

Beyond the Centre

Spring 2005

Newsletter of the Centre for Research in Women's Studies & Gender Relations
The University of British Columbia, Canada

Update from the Director

Sneja Gunew



This term has been remarkably busy by any standards. The first few weeks were spent getting material ready for the external review of the Centre which was held March 3rd & 4th. Reviewers were: Joan Anderson (University of British Columbia), Shirley Geok-lin Lim (University of California, Santa Barbara) and Meg Luxton (York University). While the exercise was intense it actually was also quite exhilarating to realize how much had been accomplished since the last review in 1999. We shared information as much amongst each

other as with the reviewers and look forward to receiving their report.

A further highlight was the fabulous undergraduate conference 'Consuming Women' held at the end of March. Invited speakers were France Winddance Twine (Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara), Ruth Ozeki (novelist and activist), and Nancy Turner (Environmental Sciences, University of Victoria). All three were charismatic speakers but what really impressed everyone was the calibre of research produced by the undergraduate participants. No real surprise to the rest of us but a wonderful opportunity to expose these talents to the university at large and to the wider community. See Wendy Frisby's report in this issue. There will also be filmed afterlife of the three keynote talks and an edited film of the event.

We also went through our annual admissions process and once again had about 70 applications: around 30 for the PhD and 40 for the MA programme. Because of our inability to offer the kinds of funding comparable to four-year packages offered by York and Toronto (who also get provincial funding) we found ourselves losing out to the eastern universities but we are excited at the new crop who will be joining us in September. See the report by Isabel Dyck. And to illustrate what a vibrant group of grads we have, see the report by Kim Snowden and Meirong Liu as well as the account from Marilou Carrillo of the project at the

Continued on 2

What's Inside...

<i>Grad Advisor's Roundup</i>	2
<i>Grad Student News</i>	3
<i>Powell Street</i>	6
<i>R.A.C.E. Conference</i>	8
<i>Int'l Women's Day 2005</i>	9
<i>SAGA Update</i>	11
<i>Consuming Women Conf.</i>	13
<i>Visiting Scholar Program</i>	15
<i>and more.....</i>	



"Action to End Racism" award recipients included Sunera Thobani, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies (above), and Brenda Ogembo, 4th year Women's Studies Major. Awards were presented at a ceremony on March 21, 2005.

The Newsletter of the Centre for
Research in Women's Studies &
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Continued from 1

Philippine Women's Centre with which she has been involved for the second year running. We also saw the second edition of *ampersand*, the elegant publication produced by the graduate student publishing committee under the direction of Sam Semper.

SAGA continued to provide a home for a number of our scholars and graduate students. A very successful one-day workshop on "Getting our

"...A further highlight was the fabulous undergraduate conference 'Consuming Women' held at the end of March...."

lives together" was held on March 11th. See Director Valerie Raoul's report in this issue.

We farewelled a number of the visiting scholars: Hammed Shahidian left for Montreal to continue work on his book on Women in the Middle East. We wish him well. Rekha Menon's stay was all too short but we hope there will be opportunities in the future for her to continue her project with some of us on television soap operas in Kerala.

Many of us were saddened by the death of Gabi Helms in December. As a young faculty member in English, Gabi had been central to the activities of SAGA and had waged a courageous battle against the breast cancer that finally claimed her life. Gabi died shortly after giving birth to her daughter Hana who is doing well.

Individual achievements of note: Kudos to Faculty Associate Becki Ross (Women's Studies and Sociology) for being awarded a Killam Prize for teaching this year. Alumnus, and

one of the first MAs to graduate from our programme, Katrina Pacey, was in the news as President of Pivot Legal Society participating in parliamentary hearings on sex workers in the downtown eastside. As the elections heat up we note that yet another UBC Women's Studies student, Jarrah Hodge, will be running as NDP provincial candidate for the riding of Quilchena. I was also pleased to be at the launch on International Women's Day, of Gillian Creese's and Veronica Strong-Boag's *Losing Ground: The Effects of Government Cutbacks on Women in British Columbia 2001-2005*. The launch was sponsored by the B.C. Coalition of Women's Centres and the B.C. Federation of Labour as well as by the CRWSGR. Sunera Thobani was honoured with an 'Action to End Racism' award at

the 2nd annual Dialogue on systemic racism held at UBC, March 21st. We also heard that we would have a postdoctoral fellow next year and will welcome Miseli Jeon (Asian Studies) who will be working with Eva-Marie Kröller and Valerie Raoul. Finally, I was relieved to get SSHRC 3-year funding to complete the book on Transculturalisms (based on the recent 3-year international project I coordinated) and congratulations to our Research Associate, Marina Morrow for getting a SSHRC grant in the recent round. We expect more good news regarding funding but that will be reported in the next newsletter. Meanwhile, roll on the summer and all the traveling and conferences as well as real research and writing that takes place during those months.



