Environmental Justice Advocate Dr. Beverly Wright To Speak

"The Perilous Consequences of Public Policy Decisions: Weathering the Storm of Natural and Man-made Disasters in the Gulf."

Dr. Beverly Wright

Wednesday 7 p.m.  February 2  EMU Ballroom

When Beverly Wright was studying environmental sociology at the University at Buffalo—SUNY in the late 1970s, she worked with a professor known for her case study of the Love Canal. The story of this toxic waste dump in Niagara Falls, New York, awakened a nation to the issues of poverty and environmental hazards. But it was another ten years before Wright and other African-American sociologists began to notice certain patterns linked to racism—poor, black communities were often those most affected by industrial hazards.

The industrialized corridor known as “cancer alley” stretches along the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. Wright developed a means to track the demographics along this stretch of river, and it became the central focus of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, which she founded. Now at Dillard University in New Orleans, the center expanded its focus following the disaster of Hurricane Katrina by educating and training hurricane survivors to remediate and reclaim their homes. After the oil spill crisis in the Gulf of Mexico, many of Wright's trainees became involved in hands-on remediation efforts. For more on Dr. Wright, go to: CSWS website; or UB Today.

CSWS 2010-11 Graduate Road Scholars Winners

Four UO graduate students will visit local classrooms through the CSWS Road Scholars Program to speak on feminist topics. Students were selected from a pool of applicants. The students and their topics are:

Water Rights Are Women’s Rights
Megan Burke, master’s student, UO Department of Philosophy

Women’s work is intrinsically linked to water and the need for free access to it. It is women and girls who are both responsible for providing water to households and who, due to economic disparity between women and men, rely on free, safe drinking water. This discussion-based presentation will address the need to consider the use and production of bottled water and how it affects women and girls around the globe.

Gender Roles in Rural Entrepreneurship: A Bolivian Experience
Alejandra Garcia, master’s student, UO Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management

Alejandra Garcia did research last summer among indigenous peoples in rural areas of Bolivia, her native country. She recorded a series of testimonials of women, which she will draw upon in her analysis of gender issues. Garcia looks at poverty reduction strategies such as microfinance and describes experiences of women leaders who have been able to achieve integration and equity as entrepreneurs.

Roller Derby: Identity and Cultural Studies
Rebecca Toews, M.S. student, UO School of Journalism and Communication

Roller derby as a pastime and athletic event is an outlet for bankers, lawyers and doctors, but these women also embody the roles of students, punks and hipsters. The sport includes women of any age, whether married, mothers, single, gay or straight. It embraces sometimes raunchy humor, but also pegs itself as a family event. Although the culture doesn’t fit neatly into ideas about traditional roles of women, some argue that the sport is just another form of objectification. This presentation delves into contradictory definitions of what it means to be powerful and beautiful in contemporary society—and whether sex appeal is a necessary component for women’s sports to appeal to fans and participants. It also covers the history of the sport.
News & Announcements

CSWS Selects Two Winners for Jane Higdon Senior Thesis Fellowship

Shelley Annette Grosjean (History) and Sara S. Quinn (Anthropology) are co-winners of the 2010-11 Jane Higdon Senior Thesis Scholarship. Following open competition among UO undergraduates working on a senior thesis on issues related to women and/or gender, CSWS selected the two UO seniors to share the $1,000 prize.

CSWS selected Shelley Annette Grosjean for her thesis project, “A Womyn’s Work Is Never Done: Reforming Traditionally Gendered Work in Lesbian Separatist Communities.” A history major, Grosjean is studying several lesbian separatist intentional communities that were created in the 1970s in southern Oregon, including WomenShare Collective near Grants Pass, Rootworks Community in Sunny Valley, and OWL Farm near Roseburg.

Sara Quinn’s research focuses on “International Solidarity and Indigenous Female Empowerment in Post-War Guatemala.” A senior majoring in cultural anthropology, Quinn has been living and working in rural Guatemala during fall and winter terms. learning Spanish and Quiché and working closely with indigenous Mayan women in communities recovering from the 36-year civil war in Guatemala and the ethnic cleansing of indigenous Mayan people that was a deliberate part of that war.

Thesis advisor Lynn Stephen, anthropology and ethnic studies, said that Quinn “looked for a situation where she would not only be in the position of a ‘researcher’ but also would be able to work for a nonprofit organization and relate to the women she hoped to work with in a way that could make a direct and tangible contribution to their daily lives.”

The Higdon Scholarship honors the life and work of Jane Higdon, a faculty researcher at the Linus Pauling Institute at OSU and an avid cyclist who was killed while bicycling on Territorial Highway in May 2006. The financial support for the scholarship is provided by the Jane Higdon Foundation (www.JaneHigdonFoundation.com), which is dedicated to encouraging and empowering young people to pursue healthy and active lifestyles and academic excellence.

Lamia Karim’s New Book about Microfinance on Huffington Post’s “Most Anticipated” List

CSWS Associate Director Lamia Karim’s upcoming book has made it to the Huffington Post’s Most Anticipated List of Books for 2011. Microfinance and Its Discontents: Women in Debt in Bangladesh is due out from University of Minnesota Press the end of March. Karim is an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology. Go here for a publisher’s synopsis.

CSWS Research Grants Deadline—January 18 (by 5 p.m.)

Grant guidelines and applications can be accessed online for CSWS Faculty Research Grants; CSWS Graduate Student Research Grants; the CSWS Laurel Research Award (for graduate students); and the Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship. Please note that application proposals must have a women and gender related component.

Application Deadline: CSWS Writing and Promotion Workshops for Women Faculty—January 31 (by 5 p.m.)

CSWS will hold its second annual writing and promotion workshops for women faculty June 14-17, with applications due January 31. Sponsored by CSWS and the UO Office of Academic Affairs, the workshops will be open to women faculty members whose research addresses the complexity of women’s lives and the intersecting nature of gender identities and inequalities. Designed for assistant and associate professors, the workshops run for four days and will consist of sessions that allow participants to refine book chapters or journal articles to be included in their promotion packages; allow participants to get feedback from peers in the workshop as well as designated external reviewers who are experts in participants’ fields; allow post-tenure participants to discuss their post-tenure research agendas; locate and access UO resources that support their research; and develop lateral resources for mentoring and collaboration. Click here for more information about applying.

Yizhao Yang: Research Matters Fall 2010

Urban planner Yizhao Yang is an assistant professor, UO Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management. Her paper “The Built Environment, Social Justice and Gender: A study of the housing conditions of single mother headed households in the Portland Metropolitan Region using 1995 and 2002 American Housing Survey Data” is now available online in the Fall 2010 issue of CSWS Research Matters. CSWS supported Yang’s research with a Faculty Research Grant.

FOR MORE ON UPCOMING EVENTS, GO TO: csws.uoregon.edu

WE NEED YOUR STORIES

Send photographs and news about your book and journal publications, field research, honors, endeavors, etc. Query Alice Evans, CSWS Research Dissemination Specialist.