



Women's and Gender Studies

Margaret Jacobs

From the Director

In August of this year I became director of Women's and Gender Studies. Although it's been busy, it has been a joy to join this thriving program with its engaged and engaging faculty and students and to be able to work with our dedicated office team: associate director Rose Holz, long-time secretary Glenda Moore, graduate assistant Melissa Swihart, and our work study student worker Chelsey Gallagher. I am very grateful to all the past Women's Studies directors, particularly Joy Ritchie and Barbara DiBernard, who built such a healthy program.

For those of you who haven't met me, let me introduce myself. In 2004, I became an associate professor in the History Department at UNL, where I teach classes mostly on the history of women and gender in the U.S. and the American West. I am particularly interested in connecting the history of the West with other colonized areas around the globe. In my research, I specialize in the history of

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North Star Internship

by Bronwyn Milliken, Junior Women's and Gender Studies Major

This past semester I have had the exciting opportunity to tutor a Sudanese student at North Star High School named Yar Kok. What I did not realize when signing up for this internship was that it would end up being me who would be tutored by Yar. Consistently in my journals this semester I have noted how ignorant I am. Before my tutoring sessions with Yar I didn't even know where Sudan was on a map, and perhaps even worse than that, I was unaware of the terrible war that is being fought there.

Each week Yar and I meet for about an hour. During this time we mostly talk, but lately she has had homework that she needs help with. She is a senior this year, and we have begun to prepare for the ACT. I am amazed at how well Yar speaks English, especially since she moved here only four years ago without knowing a word of the language. While she struggles with grammar like any non-native speaker, she comprehends very well.

Yar is twenty years old. Yar's mother lives in Egypt still, and Yar lives with her dad and seven siblings. Her parents are divorced, and she has not seen her mother since she moved to the United States. She works daily at the deli in Selleck Hall. She would

WSA Announcements:

There's a lot going on with this year's Women's Studies Association. A new name has been decided upon and soon the group will call themselves SAGE (Student Association for Gender Equality).

Some new events have been planned as well, including a concert on December 1 featuring female musicians. As an event which coincides with World AIDS day, a portion of the admission fees will go to AIDS research and relief. More details to follow.

Currently, the group meets on Wednesdays at 8pm at the Women's Center (3rd floor of the Nebraska Union). Students interested in joining can get more information by e-mailing Lisa Lux at wsa.unl@gmail.com.

like to move back to Sudan in the future, though she would like to attend college in the United States first. She is considering Peru State for college next year.

I would encourage other students to participate in this program. Not only is it an excellent opportunity to meet new people, but it also allows students to learn about other cultures. This is especially helpful to students who have never traveled abroad.

Roundtable on Women, Gender, and Globalization

By Lisa Lux, Senior Women's and Gender Studies Major

The first Women's and Gender Studies Colloquium took place on September 21 and was a roundtable discussion of globalization and its effects on women and gender. The panel consisted of Dr. Dawne Curry (Dept. of History and Institute for Ethnic Studies), Dr. Chantal Kalisa (Dept. of Modern Languages), Dr. Seanna Oakley (Dept. of English), Dr. Marcela Raffaelli (Dept. of Psychology and Institute for Ethnic Studies), and Carleen Sanchez (Dept. of Anthropology and Geography and Institute for Ethnic Studies), and was moderated by Dr. Kalenda Eaton (Dept. of English and Institute for Ethnic Studies).

First in the discussion it was necessary to establish how each panelist defined globalization. Some definitions seemed simple enough; globalization is an economic exchange, or an economic and cultural exchange. Others were more specific; globalization is the expansion of a capitalist system that has been at work for 500 years and eroding other economic systems. Also, although the term "globalization" may not encourage thinking about the individual, it brings economic, political, and cultural interconnections that affect local economy, politics, and culture as well as individual persons.

So how does "globalization" affect women? Globalization, it could be argued, has been good for health care and technology worldwide, but it has also made it possible for factories to inject female employees with mandatory contraception each month, and the disruption of the local economy by globalization frequently leaves women with less control over their economic situations, their bodies, and their family lives than ever before.

Women can perhaps be exposed to ideas and gain exposure to feminist movements around the world. This exposure may be helpful to women of the upper and perhaps the middle class. However, for the vast majority of women, exposure to an idea still leaves them without any real power or avenue for change. Also, it is important to note that the "cultural exchange" that goes on tends not to be an exchange so much as an exposure to western ideals, many of which ignore local values, customs, and culture. "Our" feminist movement may not be "their" feminist movement -- meaning that even when an attempt is made to use globalization for good, it frequently fails to come at the situation from a global point of view. It seems that it is not so much an issue of globalization as it is an issue of westernization of the globe.

