A Letter from the Director,
Dr. Laura Engel

It’s been a terrific year so far for the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies! We have co-sponsored lectures by distinguished literary scholar Cristanne Miller and internationally acclaimed poet, visual and performance artist, Caroline Bergvall, welcomed several new students into our graduate and undergraduate programs, and finalized plans for Women’s History month 2013, which will focus on “Women in The Arts.”

I’m delighted to be working this year with our fantastic new graduate assistant, Ann Vinski, a doctoral candidate in Theology and author of this lovely newsletter! Carrying on the tradition from past newsletters, this volume features articles on the interests and accomplishments of our wonderful faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates. I continue to be inspired by the range and significance of the work that everyone involved with the center for women’s and gender studies does personally and professionally. My hope is that the center can continue to provide resources, support, and enthusiasm for a variety of projects that will increase our visibility within the college, the university, and the larger community. If you would like to become more involved with the center, feel free to contact us or to stop by our office in College Hall 550A. Best wishes to all for a happy and restful holiday season!

Dr. Laura Engel
Speakers

Cristanne Miller gave an engaging talk entitled “Reading (Emily Dickinson) in Time: History, Rhythm, and Gender” on September 19 in College Hall. Miller is the SUNY Distinguished Professor, Edward H. Butler Professor of Literature, and Chair of the English Department at SUNY Buffalo, and editor of *The Emily Dickinson Journal*. She is a distinguished scholar of 19th and 20th century American poetry, world-renowned for her work on Emily Dickinson and Marianne Moore. The Center for Women’s and Gender Studies was delighted to co-sponsor this event with the English department.

Caroline Bergvall fascinated her audience during her presentation “Missing Letters, Missing Bodies: Voicings, Ghostings, Illuminations” on October 2 in College Hall. As a London poet, installation artist, and performance writer, Bergvall works across several art forms. She discussed and visually displayed artwork dealing with female representation, sexuality, and language to consider wider issues of social gendering. Her work is currently featured in the Wood Street Galleries’ exhibition, “The City & the City: Artwork by London Writers,” which runs through December 31, 2012. This event was another exciting collaboration between the English department and the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies.

Social Events

Coffee with Students
On Thursday, November 8, the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies hosted a coffee and donuts hour with undergraduate and graduate students in our office in College Hall. We shared information, refreshments, and delightful conversation!

Fall Reception
Please join us for some refreshments and conversation at the Fall Reception, Wednesday, December 5, from 4:30-6:30 in room 643 College Hall!
We congratulate Sr. Marie Agatha Ozah, PhD, on her recent election as council member of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM).

Born and raised in Nigeria, Sr. Marie Agatha is an ethnomusicologist whose research interests include women’s music, dance, and rituals. Ethnomusicology is the study of music in culture and as culture; thus, it is the study of the music of a particular culture from that culture’s perspective. She earned her PhD in ethnomusicology at the University of Pittsburgh and is the first ethnomusicologist in Duquesne’s Mary Pappert School of Music.

Sr. Marie Agatha speaks enthusiastically of the music and dance of women’s rituals. The rituals are replete with meaning, and through them, she asserts, “women are important carriers of tradition and transmitters of culture.” When she studies women’s rituals in Africa, she focuses on one group of people at a time, because in Africa, each group of people has a distinct culture. The rituals of African women tell signifying stories whose meanings are not obvious to the cultural outsider. These stories are of the women themselves, of their people, and of their beliefs. Sr. Marie Agatha explains that rituals also convey the way the women view themselves, their society, and life. Hence, in order to gain an understanding of the rich meanings of a ritual, it is significant for an observer to learn to perceive the ritual and its music and dances from the viewpoint of the women performing them.

Appreciating this deeper meaning allows for the recognition that when the women of one generation pass their people’s rituals, music, and dances to the next generation, they pass their culture along as well.

Sr. Marie Agatha’s background includes extensive study of sacred music, and she earned her Bachelors, License (Licenza), and Masters (Magistero) in Music from the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome. She sees continuity between her study of sacred music and her study of ethnomusicology: both Christian and traditional African rituals are deeply symbolic, and both impart a sense of membership to those who have passed through them. In fact, she further explains that some ethnomusicologists are now focusing on Christian music, studying it from the perspective of Christian culture.

Sr. Marie Agatha holds leadership positions within Sections of the Society for Ethnomusicology and the Internal Council for Traditional Music (ICTM).
A highlight of Jeff Stoyanoff’s career as a doctoral student in English here at Duquesne grew out of the Medieval Woman Writers course he took with Dr. Anne Brannen. Last summer, he had the opportunity to travel to the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, England, to present his paper, “Margery’s Middle Class Mysticism: Economy and the Self in the Book of Margery Kempe,” which he wrote for Dr. Brannen’s course. The paper frames Margery’s position as a supposed mystic in terms of her middle class economy. In it, Jeff argues that she treats her visions as a job rather than a calling, bartering them for food and lodging. The project is a continuing one, which he pursued further in a directed readings course with Dr. Sarah Miller. In this course, he explored Margery through the guise of motherhood and her feminine body being subjected to the market principles of selling her body.

Jeff had already taken several courses that were cross-listed with WSGS prior to enrolling in the graduate certificate program. When he took Dr. Laura Engel’s Staging Gender in the Eighteenth-Century Theater course, she suggested that he consider the certificate program. It seemed a perfect fit for him, particularly since his area of concentration is Medieval Studies, and an evolving body of research in Medieval Studies involves study of gender in medieval literature.

Having the opportunity to teach these themes in the classroom while he is a graduate student is something Jeff enjoys. He is enthusiastic about teaching and finds it rewarding to help students see that the labels and ways of thinking with which they are familiar do not apply to a different time period, such as the medieval period. When they recognize this, they come to look at their own time period differently.

