

North Dakota State University
Women's Studies Program



Sisters, Families, Mothers, Wives
The 8th Annual Red River
Women's Studies Conference

Friday, October 24, 2008
9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
NDSU Alumni Center
North Dakota State University

Keynote Speaker:

Brenda Daly

"Feminist Scholarship and the Politics of
Motherhood: Closing the Gap"

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. – Registration

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. – First Session

Women in Context, Klefstad Room

Chair/Moderator: Mumbi Mwangi, SCSU

Becky Degreeff and Robert Littlefield, NDSU, *Bringing Home the Bacon while Staying Out of the Fire*: Communication strategies of employed mothers when confronting criticism about life choices

The communication strategies of employed mothers when confronting criticisms of male coworkers and associates about their life choices to work outside of the home are examined through the perspectives of two persona: the mother with a "job" and the mother with a "career."

Christina D. Weber, NDSU, Conducting an institutional ethnography in the military: Reflections on conducting feminist research in a male-dominated institution

Research on the family program of the ND National Guard as a starting point to develop the process and implications of taking a feminist sociological perspective into research on the military.

Christopher Lozensky, independent scholar, The power to be powerless: (Un)desired objects and cheated subjects in *She-Ra's* Sea Hawk episodes

A feminist critique of "Anchors Aloft Part 1" and "Anchors Aloft Part 2"—two episodes from the popular 1980s animated series She-Ra, Princess of Power, using a theoretical framework is based on Joan Riviere's pioneering study of "Womanliness as a Masquerade," as well as subsequent reformulations of her theory by Luce Irigaray, Mary Ann Doane, Véronique Machelidon, Efrat Tseelon, and Judith Butler.

Service-Learning in Women's Studies, Reimers Room

Chair/Moderator: Laurie Blunsom, MSUM

Laurie Blunsom

Heather Nesemeier

Other MSUM Participants

A roundtable discussion about the positives and negatives of service-learning in women's studies regarding the efficacy of service-learning and how it differs from volunteerism. Panel will discuss: building community relationships through service learning, teaching Women's Studies concepts through service learning, and community benefits of service learning related to women's issues.

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. – Second Session

Women in Academia, Klefstad Room

Chair/Moderator: Nancy Jones, Concordia College

Kathleen Dixon, UND, Insubstantial inquiry: A textual study of a latter-day witch-hunt

This paper reads the transcripts of a faculty hearing that publicly reviewed the firing of a untenured professor. The paper shows how the language of injury suffused the discourse of all who spoke, no matter their age, no matter their position.

Emily Hagemeister, NDSU, Women in science: Creating social space and overcoming barriers

Discusses some major issues faced by women in STEM, and some of the changes suggested by current research.

Mary Margaret Mooney, independent scholar, An ancient paradigm for a modern discipline

The development of nursing theory and the promotion of the essence of nursing may be better served by reference to the spiral of a Celtic paradigm than by reference to the linear logic of a scientific Hellenic framework.

Mothers of Invention: Women in the Visual Arts, MSUM, Reimers Room

Chair/Moderator: Anna S. Arnar, MSUM

Laura Zeiher, Yo Mama! Renée Cox and the art of provocation

Aliese Anderson, Animals as metaphors in contemporary women's art

Chelsea Lee, Women and the art of ceramics

Historically, genius and the gift of "invention" have been defined in Western culture as a male trait associated with virility or the power of abstract reasoning. Within this paradigm, women were seen as

incapable of genius since they were considered as too passive or too bound to the material condition of their bodies or their lives as caregivers. Since the 1970s, such assumptions have been challenged by exploring alternative paradigms or by rejecting them altogether. The three papers in this panel focus on contemporary artists and diverse artistic strategies that celebrate invention—through social critique and conversation, metaphor, or materiality of the art medium.

11:45- 1:15 p.m. – Lunch (Atrium)

Keynote Address (Atrium)

Dr. Brenda Daly, “Feminist Scholarship and the Politics of Motherhood: Closing the Gap”

Brenda Daly, University Professor Emerita, Iowa State University, served as director of the Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities (2005-2008) and as editor of the NWSA Journal (2003-2007).