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New Working Group on International Women's and Gender Issues:

Women's and Gender Studies has started a new Working Group on International Women's and Gender Issues to increase campus visibility of issues relating to transnational feminisms and human rights. We meet informally to discuss articles and books and to plan events and activities on campus. The group is open to anyone. To learn more, please contact Chantal Kalisa at mkalisa2@unl.edu or Margaret Jacobs at mjacobs3@unl.edu.

Dr. Ann McGrath Lecture

By Tonia Compton, Doctoral Candidate, Department of History

Professor Ann McGrath's lecture, "Polygamy and Interracial Marriage in Colonial Histories: Cases from the Cherokee Nation and Queensland, Australia," examined in a comparative model the role of polygamous marriages on the frontiers of Australia's Queensland and among the Cherokee of the eastern United States. McGrath noted that this research is of particular importance because scholarship has generally focused on formal, monogamous marriages in frontier settings. Polygamy, however, despite being a trope for barbarism and the uncivilized, served as an institution that provided key opportunities for colonizers. White men commonly married native women, granting them access to indigenous cultures and power structures; these marriages at times mirrored the polygamous practices of Aborigines or Cherokees, evidence that native peoples exerted some control and power in forming these marital unions.

McGrath noted that in both Australia and the United States, laws were adopted that affected the ability of both whites and natives to practice polygamy. The Cherokee first adopted laws designed to prevent white men from practicing polygamy with Cherokee women in the 1820s. In Australia, there was no overt ban on polygamy because of legislation that required couples to obtain special permission to enter into an interracial marriage, permissions that were rarely granted. Professor McGrath's lecture challenged scholars to look more closely at the intersection of marriage practices among both indigenous peoples and white colonizers; in addition, McGrath's scholarship questions the historical interpretation of marriage that views monogamy as the highest point of human evolution and the most modern practice of marriage.

Faculty Achievements

English Dept. faculty member **Grace Bauer's** book, *Beholding Eye*, a collection of poems about visual art and artists, was published in July by CustomWords. *Umpteenth Ways of Looking at a Possum: Critical and Creative Responses to Everette Maddox*, an anthology she edited with Julie Kane, was published this October by Xavier University of New Orleans. In early October, she read at the Nebraska Book Festival and at the Sheldon Art Gallery as part of the Wave Bus Poetry Tour and again at the Clean Part Reading Series. Yet another book of poems, *Retreats & Recognitions*, was chosen by judge Robert Pack from over 700 entries as winner of the Idaho Poetry Prize, and will be published in February by Lost Horse Press.

Mary Beck, Animal Sciences, has been appointed chair of the Animal and Veterinary Sciences Department in the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences at Clemson University in Clemson, SC, as of February, 2007. The department has 22 faculty members and nearly 400 majors. Join us in congratulating Mary at our winter reception. (Details for this event on the back page of this newsletter.)

English Department faculty member **Maureen Honey's** new book, *Shadowed Dreams: Women's Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance*, revised edition, has just been published by Rutgers University Press (Oct 2006).

It features 36 women poets from that important era, 18 of whom are new to the volume. This is the first anthology to be exclusively devoted to New Negro women poets and the first to reprint so much of their poetry. *Shadowed Dreams* has never been out of print since it first appeared in 1989. This is the first anthology to include lesbian poetry from this era and the first to provide a critical introduction framing the poets' choice of imagery as alluding to gender and race issues formerly overlooked. This past summer, she made a research trip to the Schomburg Center for Black Culture in Harlem. A Research Council Faculty Fellowship funded the trip. She looked at the papers of an important Harlem Renaissance woman poet, editor, and artist, Gwendolyn Bennett.

Margaret Jacobs, History, won the Western History Association's Arrel M. Gibson Award for the best essay of the year on the history of Native Americans published in any journal or edited volume. The award recognizes her article "Maternal Colonialism: White Women and Indigenous Child Removal in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940," *Western Historical Quarterly* 36 (Winter 2005), for its significance in the field, contributions to knowledge, and literary quality.

Jeannette Jones, History, published "'Gorilla Trails in Paradise': Carl Akeley, Mary

Bradley, and the American Search for the Missing Link," *Journal of American Culture* 29:3 (September 2006): 321-336.

English Dept. faculty member **Joy Ritchie's** new book, *Teaching Rhetorica: Theory, Pedagogy, Practice* (with her colleague Kate Ronald), has been published by Heinemann Boynton/Cook. This book follows their anthology of women's rhetoric, *Available Means*,

the first comprehensive collection of women's rhetorical theory and practice. *Teaching Rhetorica* presents the diversity of practices scholars have developed as they have taught women's rhetorical theory and demonstrates the potential of women's rhetoric to expand our understanding of rhetoric, race, gender, and transnational perspectives.