Graduate Advisor's Roundup

Isabel Dyck

This has been an important year for the Centre and the Graduate Program, as in March we underwent an External Review. Assembling the materials took a considerable amount of work, and took up much of Jane Charles and Wynn Archibald's time in the months preceding the review. As I write we are yet to receive the official report from the reviewers, but going through the process reminded me of those things that have made my role of Graduate Advisor so rewarding - a congenial and vibrant atmosphere, the support that colleagues and staff are always ready to give, and the wonderful students that we attract to the Centre. After a year on sabbatical it was, indeed, like coming 'home.'

Since the last newsletter we have gone through the Admissions process. In addition to Sneja Gunew and myself, Margery Fee, Nikki Strong-Boag and Sunera Thobani served on the Admissions Committee. We received 27 PhD applications and 33 for the MA program. We have made offers to 6 PhD applicants and 14 MA applicants, and at the time of writing are awaiting final responses. We look forward to welcoming the new cohort of students in September.

Our current students have been very active this term in a variety of ways. Cecily Nicholson and Kim Snowden were central players in organizing the Women's Studies undergraduate

Continued on 4

Graduate Student News

Kim Snowden and Meirong Liu

We have two graduate student representatives this year. Kim Snowden is the ongoing PhD rep and was joined this term by Meirong Liu as the MA rep.

In January, the graduate students met with Sneja Gunew, Margery Fee and Isabel Dyck to discuss various issues and needs in the department and to talk about the centre review that happened in early March. A number of important ideas and suggestions were raised and, as a result, many workshops have been organized to address student needs such as career development, how to produce an academic CV, the qualifying exams, and academic publishing. Further forums and workshops will be planned for the future and the graduate students plan to meet on a regular basis to address any issues and needs within the program.

The CRWSSGR Review happened in early March. The graduate students had a chance to meet with the reviewers and discuss our experiences in the program.

Kim and Mei attended the LEAF Equality Breakfast with the reviewers and the Graduate Advisory Committee. The guest speaker was Roberta Jamieson, the first First Nations woman in Canada to obtain a law degree.

Many graduate students also took part in the Consuming Women undergraduate conference for Women's Studies that took place at UBC March 17th-19th. Cecily Nicholson was the conference coordinator and Kim Snowden and Paola Arboleda Rios were on the organizing committee. Other graduate students showed their support by volunteering - Sam Semper, Alyson Hoy, and Bianca Rus

volunteered their time to chair panels and Hui-Ling Lin was the tireless AV expert! The conference was a great success and a wonderful chance for grad students to meet and mingle with undergraduate students working in Women's Studies and related fields. The conference was also a wonderful experience in terms of pedagogy and learning about undergraduates and their academic interests.

The next issue of *ampersand*, the graduate student produced journal, is now available. It contains papers presented at last year's Women's Studies Graduate Student Symposium and the Unknowable Violences Conference. Contact Sam Semper for more information at samsemper@yahoo.com.

This year's Women's Studies Graduate Student Symposium was held on April 14th.

Many graduate students have also been busy attending and presenting at various conferences.

In January Sara Koopman presented at the International Critical Geographer's conference in Mexico City. She was asked to repeat her presentation from Mexico at the American Association of Geographer's annual conference in Denver on April 3rd. Her presentation is entitled: "Liberatory Topologies: the vigil to close the School of the Americas" and is part of a panel entitled "Spaces of Hope."

In early May Sara is also presenting in Cambridge, MA at the interdisciplinary conference entitled "Media in Transition" This year's theme is "The work of stories" and will explore storytelling as a cultural practice, a social and political activity as well as an art form. Sara's presentation is entitled, "The power of stories to build solidarity across difference".

Hui-Ling Lin went to the Thinking Gender Conference at UCLA on

Continued on 7



The Consuming Women conference organizing committee: 1 to r, Christina Hendricks, Cecily Nicholson, Joy James, Shauna Pomerantz, Wendy Frisby, Kim Snowden, and April Tam.

Grad Advisor's Roundup

Continued from 2

conference, Consuming Women, held in March, while Hui-Ling Lin's considerable AV skills contributed to the smooth running of the conference. The student-produced journal *Ampersand* came out in April, developed from the *What Are You Hungry For?* confer-

"...Itrath Syed and Cecily Nicholson provided an up-close view of the perils and possibilities of combining such activism with academia and politics..."

ence last year. Both the conference and journal are a direct consequence of the hard and inspired work of the graduate students. The annual Graduate Student Symposium for students at UBC doing feminist work was held this year on April 14th, ably organized by our first year graduate students, Alyson Hoy and Paola Arboleda, with input from Sanzida Habib. We are very pleased to attract students from across campus, and this year we had papers from eight students from other departments in addition to those given by our own students. It was a lively and highly interesting day, and attests to the on-going importance of and interest in feminist scholarship.

