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## Director's Column

**Sonia Saldívar-Hull, WSI Director**

In many ways, the theme for our annual Women's History Month celebration, *Testimonios: Celebrating our Stories* reflects the mission statement of the WSI: to promote the advancement of women by expanding and sharing knowledge through the stimulation and support of interdisciplinary research, education, and public information about and for women. The 45 events we sponsored for WHM allowed us to launch our commitment to establish an interdisciplinary Women's Studies academic institution where multiple constituencies gather for intellectual exchange on issues specifically about women.

The Women's Studies Institute we are developing at UTSA is unique in multiple ways. Unlike most Women and Gender Studies programs or Women's Studies research centers across the nation, we currently function as a research center and as the home for the WGS minor.

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## UTSA Celebrates Women's History Month

**Kirsten Gardner**, Associate Director of WSI, Women's History Month Committee Chair

As I reflect on the 2004 celebration for Women's History month at UTSA, I have a whirlwind of thoughts. Primarily, I am thrilled that we offered another exciting, interdisciplinary, and diverse program for the students and community of San Antonio. It gives me great pleasure to see so many students, faculty, and staff members participate in this annual program. I also think the strength of the program reflects the potential for Women's Studies at UTSA. As countless enthusiastic student responses suggested, members throughout UTSA are eager to learn more about women and gender studies.

The program included many remarkable presentations from Ginger Purdy's enthusiastic keynote to an invigorating panel about contemporary Chicana Activism. While I wish we had space to write about every event, I want to direct attention to one notable program. In a crowded room in the university center on a Friday afternoon in March UTSA undergraduate students examined their thoughts on feminism. I looked around the room, filled with men and women from a variety of backgrounds and was amazed at the dialogue that emerged. The students on the panel, all members of the feminist group LIPS, invited everyone in the room to participate in the discussion of contemporary feminism. They created space for differences of opinion and generated discussions that asked the audience to thoughtfully consider how power operates. Their panel reminded me of how exceptional our students can be and the stimulating environment in which we work. It was wonderful to include UTSA student and faculty panels all month long and learning more about the work of our peers.

In conclusion, the Women's Studies Institute hosted over 40 presentations in March and thousands of students attended the events. Audiences ranged from 20 to 200 and many students have contacted the WSI to express their appreciation of the month's activities. Thank you to everyone who made it happen especially Carolyn Motley and the Women's History Month Committee. ✦



Chicana activism panel at UTSA featured Maria Berriozabal, Rosie Castro, and Janie Barrera.



# Celebrating Women's History Month

WSJ News 2

Women's History Month was busy on the UTSA campus! WSI hosted 45 events in March to celebrate Women's History Month. Please contact Carolyn Motley (cmotley@utsa.edu, (210) 458-6277) to get on mailing list for 2005.

## Moraga Speaks of Healing Properties of Writing

Rebecca Cross, UTSA Literature Ph.D. Student

Cherríe Moraga delivered the keynote address of the Multiethnic Literature in the United States (MELUS) Conference on March 11, 2004 which was co-sponsored by UTSA Women's Studies Institute. Attendees to the conference, as well as the general public, filled the Salon de Gala Room of the Radisson Hotel in San Antonio to listen to the feminist Chicana writer, poet, and activist speak about the "Indigena as Scribe: The (W)Rite to Remember." Initially, Moraga mixed poetry and prose to convey to her listeners the healing power of writing, especially stories related to indigenous heritage. "Myth makes story," she asserted, "Story makes medicine." The indigenous self, Moraga explained, is denied the authenticity to imagine by others telling it that self knows nothing. "It keeps us busy," she said. She continued on a different note observing that Chicano/as, however, are complicitous in their own ignorance by allowing the disappearance of indigenous peoples. Quoting another she proclaimed, "I want my village back!"