Student News and Alumnae/i Updates

Elizabeth Cole-Fay (Women's and Gender Studies graduate, 2000) will graduate in December with her M.Ed. from Northern Arizona University. She was recently accepted into the Center for Progressive Leadership's Arizona Political Leaders Fellowship.

Chelsea Hammond, Lisa Lux, Maria Moreno, and Dene Oglesby (current WSA members) recently travelled to South Dakota with local Planned Parenthood staff and supporters as part of the (successful) canvassing campaign to overturn the state's abortion ban.

Christine Stewart-Nuñez (Presidential Graduate Fellow, and Doctoral Candidate in English with a Specialization in Women's and Gender Studies) has just had her second book of poetry *Unbound and Branded* published by Finishing Line Press.

Michael Whelan (Women's and Gender Studies graduate, 2006) recently moved to Los Angeles, California, where he is attending the MFA-Creative Writing graduate program for fiction writing at Antioch University. He is also working as a daily web editor and editorial assistant for The Advocate, as well as assisting The Bisexual Foundation (The American Institute of Bisexuality) in their efforts of getting their organization off the ground. The Bisexual Foundation is dedicated to educating others on bisexual issues and leading the way in equal rights and recognition for bisexual people.

Michelle Zych (Women's and Gender Studies graduate, 2004) attended a Women's Leadership Conference in Omaha, NE earlier this year and had the opportunity to meet Keynote Speaker/idol, Gloria Steinem not once, not twice, but three times!



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Poetry Reading

“Pink Icing and Island Blues’: A Reading by Pam Mordecai”

By Ashley Gruba, Junior Sociology Major and Women’s and Gender Studies Minor

On Thursday, October 26, Pamela Mordecai came to UNL to talk to the student and faculty community and to read aloud her amazing poetry. The event was held in the Bailey Library in Andrews Hall. Mordecai is a writer and poet from Jamaica, who currently lives in Canada. She has written various books of poetry, including the most recent *Certifiable* and *The True Blue of Islands*. She has also written textbooks, children’s books, short stories, and books on Caribbean culture and literature.

Mordecai was funny, bright, and very expressive. She read her poems with passion and talked to her listeners like they were her friends. Mordecai began by reading a few of her poems for children, instantly charming everyone and causing laughter with her voices and gestures. She also read many of her more painful and sad poems, including “The Story of Nellie,” and “My sister muse” and “My sister goes off” from *Certifiable*. She also read a poem from *The True Blue of Islands* that she had dedicated to her brother who was murdered in 2004. Writing, as Mordecai put it, “gets the bad stuff out of you.” Mordecai talked about some of the different things that inspire her, like the image of a beautiful drunk homeless woman in Toronto. Mordecai also talked about how we, the audience, can understand and appreciate poetry.

It was a great honor to have Pamela Mordecai come to UNL. She is an amazing woman and poet. She is funny, creative, and a sweet lady. Her beautiful work deserves to be recognized and read often. Mordecai has definitely brought out the poet-lover in me, and I am sure she has also brought out the poet-lover in everyone else after her visit.

Our Spring Colloquium Series will continue our focus on *Globalization and International Issues*. The series will include:

- a roundtable of community activists who work with refugee and immigrant women
- **Dr. Carleen Sanchez** of UNL’s Department of Anthropology and Geography, Institute for Ethnic Studies, and Women’s and Gender Studies who will speak on indigenous women and globalization in Central America
- **Dr. Olíva Espin**, an educational psychologist at San Diego State University who specializes on issues of immigration and sexuality

Details on these talks will be available in January.

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From the Director

cross-cultural relations between women.

Before settling in Lincoln, I lived and worked for seven years in southern New Mexico at New Mexico State University. Before that, I had spent my adult life shuttling between Colorado, California, and Oregon (with two brief stints in Europe.) Like our former director Joy Ritchie, I spent most of my childhood in Colorado. (In fact, Joy and I even grew up in the same area of Colorado.) I still feel most at home in the mountains. When I’m not being a professor, I can be found ambling the paths of Wilderness Park with my border collie, pedaling the bike trails, cooking (for pleasure), struggling to learn flamenco guitar, or being a wife and mother of two boys, 10 and 14.

