

Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies

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U of T President Naylor Recognizes Bonham Gift at Opening of New Centre

The official opening of the Bonham Centre took place on October 16, 2006. On hand to thank Mark S. Bonham (*pictured below at left*) for his endowment of the centre were U of T President David Naylor (*centre*), and Centre Director David Rayside. SDS faculty, students, and friends also attended the event. (President Naylor is presenting a brick from University College, as a symbol of Bonham's role in building SDS.) ■



Conference on Politics, Religion and Sexuality A Big Success

The Bonham Centre was the lead sponsor of a major international conference on January 18th and 19th. ***Politics, Religion and Sexuality in Canada and the U.S.*** was the most ambitious public event in SDS history, attracting 20 speakers from across the continent. Over one-and-a-half days, they spoke about faith and sexuality in public life, the influence of religion on public opinion, the role of faith in Muslim, Christian and Jewish political interventions, debates over same-sex marriage, and the role of religion in national elections.



Keynote Speaker Clyde Wilcox

Keynote addresses were delivered by Lois Wilson (first woman moderator of the United Church of Canada, first Canadian to head the World Council of Churches), and Clyde Wilcox, a politics professor at Georgetown

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SDS ALUMNA NADIA BELLO ELECTED TO SCHOOL BOARD

For many of us, our first job consisted of a stint in the fast food industry or babysitting. However, SDS Alumna Nadia Bello earned her first wages on a Toronto Board of Education Pilot Project that focussed on keeping Black youth in school. It was good training for her present role as rookie **Toronto District School Board Trustee for Scarborough East**.

"I was 16 years old and working on curriculum", says Bello. "Since then, everything I've done has been really about (working) with people who are facing barriers in the system".

A long-time resident of Scarborough East, Bello knows about the barriers faced by many students in the ward's 36-odd schools. "All of a sudden, people are realizing, 'you know what? We're missing programs, we're missing services, and our kids need those services'", she states. As co-chair of the Equity Policy Advisory Committee, Bello plans to advocate for communities and fight for policy and curricula change.



Bello has fought the good fight and emerged victorious many times in her young life. In addition to winning "a really tough race" for Trustee last November, she won her struggle against isolation and poor grades early on in her university days. "I didn't have a place where I belonged. Sexual Diversity Studies gave me that place", she acknowledges.

Having found her support system, Bello excelled at her studies and began to work for **Planned Parenthood of Toronto** while still an SDS undergrad. She became Co-ordinator for their **T.E.A.C.H. (Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia)** Program. Her work there had a direct impact on the improvements she notices in Scarborough schools today, where requests for **T.E.A.C.H.** presentations have increased dramatically over the last two years.

Bello also credits SDS with giving her many of the tools she needed to become a successful community advocate. "SDS gave me what a university education is supposed to give somebody – a way of thinking about the world, a way of organizing your own kind of learning...it's a very classic education in that sense", she explains. "But it also took that extra step of trying to bridge community to theory".

And, as she happily adds, "you *can* get a job out of SDS!"

University in Washington, D.C.

Wilcox was here for almost two weeks, as the F. Ross Johnson Distinguished visitor of the Centre for the Study of the United States. Apart from active involvement in the conference, he participated in several other events in which he talked about the American Christian right and the role of sexuality in mobilizing its political constituency. A major public lecture, delivered shortly after the conference, was the first event held in the University's new multi-faith centre.

Other conference speakers included Pamela Dickey Young, head of Religious Studies at Queen's University, Ken Wald, political scientist from Florida, Solange Lefebvre, sociologist from Montreal, and El-Farouk Khaki, Toronto lawyer and queer Muslim activist. SDS faculty were represented by Michael Cobb, Rinaldo Walcott, Meredith Cartwright, and David Rayside.

Several presentations emphasized the many faith communities that had developed accepting and inclusive views of sexual diversity. More visible were those religious groups that used the fear of homosexuality or distaste for it as a rallying cry in the political arena.

A number of conference presentations, and additional contributions from academics not at the conference, will be gathered in a published volume being edited by Rayside and Wilcox. Rayside was the conference organizer, assisted by SDS student Robbie Morgan and several SDS student volunteers. It received major financial support from long-time SDS supporter Dr. Richard Issac, the Centre for the Study of the U.S., the Dean of Arts and Science, the Provost, the office of Student Affairs, LGBTQ Resources and Programs, and several other units on campus. ■



SDS Colloquium Series
Covers Broad Range of
Topics

Six SDS Colloquium sessions were held this academic year. Faculty members and graduate students presented on a wide array of topics ranging from feminist subversion in Berlin theatre to bisexual identity. The sessions took place in Room 253 at University College, with Paul Hafferty (PhD student in Drama) as leader of an organizing committee that also included Andrea Laing Marshall and Adam Green. ■

Photography Credits

Centre Opening (p. 1) & Carolyn Dinshaw (p. 4): Anna Gutmanis
Clyde Wilcox (p. 1); Elaine Wilcox-Cook; Nadia Bello (p. 2); Errol Young
Rinaldo Walcott (p. 3); Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/UT
Bonham Centre & Rotman Forum Panel (p. 3): Anna Gutmanis



Rinaldo Walcott's Brilliant Career

Rinaldo Walcott, who teaches in SDS and serves on its steering committee, is a busy man. In addition to his duties as Professor of Sociology and Equity Studies at OISE/UT, Walcott is Editor of *New Dawn: The Journal of Black Canadian Studies*. He is also the Canada Research Chair in Social Justice and Cultural Studies.