Moraga then proceeded to describe the process by which "the village" can be reclaimed. In a portion of her address that she seemed to have named "Writing against Amnesia," Moraga asked the crowd rhetorically, "How do we remain resistant to ignorance and open to the new?" Immediately, she answered: "Art!" Through art, and specifically, for Moraga, writing, Chicano/as confound attempts at "intellectual colonization," and begin constructing the authentic representation of the "tribe," which, she claims, is nothing more than "extended familia."



Writer, Cherríe Moraga, spoke at the Radisson Downtown. The event was co-sponsored by Brackenridge Lecture Series, UTSA Department of English, Classics and Philosophy, Trinity University, MELUS, and the Women's Studies Institute.

This type of cultural work establishes "metaphors of meaning" that break rules and conventions and ultimately change consciousness. "I am not free if my pueblo is not free!" Moraga fiercely asserted. "Metaphors choose us, not the other way around," she observed, then followed with another rhetorical question, "How do I respond to the loss of values, memories, etc.-, that disappear with the 'vanishing pueblo?'"

Moraga was now encouraging. "Not all is lost," she reassured, "We are a tribal people. Writing is a rite, a ceremonial practice. Each act keeps the other honest." Moraga suggested that writing, especially that firmly rooted in collective experience, in Spanish, uses the language of the vanquished in the prayer of remembering. "Through writing," observed Moraga, "ancestors DO come to visit us. We are visited by grander souls than ourselves." The process produces, in Moraga's words, "a pure thread of continuous connection." "I shall never disappear," she concluded, as long as she owns the "cultural outsiderhood," a form of collective racial memory.

Moraga presented for her listeners a model that inseparably fuses concepts of theory with praxis. While many give that combination voice, few actually make it work convincingly. Cherríe Moraga, however, speaks with such authenticity and conviction that she delivers exactly that message, irresistibly. ✦



## Women's History Month Speaker, Cate Fosl, Discusses Anne Braden and her Work in Black Power Movement

Gregg Michel, Assistant Professor of History

Historian, Cate Fosl, presented a lecture entitled, "White Woman, Black Power: Anne Braden and the Racial Justice Movement in the American South" on Friday, March 5, 2004.

"I can't imagine all the struggles she must have gone through for being a white woman fighting for social and racial justice for African Americans during the 1950's." So commented one UTSA student after Cate Fosl's presentation on Anne Braden, a veteran of five decades of civil rights activism. Based on her award-winning biography of Braden, *Subversive Southerner: Anne Braden and the Struggle for Racial Justice in the Cold War South*, Fosl captivated students and faculty alike with the story of Braden's upbringing in a "proper" Alabama family, her rejection of the segregation and white supremacy on which she was raised, and her deep involvement in civil rights causes. Although she always has shunned the spotlight, Braden is one of the unsung heroes of the civil rights movement. Branded a communist by her opponents and persecuted—and prosecuted—by state and federal law enforcement agencies, Braden and her late husband, Carl, remained steadfast in their commitment to racial equality. From her work to desegregate residential neighborhoods in their hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, to her mentoring white civil rights activists in the 1960s to her continued involvement in civil rights, environmental, and economic justice campaigns, Anne Braden has been a beacon of hope for a better future for all people in the South. Cate Fosl's presentation revealed Anne Braden's remarkable history to the UTSA community and made clear that the individual can be an agent for change. ✦

## Students Display Visual Histories in Conjunction with Women's History Month Events

Raquel Marquez, Assistant Professor of Sociology

"Latinas in the US Society" is a Sociology course that addresses Latinas' participation in the development of this country. *Las Tejanas, 300 Years of History* offers a comprehensive and gender focused background to Latina's historical presence in the Southwest, and served as a foundation to the student's visual oral history projects. The students used this historical context to examine issues of patriarchy and family dynamics, labor and employment, immigrant women and the Texas/Mexico Border, political involvement and feminist vision; issues that their oral history projects explored through family photographs. After reading *Las Tejanas 300 Years of History* in class, the students were both excited and nervous that their visual oral histories were going to be viewed by co-author Teresa Palomo Acosta. The high quality of their poster presentations was evidence of their hard work and reflected the personal pride that each of the students placed on their family photographs. ✦



Student poster displays brought important feminist issues to light.