Students have been busy presenting their work or preparing papers for a variety of conferences and performance arenas. As well as those close to home and in other parts of Canada, audiences in the US, Mexico, South Africa and Thailand are hearing of the research being done by students at the Centre. Activist work continues

to be an important part of some student's activity. Itrath Syed and Cecily Nicholson provided an up-close view of the perils and possibilities of combining such activism with academia and politics through presentations given at the Centre's weekly Lecture Series. These are all-important accomplishments early in a career and also contribute to building a better world for women through knowledge production as well as practice work. Other students have been firmly tied to their desks while meeting heavy demands of the particular phase of their programme. Several students, for example, have been preparing for comprehensive exams over the last term, with Jade Boyd the most recent to go through the examination process.

I am delighted to report that Jade and Bianca Rus have been awarded Doctoral Fellowships this year. Congratulations to you both!

We have held a number of Professional Development sessions this term: on publishing, preparing an academic CV, and navigating the sometimes daunting path of the early stages of an academic career. Thanks go to all those who contributed to the discussion and panels: Sue Boyd, Elaine Carty, Valerie Raoul, Becki Ross, and Nikki Strong-Boag.

This is my last newsletter report as Graduate Advisor. I leave in July for the UK where I take up an appointment in the Department of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London. I will take good memories of the Centre with me – it has been a wonderful place to work. I hope I will hear news, directly or indirectly, of current and past graduate students as they continue in their careers. Keep in touch!



A snowy day at the Centre in January of this year. Photo by Xin Huang.

*Visiting Scholar's Report***Hammed Shahidian**

Anthropology/Sociology, University of Illinois at Springfield

I was a visiting scholar at the centre from mid-October 2004 to the end of the fall semester—but I did not really leave the Centre until mid-March, after participating in the SAGA conference on autobiography and research—and not even then, since my connection to the Centre continues as a Research Associate. This should tell you how much I enjoyed the intellectual atmosphere of the Centre, not to mention the warm hospitality that made me feel right at home from the moment I set foot in the Centre back in the summer of 2003—much thanks to Professor Sneja Gunew for her support of my work. I also owe a heartfelt thank to Jane Charles and Wynn Archibald, the Centre's administrators, for their valuable support and helpful advice.

I found the students in the program intellectually rigorous and politically committed. In fact, I found my interactions with students so rewarding that my only suggestion for the visiting scholar program is to devise methods to increase interactions with students.

Wednesday lecture series are extremely informative. I learned much from presentations and discussions. What impressed me most was the cultural diversity that was presented in these talks—something that I don't always experience in the overwhelmingly "mainstream America" atmosphere of Springfield, Illinois.

My stay at the Centre was quite productive. I read extensively and managed to finish two chapters of my book on women in the Middle East (Forthcoming, Praeger), as well as making plenty of notes for the other chapters. Some colleagues at UBC, including Sneja Gunew and Patricia Kachuk,

read these chapters. I thank them for their feedbacks. This is a book about which I am quite excited. It provides an overview of women's social condition in the Middle East for general readers who want a scholarly book on the subject without getting entangled in academic discussions.

My lecture at the Centre on contesting discourses of sexuality in post-revolutionary Iran helped me to make the final revisions on the article that is going to be published as a chapter in a collection on sexuality in the Middle East (Deconstructing Sexuality in the Middle East and North Africa: Contemporary Issues and Discourses, edited by Ipek Ilkcaracan, Leiden: E.J. Brill). I also pursued my interest on secularism in Iran (and the Middle East). My colleague, Dr. Peyman Vahabzadeh (University of Victoria), and I continued our discussions on a book we are co-editing on secularism in Iran. As for my research on Iranian immigrants and refugees, I was successful to talk to many Iranians in Vancouver, especially men and women of the younger generation who either have recently moved to Canada or have been raised here. Though these encounters were not organized and related to any specific research project, I feel I have benefited from these conversations to make preliminary observations and, more importantly, establish initial contacts with the Iranian community in Vancouver. I must also add that I did have a chance to interview some people for my research, including a former female political activist and a transsexual.



In addition to my lecture at the Centre, I talked to UBC audiences on three other occasions—UBC sociology/anthropology program lecture series; the Persian Tapestry series offered by UBC Continuing Education Centre, and the SAGA conference on Auto/biography as/in Research. These were occasions for me to present my research findings and thoughts on life in exile, women's movement in Iran, secularism, and feminist and cultural politics.

I also took advantage of being in Vancouver, a beautiful city with many opportunities for outdoor activities, artistic and cultural events, and fine dining. I particularly enjoyed the unique resources Vancouver provides related to Iranian art and culture. The numerous artistic events I attended during my stay in Vancouver included three concerts and a play by Iranian artists.

I feel lucky and privileged to have had the chance to interact with such impressive scholars and students at the Centre. I am only glad that though I left the Centre, I will be able to continue my affiliation with it as a Research Associate. Thank you for your collegiality.