Rinaldo Walcott: "... an intimate relationship between Black Studies and Queer Theory"

Walcott and a team of OISE grad students are about to launch the *Other Canadians Database*. Having gathered close to 500 works by racial minority Canadians, queer Canadians and feminists that examine Canada in its multicultural moment, Walcott hopes to generate more research on a body of work that has, until now, been largely ignored.

At present, Walcott is also working closely on a book entitled *Black Queer Diaspora*. The book contends that "there's actually an intimate relationship between Black Studies and Queer Theory".

Walcott is troubled by the ways in which Black Queer Canadians are written out of our history texts. "When we think of national queer figures in the Canadian context, few people of colour come to mind...Does part of queer respectability and tolerance mean that racial minority members of the 'community' have to be displaced?", he asks.

Walcott's teaching for SDS constantly challenges students to think about the broad spectrum of social justice issues. "I always "change up" the material in terms of pushing at the boundaries of our comfort level", he says.

Having been a vital part of SDS since his arrival at OISE/UT in 2002, Walcott's brilliant career unfolds. And students at U of T are grateful. ■

Bessie Smith presides over the new Bonham Centre



SDS Co-Sponsors Forum on Building Diverse Workplaces at Rotman

On November 6th, the Bonham Centre, along with the Rotman School of Management and the Rotman MBA Gay-Straight Alliance, presented a public forum on building diverse workplaces. Centre Director David Rayside was one of four panelists discussing models for successful inclusion of LGBT employees. He agreed with Susan Black, former head of Catalyst Consultants, that not enough companies are addressing LGBT issues. Employment Equity lawyer Susan Ursel and Brad Salavich, GLBT Program Manager for global workplace diversity at IBM, spoke of the high human and financial costs of not recognizing diversity. The four panelists noted that successful inclusion of LGBT employees requires innovation and a shift in corporate culture.



Panelists (left to right) Rayside, Ursel, Black and Salavich

The forum, held at Rotman, had a large audience with lots of questions for the panelists. Moderator Orrin Wolpert, president of the Rotman MBA Gay-Straight Alliance, suggested that this type of forum may expand and become an annual event at U of T. ■

SDS STUDENT AWARD WINNERS FOR 2007

Patricia & Douglas Dadson Scholarship
Sara-Marni Hubbard (SDS/English/History)

The Sexual Diversity Studies Scholarship
Kirstin Caspersen (SDS/Criminology)

Rainbow Triangle Alumni Association Award
Claire Laville (SDS/English)

Emperor I Sergio Apolloni Scholarship
Brenna Keatinge (SDS/Sociology)

The Bonham Scholarship for Study of Issues in Sexual Diversity
Gabrielle Zilkha (SDS/Equity Studies/English)

SDS Book Prize for UNI 255H
Katherine Sheng Morrison

The LGBTOUT Student Awards
Greg Fisher (Mechanical Engineering)
Annie Harris (Political Science & Women's Studies, UTSC)
David Pereira (Musical Education)

The Bonham Centre and LGBTOUT congratulate these students on their accomplishments!

KATRINA SCHWARTZ AND DAN HEALEY DISCUSS HOMOPHOBIA IN EASTERN EUROPE

In March, SDS co-sponsored two important and timely lectures on homophobia in Eastern Europe. The first, "***Sexual Politics and 'Decency' in the Putin Era: The Case of Moscow's Gay Pride Debacle, May 2006***" was given by Dr. Dan Healey (Swansea University) on March 16th. Healey pointed to the blatant homophobia of many Russian politicians, religious leaders, nationalists and ordinary citizens during and after ***Moscow Pride 2006***, though he also argued that it has made Russian queer activists more assertive. Healey cautioned that homophobes in Russia are now seeking new arguments to support their hatred, which shows no signs of abating.

On March 23rd, Professor Katrina Schwartz (University of Florida) presented "***Retreat From Europe? Homophobia, Populism and Party Politics in Latvia and Poland***". Schwartz asserted that dominant analyses of the impact of the European Union do not hold for Latvia and Poland. Instead, she maintained that under-institutionalized party systems and illiberal national identity discourses have contributed to recent anti-gay politics in these countries, and a persistent resistance to EU pressure.

Schwartz took part in ***Riga Pride*** events in recent years, witnessing first hand homophobic assaults on participants, and police inaction.



NYU's Carolyn Dinshaw and the Queering of Margery Kempe

On March 16th, Carolyn Dinshaw presented her lecture "How Soon Is Now? The Times of Margery Kempe" at University College. The lecture was co-sponsored by the Bonham Centre, The Centre for Medieval Studies and the Department of English at U of T.



Dinshaw spoke about the work of Margery Kempe, a 15th-century writer and mystic. She also examined the concept of queer temporality, or the broad notion of queerness as occupying quite different time-period frameworks at the same time.

Dinshaw, who is Professor of English and Social and Cultural Analysis at NYU, has many areas of research and interest, including Medieval literature, feminist studies and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender studies. She sits on the Board of Directors at ***CUNY's Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies*** and was co-editor of ***GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*** (which she founded) from 1993 to 2005. Her many books include ***Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Post Modern*** and ***Chaucer's Sexual Poetics***, which won the Medieval Academy of America's John Nicholas Brown Prize in 1993.

The Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies

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