Visiting speaker, Teresa Palomo Acosta enjoys viewing student work.



Displays allow space for *testimonio* and interaction with other students.

Posters encourage students to confront new, exciting issues.





## Women's Advocate Award Winner, Ginger Purdy

Rebecca Rodriguez, M.A. Student in Literature

Ginger Purdy, Women's History Month keynote speaker, presented a speech entitled *If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It!* Appropriately, her speech was about women and leadership in San Antonio, a subject with which Purdy is quite familiar.

Purdy is an extremely important figure in San Antonio's and Women's history. In 1980 she founded Network Power/Texas in San Antonio. In 1988 she founded the San Antonio Women's Chamber of Commerce in which she currently functions as its President Emeritus. As President Emeritus, Purdy works to promote women in business. Besides these two amazing accomplishments, Purdy is a member of several professional and civic associations, including: The International Women's Forum, a group of 3,000 women leaders with membership by invitation only; The National Women's Political Caucus; and The San Antonio 100, a group of women's leaders in which she is a charter member. Her important work has been recognized by several organizations and has, therefore, received numerous awards. In 1992 she was recognized as Woman Who Makes A Difference by the International Women's Forum. In 1984 she was nominated by the Women's Coalition for the Hall of Fame. Since 1983 she has been included in Who's Who in American Women. Purdy is also an author. Her book is entitled *Come On In, There's Room For Us All: Finding Your Place in the Women's Movement*.

Ginger Purdy describes herself as a Woman's Advocate. She dedicates herself to improving the lives of all people by serving as an advocate for women's development through public speaking, writing, consulting, and public service. For her services to the community and for her dedication to helping women in general, the Women's Studies Institute presented Ginger Purdy with the first annual Women's Advocate of the Year Award. A reception immediately followed this presentation. ✦



Virginia Grise (center), Irma Mayorga (far left) and production crew give a panza pose after the WHM Panza Monologues performance.



WSI director, Sonia Saldivar-Hull (left) with Advocate Award Winner, Ginger Purdy (center) and Sandra Welch, Vice Provost (right).

## Power to the Panza!

Rebecca Rodriguez, M.A. Student in Literature

The purpose behind *The Panza Monologues* was to politicize the panza. This solo performance piece was comprised of several Latinas' and Chicanas' testimonios, each of which portrayed the panza in a different way. "Panza," as used in this performance piece, is a word that stands for many things. Literally, "panza" stands for the belly area and/or the womb. These monologues politicized the panza by linking it to several themes and ideas: food, hunger, diabetes, childbirth, domestic violence, religion, class, sexuality, and gender. With its wide array of topics and perspectives, this performance piece served to represent the variety of experiences of Latinas and/or Chicanas.

Performed by Virginia Grise, directed by Irma Mayorga, and compiled by both, *The Panza Monologues* was a touching performance that had the audience laughing during its many humorous moments and left the audience quiet and pensive during those moments when it dealt with the more taboo subjects that concern all Latina/os and Chicana/os. Besides reading and performing these monologues, Grise performed a dance routine, choreographed by Rosie Torres, to the currently popular "Milkshake" song. A video, designed by H. Esperanza Garza, was incorporated into one of the performance pieces. Several songs, put together by Marissa Ramirez, played throughout the entire performance, each having important significance to each performance piece. An altar of carefully chosen props served the same purpose.

The audience, which consisted of mostly young Chicanas, left the performance excited about having their experiences documented and performed in *The Panza Monologues*. ✦



## UTSA Women's Resource Center Encourages University Community to "Dance Away their Depression!"

Yolanda Jimenez, Program Coordinator, Women's Resource Center

The Women's Resource Center mission is to provide the campus with relevant resources, services, and knowledge of women and gender related issues so that all members of the campus community will represent the University of Texas at San Antonio as individuals of character, competence, integrity, tolerance, and vision, committed to a life of service and leadership, capable of making sound decisions, and prepared to function successfully within our ever changing world.