From Powell Street to CRWSGR and Back: A Community-Based Women's Studies Course as Grad Student's Feminist Praxis

Marilou Carrillo, Ph D student

Towards Our Liberation: A Community-Based Women's Studies Course is running for the second time this year at the Philippine Women's Centre of B.C. (PWC) located on Powell Street. My involvement in the first ten-week course in 03-04 and in this second course in '05 is an experience of feminist praxis. My learning as a feminist student and activist started at the PWC and I sought to deepen this through further studies at CRWSGR. The course I participated in taking, designing, and providing to the community is an example of putting into practice theories of methodology, feminist conceptualization, and building community. It is a course designed by Filipino women for our own community (and which eventually could be developed as a source of learning for others outside the community). The methodology is simple and feminist: we tell of our own experiences, reflect on them collectively, analyze them more deeply through what we know of feminist and/or dominant thinking, and act transformatively to know and change our own situation as Filipino women in B.C./Canada today.

The struggles to integrate academic theories/social research and social activism are known and the issues around these struggles have been spearheaded by white/Euro/North American feminist studies (Fraser, 97; Hill-Collins, 99; Naples 03). Methodologizing and theorizing have been questioned by, with, and for women from academia to grassroots women's organizations. Indigenous women and women from the Majority/Third World have contributed to these struggles from "below," the "underside," the "margins" through their assertions as academics, commu-

nity scholars, and as experience-ers of systemic oppression through past and present colonial histories (Monture-Angus, 95; Tuhiwai-Smith, 02; PWC 00-04). As a member of the Filipino community, Kalayaan [Freedom] Centre that houses the Philippine Women Centre, and as a member of CRWSGR, the challenge to integrate in my own feminist praxis into reality was on.

The course is designed not only to counter and oppose, resist and struggle, but also to assert the community's own issues, create transformative action, and contribute to feminist discourse. Right away, the framework of the course reflects the community's realities: (A) the first three of ten sessions examine our own *history* (as Filipinos and particularly as Filipino

"...The course is designed not only to counter and oppose, resist and struggle, but also to assert the community's own issues...."

women) and how today we are a part of this history in the making (pre-Spanish history, Spanish and U.S. colonization, and current neo-colonization); (B) the next three sessions look at the *current context* (of the woman's question, globalization, and transnational issues); (C) the next three are women's praxis (women's methodologies, intersectional analysis of race, class, gender,

sexuality, and community organizing). The (D) last class consists of presentations of the participants' projects. They interviewed Filipino women working in various sectors in Vancouver in order to know about our community, base our knowledge production on our own stories, and analyzed by ourselves. It is also the session for individual and collective evaluation of the course experience and a party to celebrate the accomplishment.

Yesterday I, a participant in the course, facilitated session #9 on "Intersectional Analysis: Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality." (Other sessions were facilitated by other participants in the course and active members of the community.) It was utter pleasure and sheer satisfaction to experience how theoretical frameworks such as Nancy Fraser's "Redistribution and Recognition" (1997) echoes and deepens the experience of Filipino women in Canada. After watching *Say I Do* (2003), documentary on Filipino Mail Order Brides, there were tears at our collective experiences of exploitation and anger at the systems of oppression that perpetuate our forced migration. There was laughter at our own colonized minds and humour at our struggles to de-colonize said minds. Of greater delight and encouragement was the putting forward of our own issues and insights into coherent feminist praxis.

It is our hope that in struggling together as women across Canada, our issues as shared, *Canadian* issues become more and more understood and apparent. To start, perhaps writing this piece and you reading it is about *all* of our liberation when we can someday move freely in our studies and praxis,

this time learning from CRWSGR to Powell Street and back.

Endnotes

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Grad Student News

Continued from 3

March 4th to present her paper, "From Enter the Dragon to Enter the Mullet"--Exploring Representations of Queer East Asian Women by Queer Diasporic Asian filmmakers in Contemporary Canada.

Itrath Syed talked about the local antiwar movement at the Preparatory Conference for the 2006 World Peace Forum last November and delivered a guest lecture at a SFU Women's Studies course 304 last fall as well as a guest lecture in a UBC Educational Studies course last fall. She was MC at the event with Naomi Klein for Stopwar on February 2, 2005 and part of a panel on 'Women and Islam' at the University Women's Club on March 10th. She gave a guest lecture at a Womens' studies class at Capilano College on March 21. She and Cecily Nicholson presented papers at the RACE conference in Halifax in April.

Many other students are planning to attend conferences in the next few months.



Some of the Women's Studies Grad Students at the Centre, Spring 2005. Back row, l to r, Alyson Hoy, Sirijit Sunanta, Meirong Liu, Naomi Lloyd, Sam Semper, Kim Snowden, Itrath Syed, Almas Zakkiudin. Front row, Paola Arboleda, Jade Boyd, Xin Huang.

Conference: Racial Violence and the Colour Line of the New World Order

Itrath Syed

During the first few days of April, three members of our department made the long journey across country to the [very cold] city of Halifax for the annual Conference of RACE Researchers and Academics of Colour for Equality. The conference was entitled, "Racial Violence and the Colour Line of the New World Order" and was co-sponsored by the James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies.

