



Women's *and* Gender Studies

From the Director: Here's to Another 30 Years of Women's and Gender Studies!

By Margaret Jacobs, WGS Director

2007-2008 has been a full and satisfying year for Women's and Gender Studies. As we celebrated our 30th anniversary, we took time to remember and honor our past while also reflecting on where we want our program to go in the next several decades. Our 30th-anniversary banquet, held in conjunction with the Women's Center, was the culminating event of our year-long focus on Celebrating 30 Years of Women's (and Gender) Studies.

This year we have also been moving in new directions. We have welcomed six new faculty:



Julia Schleck
English

Meghan Davidson
Educational Psychology



Anne Duncan
Classics & Religious Studies

Dawne Curry
History



Iker González-Allende
Modern Languages

Anchalee (Joy)
Panigabutra-Roberts
University Libraries



We have revised our curriculum to make it clearer and more streamlined for our students. We now offer six stand-alone courses and for the first time will offer three courses in the first 5-week summer session. Our new Special Topics class (WMNS 498/898) enables us to offer new courses, such as Women, Gender, and Medicine in the US: Historical Perspectives, this summer. We are in the process of developing several new cross-listed classes, including Gender and Cultural Perspectives on the Environment and Feminist Economics.

Our emphasis areas in LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies and Transnational Feminism continue to shape the program. Through the strategic planning process and the colloquium series this year, we have identified an additional emphasis area in Women, Gender, Science, and Environment that we would like to develop.

Thanks to all of our faculty and students for participating in and supporting our program. Here's to another 30 years of Women's and Gender Studies at UNL.



WGS Colloquium Series, Roundtable:

“Studying Nature and the Environment:

Why Gender Matters”

By Carrie Walker, Doctoral Student, English

On Wednesday, January 28th, Professors Donna Woudenberg and Patti Boehner gave a presentation entitled, “Studying Nature and the Environment: Why Gender Matters.” During their presentation, Woudenberg and Boehner gave an overview of their class, “Gender and Cultural Perspectives on the Environment” (NRES 496/896), which they teach on East Campus. The focus of the talk included how patriarchal systems and globalization limit women’s access to and control of critical natural resources in developing nations.

Professor Woudenberg discussed specific complications surrounding water accessibility—including time spent waiting for water and the vulnerability of women while traveling to water sources. She also explained how women perform the majority of agricultural work but own less than two percent of the land, and have less access to technological resources, educational opportunity, and financial support.

Continuing with these ideas, Professor Boehner introduced the ideas surrounding eco-feminism, a theoretical perspective which interrogates the link between the oppression of women and the degradation of nature. As she explained, under one model of eco-feminism both women and nature are often giving, fertile, and, thus, exploitable under our capitalist, anti-nature system. Professor Boehner also argued that, in many cases, women first notice environmental problems more quickly because, as they make up the majority of agricultural workers, women are more immediately impacted by degradation of natural resources.

For additional reading on these issues, Professors Woudenberg and Boehner suggest *Capitalism as if the World Mattered* by Jonathon Porritt and Amory B. Lovins as well as work by Thea Colburn and Vandana Shiva.



WGS 30-Year Anniversary Banquet

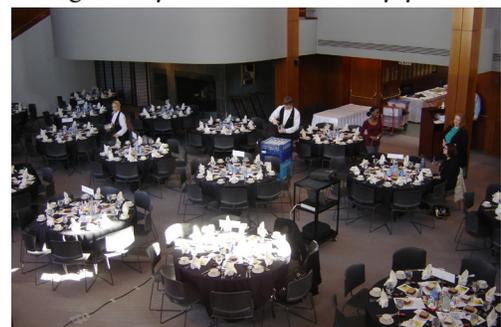
By Danielle Charleston,
Senior, Political Science
and WGS Major, LGBTQ/
Sexuality Minor



What better way to celebrate your 30th birthday than with family and friends? That’s how the Women’s and Gender Studies program spent the evening of March 13th with faculty, students, and WGS supporters at the Women’s Center annual banquet. It was a celebration which retraced the history and fight to create a Women’s Studies program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, one which dates officially back to 1976 (when the major was first created) but began several years earlier. Alright so we’re a wee bit past the 30 year point but who’s really counting anymore?