The primary function of the Women's Resource Center is to serve as a supplement and addition to existing Student Services Offices on campus by offering resources and psycho-education to the students, staff, and faculty on gender-related issues. The staff of the Women's Resource Center continues to spread awareness of their helpful growing establishment by distributing pamphlets at each event.

Latin dance classes were offered twice in the month of March in celebration of Women's History Month. For this event, Jorge Alonso Perez from *Dance Therapy - Dance Your Depression Away* was invited to educate us about Latin dances. Dance Therapy has evolved from his passion for Latin dance and a long held dream to help improve the quality of life for individuals and families of his community. Jorge believes that almost everyone, at some time in their life, suffers the isolation and loneliness of depression, so he tries to reach the community with Dance Therapy. He brings people together who come not only to dance, but reach out and touch each other's spirit as well. Jorge Alonso Perez has been teaching Dance Therapy classes in community for a year a half for free. Mr. Perez brings his expertise and time to the *barrio* connecting the people to the Latin dance.

While learning and sharing the cultural richness of dance and music- the medium of dance itself allows everyone to be a teacher and a student at the same time - in an open, non-judgmental atmosphere of fun and growth. The healing effects of music and movement strengthens and energizes our physical well being, while sharing our hope and our experience rebuilds our spiritual strength and confidence, and rekindles feelings of caring and belonging - to the community, and to the circle of life.

The event was a huge success. On March 5, twenty-nine students, faculty, staff and community attended. On March 25, thirty-four participated. This event allowed students and the community to interact with faculty and staff at a different level. We provided needs assessment surveys at each of these events to determine the needs of students, faculty and staff. The participants described the activity to be strongly helpful and looked forward to attending again.

Jennifer Alvizo, a Graduate Student and Graduate Assistant at UTSA describes walking into the class feeling a little uncomfortable dancing with strangers. However, the icebreaker allowed her to feel more comfortable. She enjoyed meeting new people and felt the instructor was friendly and easy to understand. She enjoyed learning new steps and described the experience as a nice vacation from the hassle and baffle of school and work.

Terry Castillo, staff from UTSA quoted, "The Dance Therapy event was GREAT. I was able to associate and converse with complete strangers and felt so comfortable with them as if I knew them for some while now. The instructor was extraordinary and extremely straightforward. I most of all enjoyed the 'Circle of LOVE,' in which a guest speaker so kindly touched our hearts with words of encouragement. I can't wait for another session!"

Hector Hernandez, a participant from the community, attended the event with his nephew and daughter. He advised, "Not only were the classes exciting but Mr. Perez also teaches manners and etiquette, in a dance hall setting, this in turn teaches the young one ones character that might eventually save them from taking a wrong turn later in life."

The Dance Therapy class not only educated the participants but allowed them to take a break from every day monotonous stressors. The staff of the WRC looks forward with great anticipation to continue to be of further assistance to the UTSA community. ✦







## UTSA Students Attend March to Save Women's Lives in Washington D.C.

Jasmine Collier, UTSA LIPS

The story is uncomfortably similar to any cut-n-paste Hollywood feel-good movie. Take an unlikely band of brash young people, set them at an unlikely and farfetched goal, and watch the escapades, the misunderstandings, the setbacks bring them together to accomplish their goal. This band of brash young people is UTSA's feminist group, the "Ladies" Incensed by a Patriarchal Society (LIPS). The goal: get all interested members to Washington, D.C. to the March to Save Women's Lives (formerly the March for Choice) on April 25.

Back in September, the possibility of attending was first brought up by one of our members. We all took a long, honest look at ourselves and weighed the possibilities of us being able to raise enough money to rent a van, book a hotel room, and not run out of gas somewhere on the East Coast. Then we had a good laugh and changed the subject. It wasn't until we had a club fundraiser that was wildly and unexpectedly successful that we returned to the idea and decided it was a possibility.

