From the editor...

Welcome to the premiere edition of LUMINARIA. Formerly known as CYNOSURE, LUMINARIA serves to guide and inform women during their time at The University of Texas at Austin. This issue focuses on some of the campus resources available for women, MTF transgender students, and others interested in women’s and MTF issues on campus, locally, and worldwide.

LUMINARIA is produced by the staff and students within the Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC), which is part of a campus-wide network of resources for undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in exploring and thinking about issues related to gender and sexuality. Alongside services and education offered by the University Health Center, campus libraries and archives, the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies, the Center for Counseling and Mental Health, and other offices, the GSC offers several advocacy, education, and outreach programs. The Feminist Action Project, mentor programs for LGBTQ and women students, walk-in advising, annual conferences related to gender and sexuality, and a lending library offer a variety of intellectual, social, and cultural resources. This issue also highlights additional campus programs and resources that complement the GSC’s work.

Women in Engineering Program

Nicole Torres, Chemical Engineering, 3rd Year

The Women in Engineering Program (WEP) has three main goals: educate young females about what engineering really is, recruit females into the engineering program here at UT, and, finally, give them the tools and support they need to graduate and have a successful engineering career.

My first interaction with WEP was the summer before my senior year of high school. Like many of my peers at the time, the overwhelming responsibility of college applications and choosing a major that determined my career was the topic of almost every conversation with my parents. Luckily, I was invited to a Women in Engineering at UT (WE@UT) camp hosted by WEP, in coordination with the Honors Colloquium, which gave me insight into the engineering program and student life at UT. Even though I had grown up with an engineering father, I never really understood what it meant when I told people, “My dad is an engineer.” The WE@UT camp introduced me to all the different types of engineering and what cool careers are associated with it; the camp also let me get to know current female UT engineering students, which gave me even more understanding as to how amazing the UT engineering program really is. Without the WE@UT camp, I probably would not have considered engineering, let alone UT engineering.

Once at UT, I became even more involved with WEP because I wanted to utilize all the cool opportunities that they had talked about at the camp. First and foremost, I joined a WEP First-year Interest Group (FIG) for chemical engineers called The Rockin’ Pipettes. The FIG allowed me to connect with other female chemical engineers to build study groups, friendships, and connections to last throughout my college career and beyond. During my first year, I also attended various info sessions put on by the WEP office that gave me more information on topics like study abroad and scholarships. I participated in volunteer opportunities like Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day, where over 1500 first through eighth grade girls come to campus and, through hands-on activities, learn what an engineer is and how cool engineering can be. I also attended the WEP Evening with Industry Banquet, which allowed time for me to network with professional engineers in a smaller setting and learn about the many different careers available to me as an engineer.

By the end of my first year, I knew I wanted to give back to the organization that gave me so much, so I applied to be a Peer Assistance Leader (PAL) to mentor a first year female engineering student and served as a FIG mentor for a WEP FIG called Fabulous Intelligent Gals for all
different engineering majors. I also started working in the WEP office during the week to further my involvement in WEP activities. Now, I am in my third year at UT and I continue to be a PAL and work in the WEP office. I also take leadership roles when leading various recruiting sessions as well as many different volunteering opportunities. I know that WEP has played a key role in my success as an engineer so far and I will continue to give back so that I may help other female engineering students succeed in a discipline that is only 22% female.

WEP Web site:  www.engr.utexas.edu/wep/

“A Revolutionary Notion”
Women’s Human Rights Education
Kristen Hogan, Project Director, Embrey Women’s Human Rights Initiative

This fall has been the first semester of the Embrey Women’s Human Rights Initiative (EWHRI), a Center for Women’s and Gender Studies program that supports the role of education in human rights advocacy. The EWHRI has two goals: to raise awareness about women’s human rights and to support women’s human rights education. This pairing invites a critical reading of human rights discourse as well as advocacy.

In the face of proposed disproportional college budget cuts to identity studies centers, recognizing education as human rights work offers a tool for an appropriate evaluation of our work in the identity studies centers. The work of the centers has created practices of critical analysis to name and resist the exclusion of women, people of color, and queer people (all interconnected communities) from educational frameworks. Feminist Indigenous Studies scholar Andrea Smith reminds readers that supporting human rights requires a new economics of accountability within the United States. She writes of connections between gender violence and violence against indigenous peoples, “Adequate funding for indigenous-controlled programs and services is not a privilege for states to curtail in times of economic crises. Rather, as international human rights law dictates, states are mandated to address the continuing effects of human rights violations.”

