UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM

Volume 5 No:1 Spring 1998

Mahnaz Afkhami to be the Keynote Speaker for No Limits Conference

The International Committee of Women's Studies is pleased to announce that Mahnaz Afkhami, Executive Director of Sisterhood is Global Institute, will provide a keynote address on Saturday, March 7, 1998, at the No Limits Regional Women's Studies Conference. Afkhami's presentation will begin at 10 am at the East Campus Union. The title of her presentation is "Feminism and Fundamentalism in the Muslim World." It is free and open to the public.

Mahnaz Afkhami, originally from Kerman, Iran, has worked extensively in women's human rights. As Afkhami became increasingly involved in women's issues in the late 1960s, she moved from her position as Chair of the English Department at the National University of Iran to become the Secretary General for the Women's Organization of Iran from 1970-79. She was simultaneously Minister of State for Women's Affairs, from 1976-78. This position was eliminated with the Islamic Revolution and Afkhami moved to the United States where she has continued her work promoting women's human rights and has published numerous books, including the following which will be available at the conference:

- *Face and Freedom: Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World;*
- *Women in Exile;*
- *Muslim Women and the Politics of Participation: Implementing the Beijing Platform.*

The Sisterhood Is Global Institute was established in 1984 as a publicly funded international nonprofit organization created specifically to help improve women's human rights on the local, national, regional and global levels. With members in 70 countries, SIGI currently maintains a network of over 1,300 individuals and organizations, and operates branch offices in several regions. SIGI programs include the Human Rights Education Project, which seeks to inform and empower women; meetings, conferences, and symposia on issues of concern to women; and alerts in response to urgent cases of human rights abuses against women.

In her own work, Afkhami is concerned both with the situation of the women living in exile in a global environment, and how one survives that crisis in a productive way, just as she is intimately concerned with the human rights of women in specific cultural milieus. She recently published an article in *Iran Nameh, XV:3 (Summer 1997)*, a special issue on Iranian Women, called "Evolutionary Politics and Revolutionary Change: 1965-1978: Activities and Achievements of the Women's Organization of Iran", in which she discusses the possibilities and limitations women encountered as they strove for their rights in Iran, where society was conservative and patriarchal, the state modernist and authoritarian. In Iran, Afkhami explains, the Women's Organization tried to define the ideological contours of the women's movement by initiating extensive dialogue and debate with women across the nation.

You can visit the SIGI website at: http://www.feminist.com/sigi.htm.

In this issue:

Mahnaz Afkhami ..... Page 1
From the Director ..... Page 2
No Limits Flyer ..... Page 3
International Grant ..... Page 4
International Grant ..... Page 5
Announcements etc. ..... Page 6
Calendar of Events ..... Page 7
Notes ..... Page 8

From the Director's Desk

It's been another good season for the Women's Studies Program at UNL. Increasing numbers of students are taking our courses and deciding that Women's Studies should be a formal part of their academic programs. Our faculty have published an impressive array of books and articles, and have done extraordinary service to the program, the University, and the local, national, and international communities. We are grateful for the increasing number of faculty, alumnae, and community members who have shown confidence in and support of our program by giving to the Women's Studies Development Fund through the University of Nebraska Foundation. We have now established an endowment fund for the Women's Studies Outstanding Achievement Award as well. We have raised $2,500 toward the $10,000 we need to generate the money for our student achievement award each year. If you would like to help us reach our goal, you can contact me, or contact the Nebraska Foundation directly. We are dedicated to supporting our students in as many ways as we can, and this award is an important part of that goal. Fall 1997 was a rich and exciting semester in Women's Studies. Hundreds of people from UNL and the community benefited from Mohawk writer Beth Brant's visit. Our International Colloquia and the special visit by filmmaker Manjira Datta from India added to the richness and stature of our program. This semester promises to be equally exciting. Please note the information in this newsletter on the No Limits Conference March 6-7.Steph Witham and Women's Studies students have once again put together a diverse, exciting, and challenging conference, which is free to everyone.

I urge you, whether you are a student, staff, faculty, or community member, to become involved in the Women's Studies Program in some way, whether it be by attending our events, taking our classes, or helping organize our activities. If you would like to become involved, please call me at 472-1828, or email me at bjd@unlinfo.unl.edu. I'll be glad to hear from you!

