



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

BE YOU

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

SECOND EDITION

SMCGC OFFICE BEARERS

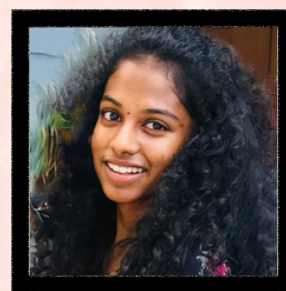
2021-22



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Resilience is knowing that you are the only one that has the power and the responsibility to pick yourself up – Mary Holloway

The start of 2021-2022 academic year was a pleasant beginning as it meant back to being in campus together after a long hiatus of online classes and remote study due to the pandemic.

With renewed energy and excitement the students of gender centre buoying up the entire campus, it was clear that every day would be an opportunity to celebrate everybody for our uniqueness.

The Gender centre focussed on programs that were re-affirming our sense of community and finding new ways to connect and better understand one another and spreading the message of – BE You!

I am delighted to welcome you to our second edition of our Newsletter, BeYou, an initiative of Stella Maris College - Gender Center which aims to connect, inform and inspire you with reflections on gender and it's asymmetry in society. Continuing with the interesting previous edition, the office bearers of Gender Center have ensured to explore new ways of learning, unlearning and relearning so as to continue on to the path of brilliance.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Sasitha'.

Director

Stella Maris College, Gender Centre

ABOUT THE CENTER..

Gender Center is an initiative of the Department of Sociology instituted in the year 2018. It is a product of the collective interests of the students and the Department to highlight the relevant issues and concerns in society.

Our objectives are

- to create awareness on gender, sexuality, mental health.
- to challenge topics and themes that are considered taboo and disable the shame through conversation.
- to shed light on these topics within the context of our country.
- to host an equal and safe environment for discussion.

We wish to bring out the best in each and every individual.





JOURNAL

'21-22



Gender Series Talk

Date: 26 June 2021

Gender Center's first Gender Series Talk session presided by Dr. Lora Deva Prasanna, faculty and former Head of the Department of Social Work, Stella Maris College.

Dr. Lora helped the participants to look beyond the social constructs that will undoubtedly help them in the long run. The session brought the ground reality of everything being gendered and that, we ourselves, gender it.

Report by Saeeda Hafiz



Gender Series Talk

Date: 27 June 2021

The speaker of the day Ms. Lohitha Jaikar, a social researcher and facilitator who possesses expertise in areas of social welfare, emotional intelligence, life skills, business, and communication skills. The session was on Gender Empowerment Health Perspective.

The session was very informative and it ended with the question on how to bridge the gap to balance empowerment and health.