In this time of economic crisis, human rights requires the sustenance of the centers. In support of this work, the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies (CWGS) has begun a new partnership with the Embrey Family Foundation, a partnership that describes the work of all identity studies centers on campus as advocates for our students’ and communities’ economic, social, and cultural human rights.

Building education for women’s human rights includes explaining both why we need the term “women’s human rights” and what issues that term encompasses. Women’s human rights advocates Charlotte Bunch and Samantha Frost explain the importance of naming: “women’s human rights’ is a revolutionary notion. This radical reclamation of humanity and the corollary insistence that women’s rights are human rights have profound transformative potential” (2000). For EWHRI projects, a critical reading of human rights discourse means resisting a single definition of “women” and examining the context of international human rights instruments that obscure the human rights of marginalized communities.

EWHRI supports women’s human rights strategies as resistance to oppressions along narrative borders of ability, class, ethnicity, gender, indigeneity, nationality, and sexuality. We prioritize awareness of the local context by recognizing women’s human rights advocacy on campus and in local organizations. We recognize that human rights violations and advocacy projects happen right here in Austin and nearby throughout Texas and the U.S. The Initiative operates in collaboration with ongoing human rights projects on campus, including the Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice and the UT Libraries’ Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI).

As part of raising awareness about women’s human rights, EWHRI has developed a new discussion forum, created finding aids for campus and community resources, and is planning an international conference for 2012. With the Rapoport Center we created the new CWGS/Rapoport Center Research Cluster on Women, Gender, and Human Rights.

This discussion forum for faculty and students creates a space to share teaching strategies, workshop research projects, build networks, and connect with speakers.
Another project has been the online CWGS Guide to Research and Teaching for Women’s Human Rights, which is an organized list of CWGS affiliate faculty who research and teach women’s human rights issues. This tool helps students plan their coursework and faculty build connections. We are also generating an online list of community organizations for student internships and faculty connections for course assignments. This list, which premieres in Spring 2011, will build on other resources available on campus.

Our faculty continue these conversations by building new frameworks for existing courses, as well as in new courses. This semester we offered our first undergraduate core course with a framework in women’s human rights. We are currently reviewing applications from faculty for research grants to develop interdisciplinary, team-taught Signature Courses, which are first-year critical reading courses, on women’s human rights issues including human trafficking and media representations. Students may enroll in these courses starting next fall.

The Initiative is also in the early stages of planning for a fall 2012 Austin-based international conference on women, gender, and human rights organizing in the Americas.

Join in this work by participating in the Research Cluster, proposing new courses, taking classes with our faculty, and contributing to and attending the fall 2012 international conference.

Links:

Rapoport Center:  www.rapoportcenter.org
HRDI:  www.lib.utexas.edu/hrdi/
CWGS/Rapoport Center Research Cluster on Women, Gender, & Human Rights:  www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/cwgs/research-clusters/WGHR.php

References:


Male-to-female (MTF) Transgender Resources at the UT Libraries

There are lots of great resources on campus for those interested in MTF topics, whether you are writing a paper for a class or just interested in some personal reading. In addition to the GSC’s library, the UT Libraries also holds a wealth of MTF material. While most of these resources are titled more generally to the whole transgender community, many of them have chapter level coverage of MTF topics. In addition to searching the library catalog with keywords, it is also beneficial to browse the collection online using subject headings. This can be accomplished by selecting “subject heading” from the menu in the catalog and searching one of these official Library of Congress subject terms:

- Transgender people
- Transgenderism
- Transgender youth
- Gender identity

UT Library Catalog:  http://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/

Here is a selected list of UT Libraries items that have been very popular:

Trans People in Love
Editors: Tracie O’Keefe and Katrina Fox
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.7 T736 2008 and Ebook

Sandra L. Samons, When the Opposite Sex Isn't: Sexual Orientation in Male-to-Female Transgender People.
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 S26 2009

Laurie J. Shrage, You’ve Changed: Sex Reassignment and Personal Identity.
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 Y68 2009

Lori B. Girshick, Transgender Voices: Beyond Women and Men.
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.7 G57 2008

Susan Stryker, Transgender History.
Berkeley, CA: Seal Press
Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2008.
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 S77 2008

