

~~the colgate center for  
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# NEWSLETTER

## The Brown Bag Series

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Another year, another semester filled with interesting topics as delivered by the Center for Women's Studies brown bag series. This semester saw a steady flow of audience members enter on Tuesday to hear about many issues surrounding gender and other areas of identity as they helped themselves to a Curtain Call lunch. And, while March for us was filled with topics of religion, these four months have generated a diverse menu of weekly conversation to the Colgate community – everything from mediative rhetoric to the recent political focus on Planned Parenthood. For all the changes in store for the Center this upcoming Fall, the brown bag series will undoubtedly remain available for the Colgate community and will stay in the business of providing good food and great conversation throughout the academic year.

<b>We May Have All Come on Different Ships, but We're in the Same Boat Now</b>	<b>1/18/11</b>
Panel of Faculty & Staff Co-sponsored w/ ALST	
<b>Feminisms across the Life Course</b>	<b>1/25/11</b>
Carol Bergen, Monica Costa, & Dr. Susan Marafino	
<b>Birth Control Matters: A Discussion with Our Local Planned Parenthood Affiliate</b>	<b>2/1/11</b>
Beth LeGere, Director of Public Affairs - Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson	
<b>An Up Close View of the Ci</b>	

## Comes to Hamilton Theater

On January 26 the highly anticipated Tyler Perry film hit the big screen at Hamilton Theater. The movie, sponsored by ALST, WMST, and the ALANA Cultural Center, brought out a huge crowd of the Colgate and Hamilton community. The story focuses on the lives of 8 black women living in New York. Each woman has her own story, and the audience is taken on a journey through the lives of the women and, more importantly, has a first class seat to an in-depth look at the lives of black women in America. The next day a brown bag was held in the Center for Women's Studies to discuss the film and its impact. Many areas were explored, including family, employment, health, socioeconomic status, and much more, and the dialogue was centered on how all these factors play into the lives of black women in America. The event was a huge success and succeeded in its goal in bringing more awareness about communities of color to the Colgate and Hamilton communities.

*Professor Landon Reid leads a discussion about the choreopoem and the film adaptation.*

## Creating Change

In early February I and three other Colgate students departed the frigid cold and blinding snow of Upstate New York for the frigid cold of Minneapolis, MN. Seeing as I was attending a conference, however, there was not much time spent in the freezing weather. So, I spent the week in the heat of discussion, surrounded by passionate queer activists from around the country and around the world. Creating Change is a conference put on annually by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and it attracts thousands of folks to discuss, assess, and celebrate the queer rights movement. And, the topics there are fairly diverse (it took me a good two hours to flip through the thickly detailed program book and work out a schedule of sessions for the week). Some of my personal highlights from that week are "Uptight Gays and Out of Control Queers," "Doing Justice: Polyamory/Nonmonogamy in the LGBTQ Movement," and "White Weddings or Whitewashing: Homonormativity and the Argument Against Equality." Being part of the Creating Change Conference was a very different atmosphere than what I experience at Colgate. I mean, how often do folks make sure to ask for your PGP (preferred gender pronoun) on campus? Needless to say, it was a bit difficult to get back into the groove of Colgate once I returned. And, I'll admit, there was quite a bit of reluctance to leave such a liberating space at all. Everyone in our group half-jokingly complained about having to return to "straight world." But, being in Minneapolis did give me some idea to what an inclusive and educated space might look like. More so than the confidence and the enthusiastic engagement that I often found with those I interacted with at the conference, there was always an effort to speak from personal experience in order to avoid generalizations; and when assumptions or privileges were called out,

there was an ownership of being in the wrong. "Straight world" doesn't really have that type of mentality. Heck, it's oftentimes hostile to the idea of inclusivity or having to be conscious of the feelings and experiences of others (why else would there be so much groaning about having to be PC?). My aspiration after this experience after being in a starkly different environment is to bring some of those ideas into "straight world" (i.e. Colgate). Maybe starting with this project, we can really start to create change in the real world.



*After 5 days in Minneapolis, MN, the group of 4 students and 2 staff members leaves exhausted but happy from a fabulous conference.*

## Sheryl Swoopes

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Sheryl Swoopes has always been a groundbreaker. From her role as the first woman ever to be drafted into the WNBA to her ongoing advocacy in the LGBTQ community, Swoopes leaves behind a blazing legacy wherever she goes. The Colgate community was treated to a fantastic lecture by Swoopes on the evening of February 3 in Love Auditorium. As the best-selling author of the memoir *Sheryl Swoopes*, Swoopes candidly discussed her upbringing, her ascent into fame as a basketball superstar, and the challenges she faced when she came out as a lesbian, a decision which profoundly affected her career and public image.

