

Special thanks to:

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Norwalk Community College  
NCC Norwalk, Connecticut

New England Women's Studies Association  
Annual Conference  
February 24 - 25, 2006



Never doubt that you can change history. You already have.  
Marge Piercy

# New England Women's Studies Association Annual Conference

Norwalk Community College is proud to sponsor the 2006 NEWSA Conference. This year marks the inauguration of a Women's Studies Option at NCC, and we are pleased to mark that milestone by hosting so many distinguished scholars to speak about "Women and Justice." We thank President Levinson and Dean Edington for encouraging us to pursue a program that examines women's lives, issues and work, and for enabling us to provide this forum for the entire New England community to examine the way that justice in the arts, language, race, economics, academia, unions, jurisprudence, medicine, theology, and philosophy intersects with women's experiences.

We are pleased to have Marge Piercy deliver our keynote address. Ms. Piercy is the author of seventeen novels, seventeen volumes of poetry, and a critically acclaimed memoir. Educated at the University of Michigan and the recipient of four honorary doctorates, she has been a key player in many of the major progressive political battles of our time, including the women's movement and the resistance to the war in Iraq. She has taught, lectured and/or performed her work at well over 350 universities around the world.

*Laurel Peterson, Chair, 2006 NEWSA Conference Committee,  
Associate Professor, Norwalk Community College*

## Schedule of Events

### Friday, February 24:

6:00 - 7:00 pm East Atrium  
7:00 - 10:00 pm Pepsico Theater

Reception  
*Born into Brothels:*  
*Calcutta's Red Light Kids*  
Speaker: Lina Srivastava, lawyer,  
human rights activist and  
former Executive Director of  
Kids with Cameras Foundation

### Saturday, February 25:

8:00 am E. Atrium  
8:00am - 2:30pm E. Atrium  
8:30 am Pepsico Theater  
9:00 -10:15 am  
**10:30 -11:45 am Pepsico Theater**  
  
12:00 -1:00pm W. 103/105  
1:15 - 2:30 pm  
2:45 - 4:00 pm  
4:00 - 5:00 pm E. Atrium  
9:00am - 4:00pm E. Atrium

Breakfast  
Registration  
Opening Remarks  
First Concurrent Sessions  
**Keynote Address: Marge Piercy,  
"Justice Requires Imagination in  
an Unjust World"**  
Lunch  
Second Concurrent Sessions  
Third Concurrent Sessions  
Closing Reception  
Women's Marketplace

2:45 pm  
to  
4:00 pm

*Third Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **Activism in Women's Studies, Women's  
E226 Studies as Activism: Faculty and Student  
Perspectives**

**“Activism in the Women's Studies Curriculum”: Challenges and Opportunities”**

*Motivations for, pedagogical benefits of, and the challenges of activism assignments in a women's studies course.*

Presenter:

Donna M. Bickford, Ph.D., University of Rhode Island

**“Academic Work and Activism”**

*Using intellectual understanding to work towards community justice: how to connect education with experience.*

Presenter:

Alexis Coppola, University of Rhode Island

**“Teaching Women's Studies When There is No Women's Studies: The Community College Context”**

*How the subversive use of a women's studies agenda in composition and literature courses succeeds and an introductory women's studies course fails.*

Presenter:

Janet Hagen, Three Rivers Community College

**“Student Feminist Organizations in the Community College”**

*Lone Juliet: How and why to start a community college feminist organization.*

Presenter:

Caitlin Gallagher, Three Rivers Community College

Moderator: Donna M. Bickford, Ph.D., University of Rhode Island

9:00 am  
to  
10:15 am

*First Concurrent Sessions*

Room:  
Pepsico  
Theatre

**Voices of Power and Truth:  
Readings of Poetry of Justice by Women**

*This eclectic assortment of poetry by women addressing topics of justice and the splendor of life energy will be read aloud by college students and faculty.*

Presenters:

Chris Japely

Shackara Gayle

Cindy Lopez

Cristin Macchiarulo

Romina Todeschini

all from Norwalk Community College

Moderator: Chris Japely, Norwalk Community College

Room  
General  
Re  
Forum

**Ruling Women: The Jurisprudence of Ruth  
Bader Ginsburg and Justice for Women**

*Ruth Bader Ginsburg has served on the Supreme Court since 1993 and is now the only female justice. As long-time Director of the ACLU Women's Rights Project, she was a leading advocate for justice for women. To what extent has Justice Ginsburg remained a leader in the field as a member of the Supreme Court?*

Presenters:

Joette Katz, Associate Justice, Connecticut Supreme Court

Emanuel Margolis, Of Counsel, Wofsey, Rosen, Kweskin & Kuriansky, LLP

Martin B. Margulies, Professor *Emeritus*, Quinnipiac University School of Law

Moderator: Stephane Kirven, Norwalk Community College

9:00 am  
to  
10:15 am

*First Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **War: Women's Responses and Representations**  
E212