Listings continued next page.
Patricia Gherovici, *Please Select Your Gender: From the Invention of Hysteria to the Democratizing of Transgenderism.*
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 G43 2010

David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category.*
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.7 V35 2007

John Phillips, *Transgender on Screen.*
PCL Stacks  PN 1995.9 T69 P35 2006

*Transgender Rights.*
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 T716 2006

PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 E55 2006 and Ebook

Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, *The Transgender Studies Reader.*
PCL Catalog - Ebook

*U PEOPLE: LGBT Rockumentary* (video recording)
Directors: Hanifah Walidah and Olive Demetrius
CreateSpace, 2008, 76 minutes
Fine Arts Library
(Ask for DVD 7823 at Fine Arts Circulation Desk)

Virginia Prince: *Pioneer of Transgendering.*
Editors: Richard Ekins and Dave King
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 P56 2005

PCL Stacks  HQ 77.8 T43 A3 2008

PCL Stacks  HQ 77.95 U6 B43 2007

Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives.*
PCL Stacks  HQ 75.5 H335 2005

*Trans/forming Feminisms: Transfeminist Voices Speak Out.*
Editor: Krista Scott-Dixon
PCL Stacks  HQ 77.9 T715 2006

**NOTE:** These titles are showing very high circulation rates, so submitting a recall request may be required. If there are additional materials you would like the UT Libraries to acquire on this or any gender studies topic, please let me know.

**Lindsey Schell,**
*English Literature and Women's Studies Librarian*
schell@mail.utexas.edu.

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**Upcoming Events - FALL 2011**

- **Saturday, August 20**
  GSC Leadership Retreat, SAC (Room 2.120), 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

- **Thursday, September 1**
  Mentor Program Training and Reception,
  GSC and SAC (Rooms 3.116 and 3.106), 6 p.m.–8 p.m.

- **Friday, September 2**
  Queer Students Alliance’s Welcome Carnival,
  Recreational Sports Center Gym, Time–TBA

- **Wednesday, September 7**
  Orientation meeting/event for student orgs,
  GSC, 5–6 p.m.

- **Thursday, September 15**
  Women's Programming Alliance presents *Laying It On the Line: Asian American Women, Mental Health and Sexuality* (a workshop/discussion), SAC 2.120, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
  Free Pizza!

- **Wednesday, September 21**
  GSC Open House and Library Naming Ceremony,
  SAC 2.112, 6 p.m.

- **Thursday, September 22**
  Open Training on Bisexuality, SAC 2.120, Noon–2 p.m.

- **Thursday, September 29**
  GSC Game Night, SAC 2.112, 6 p.m.
• Week of October 10–14
Queer Students Alliance’s Coming Out Week. Details at:
http://blogs.utexas.edu/queerstudentsalliance/

• Wednesday, October 12
Open Ally Training, SAC 2.120, 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

• Thursday, October 13
Opening reception for Fearless, and talk by artist Jeff Sheng,
Time and Location–TBA

• Friday, Saturday, October 14–15
QSA and GSC present the Queer Texas Conference (QTC),
School of Social Work. Details at:
http://blogs.utexas.edu/queerstudentsalliance/

• Wednesday, October 19
Love Your Body Day Celebration: Make a YAY Scale,
GSC, SAC 2.112, 6 p.m.

• Thursday, October 20
Screening of Red Without Blue co-presented with VAC,
The Arcade of the Visual Art Center, Noon–1:30 p.m.

• Thursday, October 27
National Young Women’s Day of Action, Speaker: Maria Poblet,
Executive Director of Causa Justa | Just Cause, SAC Ballroom
(North Side), Noon–2 p.m.

• Thursday, November 3
Mentor Program Social: Bowling Night, Texas Union, 5–7 p.m.

• Wednesday, November 9
Open Transgender Training, SAC 2.120, Noon–1:30 p.m

• Thursday, November 10
Living With Pride: Coming Out for the Holidays,
SAC 3.112, 6–7:30 p.m.

• Thursday, November 17
GSC Speaker Series: Eli Clare, SAC Ballroom (North Side),
6–8 p.m. Co-sponsored with Services for Students with
Disabilities and the Division of Housing and Food Services

• Friday, November 18
Gender Performance Workshop, SAC 3.116, 6–8 p.m.

LUMINARIA is produced by the staff and students within the Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC), a part of Student Diversity Initiatives within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at The University of Texas at Austin.

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