In spring 2013, Gender Studies Minor (GSM) is happy to welcome seven new board members, Dr. Elisabeth Culver, Assistant Professor of Nursing, Dr. David Heineman, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, Dr. Thomas Klinger, Professor of Biological and Allied Health Sciences, Dr. Yahya Laayouni, Assistant Professor of Arabic and French, Dr. Stephanie Shepherd, Assistant Professor of Environmental, Geographical, Geological Sciences, Dr. Kelly VanGorden, Assistant Professor of Exercise Science, and Dr. Diana Zoelle, Associate Professor of Political Science.

Also this semester, Keara Hozella, majoring in English and minoring in Gender Studies, is working at the GSM Office as Work-Study Student.

This issue contains Keara Hozella’s interview with the visiting author Anna Monardo.

At the GSM Reception, on Friday, April 26, ten students graduating with the GSM, will be given green graduation cords and the winner of the 2012-2013 GSM Essay Competition will be announced.

Dr. Ferdâ Asya
Associate Professor of English
Director of Gender Studies Minor

Graduating Gender Studies Minor Students

- Brianna Albertini (Mass Communications, English Minor)
- Emily Fredericks (Exercise Science)
- Eowna Young Harrison (Sociology)
- Sara Huff (Communication Studies, ASL Minor)
- Kristen Lang (Art Studio, Art History Minor)
- Hannah Long (Communication Studies and Psychology, Philosophy Minor)
- Olivia Miller (Political Science)
- Casey Simms (Psychology, Sociology Minor)
- Angelica Waltman (Interpersonal Communications)
- Heather Yoder (Psychology)

Congratulations!
**Women in Sport Students Participate in Clinic**

The second annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day Clinic was hosted by Bloomsburg University’s (BU’s) Athletic Department this year. The event occurred on Saturday, February 9. The attendees were between the age ranges of elementary to high school students. The event began with a basketball clinic directed by BU’s women’s basketball team. An activities fair was offered after the basketball clinic, and allowed other women’s sports teams from the university to demonstrate their skills. The other women sports teams that were represented included the following: tennis, softball, soccer, swimming, cross country, and track and field. The BU band also performed for the crowd. Fifteen students from Dr. VanGorden’s Women in Sport class guided the girls throughout the day. The Women in Sport students managed various agility stations within the clinic. All of the young women and girls who attended the festivities were granted free entry into the women’s basketball game that night.

**Fall 2012 Gender Studies Minor Reception**

The Gender Studies Minor Fall 2012 Graduation Reception was held on November 9, 2012 in 163 Centennial Hall. Light refreshments were enjoyed along with scintillating conversations. William Doran was congratulated on his upcoming commencement ceremony and received the green Gender Studies Minor cord. The reception was attended by (standing from left to right) Dr. Faith Warner, Dr. Ferdâ Asya, Dr. Christina Francis, Dr. Nicole Defenbaugh, Hannah Long, Benjamin McIvor, Eowna Young Harrison, (sitting from left to right) Rachel Wagaman, William Doran, and Keara Hozella.
An Interview with Anna Monardo
By Keara Hozella

Anna Monardo is the author of the novels, *Falling in Love with Natassia* (Doubleday, 2006) and *The Courtyard of Dreams* (Doubleday, 1993), which was translated into German, Norwegian, and Danish, and nominated for a PEN/Hemingway Award and recommended for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Monardo’s essays, poems, and fiction have been anthologized, featured on the National Public Radio (NPR), and published in leading journals such as *Prairie Schooner*, *The Sun*, and More.

Anna Monardo visited Bloomsburg University on Thursday, April 11, for a lecture, question and answer session, and class visits. The title of her lecture was “Translating the American Dream.” Monardo’s visit was sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts, Department of English, and Gender Studies Minor.

This interview allows a glimpse into what the author’s life was like while she was writing her novel, *The Courtyard of Dreams*, where she found her inspiration, and her views on gender roles.

The synopsis of your first novel, *The Courtyard of Dreams*, as written on its back cover, “tells the story of seventeen-year-old Giulia Di Cuore, a first-generation Italian American growing up in Ohio in the 1960s. Giulia struggles with the old-world values of her father, until she travels to southern Italy to visit her extended family, and there she begins to find her place in the world as a daughter, as a woman, and as an American.”