It was my first time in Halifax and only my second time presenting a paper at an academic conference. Luckily for me, this conference provided a wonderful and supportive atmosphere in which to present new work to a new



Dr. Sunera Thobani presented on "Women and the War on Terrorism: A Study of Two Documentaries" at the fifth annual R.A.C.E. conference in Halifax in April.

audience. There was a real sense of community and solidarity among all of the presenters and the organizers of the conference. The papers presented covered a wide range of scholarship but all were engaged with the idea of examining the shifting realities of racism and violence. I found all of the papers to be compelling, yet some went further and presented challenges to my own assumptions and the paradigms under which I have chosen to work. As well, of course, it was a great opportunity to network and to meet other students and professors who are pushing the field of critical race scholarship forward in Canada.

Dr. Thobani, as well as being on the steering Committee of RACE, also presented her paper, "Women and the War on Terrorism" which analysed the constructions of gender and "race" in two Canadian documentaries about Afghanistan. Our own Cecily Nicholson presented a paper on the issues she is contending with as she embarks on her doctoral research, "Approaching a Speaking Subject, Remembering My Place in Academy". I presented a paper on the construction of the "shariah" debate in Canada.

This would also be a good place to mention that this conference was an annual event for RACE and the next conference will be in Saskatoon and will be focussing on issues of Racial Profiling. I believe a CFP will be out soon for that conference. As well, I would encourage any of you who are interested in RACE to find out more about the local and Canada-wide activities by talking to Dr. Thobani directly. And to read all of the abstracts of the papers presented go to http://jamesrjohnstonchair.dal.ca/johnston_6329.html

Perhaps for the next RACE confer-

ence in 2006 we can do a road trip from the CRWSGR!

NB: The conference provided an opportunity to engage in scholarship and activism from various regions in Canada and showcased several dynamic plenary speakers including conference organizers critical race scholar Professor Sherene Razack and the Canadian Chair of Black Studies Professor David Divine. This growing network of feminist and critical race scholars has begun work on next year's conference to be held in Saskatchewan and the 2007 conference to be held in Montréal. The tentative conference theme for 2006 will be *Race, Education, Law and the Human Services* with a corresponding one-day forum on Racial Profiling organized by Patricia Monture. For more information on Researchers and Academics of Colour, please contact Sunera Thobani. To view the 2005 Racial Violence conference program, visit www.jamesrjohnstonchair.dal.ca/johnston_6329.html.

check it out.

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International Women's Day, 2005



Lauren Hunter and Gerry Pratt



Fearless leader at the kitchen sink

Photos courtesy of Xin Huang



Carson Brooks

Cecily Nicholson, Kim Snowden, Sam Semper, and Lisa Hickey



Visiting Scholar Rathi Menon



Women's Studies Reference Librarian Dorothy Martin

Women's Studies Graduate Students with their mascot for the evening, Carellin Brooks' daughter Carson (at centre)





Lynette Russell



Sue Hendler



Beth Seaton



Scott Anderson

Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations

Spring 2005 Lecture Series

January 12: Beth Seaton, York University
A Physiology of Culture: Early Puberty and Social Environment

January 19: Susan Shantz, University of Saskatchewan
Autobiography in Contemporary Visual Art: Residual Anxieties

January 26: Lynette Russell, Monash University, Australia
'Either, Or, Neither, Nor.' Resisting The Production of Dichotomies: Gender, Race and Class in The Pre-Colonial Period of Australia

February 2: Sue Hendler, Queen's University
And So the Experts Took Over: Women in Professional and Non-Professional Planning Organizations in Canada

February 9: Annie Ross, First Nation Studies, SFU. (This talk is co-sponsored by RACE.)
The Persistent Mother

February 23: Becki Ross, UBC
Entertaining Femininities: The Spectacles of Striptease and Sport, 1950-1975

March 2: Rekha Menon, Calicut University, Kerala, India
Television and Women—A study on how female identity and subjectivity are constructed in Malayalam TV channel programmes.

March 9: Mandakranta Bose, UBC
An Art of One's Own: Heritage, Gender and Classical Indian Dance

March 16: Scott Anderson, UBC
The Philosophy of Coercion and Power for Feminists

March 23: Christiane Harzig, University of Winnipeg
Body Politics at the Border: Regulating Citizenry in the 19th and 20th century in North America

March 30: Titiporn Siriphant, Thammasat University, Thailand
Where Are the (Wise) Women: Persisting Gender Biases in Grassroots Knowledge Management Movement in Rural Thailand

April 6: Cecily Nicholson, CRWSGR, UBC. (This talk is co-sponsored by RACE.)
Approaching a Speaking Subject, Remembering My Place in Academy



Mandakranta Bose



Annie Ross



Susan Shantz

Studies in Autobiography, Gender and Age

Update from the SAGA Centre

Valerie Raoul, SAGA Director

I am happy to report that since my last up-date, the SAGA Centre has undertaken a number of activities, indicating that it is now fully up and running. The CFI money had to be spent by the end of December 2004, and all the equipment has now been delivered and most of it installed. This includes a photocopying machine, which is much appreciated. Cards to use it can be purchased from Wynn. The portable computers and video camera have already come in useful for workshops, and the transcribing equipment is in demand. A counter for the printer (also using pre-paid cards) will be in place shortly, and a video-editing station with a Mac computer. Work on the data-

base pilot project will take place over the summer, with assistance from the UBC Archives staff.