Report by S.Rithika



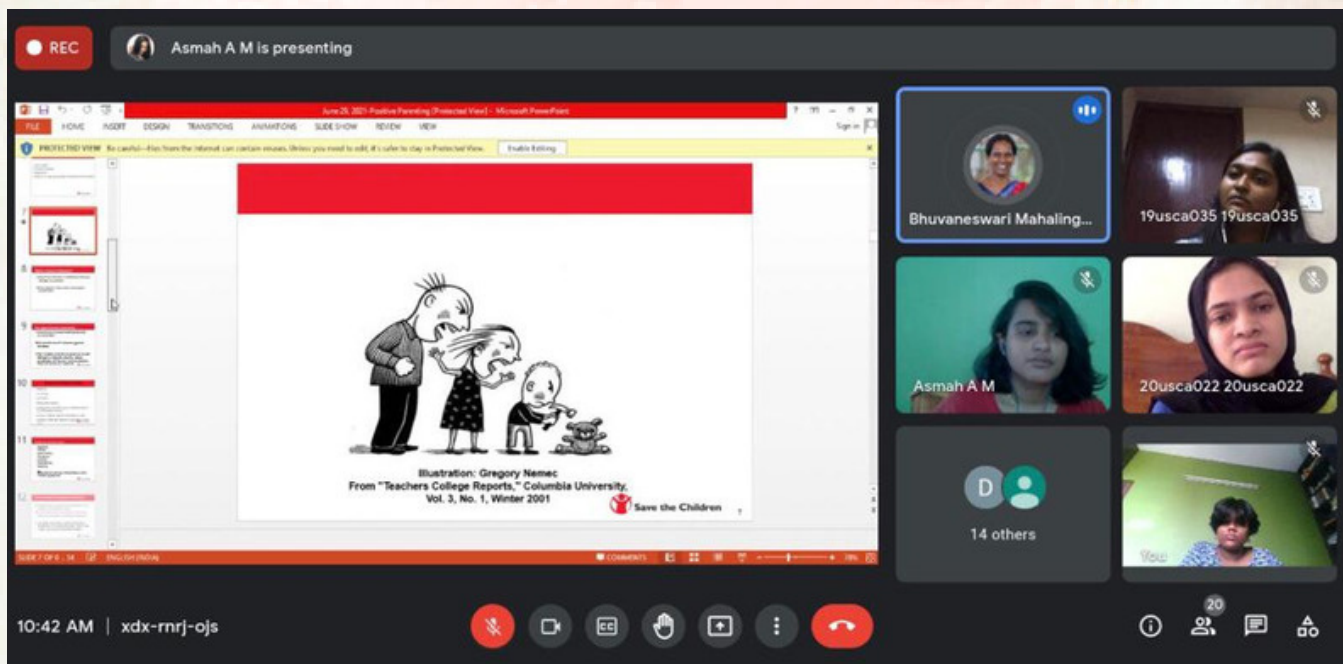
Gender Series Talk

Date: 29 June 2021

Dr. Bhuvaneshwari, social worker, who has worked with international platforms including the UN, and has worked closely with child wellbeing.

Dr. Bhuvaneshwari enlightened students on Positive Socialisation with the understanding of corporal punishment, child socialization, and how it affects gender socialization in children to a great extent.

Report by Vashenee



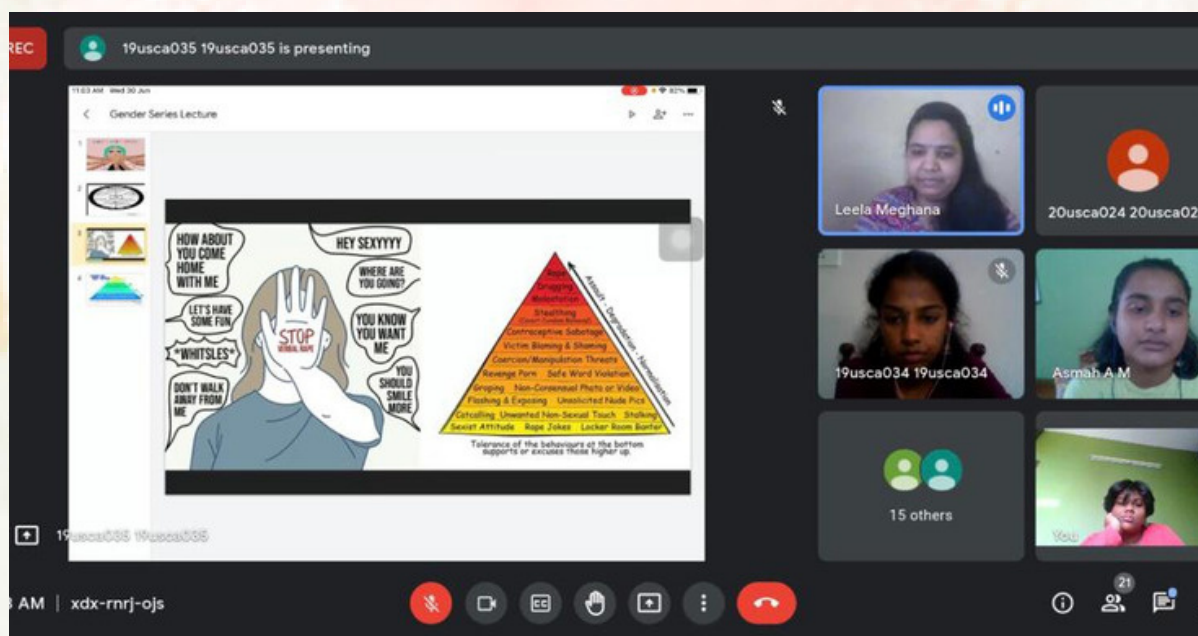
Gender Series Talk

Date: 30 June 2021

The speaker of the day was Ms. Leela Meghna, who is pursuing her Master of Social Work degree from Stella Maris College. Touching upon topics of consent, rape culture, and methods of counteracting rape culture, the session was indeed an enriching experience. She shared instances of sexual assault and how the response to the same was deeply rooted in victim-blaming and misogyny.