Originally from Altoona, PA, Jeff earned his BA in English at St. Francis University in Loretto, PA. He is certified in secondary education, and after graduating from college, he taught for a year in Blair City, PA. Currently a third year doctoral student in English, Jeff came to Duquesne in the fall of 2008 when he began work on his Masters in English. We are delighted that Jeff has studied with the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies during his years here at Duquesne.
As a Secondary Education major with a concentration in English, Stephanie Wontrop’s schedule was already full. However, when she took a Gender and Drama course in the fall of 2011, she became interested in pursuing a minor in WSGS. “I kept thinking how interesting it would be to present this to a high school class. Especially during adolescence, there are constant self-image issues … many of which come from stereotyping and gender issues.” Through the help and support of Dr. Laura Engel and Mrs. Gallucci, Stephanie’s advisor, she was able to work with her schedule so that she could fulfill the course requirements to complete the minor.

Stephanie thinks that the knowledge and insights she has gained from WSGS give her “a new way to approach looking at materials examined in a classroom by seeing how gender exists within texts as well as in popular culture…. The knowledge schemas that come from WSGS can help to put a new spin on how students view the power of literature and bring light to what is said about gender standards and roles.” In her career as a teacher, she hopes to reach students by using “the function of gender in literature to make the material we study tangible and relevant to their lives.”

When we asked Stephanie about the experiences she found most formative during her undergraduate years, she pointed to her courses. “I think the English and WSGS courses I have taken at Duquesne have been the most influential. Fortunately, I have had the opportunity to take a variety of courses, from Contemporary Poetry, Drama and Gender, and Women Restoration Writers, to Greek, Roman, and Medieval Mothers and Psychology of Gender. The breadth of information in these courses has enabled me to grow as a learner and gain new perspectives on how gender plays out in various forms of literature, history, and modern society.”

Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Stephanie is a senior and will graduate this spring. She plans to pursue a Masters degree in English focusing on gender issues. We wish Stephanie all the best in the next stage of her education, and we are thrilled that she has been part of WSGS!
**New Students**

We are excited to welcome the following students to Women’s and Gender Studies!

**Graduate Certificate Program**
- Patrick O’Brien, Psychology
- Josie Rush, English
- Paige Volek, English

**Undergraduate Second Major**
- Madison Maxon, Political Science

**Undergraduate Minor**
- Jeffrey Johnston, Psychology & Theater Arts

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**Announcements**

Dr. Laura Engel
Associate Professor, English Department
Director, Center for Women’s & Gender Studies

My book in progress, *Archival Performances: Women, Writing, and the Theater 1780-1915*, considers archival research about women in the theater in terms of a series of performances, a methodology that illuminates what can be found in the archive alongside the invisible traces of information that link materials in unusual and unexpected ways. Theater historians, such as Marvin Carlson, Joseph Roach, Diana Taylor, Jacky Bratton, and David Roman, have been tackling the question of how to account for theatrical performance and for the performance of everyday lived experience in the absence of tangible evidence for many years. I suggest that we can productively apply similar tactics to the study of “literary” materials, such as diaries, letters, and photographs. Specifically, I employ Joseph Roach’s questions about how to account for and archive what he terms “the invisible rituals of everyday life,” and Diana Taylor’s term “repertoire,” which describes traces of the past that are un-recordable and ephemeral, to create a space for beginning to map out and imagine the intangible performances surrounding historical materials. I argue that these paradigms are particularly useful strategies for dealing with archival materials by or about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatrical women, whose unconventional lives and experiences often went unrecorded, or when written down became manipulated and distorted in an effort to re-imagine their unique position within accepted narratives of femininity. Ultimately, *Archival Performances* seeks to make larger claims about the performances involved in academic research, investigations that are always tied in some way to the desires, memories, and cultural framework(s) of the researcher. In this way the book provides new strategies for considering the significance of women’s writings in and around the theater, as well as offering a fresh paradigm for linking the intersecting fields of literary studies, theater history, gender studies, and performance studies.
Spring 2013 Upcoming Events

Women’s History Month 2013
“Women and the Arts”

Jan Beatty
Thursday, March 14, 2013, 7:00 p.m. in the Duquesne Room

Jan Beatty is an award-winning poet and director of Carlow University’s Madwomen in the Attic poetry workshops.

Emily Newman
Tuesday, March 19, 2013, time and place TBA

Emily Newman is a video artist who is based between Pittsburgh, PA, and St. Petersburg, Russia. Her talk will include information about her current project, “Kruzhok Pittsburgh,” in which she leads a group of artists drawn from the Russian community in Pittsburgh and local university students. She is collaborating with Natalya “Gluklya” Pershina of St. Petersburg to create artwork about Russian pensioners and their grandchildren.

Darwin Day
Thursday, February 14, 2013, 7:00 p.m.

The Center for Women’s and Gender Studies is partnering with the Biology department to bring Dr. Marlene Zuk, Professor of Biology at the University of California Riverside, to Duquesne. Her talk will focus on her book, Sexual Selections: What We Can and Can’t Learn about Sex from Animals. There will be an informal coffee hour the following morning, February 15, for WSGS students and faculty to have an opportunity to speak further with Dr. Zuk.

Mattress Factory exhibit, “Feminist and…”

We are organizing a trip with students to see “Feminist and…” in the spring semester. The exhibit features the work of women from different age groups and diverse cultures, representing some of the different voices and issues in feminism. More details in the spring.

Eleanore Holveck Essay Award

Each spring the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies honors one WSGS undergraduate and one WSGS graduate student with the Eleanore Holveck Essay Award. All WSGS undergraduate and graduate students are invited to submit an essay that advances conversation about women’s and gender studies—winners will receive a certificate and monetary award! More details in the spring.