**"Insights into the Challenges Encountered by Women of Diverse Ethnicities Serving in the American Forces, 17th-21st Centuries"**

*The "official" history of women in the US military ignores tens of thousands of women who have served the military since this country's founding. What were the roles and contributions of those women? What challenges did they face while serving this nation?*

Presenter:

Leah G. Stambler, Ph.D., Western Connecticut State University

**"From Icon to Absence: Representations of Women in Editorial Cartoons During WWII and the Civil Rights Era"**

*Using over 1200 cartoons from 1941-45 and 1963-65, this presentation considers the role of women as women, women as icons, and men portraying women in political cartoons.*

Presenter:

Shirley A. Jackson, Ph.D., Southern Connecticut State University

**"War on the Interior: Edith Wharton's Cabinet War Rooms"**

*Edith Wharton's activism in WWI illustrates that her commitment to architecture and interior design cannot be relegated to the intimate, as often occurs when discussing 19th century women writers and space.*

Presenter:

Caroline Hellman, Graduate Center, City University of New York

Moderator: Renae Edge, Norwalk Community College

2:45 pm  
to  
4:00 pm

*Third Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **Naming Gender, Creating Identity:  
E223 **Communicating, Translating, Blending, and  
Teaching****

*This panel explores the power of language in the social constitution of identities and how to resist dominant beliefs through reframing methodologies and practices.*

Presenters:

Jlynn Frazier  
Iria Gonzalez Liano  
Julie-Ann Scott  
Margaret Haberman  
Patricia Sithole  
all from the University of Maine

Moderator: Jlynn Frazier, University of Maine

Room  
E225

**Engendering Power, Race, and Justice in the  
Community College: Rosa Parks Day**

*Faculty, staff, and student panelists describe the creation and institutionalization of the first Rosa Parks Day. Responsive process, all college events, and activities in women's studies, peace and social justice, and history classes are enumerated.*

Presenters:

Anne M. Wiley, Ed.D.  
Abigail Jenks, MSW  
Rosemarie Freeland  
all from Greenfield Community College

Moderator: Anne M. Wiley, Ed.D., Greenfield Community College

2:45 pm  
to  
4:00 pm

*Third Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room:  
General  
Re  
Forum

## **Gender, Culture, and Justice: Contesting and Asserting Tradition in Pakistan**

### **“Gender Relations and Reproduction Health”**

*This presentation focuses on the pattern of gender relations in a traditional Muslim society and their impact on women’s reproductive health.*

Presenter:  
Gul Shamin, Brandeis University

### **“Working with Men to End Gender-Based Violence”**

*This presentation shares the personal reflections of working with men to end gender-based violence through a police training gender-sensitization project.*

Presenter:  
Hammad Masood, Brandeis University

### **“Violence Against Women in the South-Asian Context of Social Injustice”**

*This paper examines forms of gender violence in Pakistan with a special focus on the orthodox cultural traditions like Karo Kari that may lead to the mutilation and death of women.*

Presenter:  
Muqaddisa Mehreen, Fulbright Fellow, Brandeis University

Moderator: Kelley Ready, Ph.D., Brandeis University

9:00 am  
to  
10:15 am

*First Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room:  
E112

## **The Power of Language and Silence**

### **“Bearing Democracy: Winnie Mandela’s Truth Hearing”**

*Examining the representation and resistance of Winnie Mandela’s simultaneous labels by the TRC as “Mother of the Nation” and “Crazy War Criminal,” this paper provides a framework for re-thinking the place of political women.*

Presenter:

Nikki Karalekas, National Women’s Study Association

### **“Women’s Speaking and Silencing: Gender at South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission”**

*The aim of the TRC was to voice the past; however, for women, the experience of seeking justice through testimony was hindered by the interpellation of women’s speech and language.*

Presenter:

Denise Handlarski, York University (Toronto)

### **“Race and Justice: Rhetorical Strategies in the Autobiography of Ida B. Wells”**

*This paper explores the ways Ida B. Wells Barnett (1862-1931), an anti-lynching and civil rights activist, uses gender as a rhetorical strategy to support the activist argument within her autobiography, Crusade for Justice (1928).*

Presenter:

Heather Ostman, Ph.D., Empire State College

Moderator: Lori Soderlind, Norwalk Community College

9:00 am  
to  
10:15 am

*First Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **Acting Out: Forms of Activism**  
E108

**“The Power of the Purse: Women’s Philanthropy as the Next Frontier of Feminist Action”**

*Philanthropy, the next frontier of feminism, offers women a powerful way to circumvent the status quo, introduce social innovations, and effect positive global change.*

Presenter:

Nancy Alexander, Founding Member of Community Fund for Women and Girls

**“Raising Consciousness: The Use of Activism in an Introductory Women’s Studies Classroom”**

*Using activism in women’s studies can strengthen students’ understanding of feminist issues. The presenter will discuss course design, benefits, and challenges of teaching activism.*