The native Texan and current basketball coach also touched upon themes of hope and optimism, explaining that every day she wakes up and asks, "How can I make my life better, and how can I make the lives of others better?" The event, sponsored by a host of groups including the ALANA Cultural Center, the Dean of the Faculty, and WMST, among other groups, was attended by a large crowd of over 100 individuals, who left the talk inspired by Swoopes' story and wisdom.

## Liz Funk

Pan-Hellenic Council and Women's Studies co-sponsored published author Liz Funk for both a brown bag discussion and a lecture. Funk spoke to a group of young women about the pressures of growing up in a society where overachieving is a norm. The girls who play varsity sports, are active in multiple clubs, and manage to maintain a 4.0 GPA are everywhere. Funk discussed her research with young women across the United States who felt similar pressures to "keep up" in a society that demands perfection, the findings of which are published in her book *Overachievers*. She made several key points about the hype surrounding fashion and body image, relationships, and the differences in personality that certain women adopt in different situations.

One of her most poignant and interesting examples was that of the well-rounded, female, college student who is determined to succeed after graduation. During the day, the student believes that men are attracted to smart and strong-minded women. However, within the social scene on campus, she adopts a ditzy demeanor who drinks too much and is only interested in the hook-up culture. Funk is puzzled as to why young women feel the need to change so much in the course of one day, suggesting that they assume the role that they believe is expected from them.

Funk made the strong point that women are empowered with vast opportunities but are also held to nearly unattainable expectations and standards. In a culture where women define themselves by what they look like, their GPA, and the activities in which they are involved, the strive for perfection is common. Funk encouraged her audience to embrace this ambitious drive, while still maintain-

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**Not Just a Game**

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**Tim Wise**



## Planned Parenthood Rally

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### Take Back the Night

Marching refers to organized, uniform, steady, and rhythmic walking forward. A speak out is a gathering where people relate their experiences or opinions about a specified topic or concern. Take Back the Night March and Speak Out is the annual event when members of the Colgate community march around campus declaring that we will not tolerate any form of sexual abuse or sexual violence. We march and chant from the quad to Broad Street. It is loud; it forces people to pay attention to us, and, sometimes, it even makes people feel uncomfortable. In our society, there are "taboo topics" that we try to avoid. Unfortunately, domestic violence and sexual assault are some of them. However, just because we do not talk about these issues does not mean they are nonexistent. Just because people are not reporting these crimes does not mean that rape or sexual assault are not problems at Colgate. In a society where we tend to ignore things that challenge our comfortable world, Take Back the Night is a reminder that everything is not perfect in the world or here at Colgate. Take Back the Night is actually a challenge of that false assumption and a call to action as well. We are loud because we want everyone in the vicinity to hear us. We walk around

## QueerFest: Celebrating All Identities

In March Colgate celebrated *QueerFest*, formerly known as Big Gay Weekend. It is an event meant to raise awareness and education around topics of gender and sexuality. The weekend celebrated and enlightened participants by providing educational workshops, speakers, and social events. The keynote address, given by renowned theologian Reverend Irene Monroe of Harvard Divinity School, stressed the importance of recognizing the way oppression of our identities affects our scope of the world. She shared her personal journey to understand the intersections of her race, ethnicity, sexuality, and social capital in order to create strong relationships. The weekend's workshops included conversations about current social and political issues, including California's Proposition 8, the politics of language, and drag performance culture.

Two of Colgate's own professors, Kenneth Valente and Casey Sprock '76, led workshop discussions connecting queer-community issues to Colgate specific action steps. Rev. Monroe also helped Colgate students create an action plan to better support LGBTQ Greek students, to communicate issues of bias or exclusion to administrative decision-makers, and to become involved with nationally recognized rights organizations. The Seattle-based grassroots organization Put This on the Map showcased their documentary about increasing the visibility of queer youth. Their film and education tour is an example of a mobilization effort for young people and adults to share stories and speak frankly about the oppression and homophobia that perpetuate stigma for LGBTQ folks and give rise to bullying. Ending the long list of events was the annual Drag Ball, featuring celebrity drag queen Pandora Boxx and 9 student drag performances. These amateur performances energized the audience and became the highlight of the weekend's events!