On March 11th we organized a very successful one-day workshop on oral history entitled "Getting Our Lives Together", held in the Graduate Student Centre Penthouse and attended by 40 people from UBC and elsewhere. It was unusual in bringing different generations together, as a Brock House life history group of seniors was well represented, thanks to Sid Butler (a retired UBC Professor and SAGA Associate who publishes their work). The first session, "Working in and with the local community", began with an account of her varied experiences by local oral historian and broadcaster Vera Rosenbluth, followed by a presentation by

(Oral History in Kerala). They brought a range of disciplinary perspectives to the methodological and ethical issues that arise from mediated life stories. In the afternoon, Hammed Shahidian (CRWSGR Visiting Scholar), Richard Ingram, and Jim Overboe talked about their incorporation of their own life stories into their research on exile, disability, and psychiatric treatment respectively. The day ended with discussion of the arts as auto-bio-graphics, with video and slide presentations from Gu Xiong (UBC Fine Arts) and Susan Shantz (CRWSGR Visiting Scholar). Our thanks to all the participants, to the CRWSGR for contributing to the cost of the lunch, and to Vera Rosenbluth for copies of her books on oral history for the SAGA Centre.

This workshop inspired a good deal of enthusiasm, and requests for more events related to oral history and methodology. On March 22nd we welcomed Michael Riordon, author of *An Unauthorized Biography of the World* (2004) and several other works based on oral life stories from people who do not usually get heard. The examples he gave provided strong evidence for the historical and social importance of collecting and recording the stories of those whose experiences will otherwise be forgotten or ignored. We are now planning a workshop for mid-May on the technicalities of interviewing, recording, editing and analysing oral materials.

During this academic year, events beyond our control have meant changes to the composition of the SAGA Advisory Committee. In the Fall, Anne Martin Matthews (Social Work/Aging) stepped down, as she became Di-

Continued on 12



Rathi Menon speaking at the SAGA Workshop "Getting our Lives Together", on March 11th.

Ed Wickberg (UBC Professor Emeritus, History) on a project on the history of organisations in Chinatown. A panel on "Oral Life Stories in Qualitative Research" was chaired by Dawn Currie (Sociology), with presentations from Cynthia Andruske (Educational Studies), Dianne Newell (History), and SAGA Visiting Scholar Rathi Menon

*Visiting Scholar's Report***Rekha Menon**

Media Professional, India

I wish to start by thanking everyone for making my period of stay as a visiting scholar 'the most memorable time in my life' at the Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations at UBC. My special gratitude to Sneja Gunew, Director, CRWSSGR for giving me this opportunity to explore and expand the research possibilities of my subject of study from this part of the world.

During my four weeks visit at the Centre, I gave a talk on 'Television and Women—A study on how female identity and subjectivity are constructed in Malayalam (a regional language in India) TV channel programmes' as a part of my larger study 'Consuming Women - Problems and Challenges in Malayalam Visual Media.' The support and courage given by the staff and faculty at the centre has given me extra confidence and has opened a window to the outer world for my further study. During my stay I attended the Wednesday talks at the Centre , seminars conducted by SAGA , as well as the Undergraduate conference on 'Consuming Women. ' The under graduate conference provided me with an opportunity to mingle with guest speakers, students speakers and other participants and share and compare the issues faced by east and west in the visual media.

I was astonished to see the range of books Koerner Library had and was really re-inventing my student life reading and photocopying all that I would need in my study. I was lucky enough to be part of International Women's Day Celebrations at the Center on March 8, 2005 and it was a fabulous get-together. I should specially mention the 'Wynn & Jane' combo which makes

the centre function so professionally. I am going back with colorful memories and a new list of friends too.

Once again my special thanks to the 'Woman of few words with a sparkling smile'- Sneja Gunew, I am really grateful to you and your team for giving me this life time opportunity. And please do remember, for any help from India, I am just a keyboard away!

**SAGA Update***Continued from 11*

rector of the CIHR College focused on Aging. We expected Gabi Helms (English/autobiography) to be going on maternity leave in January, and were very sad when she unexpectedly died of breast cancer at the end of December. A third member, Jean Barman (Educational Studies), has now retired. I am pleased to announce that Dianne

Newell (History, Director of the Peter Wall Institute of Advanced Studies) has agreed to be on the committee, as has Vera Rosenbluth, who will provide valuable experience and community connections. Connie Canam (Nursing) and Sneja Gunew (CRWSSGR/English), and Carla Paterson (Foundations) are continuing as members, and one or two others will be added.