Women's Studies Faculty

Rashmi Bhatnagar
Grace Bauer
Christina Brantner
Mary Jo Deegan
Barbara DiBernard
Moira Ferguson
Gwendolyn Foster
Sharon Harris
Maureen Honey
Ann Kleimola
Alpana Knippling
Jennifer Lehmann
Christin Mamiya
Adelaida Martinez
Ann Mari May
Helen Moore
Linda Pratt
Hilda Raz
Joy Ritchie
Sue Rosowski
Eva Sartori
Anna Shavers
Alison Stewart
Wendy Weiss

Faculty Associates

Radha Balasubramanian
Margaret Bolick
Shelley Fuller
Amy Goodburn
Ruth Nisse
Venetria Patton
Marcela Rafaelli

No Limits

International Women:
Continuing Our Traditions of Resistance

Regional Women's Studies Conference
Sponsored by the Women's Studies Association
of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
6 & 7 March 1998, 9:00-5:00 each day
UNL East Campus Union, 3rd Floor.

Women's Studies No Limits Conference
proudly presents
Emilia Gonzalez-Clements
Jenefer Shute
Mahnaz Afkhami

We invite everyone to join us for the 1998 No Limits Regional Women's Studies Conference. Our conference will be featuring academic papers, creative writings, visual arts, film, and music relating to women's issues, lives, and culture.

Emilia Gonzalez-Clements will speaking on the Beijing Conference -- Friday, March 6. The luncheon and presentation will be from 11:45 - 1:45 p.m. Anyone interested in luncheon tickets should contact the Women's Studies Office @ 472-9392.
Jenefer Shute will be speaking on "Minding the Body." -- Friday, March 6 from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Her presentation will focus on her novel Life-Size.
Mahnaz Afkhami is the president of Sisterhood is Global Institute. She has been extensively involved in Muslim women's human rights issues. -- Saturday, March 7 from 10:00 a.m. - noon.
For more information on the conference or any of these keynote speakers, please contact the Women's Studies Office @ 472-9392.

News from the International Grants Dispersal Committee

As co-chair of the International Grants Dispersal Committee, along with Wendy Weiss, I want to make a mid-year report on activities in Women's Studies during 1997-98. This year Wendy Weiss is doing yeowoman labor on getting a speaker for us. She has managed to get the agreement of Mahnaz Afkhami, President of the Sisterhood is Global Institute, to be the keynote speaker for the No Limits Conference in March. Ms. Afkhami will be speaking on March 7 at 10 am in the East Union. She is the founder of the Association of Iranian University Women and was Minister of State (Iran) for Women's Affairs in the mid 1970s. Ms. Afkhami has written and lectured extensively on Muslim women's human rights, women and development, and women and leadership. Wendy, myself, Alpana Knippling, Bidisha Nag, and Tagi Adams are doing our best to make Ms. Afkhami's visit successful.

The No Limits theme is international feminism, and the WSA representative to our international committee, Tagi Adams, has indicated that WSA is willing to fold their efforts into ours by featuring as their keynote speaker the visiting speaker we have chosen for our own program. The WSA conference is a highlight of our international activities this semester, and we look forward to seeing the ultimate shape of the event on March 6 and 7.

Bidisha and I have worked hard on coordinating the International Colloquia for the fall of 1997 and the spring of 1998. An impressive set of speakers gave the following talks this fall: Christina Brantner from Modern Languages led the series with a talk on Women's Issues in (Re)Unified Germany; Ellen Marshall, Field Director of the Population and Habitat Campaign for the National Audubon Society, spoke on Women and Development; Domino Perez from English and Ethnic Studies shared the work she is doing for her dissertation on Contemporary Readings of La Llorona in Film; and Catherine Daly, from UNO, gave a talk on Afghan Women in Non-Muslim Communities. These were all excellent presentations that continued the fine series we were able to offer last year.

We now have a schedule for the spring semester colloquia. Alpana Knippling from English will lead the series in January with a talk on Global Feminism; Teresita Aguilar from the Center for Curriculum and Instruction will discuss Grassroot Activism in Mexico in February; Mahnaz Afkhami will serve as both the No Limits keynote speaker and our colloquium speaker in March.