Keara Hozella interviews author Anna Monardo for this issue.
An Interview with Anna Monardo

**Q:** Do you view the protagonist, Giulia as more of a feminine or feminist character?

**A:** Giulia is obviously feminine, but I think she’s definitely a feminist. She was creating a path where there wasn’t one. We may question those paths, but she still created them. I think that’s what feminists have to do. It’s really important to take care of your emotional needs in life. Relationships are really important, but other things are too. Some people tell women that they need to choose their work over their relationships, but I say they don’t need to choose. You can’t let one compromise the other. We need to work to be free to take care of both things.

**Q:** How did you determine the personalities of the dominant male characters, mainly Nicola and Luca, in *The Courtyard of Dreams*?

**A:** You create these composite characters. Luca is based on my seventeen-year-old summer love, but he’s completely altered. The father is the way I saw my father at the time—larger than life, frightening, and a force. He was assimilated here, but there were aspects of American culture he never faced until I was an adolescent. I wanted to go out into the world like an American girl. Now that I’m a parent, I feel so much compassion for that. The phenomenon of immigrants is that their mindset stays with the values that they left with, life moves on, and the values in the country they came from have changed, but they stay stuck where they were. I wanted to capture Nicola trying to impose the values of a time that was out of date onto his daughter, that “out-of-sync-ness.” I wanted to capture the love and codependence between them. It was love, but it was overwhelming. He (Nicola) slowly became his own individual. I made Giulia different from me, so that she could become an independent character.
An Interview with Anna Monardo

Q: Will there be a sequel to *The Courtyard of Dreams*? Many readers wish to know if Giulia will be more assertive when she returns to America after her experience in Italy.

A: I thought about a sequel. I’m writing a non-fiction piece now. I’m writing my family’s immigration story as it really happened. I don’t know if it’s a sequel or a parallel text. I’m trying to write the truth about everything I fictionalized in *The Courtyard of Dreams*. The character I would want to return to and the one that interests me the most is the father, Nicola. I would want to use his point of view. Originally, the novel was supposed to be in three parts: Giulia’s life in America, the next her life in Italy that summer while living with Luca, and then a third part ten years later with Giulia as a photographer in New York. I wrote all three parts originally. When the manuscript was accepted, it was too long. When I worked with an editor, we realized it was unwieldy. We condensed part one a lot, got rid of part three, and made part two the novel.

Q: There are a number of superstitions in your novel, such as the “evil eye.” Are Italians superstitious?

A: Yes. My main focus was on Southern Italy. Superstitions are part of their heritage and culture. They’re funny and interesting. I carry some of them too. My father was an educated person, but if you tried to come into the house with an umbrella, he’d flip. If my grandmother came home from a funeral, she’d touch the stove, before she even removed her coat, to burn away the spirit. My uncle can’t stand gladiolas, because in Italy they’re only used at funerals. People are all the same. We’re all anxious and fearful at times. If you can find any container to help hold that anxiety, it’s a healthy coping mechanism.
An Interview with Anna Monardo

**Q:** Is it a cultural aspect of Italy to be more comfortable with one’s body? Giulia seems more accepting of many things in Italy with which she was not comfortable in America, including her own body and bodies of others.

**A:** Giulia has a sexual awakening. I wanted to capture that adolescent time in life where a person isn’t actively sexual, but so sexual in his or her perceptions and taking in the world. That’s part of the struggle of adolescence. The body image thing was a real thing for me. I grew up in the seventies with the “Mod Squad.” The woman in the group was white, very skinny, and had long, blonde, perfectly straight hair. She was the ideal hippie. She was what you were supposed to look like. And I didn’t look like that, you know? Like so many of us women, we grow up thinking, “I need to look like that.” That model doesn’t even look like that. We all know how killing that is. In Southern Italy, there were people on the beach who looked like me and were my size. Their skin color was mine and it was the same gene pool. I fit in, and it was great. In general, Europeans are freer. When I wear my conservative one-piece bathing suit on the beach, I stick out. Everyone wears two-piece bathing suits. They feel great about it; why shouldn’t you?

**Q:** In a 2011 interview, you stated that “it was the act of leaving for New York that shaped” you. Which aspects of your life, apart from writing, were influenced by this act?

**A:** When I got to New York, I felt like I was in the right place at the right time. I felt that way for the first time in my life. I felt comfortable in my skin. The path I had taken away from my family and their expectations met up with the path offered to me in New York, in my professional life, studying the arts and writing, and for working with artistic people. I was in a world where I could do anything. There was a freedom in the air that I just loved. That feeling of freedom is part of who I am. When I go somewhere and I don’t find it, I’m kind of stunned. It was the go-ahead to pursue my interests and passions. It was to be defined by what I loved.
An Interview with Anna Monardo

Q: During what time of the day do you prefer to write?