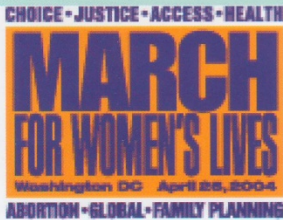
We set out with a determination reserved for young feminist students and pitbulls. We set up craft nights where we stitched purses and made record bowls and other knickknacks to sell at the monthly downtown art festival, First Friday. Despite decent turnouts, it quickly grew apparent that we needed something with a little bit more oomph.

We talked a friend into allowing us to host two fundraising parties, or Disco Politicos, as we call them, at her bar. We are eternally grateful to the Bermuda Triangle for allowing us our shenanigans and helping us out so much. We held silent auctions at both parties, our second one boasted a drag show featuring drag queens who drove in from all over the state to help us out in our quest.

Despite our efforts, we were a little short of our goal. Hitching up our pants, we took on an ambitious Planned Parenthood job, involving detailed county maps and a wily Excel program, which accomplished two things: 1) we raised more money, and 2) we got some serious bragging rights. We like to think that we impressed the Planned Parenthood with our scrappiness because they pointed us in the direction of a scholarship available to Planned Parenthood volunteers that awarded money to young women trying to attend the March. We managed to get two applications in under the deadline and came away with two awards for two of our members!

The scholarships brought us to our goal-a van to rent, a hotel to stay in, gas to get there and back, and a little extra to pay for a meal. It seems so hard to believe-all the hard work, all of the planning, all of the craziness-and we're done. This group that has become more like a band of sisters than a club of members, this group has managed to set a pretty lofty goal and achieved it, with incredibly generous help from our community. We're grateful and proud of the combined effort from everyone involved to make sure that San Antonio is represented at the March to Save Women's Lives in D.C. There is no way that our voices won't be heard! ✦

### More information...



For more information  
[www.marchforwomen.org](http://www.marchforwomen.org)

Over a million women and men from across the United States and dozens of other countries marched on April 26, 2004 in the largest women's rights protest in United States history. They were seeking to influence US policy on abortion ahead of the November 2 presidential vote.

Older women in their Sunday best mingled with college students in T-shirts in a massive demonstration sparked largely by what they see as President George W. Bush's efforts to chip away at a women's right to an abortion.

Organizers, estimating participation at 1.2 million, declared that this protest was larger than the 750,000 who attended the last abortion rights demonstration in 1992. The protestors and organizers said they were calling for medically sound sex education, birth control, and better health care for women worldwide. ✦



## WSI 2004-2005 Graduate and Undergraduate Student Scholarships Announced

WSI News 7

Rebecca Rodriguez, UTSA M.A. Student in Literature

The Women's Studies Institute is pleased to announce the six UTSA students who will be awarded \$500 for the 2004-2005 school year. Scholarship criteria was very specific. For undergraduates, eligible candidates must be pursuing a Minor in Women and Gender Studies, have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, with at least 60 semester hours or pursuing advanced courses in Women and Gender Studies, and enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester. Candidates submitted a 300-500 word essay stating how they plan to contribute to women's issues in their chosen profession. The criteria for graduate students required applicants to have taken at least 15 semester hours with 3.0 grade point average or higher. Applicants submitted a major paper related to women's studies, or a shorter paper or poster presented at a conference on a topic related to women's studies and women's lives. The deadline for this scholarship was March 12, 2004.

The following six scholarship winners were chosen for outstanding academic contributions to the field of Women's Studies at UTSA.

Graduate student recipients:

- Holly Hansen-Thomas, Doctoral Candidate in Culture, Literacy, and Language (part of Bicultural Bilingual Studies), submitted an abbreviated dissertation proposal entitled "Learning to use math discourse in a reform-based middle school classroom: How Latina/o Els become socialized into the math community of practice."
- Carolee C. Moore, Graduate student in Art and Art History, submitted a paper entitled "Reclaiming the Female Nude: Women Artists Who Portray Themselves."
- Patricia Trujillo, Doctoral student in English, Classics and Philosophy in the college of Liberal and Fine Arts, submitted a paper entitled "*La Ultima Vez, Yo Prometo*: Theorizing Cycles of Violence in Helena Maria Viramontes' *The Moths*."