Just in case you haven’t been opening all those e-mails I send out, let me fill you in on what we’ve been doing this fall. We’ve organized and sponsored our fall colloquium on Globalization and International Issues, hosted receptions for visiting scholars Mary Beth Norton and Ann McGrath, and co-sponsored a talk (with Geography) by feminist geographer Karen Morin. Our curriculum committee has met several times to revamp our requirements to better meet the needs of our students and the objectives of our program. And we have inaugurated a new Working Group on International Women’s and Gender Issues. This spring we will continue our colloquium series and help to sponsor the annual student conference, “No Limits.” A special thanks to Rose Holz for all of the work she has done to organize this year’s conference.

As director of the WGS program, I hope to continue to strengthen our new LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies minor, and to focus on another one of our strategic priorities, Global/Transnational Women’s and Gender Studies. I am also committed to maintaining the other less definable qualities of our program: a sense of community (I actually look forward to meetings with all of you!) and a space for truly interdisciplinary intellectual exchange.

Thanks for your patience with me as I adapt to this new role as administrator. Please feel free to contact me at 472-9300 or mjacobs3@unl.edu with any questions, concerns, suggestions, good jokes, or tasty recipes.

No Limits 2007: Call for Papers

“The Personal, the Political, and the Patriotic: No Limits 2007”

March 30-31, 2007 at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln

“No Limits” is an annual conference dedicated to crossing boundaries between disciplines and exploring a wide range of women’s and gender issues. This year’s theme borrows upon the feminist slogan of the 1970s as a way to reclaim the possibilities of dissent through both artistic expression and political activism. We invite proposals from undergraduates, graduate students, and recent graduates on any topic from any discipline related to women’s issues, lives, histories or cultures; feminism; or women’s and gender studies. Creative writing, visual arts, film, music, performances, and academic papers are all welcome. Proposals for individual presentations or pre-made panels are accepted.

Keynote and Featured Speakers include:

- Poet/Dramatist/Scholar Tatiana de la Tierra (author of *For the Hard Ones: A Lesbian Phenomenology/Para Las Duras: Una fenomenologia lesbiana*)
- Amy Miller (Legal Director of Nebraska’s American Civil Liberties Union)

Please include in your proposal each of the following items:

- An abstract of 250-400 words describing your project and its larger significance.
- Contact information: your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, e-mail and phone number MUST be on your abstract.
- Please also include the days you are available to present and any A/V equipment you might need. 15-20 minute presentations are expected. If you anticipate your presentation to exceed that time, please make a note of it on your proposal.

Proposals may be submitted two ways:

1. Electronically to:

nolimits2007@unl.edu

NOTE: please copy and paste the text of your proposal into the body of the e-mail as well as attach an electronic copy.

2. By mail to:

No Limits Conference
c/o Women’s and Gender Studies Program
327 Seaton Hall, University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Lincoln NE 68588-0632

*** Deadline for submissions is Friday, January 26th, 2007 ***

This conference is co-sponsored by the UNL Women’s Studies Association; the UNL, UNO and UNK Women’s (and Gender) Studies Programs; with additional contributions from The Center for Great Plains Studies, Department of English, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Latino and Latin American Studies, UNL Honors Program and others.

Call For Volunteers: No Limits 2007

Volunteers will be needed to assist with the following list of tasks:

Pre-Conference Tasks

- Making name tags
- Putting together conference folders
- Putting together moderator folders

Conference Tasks

- Moderators for panel presentations
- Staffing registration tables
- Errands for conference convenors
- Assisting visitors with disabilities
- Technology support

If you are interested in volunteering for these or other tasks,
please contact Rose Holz, rholz2@unl.edu

Congratulations to our December 2006 graduates!

Major: Beth Crow
Minors: Rhea Dowhower
Tiffany West

Please join us for our end of the semester party to honor our graduates and celebrate our program!
December 8, 2006, 5-7 p.m.,
Home of Margaret Jacobs, 4119 Sheridan Blvd.
474-9881

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The WGS program has a small budget with which to order books and DVDs/videos for the university library. If you have suggestions for materials to order, particularly in our priority areas of LGBTQ Studies and Global/Transnational Gender Issues, please contact our work study student worker, Chelsey Gallagher, at lilgallagher2005@hotmail.com or Margaret Jacobs at mjacobs3@unl.edu.
- This summer Rachael Robinson-Keilig (our summer GA and graduate student in Educational Psychology) compiled information from over 50 graduates of our program (in conjunction with a grant from ITLE). A report of her findings are available to view at the Women's and Gender Studies office in Seaton Hall.

For more information please visit our home on the web
www.unl.edu/womenssp

There you can find information on our upcoming conference, the major/minor/graduate specialization requirements for students, our class description booklet, our video library list, faculty bios, details on our scholarships and awards, and much more!

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