A: When I was young, I liked working at night. I had a part time job at *Time* magazine as a copy-editor, so I worked night shifts and worked well at night. That changed when I started teaching at university. Now I love the mornings. It’s important to grab some quiet time to write.

Q: What is the best piece of advice you can give about the writing process?

A: Sit with your manuscript every day, even if it’s only for ten minutes. I don’t do it all the time, and when I don’t do it, I regret it. The act of writing and sitting with a manuscript on a regular basis is the best thing you can do.

Q: Who are some of your most influential or favorite authors?

A: Natalia Ginzberg is one. She was from Northern Italy. She’s very minimalist. Her family was very active in the underground during the war. Her husband worked with her brothers. He was Russian and very active in the underground. They had to go into exile. He was imprisoned and he died in prison.

Edna O’Brien is another. I read her a lot at a certain time. She wrote about emotions and it really gave me license to do the same. Gabriel Gracias Marquez is a favorite because the big saga is very important to me. Henry James and Edith Wharton should be included too because their works’ psychological aspects are great. F. Scott Fitzgerald is one of my favorites in terms of style. His sentences are beautiful.

Other writers are our best teachers. I always tell my students that they can’t expect to write at a higher level than the books they read.
Faculty Accomplishments

LaTonya Trotter, a temporary Frederick Douglas Teaching Fellow, presented her paper, “We Just Do Things Differently: Care as an Organizing Principle for Constructions of Nurse Practitioner Expertise,” at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, held on March 21-25, 2013. This same paper will be published by Rutgers University Press in the edited volume *Caring on the Clock: The Complexities and Contradictions of Paid Care Work*. Mignon Duffy, Amy Armenia, and Clare Stacey are the volume’s editors.

Trotter also had the honor of being the graduate student paper award winner of the 2013 Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), Health, Health Policy, and Health Services Division. She received this award for her paper, “Constructing Uncertainty, Constructing Skill: Creating New Forms of Medical Expertise through Nurse Practitioner Narrative Practices.” She greatly credits the support of the Frederick Douglas Teaching Fellowship in not only mentoring her as a teacher but in supporting her research.

Dr. David Heineman published a short chapter on the history and cultural impact of "Sheena, Queen of the Jungle" in *Icons of the American Comic Book: From Captain America to Wonder Woman* edited by Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith.

Last year, he also published a few entries, “Virtuality,” “Television,” “Cyberculture,” and “Graphic Novels,” in *The Encyclopedia of Gender in the Media* edited by Mary Kosut.

Dr. Christina Francis presented the paper, “Chasing the White Stag: Medieval Motifs in *Snow White and the Huntsman*,” at the 2013 National Popular Culture conference in Washington, DC in late March.

Dr. Ferdâ Asya gave a lecture, “Location and Dislocation: Edith Wharton’s Transatlantic Homes and Friends,” for the Institute for Culture and Society on April 18, 2013 at Bloomsburg University.

Past Events

On Tuesday, April 2, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., in preparation for the novelist Anna Monardo’s visit, Dr. Ferdâ Asya led a reading and discussion session on Monardo’s novel, *The Courtyard of Dreams*. The session was well attended by the students, staff, and faculty of Bloomsburg University and people from Bloomsburg and the surrounding communities.
The purpose of the Gender Studies Minor (GSM), which offers cross-listed courses in sixteen departments across Bloomsburg campus, is the study of social, cultural, and historical constructions of gender and its intersections with other constructions such as race, class, nation, and sexuality.

The program investigates gender relationships and inequalities in a variety of societal contexts and strives to provide co-curricular experiences to enhance the Gender Studies Minor curriculum and raise awareness about issues of gender. Eighteen credit hours are required to complete this minor program.

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania is committed to affirmative action by way of providing equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons without regard to race, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.

Summer 2013 Courses
ENGLISH 156.21 Popular Literature: Women and Crime Fiction

Fall 2013 Courses
BIOLOGY 230.01 A.B.C.D Human Sexuality
ECONOMIC 313.01 Labor Economics
ENGLISH 156.01, 02 Popular Literature: Women and Crime Fiction
ENGLISH 288.01 Feminist Reading of Culture
EXERSCI 288.01 Women in Sport
HISTORY 329.01 The American Woman
POLISCI 377.01 Feminist Political Theory
SOC 231.01 Marriage and Family
SOC 231.02 Marriage and Family
SOC 320.01 Sociology of Gender

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Please refer to the GSM website, for courses and information.

bloomu.edu/gs