The four-day series has been very informative and the participants' feedback was also very positive regarding the topics discussed and the conduct of the series.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath



Workshop on Research Methodology

Date: 17 July 2021

The speaker of the day was Dr. Neerja Rao, former Head of the Department of Sociology, Stella Maris College.

The session aimed at addressing the intricacies of carrying out research. Dr. Neeraja Rao started out by breaking down the queries the GC team had regarding the research topic they had decided on for the academic year 2021-22. The research proposal was explored in-depth and clarity regarding the same was achieved.

The workshop had been successful by enriching the participants with clarity and information in research methodology.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath

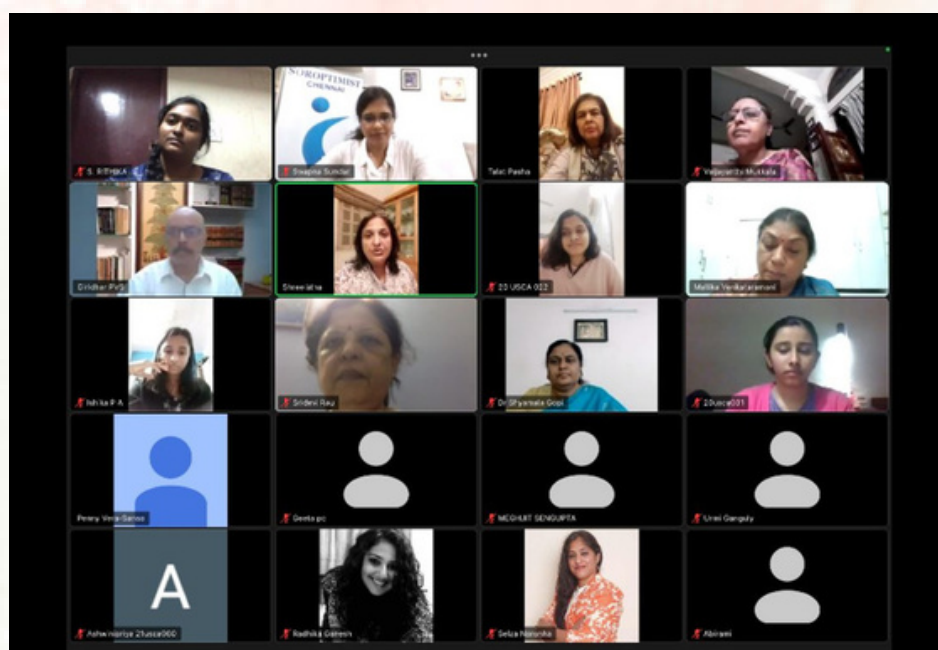


Panel Discussion by The Soroptimist International Date: 8 December 2021

The Department of Sociology has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Soroptimist International in creating awareness about gender issues. The first activity in collaboration with Soroptimist International, an intercollegiate mini- documentary making competition, to commemorate the United Nation's 16 days of activism campaign on Elimination of Violence against Women.

The panel discussion aimed at highlighting women as the custodians of culture. The welcome address was rendered by Ms. Swapna Sundar, followed by Advocate Giridhar who moderated the session. Ms. Shashikala, Ms. Talat Pasha, Ms. Geeta, Mr. Meghjit, Ms. Radhika, and Ms. Penne engaged the audience with their valuable inputs into the topic.

Report by Saeeda Hafiz



Open Mic!

Date: 17 December 2021

Gender Center's first offline event- open mic was on the theme 'Embrace who you are'. The aim of the event was to provide a platform for the members of Gender Center to showcase all their talents and creativity.

The participants, as well as the audience thoroughly enjoyed the event which was evident from the positive feedback and engagement at the end of the session. The open mic platform really helped open up a lot of young talents in the Gender Center.

Report by Nikila M.R





International Women's Day Celebration 2022

Date: 8 March 2022

Gender Center's second offline event in 2022 was held on International women's day on 18th March, accompanied by a celebration.

The honourable chief guests of the day were Thirumathi Maheshwari Ravikumar IAS and Dr. Gomati Narasiman, shared her insights about health and fitness for women which is a predominant and often ignored issue in contemporary society.