Another event of some distinction in the fall was the visit of filmmaker Manjira Datta who discussed her documentary films on women in India and presented a slide show. Datta is a world-class filmmaker and photographer, and we were lucky to have her in Lincoln, all thanks to Bidisha Nag who coordinated the visit. Alpana Knippling also helped to make Manjira's stay here a success. Among Manjira's many films is Rishte (1995), a powerful documentary of a mother in India who poisoned herself and two of her daughters. Rashmi Bhatnagar from English showed a portion of this film in conjunction with her colloquium last year. Women's Studies has a copy in our video library. I hope we can bring Manjira Datta back to Lincoln at an appropriate point in her travel schedule so that we can have the opportunity to view her films with her in attendance.

An activity that enhanced the international dimension of Women's Studies last year was Alpana Knippling's attendance at a faculty development institute at SUNY-Albany in June on Cross-Cultural Approaches to Curriculum Transformation. She has generously shared her information packet with the program, and it is on file in the Women's Studies Office. Included in this packet is a bibliography of works on pedagogical issues, feminist theory, comparative and international perspectives, and women in Africa, Latin America/the Caribbean, and Russia/Eastern Europe. There are also course syllabi from Marjorie Pryse on Women in Global Perspective (WS 308); Linda Pershing on Classism, Racism, and Sexism (SS 353); and

News continued

a hand-out from Deborah Rosenfelt called "Suggestions for Curriculum Transformation." Alpana reports that this experience was an educational and rewarding one particularly from the standpoint of diversity issues.

Alpana has also been chosen as one of three faculty members to be part of a Japan Seminar that will work to integrate Japan into the UNL curriculum. Alpana's contribution will be a course on Japanese Women's Literature that she will introduce some time in the near future. In addition to meetings in Washington D.C., Alpana and team members from other institutions will travel to Japan for a three-week seminar this summer. Alpana's activities have added immense international resources to the Women's Studies Program. Congratulations to her!

Another component of the international work in Women's Studies at UNL is a trip I took to Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece last May when I met with women in the English Department to discuss a faculty exchange with UNL's English Department. This exchange was initiated by Joseph Stimpfl in International Affairs who provided transportation for Linda Pratt and myself to go to Greece and get to know people there. The English Department at Aristotle is feminist and multicultural, with scholars doing work on African American women poets, gender theory, and cultural studies projects. Material from this department is on file in Linda Pratt's office and in the Women's Studies Office. I met with the chair of the department, Ekaterina Douka-Kabitoglou, who is most interested in hosting us as often as we can get to Thessaloniki and who is also interested in having her faculty visit Lincoln. Linda and I are still working out the details of this agreement, which are hampered by the tremendous work duties of people at Aristotle, the difficulties of arranging housing on each end, and the differences between our academic school years.

I also had the good fortune to attend the MELUS conference (Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States) with Venetria Patton of English in Hawaii last April. Venetria and I were on a panel with Myriam Chancy which we put together, and we heard the powerful activist/poet Haunani-Kay Trask, who was the keynote speaker. She is the Director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii and is the author of Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory, Fighting the Battle of Double Colonization, and From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii. Her talk was one of the most passionate and eloquent attacks on colonization I have ever heard.

Dane Kennedy of the History Department is coordinating a Ford Foundation Grant to internationalize the curriculum at UNL around minority experiences across the globe. Barbara has been in touch with Dane and distributed the proposal to Wendy, Bidisha, and myself so that we can coordinate our efforts with Dane's. I too am in touch with Dane and expect that Women's Studies will participate in this important project in central ways.

These are all important dimensions to our continuing efforts to internationalize the Women's Studies curriculum and program, and they speak to a widespread interest in international issues among our students and faculty. We have felt keenly the loss of Bettina Heinz who assumed a teaching post at Doane College in Communication this August after being an administrative assistant to the International Grant Dispersal Committee last year and summer. We wish her well in her intercultural communications career, and I can't emphasize strongly enough how vital Bettina's administrative skills were to the international program last year.

Maureen Honey
Co-Chair
International Grants Dispersal Committee

Women's Studies Library Update

Each year, the Women's Studies Program brings many fine poets, writers, feminists, and activists to our campus. It is an honor and a privilege to become acquainted with so many exceptional women, and in an effort to continue their legacy, we have established a new collection for our Women's Studies library. Starting last fall with Beth Brant's visit, we have begun to acquire books authored by our speakers, complete with that author's signature. Although in its infancy, this exciting collection will grow throughout the years. As with our other books, videos, and audio tapes, these, too, are available to be checked out.