The events were extremely informative and well attended by Colgate students, staff, faculty, and visitors from other local college campuses. To see the Colgate community come together was phenomenal - openly discussing issues of gender and sexuality keeps relevant issues at the forefront of our understanding and allows us to be active participants in making positive change. Support for *QueerFest* and other LGBTQ themed events on campus proves that students are interested in making an impact to support the rights and equality of LGBTQ individuals.



*Reverend Irene Monroe, the keynote speaker, discusses the idea of a hierarchy of oppression.*

### Spring 2011 WMST Courses

<b>CLAS 232</b>	Sexuality and Gender - Classical	<b>POSC 217</b>	Identity Politics
<b>CORE 144</b>	The Psychology of Oppression	<b>RELG 253</b>	Sex, Love, and God: Religion and Queer Studies
<b>ECON 234</b>	Gender in the Economy	<b>SOAN 369</b>	Women, Health, and Medicine
<b>EDUC 303</b>	Gender & Development	<b>SPAN 226</b>	Latin American Women Writers
<b>ENGL 208</b>	Introduction to Literary Study: Sex and the Global City	<b>WMST 202</b>	Women's Lives: An Introduction to Women's Studies
<b>ENGL 433</b>	West Indian Literature	<b>WMST 302</b>	Women's Lives in Biography and Autobiography
<b>ENGL 442</b>	Virginia Woolf & E.M. Forster	<b>WMST 490</b>	Feminisms: Personal, Local, and Global Perspectives
<b>GEOG 321</b>	Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change	<b>WRIT 242</b>	Stand and Speak: Feminist Rhetorics and Social Change
<b>LGBT 303</b>	Speaking Its Name: Gay and Lesbian Identities since the 19th Century (CORE 303)		



## Senior Profile: Casey Schmidt

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It is a tradition for the Women's Studies Newsletter to feature its graduating senior interns; and while we at the Center for Women's Studies don't do things simply for tradition's sake, we like to honor those people who have served the Center well. This year we have one graduating intern - Casey Schmidt. We asked her a few questions about her experience at Colgate and at the Center. Thanks for everything, Casey!

Major: Women's Studies

Extracurricular activities: Outdoor Ed.

Years as an intern: 1.5

What was your favorite course?

My favorite course... wow, that's hard... probably with Professor Kay Johnston.

Where is your Colgate hideout spot?

It used to be up on the Ski Hill: that alcove with the bench that looks out West. Now, my hideout spot would probably have to be the SAP (the Saperstein Jewish Center); I go and distract my friend who works there and occasionally take naps on the couches (those couches are impossible to fall asleep on!).

What is one thing you would change at Colgate?

I was just talking about the things I wish I could give/help change at Colgate with my advisor. One of the ones that's been on my mind a lot in the past year or two is a kind of pre-orientation and continuing support program for students who don't belong to the dominant or majority culture of Colgate, especially students of a lower socio-economic status. There are a lot of kids who don't necessarily qualify for the OUS program but who—I think—could really benefit from having some kind of support network and safe community space set up for them on campus. I was definitely one of those kids who almost didn't make it past my first year, and, now, I've come to really appreciate my experience here. But, it could have been easier, and I would like to see it made easier for others who feel the same way I did: like I didn't belong here. If I ever got the opportunity, I would love to set up a program that addressed these concerns at Colgate.

If the Center for Women's Studies were to add a room, what would you want?

A napping room! Dim lights, white noise, some mattresses, and curtains to draw around you (that's definitely a selfish wish and largely influenced by my desire to find places to nap up the hill). Or, I could dig a sun room with lots of plants (probably hard to manage in a basement, though).

What is your most embarrassing moment at the Center for Women's Studies?

I had recently sent out an email to my fellow interns at the Center, and I had used the word "guys" to address them. Then, right after a (male) student I perhaps maybe liked walked out of the Center, Heather looked at me and said "Guys?! Guys, Casey? Really?" And, I responded, "I'm to like guys, Heather!" She, of course, was not talking

## The Next WMST Program Assistant

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Thank you for two wonderful years. Now, here's a little background about our new program assistant. Please welcome Kimmie Garner.

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### The Center for Women's Studies Staff

**Director:**

Ulla Grapard,  
Associate Professor of Economics and Women's Studies

**Program Assistant:**

Heather D. Dockstader '04

**Administrative Assistant:**

Letta Palmer

**Student Interns:**

Casey Schmidt '11  
Natalie George '13  
Kelsey Gibb '13  
Rachelè Hatter '13  
Christina Liu '13  
Xavia Publius '13