The cultural component was fulfilled by the office bearers of the Gender Center, who delivered a captivating and informative mime performance highlighting women's security in cyberspaces.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath, S. Rithika and S. Aparna





Webinar on Law of Desire

Date: 18 March 2022

Dr. Madhavi Menon prompted the participants to embark on a journey of critical thinking about the topic with her thought-provoking statements. The professor explored desire as a concept and its ability to be a matter of public and private concern at the same time thus being subjected to legal scrutiny and legislation in the public sphere.

She brought attention to real-life cases which highlighted instances of a woman's decision regarding her own desire always belonging to her father, then her husband and then her son- always passing onto the men in her life in a perpetual cycle under presumed authority.

The session was successful and modelled as an interactive one.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath and Ridha Fatihma V.A





Workshop on sexual harassment at workplaces

Date: 26 March 2022

Dr. Vengadamani, Dean of Amity Global Business School presided over the session. Dr. Vengadamani spoke about sexual harassment in the corporate sector and gave the meaning of sexual harassment and safety measures that one should be aware of in order to protect themselves from sexual harassment in the workplace.

Ms. Shanas Fathima, a member of Soroptimist International Chennai, spoke on gender sensitivity and created awareness about micro-aggressive behaviour that women might face in the public sphere.

The next speaker Ms. Swapna Sundar, President, Soroptimist International Chennai, elaborated on Internal Complaints Committee and its functions related to sexual harassment cases. It was a very informative and insightful session.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath, S. Rithika and Saeeda Hafiz





Workshop and Research Publication

Date: 9 May 2022

The last event of Gender Centre for the year 2021-22 was a basic workshop on 'Gender and Sexuality'. This workshop also marked the unveiling of the research publication of the extensive research carried out by the Gender Center senior office bearers and the research team from the third year of the Sociology department.

Dr Ramakrishnan from SAATHI, renowned theatre artist, activist and writer Ms Revathi, and social activist and philanthropist Ms. Manonmani from All India Democratic Women Association (AIDWA) were the chief guests of the day.

A panel discussion with panellists; Dr L Ramakrishnan, Mx Delphina, Mx Shiva and Mr Ramesh engaged the students with their valuable inputs on gender and sexuality.

Principal, Dr. Sr. Rosy Joseph unveiled the research report publication, titled "A Sociological Analysis on The Awareness of Sexual Harassment Among College Students in Chennai City". The Gender Center proudly accomplished its plan of action for the year on a productive and satisfying note.

Report by Abirami Raveendranath, S. Rithika and Saeeda Hafiz





CREATIVE CORNER



Sappho's Scarlet Stain

Lovers and monsters, lusting after this body
Men who strip me of personhood
I'm simply an object now
Only existing to satisfy hungry eyes
And wandering hands
Of men who could be my fathers

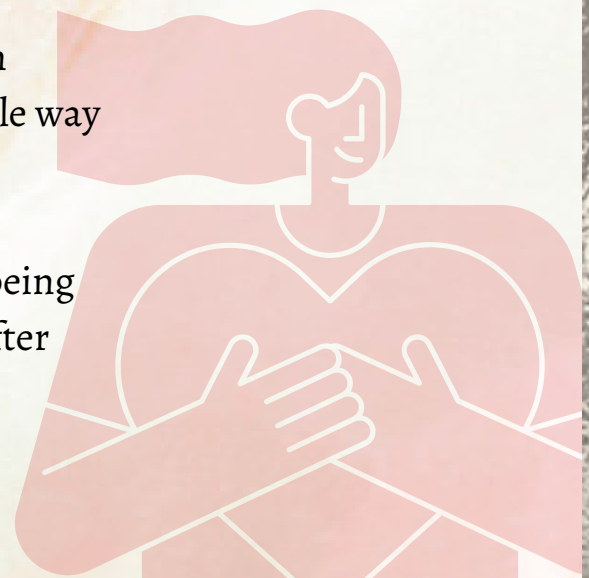
Women who praise my womanhood
I'm a person with feelings and emotions now
Dainty and flower-like
Fragile and soul deep
Is their love
For those who portray this calm softness
Serene and lovely
No swords of protective chivalry
Or the raging hardness of masculinity

I'm Sappho's scarlet stain
Upon brown earth
I'm Achilles' Patroclus
Sweet and blushing
Atop the tallest tree
I'm the Love witch
Aching and earning
For love not of this earth
Yet so human, in every possible way

In the eyes of a woman
I'm more than my physical being
Not just an object to lust after
But, finally, a person.