Part of the banquet was spent honoring those who planned and ultimately created a major and minor in Women’s Studies, including Linda Pratt, now Executive VP and Provost. The banquet was also fortunate to have several other distinguished speakers from the university to help celebrate our achievements. These included David Manderscheid (Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences), Matt Hecker (Dean of Students and Director of Judicial Affairs) and Barbara Couture (Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs), who offered words of praise and encouragement to the Women’s and Gender Studies program and everyone involved. In addition, the birthday celebration allowed students and faculty to share their personal experiences with the program, illustrating the achievements and true community and family that has become Women’s and Gender Studies here at UNL.

In the end, our party was a success with a full house, a birthday song, and a bit of birthday cake to top it all off. To all our supporters, sponsors, students, faculty, and friends, we are eternally grateful and look forward to celebrating with you all in the many years to come.



Celebrating 30 Year of Women's and Gender Studies

Continued from page 2



Women's Center Table

Thanks to all the students, faculty and staff who have come and gone.
Your efforts have made Women's and Gender Studies what it is!



Sharlette Schwenninger



Dean David Manderscheid



Matt Hecker



Barbara Couture



Freshman WGS Student Shasta Inman



Ryan Fette



Maria Moreno



Jan Deeds



Helen Moore



Faculty/Staff Achievements

Grace Bauer, Professor of English, will be reading from her two recent books of poetry, *Beholding the Eye* and *Retreats & Recognitions*, at 3:30pm on Monday, April 28th in the Dudley Bailey Library, Andrews Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln City Campus. Grace's recent publications include poems in *Southern Indiana Review* and the anthology *Nebraska Presence*, short stories in *The Los Angeles Review* and *Chariton Review*, and a nonfiction essay in the *Santa Ana Review*.

Susan Belasco, Professor of English, is the co-editor of *The Bedford Anthology of American Literature*, Volumes 1 and 2, published this year by Bedford/St. Martin's. The project includes the two volumes of the anthology; a DVD of sound, images, and video clips; a website; five newly-edited novels designed to accompany the anthology; and an instructor's guide. Current and former WGS faculty members have been involved in this project. **Tom Gannon** serves on the editorial advisory board for Volume 1, and **Amelia Montes** served as a reviewer for Volume 2. **Venetria Patton** (now at Purdue University) is the editor of *Background Readings for Teachers of American Literature*, a collection of essays designed as a resource for instructors, and **Sharon Harris** (now at the University of Connecticut) is the editor of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*.

Mary Anne Holmes, Professor of Geosciences, has been

included in the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) 2008 Class of Fellows in honor of her 12 dedicated years working towards the advancement of women in the geosciences. Criteria for selection as an AWIS Fellow include a demonstrated exemplary commitment to the achievement of equity for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

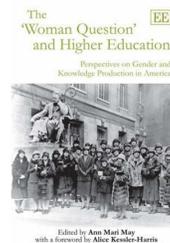
Michael James, Professor of Textiles, Clothing and Design, has a solo show, *The Life in a Day*, on display at Modern Arts Midwest (located in Lincoln's Haymarket) from March 27-April 26, 2008. The exhibition will include works from an extended series titled *Daybook* as well as a group of pieces inspired by impressions James took from recent trips to China and Korea. The *Daybook* series focuses on exploring the tensions that exist between the natural and the built environments. The impressions from China and Korea come from James' strolls in neighborhoods and gardens of Shanghai and Seoul. *The Life in a Day* exhibition builds on James' longstanding interest in pattern, texture, and color and continues his self-imposed charge to push the medium of the quilt beyond those conventions for which the form is largely known.

Stephen Lahey, Assistant Professor of Classics and Religious Studies, has been honored with a 2007-2008 Parents' Association Award in recognition of his contributions to UNL

students. This is the second time Professor Lahey has received a Parents' Association Award.

Margaret Macintyre Latta, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, is being honored at the All University Honors Convocation with a Donald R. and Mary Lee Swanson Award for Teaching Excellence.

Ann Mari May, Associate Professor of Economics, has recently published an edited volume entitled *The 'Woman Question' and Higher Education: Perspectives on Gender and Knowledge Production in America*, Edward Elgar 2008, featuring an article by Dr. May on "Gender, Biology and the Incontrovertible Logic of Choice." The book is available on www.amazon.com.