Presenter:

Susan V. Iverson, Ed.D., University of Maine

**“Testimonial Novels, Women, and Social Justice”**

*The presenter explores the way in which testimonial novels are important texts in classrooms that seek to educate students about social justice and civic responsibility.*

Presenter:

Donna M. Bickford, Ph.D., University of Rhode Island

Moderator: Bernice Marie–Daly, Ph.D., Norwalk Community College

2:45 pm  
to  
4:00 pm

*Third Concurrent Sessions*

Room: **Oh My God(dess)! Contructs of Feminism in  
E222 Theology and Philosophy**

**“Women and Religious Thought”**

*An examination of the ways traditional religious thought sculpt our notions of God, nature, and society, and support women’s second-ary status throughout the world.*

Presenter:

Bernice Marie-Daly, Ph.D., Norwalk Community College

**“Is Social Feminism Compatible with Social Justice: Anti-essentialism, Anti-foundationalism, and the Insider-Outsider Thesis”**

*This paper investigates Insider-Outsider Feminist theory and the difficulty of establishing claims of social justice in a world without essences or foundations.*

Presenter:

Ed Grippe, Ph.D., Norwalk Community College

**“Is Feminism Really for Everyone? A Look at the Complex Relationship Between the Christian Church and Feminism”**

*An activism project in a Women’s Studies 101 classroom sparked the series of discussions that culminated in this paper. Come ready to listen, think, and share.*

Presenter:

Kati McCarthy, University of Maine, Orono

Moderator: Kimberly Hamilton-Bobrow, NEWSA Co-chair,  
Manchester Community College

1:15 pm  
to  
2:30 pm

*Second Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **Representations of Women in Literature: The  
E225 Old and the New**

**“Re-representing Stereotypes: Female Characters as  
Constructed in Harry Potter”**

*This presentation examines how stereotypical gender roles and traditional male hierarchy are enforced in Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.*

Presenter:

Michelle Niestepski, University of Rhode Island

**“Occasioning Social Justice: Harkening Women’s Authorial  
voices in the Classroom”**

*This presentation introduces participants to a wide range of contemporary literature written by women who focus on issues of women and/or justice.*

Presenters:

Jane M. Gangi, Ph.D., Manhattanville College

Mary Ann Reilly, Ed.D., Manhattanville College

Moderator: Cathy Milton, Ph.D., Norwalk Community College

1:15 pm  
to  
2:30 pm

*Second Concurrent Sessions*

Room: **From Norma Rae to Present Day:  
E226 Women and Unions**

*Two union stewards will discuss how they organized their unions and the challenges they faced and continue to face today.*

Presenters:

Betty Cutler, chief steward at the former Clarion Hotel (Norwalk)  
Wendy Schulze, union steward at Western Connecticut State University

Moderator: Kristie Starr, UNITE HERE! Local 217

Room: **Enacting Social Justice Under a Human Rights  
E223 Umbrella**

*The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that the recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. This panel will discuss how to work within a human rights framework to achieve social justice.*

Presenters:

Lauren Greis, Feminist Majority Foundation Campus Organizer (Northeast)  
Daquanna Harrison, Feminist Majority Foundation Campus Organizer (Mid-Atlantic)

Moderator: Leah Stambler, Ph.D., Western Connecticut University

1:15 pm  
to  
2:30 pm

*Second Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room:  
General  
Re  
Forum

## **Women, Justice and Art**

### **“Women and Art Education”**

*Three perspectives of women and art education: Lack of support; female experiences as art students; an art teacher’s point of view.*

Presenter

Lynne Knobel, certified art teacher and artist

### **“Creating Opportunity for Community and Collaboration”**

*In contrast to men, women have a greater tendency to work in isolation: What would a paradigm shift look like?*

Presenter:

Jeannie Thomma, artist, writer, teacher

### **“Women Confront War”**

*Artistic interpretations of early 20th century artist/activist Käthe Kollwitz and 21st century protestor Cindy Sheehan.*

Presenter:

Janet Luongo, painter, speaker, activist

This panel will also preview a 16 minute film, “Women Make Art”.

Moderator: Gloria Santoyo Ruenitz, President, Women’s Caucus for Art (CT)

1:15 pm  
to  
2:30 pm

*Second Concurrent Sessions (continued)*

Room: **Contesting the Authority of Medicine**  
E222

**“‘Are You Girls Conspiring?’ Power and Politics in My Hospital Bed”**

*A reading of narrative non-fiction by a patient who bit back.*

Presenter:  
Julie Devaney, York University (Toronto)

**“Adventures in Homebirth: Becoming a Mother in the Third Wave”**

*A personal exploration of homebirth as an extension of nonbiomedical health care and power relationships in both hospital-based and homebirth models of childbirth.*

Presenter:  
Maura Jo Lynch, multiple college grad and new mom

Moderator: Catherine Hoyser, Ph.D., NEWSA Co-chair,  
St. Joseph's College