-Abirami

19/USCA/o6o



The Woman

The Woman is faceless yet she is all of us. She embodies every tag that women are labelled with - she is both a saint and a sinner, a goddess and a whore, an embodiment of purity and of unchastity.

She carries multitudes within her, yet she lives on with all these identities rushing and colliding inside her very being. Her body is a canvas for society - it doesn't belong to her. Every part of her belongs to another - to those to whom she is bound by familial obligations and ties. She breaks free sometimes and is shackled again at other times. She doesn't cry for help for she is not a victim. She is a warrior who yields the sword of her femininity and proudly wears it while shredding through a cruel world engulfed by the malicious snake called patriarchy.

- Abirami Raveendranath

19/USCA/o6o





In the hype of patrilineal lineage and historical practices, it has manifested itself. The changing attitude towards domineering is highly conspicuous in contemporary societies, at least to some extent. Male fantasies all around! Let's slam the patriarchy.

-Annet

20/USCA/005

As A Woman

We as a Woman were experienced and still Experiencing Male domination Almost everywhere In India. We don't want to be grateful for the father or Any male member of the family who allows women to go for a job or To study or to marry someone who they love!

The term "allow" doesn't mean you got your "liberty"

Liberty means not to get permission for the right thing you are going to do, or the right thing you wish to do!

Women are not asking for permission or any Incentives to run their life,
All we are fighting is "The rights" and "The equality"
YOU GO GIRL!

-Trisha K

20/USCA/047





In an era where women scarcely were allowed to take decisions for themselves, these women took a confident stride and became emboldened through their choice to pursue a career. They chose to break free from the reins of patriarchy. Seeing their photo reminds me of how far we have come and how far we are yet to go

Anagha S
21/USCA/048

Together

No road has always been straight without stones and gravels.

Countless women around the globe for millions of years have lowered their heads to the domination of men. Whether it is called as a male dominating society or a patriarchal society, the effects and struggles faced by women had always been the same. As confident as always they focused the light at the end of the tunnel. They moved forward to new destinies, creating new stories. Stories which inturn changed the destiny of mankind. Women escaped the strong clutches of patriarchy. They learned space theories and mathematical equations instead of age -old recipes.

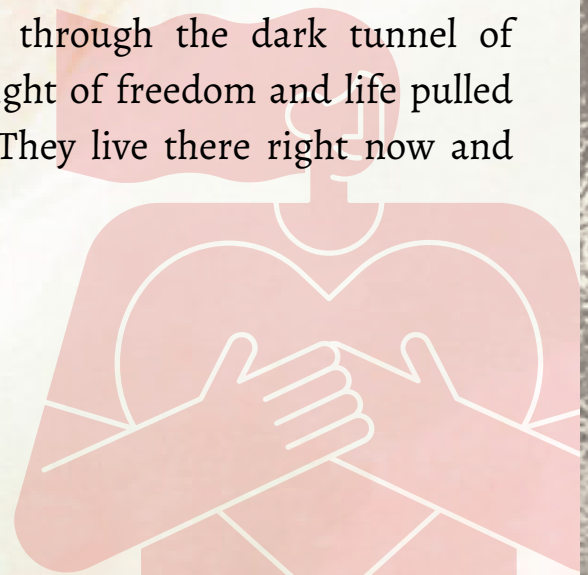
They moved to the top of companies rather than standing behind the patriarchal lords. They even crossed the boundaries of earth and flew to the space.

They gave voice to their mind and raised it. They stood for them and for others. They created a better a life and lived it.

They travelled a lot through the dark tunnel of Patriarchy. But the light of freedom and life pulled them to a new life. They live there right now and always will.

Neenu Elza Zachariah

21/USCA/007



We-men

The sand clock figure is what they expected her to be,
Now, her 'groped' perfect skin glows to her eyes in darkness,
Like UV lighted fingerprints on the grips of the weapons that the murderers held.
Rubbing over the unpleasant touch day after day,
Contemplation of how independent and a free bird she was,
With feathers from her ancestor's chopped wings terrified her as she stood alone.