This volume offers fresh insights on the role of women in higher education in the US and speaks to the long struggle of women to gain an authoritative voice in higher education. Other contributors include Alice Kessler-Harris,

Helen Horowitz, Jerry Jacobs, Virginia Valian, Elizabeth Higginbotham, Jane Roland Martin, Carla Fehr, and Mary Ann Dzuback. Professor May has additionally published an article in *Frontiers in the Economics of Gender*, eds. Francesca Bettio and Alina Verashchagina (London: Taylor and Francis), 2008, entitled "Gender and the Political Economy of Knowledge."

Professor May has also been invited to participate in the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Higher Education Working Group, spring 2008.

Hilda Raz, Professor of English, has published *What Becomes You*, a memoir with Aaron Raz Link, through the University of Nebraska Press (available on nebraskapress.unl.edu).



The book has been named one of five finalists for the 2008 Lambda Book Award. The award recognizes excellence in the field of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender literature.

Student/Alumni Achievements

Beth Crow, Women's and Gender Studies alum, is working in Oregon with the non-profit organization The Fund for Public Research. It is an organization that partners with other NGOs, such as Environment Oregon, The Sierra Club, and US PIRG, to get the public involved and Oregonians focused on environmental and humanitarian issues.

WGS Founders Interview: Linda Pratt

By Laura Roost, Master's Student, Political Science, and WGS Graduate Assistant

You can find Dr. Linda Pratt in Varner Hall working diligently as UNL's Executive VP and Provost. Almost 40 years ago, Pratt came to UNL as a young English hire fresh out of graduate school. She became one of two women in a department with 53 male tenure track faculty. Her graduate work led to an emphasis on race, but she soon saw that the issues of race and gender intersected with systems of oppression. Dr. Pratt then acted on this realization by trying to help in an area she felt needed attention at UNL: courses involving women as topics of study. She joined with a cluster of students and faculty to help get women's studies courses on campus, making UNL one of the first in the Midwest to offer such courses. Pratt worked on many committees and groups that sought to bring and keep women's studies courses on campus. In 1976, the movement achieved a great victory when the university approved Women's Studies as a program of study.



Of those early days, Pratt notes that there were many challenges, but because of their dedication students and faculty consistently met those challenges head-on. As she explained, "it takes a passionate commitment that is sustained to create a new discipline or sub-discipline without administrative support." For example, because the program had no budget, Women in Contemporary Society (the first course that was offered), was taught for free. But, as Dr. Pratt further noted, the course was always filled with students, a pattern which continues to characterize WGS courses today with demand often outstripping the seats available. Student interest, in other words, was and continues to be instrumental at every level for justifying the program's existence.

There were other challenges in these early days as well. Pratt explained that many of the women faculty who were interested in promoting women's studies courses here at UNL were the lone speakers in their departments. This was not the case with Home Economics however. In fact, Pratt noted how there is often a tendency now to look down on Home Economics colleges of the past, but she explained that they housed many of the progressive women of the time who were often vital to the establishment of Women's Studies programs in the first place.

When asked what the biggest effect the Women's and Gender Studies program has had on campus, Linda Pratt said that it meant that those interested in women's studies and women's rights issues no longer had to stand alone. Now they had a place to call home where like-minded people could create a community of support and enrichment. UNL was also made a more attractive place for women faculty.

For news, events, & info, go to:
<http://www.unl.edu/womenssp>

Upcoming Conferences

NWSA Conference:

- Topic - "Resisting Hegemonies: Race and Sexual Politics in Nation, Region, Empire"
- Millenium Hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio, June 19-22

Summer Courses

WMNS 101 - Intro to Women's and Gender Studies

WMNS 385 - Women, Gender, and Science

WMNS 498/898 - Women, Gender, & Medicine in the US

For registration information, go to summer.unl.edu.

For course info, go to www.unl.edu/womenssp/summer.shtml

2008-2009 Colloquium Series Topic Announced:

Gender, Medicine, Science and the Environment

Stay tuned to the WGS website for more information!

WGS Graduates:

Congratulations to the following WGS majors, minors, and graduate specialization students graduating this May!

Majors:

Tressa Copple

Lisa Lux

Stacy Prochaska

Minors:

Ashley Conatser

Erin Culhane

Sarah Filcher

Andrea Highstreet

Tara Moore

Graduate Specialization:

Amanda Cue

Cynthia Williams

In honor of the 30th anniversary of Women's and Gender Studies at UNL

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Campaign: LASWMNS07

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Women's and Gender Studies Program



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