Over the coming months, Hui-Ling will complete the editing of a volume of interviews with feminist faculty at UBC, which will hope to make available online, and Sara Koopmen will update the web-site. We have appreciated the presence of two visiting scholars at SAGA, Rathi Menon from India (who may still be with us next year), and Sofia Trilivas, from Crete, who will be going home in June. My thanks to them and everyone who has helped to bring SAGA to life, and especially to Hui-Ling whose assistance has been invaluable.

Other news items:

Congratulations to Jim Overboe (Sociology), who was a Research Assistant for the Wall project on Narratives of Disease, Disability, and Trauma and defended his thesis last Fall, on obtaining a tenure-track position in Disability Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. Also to Richard Ingram (Interdisciplinary Studies, home department CRWSSGR, also an RA for the Wall project) on defending his thesis on April 8th, on "Troubled Being and Being Troubled: Subjectivity in the Light of Problems of the Mind".

Professor Joan Anderson (School of Nursing, former member of the CRWSSGR Steering Committee and Chair of the Review Committee), has a new position as Health Research Coordinator, Office of the VP Research.



Consuming Women: An Undergraduate Conference

Wendy Frisby, Program Chair

The Consuming Women Undergraduate Conference, organized by Women's Studies at UBC, was held at the Asian Studies Centre on March 17-19, 2005. The conference was rated a huge success by everyone in attendance. It was designed to bring undergraduate students interested in Women's Studies from across campus and across British Columbia together to present their work, debate different points of view, build their presentation skills, and develop new friendships. Based on the enthusiastic comments received, it is clear that these goals were achieved.

Ninety undergraduate students from various departments in the colleges and universities in British Columbia and beyond submitted proposals and presented their interesting interpretations of the Consuming Women theme in various formats including papers, posters, films, performances, artwork, and workshops. An additional 90 students attended the various sessions. The response by undergraduate student demonstrates their commitment to a number of important issues ranging from critiques of the beauty industry, to the affects of globalization and colonialism, the silencing that occurs due to discourses around race and sexuality, and the violence perpetrated on sex trade workers. Contrary to recent media predictions of "the death of feminism", undergraduate students

are clearly taking up the cause and intellectual debates in interesting and provocative ways.

Our three guest speakers also provided lively and thought provoking perspectives on the conference theme. Dr. France Winddance Twine, a Professor of Sociology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, opened the conference with an eloquent talk entitled "Shopping for Blackness: A Cultural Analysis of White Mothers in Interracial

the award-winning author of *My Year of Meats* and *All Over Creation*, who did a reading from one of her books. Several of the students had read her novels in courses so they were very excited about having the opportunity to hear about what inspired her writing and to ask her directly about her work. Dr. Nancy Turner, a distinguished professor in the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria, was our final speaker. Nancy is an ethnobotanist and ethnoecologist who talked about the food production practices of British Columbia's indigenous communities from pre-colonial times to the 21st Century. Her collaborative research with indigenous elders challenges many assumptions about food production practices and policies.

Delegates commented on the positive energy, the high quality of the student presentations, and the availability of guest speakers, graduate students, and Women's Studies instructors to answer questions and provide constructive feedback. Cecily Nicholson, the conference coordinator, along with Kim Snowden, Shauna Pomerantz, and Hui-Ling were graduate students at UBC who assumed major roles in making the conference a success. Thanks are also extended to Joy James, Chris-

Continued on 14

"...there have been calls to make the conference an annual event that would be rotated between the colleges and universities in British Columbia..."

Families in England." She reanalyzed ethnographic data collected over several years to demonstrate how white mother's patterns of consumption were tied to their negotiations of the racial identities for their children. Dr. Twine is a highly entertaining and persuasive speaker and she plans to return to work with the Centre for Research in Women's Studies & Gender Relations (CRWSGR) at UBC in the future. Our second guest speaker was Ruth Ozeki,

Photos at top of page: Guest speakers at the Conference: France Winddance Twine, Ruth Ozeki, and Nancy Turner.

tina Hendricks, Krista Jones, Leslie Supnet, MaryAnne Brown, April Tam, Wynn Archibald, Jane Charles, Brian Charles and his film crew, and the many other students who volunteered.

There are several initiatives to be pursued following the conference. First, there have been calls to make the conference an annual event that would be rotated between the colleges and universities in British Columbia. We are also investigating the possibility of publishing an anthology of selected undergraduate papers presented. And finally, there are a number of ties-in with work being done here at the Centre. For example, the conference theme

is linked directly to Sneja Gunew's Food and Human Insecurity Project and the guest speakers expressed an interest in becoming more involved in this and other Centre activities. It was clear based on the caliber of the undergraduate papers that many of these students are destined for graduate school. It certainly would not be surprising if some of them applied to the CRWSGR in the future given the exposure they had to graduate students and faculty on the weekend.

To preserve the memories and ideas presented at the conference and to illustrate what Women's Studies is all about, we are producing a

Consuming Women film that will be available for viewing on our web site www.ws.arts.ubc.ca in the upcoming months. Thank you again to everyone who contributed to this stimulating event.

UBC Scholar-in-Residence Program 2006-07

The Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations is offering UBC Scholar positions for the 2006-07 session.