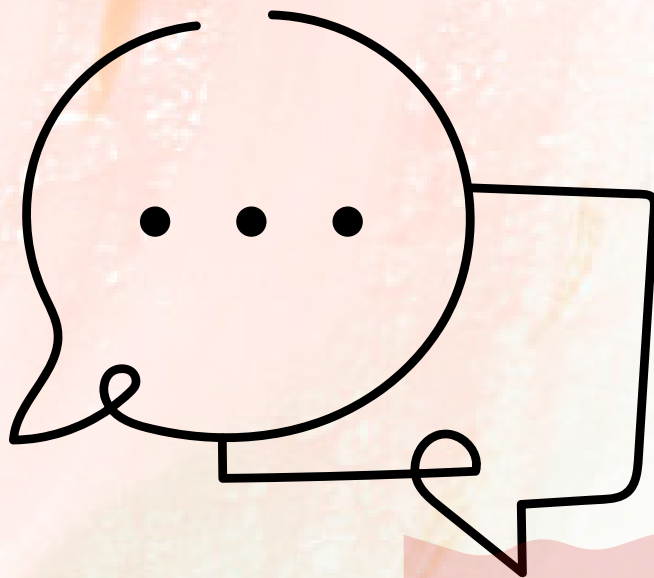
She was a female and not just a non-male in 2022,
Feminism racing down the aisle of every Indian household,
Not everyone's brain cells acted like sponges to absorb down the positive extreme,
At least Do's and don'ts's don't come with "for he" and "for she" as subtitles in few,
There's hope but no determination.

Law says gender reveal is still opposed and is a crime here,
Her uterus didn't hold X and Y in different altitudes,
Physically designed to house all sexes with impartiality,
Are we to 'adjust' into this not-yet totally changed setting or do we deserve it all?
Just asking for it, nah, demanding for it.

Sushanthikaa M
21/USCA/002



FEEDBACK



Members speak...

All I can say is that the Gender Center is an amazing, powerful space where everyone can learn, unlearn, and relearn together. For the chances I've been given, I will always be grateful. Thank you Gender Centre!

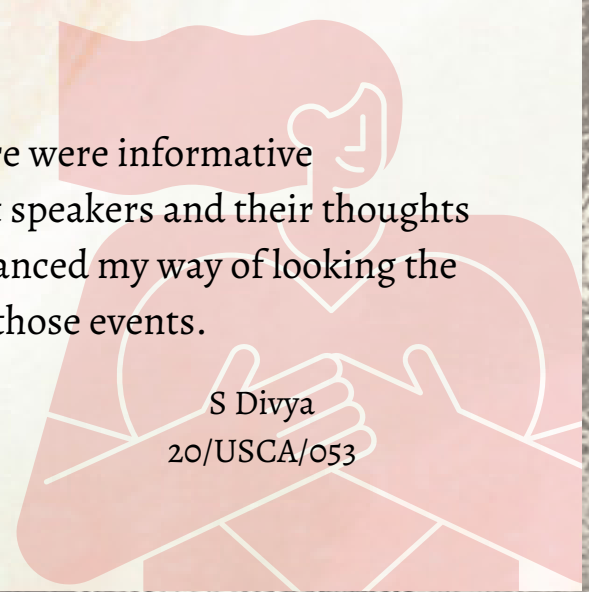
Sharika
19/USCA/o75

The gender centre has exposed us to various topics, right from sexuality and gender to the different social issues people face every day. The guest lectures, seminars, and programmes have opened up opportunities for students to explore various topics on gender and its interrelated issues and have helped us learn the reality of society. The Gender Centre has worked rigorously towards breaking the bias by providing us with opportunities through its activities. Moreover, the various lectures and programmes are not just enlightening but also make learning fun.

Sanaa
20/USCA/o43

The events conducted by the gender centre were informative. I got an opportunity to meet and listen to different speakers and their thoughts and life experience, gender centre events has enhanced my way of looking at society. I got good exposure from those events.

S Divya
20/USCA/o53

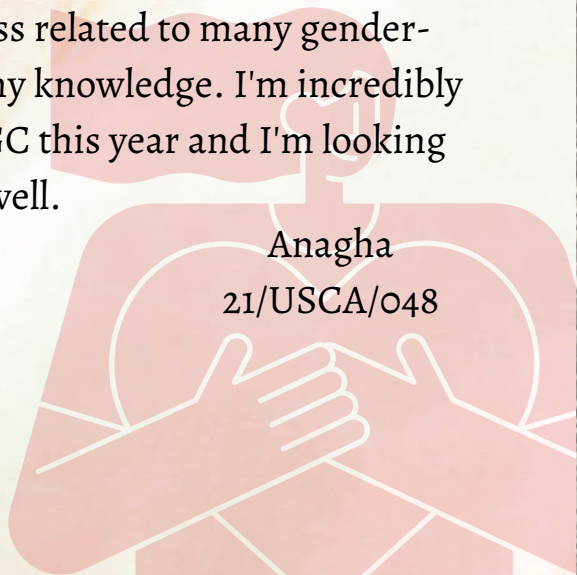


Gender centre appeared to me when I was stuck with myself! It was a safe place and very educating place. Gender centre taught me about the depth of another side of the world which we missed to look at, worry about, to respect. I wish our students get to know the warmth of the Gender centre.