Daly's research and teaching interests include feminist literary theory, American women's narratives, trauma and phototextuality, autobiographical criticism, and pedagogy.

*Her publications include two books, *Authoring a Life: A Woman's Survival in and through Literary Studies* (SUNY 1998) and *Lavish Self-Divisions: The Novels of Joyce Carol Oates* (Mississippi 1996); one co-edited anthology, *Narrating Mothers* (Tennessee 1991); as well many personal-scholarly essays, and others on contemporary women's narratives.*

1:15-2:15 p.m. – Third Session

Top Papers, Reimers Room

Chair/Moderator: Michelle M. Sauer, UND

Wendelin Hume, UND, Women's voices from the Red River Valley on the on-line living herstory museum project

We are developing an on-line museum housing the oral narratives of Red River Valley women, sixty years and older. With this on-line museum, not only can we read about what has happened to our foremothers, but we can now record history aurally and visually. Our display will share some details about the project and how to access the museum to see our first interviews.

Nancy Jones, Concordia College, Christina Rosetti's 'sister' poems: Sisterhood as salvation

Considers a number of Rosetti's poems on sisters and sisters' roles as each others' advocates and saviors in the context of male sexual predation.

Mumbi Mwangi, SCSU, Connecting the local to the global through teaching, scholarship, and activism: A case study of NGATHA international project in Rural Kenya

In line with Saint Cloud State University's (SCSU) mission to provide our students with international experience through globalizing our programs, this presentation showcases ways in which NGATHA International initiative and project have opened up new avenues of engagement with global issues for SCSU students through students' involvement with international activism and outreach initiatives on campus.

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. – Fourth Session

Mothers, Sisters, and Virgins in Pre-Modern Europe, Klefstad Room

Chair/moderator: Andrea Donovan

Annette Morrow, MSUM, Queer saints and breastmilk: Gendering leadership in late antique Christianity

Explores exegetical and rhetorical techniques of historians to reconstruct the original setting of Vibia Perpetua as recorded in the Passio, to grapple with the question of why the author(s) deemed it necessary to append the dream accounts of such a powerful female.

Andrea Donovan, MiSU, Variations of art historical norms in pre-modern virgin and child imagery

Analyzes what were typical and what were not typical Medieval and Renaissance images of the Virgin and Child, and why variances existed.

Michelle M. Sauer, UND, "Al susters togedere": Creating communities of sisters within the medieval anchoritic tradition

Examines the idea of a synthetic sisterhood, a way to link the ideas of discourse and identity, within the context of a popular Middle

Ages, with emphasis on the creation of an imagined community among solitaries.

Women and Issues, Reimers Room

Chair/Moderator: Heather Nesemeier, Concordia College

Katie Richardson, Lindsey Bergeron, Kathleen J. Bergseth, and Thomas McDonald, NDSU, Assessing the needs of women recently released from prison

The paper reports the results of a survey research project involving community-based service providers who work with criminal offenders in the two largest cities of a Midwestern state. Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the community based service providers' perceptions of the most pressing needs of these women are presented.

Dana Rognlie, Concordia, Sex trafficking: The commodification of sisters and wives

Some estimate that between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year. The work of theorists like Judith Butler, J.K. Gibson-Graham, and Chandra Talpade Mohanty will be used to discuss solidarity, as opposed to sisterhood, in evaluating how anti-trafficking movements must operate in working toward a common goal of an anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-capitalist post-colonial world.

Dena Wyum and Christine McGeorge, NDSU, The National Women's Conference of 1977: An exploration of attendees' memorable moments

This study sought to document the significant memories of women who attended the National Women's Conference in 1977. The conference is significant as it was the first and only federally funded meeting that was specifically designed to address concerns of women from across the United States.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. – Reception, Atrium

Contributing Artists

Babette Cuadrado, Concordia

Andrea Donovan, Minot State University

Red River Women's Studies Conference Committee 2008:

Ann Burnett

Kristi Wenzel

Erienne Fawcett

Dawn Bjorgan

Steven Hammer

The NDSU Red River Women's Studies Conference Committee would like to thank the following groups for their support and contributions:

Women's Studies program, NDSU

English department, NDSU

YMCA of NDSU

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President's Diversity Council, NDSU