The Centre stimulates feminist research and facilitates the exchange of ideas and collaboration amongst scholars working in relevant areas at U.B.C. and elsewhere.



Nancy Nisbet, Associate Professor, Arts History, Visual Art, and Theory, was the Centre's Visiting Scholar 2004-2005.

The choice of scholars each year is determined by a variety of factors including, excellence of the research project, representation from diverse fields, disciplines and faculties, length of time to/from sabbatical, and diversity of ranks. In addition, the Centre may have a particular programme need at a particular time.

Only full time UBC faculty not on sabbatical are eligible to apply. Up to two one-term (4 months, excluding May to August) positions are available. After completing an appointment as a UBC Scholar, a faculty member will not be eligible to apply again for at least ten years.

During their appointment, Scholars are expected to contribute to scholarly activities of the Centre by being present several times a week, interacting with visiting scholars and post-docs or graduate students, and participating in interdisciplinary seminars or discussion groups. Scholars will also give a public seminar or workshop during their term.

The UBC Scholar's Department will be reimbursed appropriately cover the cost of hiring sessionals for the teach-

ing that scholar will not be doing in the department. It is hoped that departments will be able to release Scholars from some of their administrative duties while they are at the Centre. It is recognized that the ability of departments to provide such administrative release will vary; the details for each Scholar will be worked out by the individual Scholar and her or his Department.

The deadline for receipt of applications for the 2006-07 academic year is November 15, 2005. Interested UBC faculty must submit a curriculum vitae, a statement of their research plans for their term as a UBC Scholar, the preferred date of their term, copies of recent publications, and letters of approval from their Department Head/Director and Dean. Applicants are also asked to arrange to have two references forwarded to:

UBC Scholar Program, Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations, 1896 East Mall, CAMPUS 1

Visiting Scholar Program 2006-07

The University of British Columbia offers a Visiting Scholar Program as an integral part of its Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations. Scholars working in these areas are encouraged to apply to spend leave time (one to six months) in affilia-



Sofia Trilivas (Psychology Dept., University of Crete), a visiting scholar at the Centre during the 2004-05 academic year.

tion with the Centre. The goal of the Centre is to stimulate feminist research and to facilitate interchange of ideas and collaboration among scholars, at UBC and elsewhere. Scholars will be expected to participate in the activities of the Centre and to give a public lecture during their term.

The Visiting Scholar programme is open to faculty, both untenured and tenured, as well as to independent scholars who are engaged in critical work on women and gender, who are not currently working on a higher degree at any institution and preference will be given to those who reside in areas outside the B.C. Lower Mainland.

Scholars from "developing" countries are encouraged to apply. In its selection of visitors, the Centre hopes to create a diverse community of junior and senior scholar-researchers. The Centre is particularly interested in applicants who are situated within existing Women's Studies centres which might be interested in forging future international links.

Funds are extremely limited and are not available for salary. Their permanent geographical location and their other forms of supports will determine the level of assistance available to successful applicants. Normally, scholars from North America, Australia, New Zealand, and the European Union, will not be eligible for funding.

Scholars will normally be provided with shared office space at the Centre itself, phone, a computer workstation in the SAGA Centre, Koerner Library and secretarial assistance. The University's academic year runs from September to April; therefore applicants are encouraged to schedule the majority of their visit to the Centre during these months. Scholars will normally only receive funding on one occasion.

Applications must include:
Curriculum vitae

A detailed statement of research plans for the time period

The length of stay proposed and the dates

An indication of required funding needs

The applicant must also arrange to have two referees forward their assessments to: Visiting Scholar Program, UBC Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations, 1896 East Mall, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6T 1Z1.

The closing date for receipt of applications is December 1, 2005.

AV Equipment available for loan to WMST Grad Students

The Centre has the following audio-visual equipment available for the use of graduate students in their research or other projects.

Equipment can be signed out at the front desk.

- *Sony TRV350 handycam Camcorder & Tripod*
- *Sony Multimedia Projector*
- *Canon PowerShot G5 Digital Camera*
- *Handheld tape recorders (standard cassette)*

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN WOMEN'S STUDIES AND
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The Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations is a part of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at The University of British Columbia. Our primary purposes are to:

- *Highlight the significance of research in Women's Studies or Gender Relations and feminist research in all fields;*
- *Encourage UBC faculty graduate students and others to meet together in multi-disciplinary groups for discussion and research in these areas;*
- *Bring UBC researchers together with activists and researchers from other institutions in Canada and abroad, and from within the community; and*
- *Communicate support for women's studies, gender analysis and feminist research to governments, institutions, community groups and the public in British Columbia, Canada and elsewhere.*

Beyond the Centre is published by The University of British Columbia's Centre for Research in Women's Studies and Gender Relations twice a year. It is distributed free of charge to interested researchers, educators, community activists, practitioners and students. To subscribe, e-mail your request to wynn.archibald@ubc.ca. Any part of this newsletter may be reprinted with credit to the source.

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