3-22-2002

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University of Dayton

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UNIVERSITY of DAYTON

NEWS RELEASE

UD SYMPOSIUM WILL HIGHLIGHT RESEARCH, RAISE AWARENESS OF ISSUES RELATED TO MULTICULTURAL AND THIRD WORLD WOMEN

DAYTON, Ohio — It was at the December meeting of women faculty members from the University of Dayton’s college of arts and science that Sheila Hassell Hughes began to see the connection. “As we shared information on our various areas of research and teaching, it quickly became evident that a large number of us, including new faculty members, were involved in issues related to women of color and varied cultures, Third-World women and issues of feminism and other concerns pertaining to women,” said Hughes, an assistant professor of English.

These faculty members represented many departments on campus, but information about their research and teaching hadn’t yet crossed departmental boundaries, said Hughes, who is completing a series of projects on the work of women poets of mixed European and Native American heritage.

To connect these researchers and their research, as well as raise awareness of the issues being taught and studied, UD’s Association for Women Faculty, Administrators and Professionals will sponsor the Symposium on Multicultural and Third-World Women in early April. Symposium events are free and open to the public.

The centerpiece of the symposium will be a collection of presentations by four faculty members and one student on their research. It will begin at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 3, in the Learning Teaching Center forum on the lower level of Roesch Library. A reception will follow the last of the 10-15 minute presentations.

The presenters and topics are:

• Ellen Fleischmann, assistant professor of history — Converting the Heathen or Oneself?: The Exchange Between American Missionary Women and Indigenous Women in Lebanon and Greater Syria;

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• Sheila Hassell Hughes, assistant professor of English — Social Location and the Shape of the Soul: Multicultural Sources for a Critical Feminist Imagination;

• Sister Laura Leming, F.M.I., assistant professor of sociology, anthropology and social work — Negotiating Catholic Identity: Women in the Developing World;

• Judith Huacuja Pearson, assistant professor of visual arts — Contemporary Chicana Artists’ Installations as Critique: The Art of Yolanda Lopez and Celia Herrera Rodriguez; and

• Mary Fischer, junior sociology major — An Indigenous Feminism: The Women’s Rights Movement in Morocco.

In conjunction with the main event, 14 UD students have created and will exhibit more than a dozen posters on their own research, learning and service related to the theme. The mixed-media posters will be on display April 2-5 in the LTC forum.

The posters will cover topics both broad and local, such as junior Mary Fischer’s studies on the women’s rights movement in Morocco and senior Jessica Gruenke’s “Photovoice” poster essay. Gruenke distributed disposable cameras to women in two of Dayton’s marginalized neighborhoods and asked them to express, through photos, what gives them hope and what they want to see improved.

The student poster presenters will be available to discuss their projects at the reception following Wednesday’s main event.

Hughes said she hopes the symposium will draw attention to the wide range of work being done across campus related to women’s issues. “We think this will help people see the richness of what’s being done here and perhaps stimulate conversation for future work by our faculty and students,” she said.

“We also want to highlight some of the women’s issues that might not be immediately evident to most of us white men and women living in the Midwest.”

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