Undergraduate student recipients (All of these undergraduates are minoring in Women and Gender Studies).

- Elizabeth P. Lowder, is pursuing her degree in Political Science.
- Susan P. Marks is pursuing her degree in Psychology.
- Jacqueline D. Peery is pursuing her degree in Health with a concentration in Community Health.

The award ceremony for these scholarship winners will be held in September. The ceremony will be a part of the Women's Studies Institute's reception in recognition of new female UTSA faculty. ✦

### Director's Column continued from page 1...

Sonia Saldivar-Hull, WSI Director

In the 16 months since the establishment of WSI, we have sought grant opportunities and have written proposals to fund the establishment of a major track and MA program in Women's Studies. While traditionally, program development is accomplished through the relatively unrewarded service component of faculty duties, my hope was to develop the major track during a funded faculty curriculum development seminar. The reality of acquiring external funding for curriculum development in WS, however, is much more daunting than I initially imagined. In the spirit of the long history of women's triumphs in the face of struggle, we will nonetheless proceed with the project.

This past year, Associate Director Kirsten Gardner and I crafted a document that will serve as the blueprint for the major track proposal that the Women's Studies Advisory Committee (WSAC) will write. Ultimately, the WSAC will author three proposals: a B.A. major, an M.A. certificate, and an M.A. degree. In order to ensure the success of all three proposals, we designed a workshop for the WSAC curriculum committee that will be charged with writing the proposals. UTSA is one of the top five Hispanic-serving institutions in the US—and we at WSI are committed to establishing a program that recognizes our location in South Texas. By developing a major track in Women's Studies, we seek to strengthen the curriculum at UTSA, improve student enrollment and retention rates among the campus' large population of minority and nontraditional students, and nurture leadership among female students. We also seek to forge working relationships with the larger San Antonio community, particularly on issues relating to the development of female leadership in the 21st Century. The WSI will explore collaborative partnerships with community organizations to disseminate information and foster dialogue on issues of concern to working class women. We foresee including a service learning component in the B.A. proposal, offering students a chance to work with women's organizations throughout the community of South Texas.

Once we complete these proposals, each proposal will be forwarded to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for final review and approval by the UT system. The proposals will emphasize the expertise of faculty already employed at UTSA who are willing and eager to contribute to this program, and students' demands for UTSA to offer more courses in Women's Studies. Presently no UT system schools offer a major in Women's Studies—UTSA will be a model for institutional transformation that capitalizes on existing sources to diversify course offerings and fields of study.

We will continue to sponsor lectures and conferences, host WHM celebrations, and develop a research agenda that provides an intellectual and social climate for faculty, graduate and undergraduate researchers and scholars in Women's Studies that is likely to expand substantially in years to come. ✦



# Announcements

Women's Studies Institute Reception  
honoring  
New Women Faculty,  
2004-2005 WSI Scholarship Recipients,  
and  
2004 American Association of University Women  
Conference for  
College Women Student Leaders  
September 9, 2004  
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Mesquite Room  
UTSA University Center

Mark your  
calendars!



## WSI Making Community Connections

San Antonio Women's Chamber of Commerce Gala Celebration 2004



**Interested in earning a minor in Women and Gender Studies?**

♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

Sign up for the foundational course, WGS 2013, and visit your advisor.

Drop by WSI for additional information!

cmotley@utsa.edu (210) 458-6277

Top left, Debbie Perez, SAWCC Board Member, listens to keynote.  
Middle left, WSI's Sonia Saldivar-Hull, SAWCC Gala Keynote Speaker, and Kirsten Gardner.  
Bottom left, Carolyn Motley, SAWCC Board Member and WSI Staff Member, and husband, Darryl.

Top: Sonia Saldivar-Hull with Dean Blandina Cardenas and Dr. Belinda Flores.  
Bottom: Denise Powers, Chair of SAWCC, and husband, Ben, enjoy the wonderful dinner!



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