Disha.N
20/UAFA/108

Since the beginning of the year, being part of the Gender Center has been so rewarding. Through Open-Mic the first offline event, helped establish a connection with artists, allowing us to express our views through poetry, dance, music and so on. I've attended a variety of workshops organised by GC with resource persons who had much to offer in terms of their knowledge, tackling difficult topics of conversation in a way that easily reached us, students. The emphasis was on bringing up the levels of awareness related to many gender-related issues and queer identity and helped add to my knowledge. I'm incredibly happy to have attended all the events organised by GC this year and I'm looking forward to future events as well.

Anagha
21/USCA/048



Office Bearers speak...


Hello readers! I Rithika president of Gender Center 2021-2022. My Journey of SMC-GC has been amazing with an abundance of learning, unlearning and relearning.

In our GC room we have this quote that I randomly came up with for our reading corner “people who read lead” , I will modify it a bit after this three years of beautiful journey “Those in the Gender Center will definitely lead”. In a world of shaming and stigmatisation a center like Gender Center reshapes us as humans, and teaches important lessons. I still remember sitting on the first day of college orientation, our previous gender Center office bearers put up a play that caught all my attention, so I joined the Center for its motto BE YOU! The events conducted by the Gender Center made me want to be the core executive member (2019-2020), co-treasurer (2020-2021). I was so welcomed. The best part of GC is we grow into a person, it's ok if we are not aware of certain things GC always gives us the opportunity to learn. Every event organised did have a great impact on me. There was a lot of learning and interaction with different sets of people from different identities and fields. Being part of the organising committee helped me gain leadership abilities, we were always guided and backed by our Director Dr. Sasitha who taught us to always bring the best out of us. Working in a team was filled with lots of fun and has taught me to put myself in others' shoes. Gender Center truly is the place that taught me to accept and respect people for who they are. Gender Center is undoubtedly the place to grow as a better person, I am sure the center will continue to positively impact a lot of people.



Rithika S
President

Gender Center was like a home to me; it was one space where I was not judged but made to think rationally and question many conventionally fed ideas. The ground reality and the understanding of gender, sexuality, mental health, menstruation, sex-ed, and sexual harassment was not just a mere seminar or activity. It truly kindled many questions that eventually enabled me to be a more sensitive yet sensible person who has grown with the GC for the 3 years. The best thing is that in GC, there's always scope to learn, re-learn, and unlearn, nothing to be reticent at all. You always get space to say "I don't know" and get the profound knowledge as a takeaway. The GC Fam comprised of the Director, faculty advisors, Core members, and the members of the Gender Center is worth reliving again if given a chance.



Vashenee
Treasurer

I've been a part of the amazing journey that the Center had to provide for the past three years, as a core executive member (2019-20), as the Vice- President (2020-21). and the Secretary (2021-22). I had the privilege of working with three sets of teams who were so unique and efficient in what they did. They have been a source of inspiration for me, both professionally and personally. The skills I have learnt in these years- time management, team coordination, empathy- have prepared me to be a leader and bring as much awareness I can about gender and sexuality. I've been passionate about LGBTQ+ activism since 10th grade and the GC proved to be a space where I can make some sort of change in the general perception of the community, however minute. The GC has helped me grow into my identity as an androgynous bisexual person, precisely because it was a place of acceptance, free of heteronormative expectations and judgements. Every event that was organised had an impact on me, even as I was involved in the organising. I got to interact with all these amazing people who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community, something I've only dreamed of while being closeted. I got to connect with them, which 16 year old me wouldn't have even thought possible, and be inspired by their stories. The GC is truly a place for change and I'm sure I will witness it flourishing in the coming years!



Abirami

Secretary

Be who you are and say
what you feel, because
those who mind don't
matter, and those who
matter don't mind.

BERNARD M. BARUCH