Women's Studies Awards

The Women's Studies Program will again be celebrating the achievements and excellence of our students with two awards. The Women's Studies Outstanding Achievement Award is a $500 award for an undergraduate student who has done outstanding work in Women's Studies. The Karen Dunning Women's Studies Scholarly Paper/Creative Activity Award will be granted to one undergraduate and one graduate student in the amount of $500 for a scholarly paper or creative activity. Eligibility requirements differ for each award; application materials are available from the Women's Studies Office. The entry deadline for both awards is Monday, March 2, and the recipients will be announced at the 1998 Spring Graduate Reception and Awards Ceremony scheduled for Friday, May 1

In Memoriam

Katherine Farrell, a Health and Human Performance instructor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, died on January 17, 1998. She was very active in women's health care issues, and was a recipient of the1997 YWCA Tribute to Women award. While serving as a commissioner on the Lincoln-Lancaster Commission on the Status of Women, Kathy was instrumental in starting Lincoln's first birthing room at the St. Elizabeth Community Health Center. She was also involved in a food co-op which eventually became Open Harvest. For many years, Kathy taught a women's health course which is a valuable part of the Women's Studies curriculum. We have all benefited from Kathy's work on women's health care issues and on other projects which have raised the quality of life in Lincoln. Her husband Michael and their three children survive Kathy. Memorials may be sent to the Nebraska Art Association, care of the Sheldon Art Gallery.

(Information for this article was taken from the January 18, 1998, article in the Lincoln Journal Star newspaper).

Calendar of Events
Spring 1998

28 Jan.: Women's Studies International Colloquium Series. Alpana Knippling, Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies, UNL. "Global Feminism in the Global Economy: Reflections on Indian Poet Toru Dutt (1856-1877)" Nebraska Union, 3:30 p.m.

February
** Black History Month

9-10 Feb.: Rhoda Howard, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Peace Studies at McMaster University in Canada. She has written a number of books about human rights (in Africa and more generally) and her interests include women's rights.
Colonial Room A, Nebraska Union, 3:30 p.m.
For more information, call 472-2414

25 February: Women's Studies International Colloquium Series.
Teresita Aguilar. Associate Professor in Center for Curriculum and Instruction, UNL
"Teaching from the Margins-Teaching from the Heart: Voices of Three Grassroots Activists in Search of Social Justice"
Andrews Hall Lounge, 3:30 p.m.

March
**National Women's History Month
**National Feminine Empowerment Month
**Disability Awareness Month

5 Mar.: Women's Center presents Chai Ling. She was the commander-in-chief for the democracy movement at Tianamen Square. Centennial Room, UNL City Campus Union @ 7:00 p.m. Her presentation will be entitled "The Power of One: Woman Making a Difference." Sponsored by the Women's Center.
For more information, call 472-2597.

6-7 Mar.: No Limits Regional Conference. "International Women: Continuing Our Traditions of Resistance." Keynote Speakers:
Mahnaz Afkhami, Jenefer Shute, and Emilia Gonzales-Clements.
Nebraska East Union
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. each day

April
*** Victim Rights Month

May
1 May: 1998 UNL Women's Studies Spring Graduate Reception and Awards Ceremony. 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Great Hall, Wick Alumni Center

All events are free and open to the public

Yes, You can help!

I would like to support the teaching, research and service activities of the UNL Women's Studies Program.
Please use my gift to support:
_____ Women's Studies Development Fund (for general support of projects and activities)
_____ Women's Studies Outstanding Achievement Award

Enclosed is my gift of (please circle the amount): $ 1000 $250 $100 $50 $35* other _____
* Gifts of at least this size make a big difference in the work of the UNL Women's Studies Program

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State/Zip: _____

Please make checks out to University of Nebraska Foundation. Specify account # 5285 for Women's Studies Development Fund.
Send to:
University of Nebraska Foundation
1111 Lincoln Mall Suite 200
Lincoln, NE 68588-0650

Notes

Grace Bauer has two poems ("Bathsheba: Looking Forward. Looking Back" and "Note From The Imaginary Daughter") in the anthology THE MUSE STRIKES BACK: WOMEN POETS RESPOND TO MEN, recently published by Storyline Press. This anthology might be of interest to people teaching women writers classes.

Ann Mari May published an article in the NEBRASKA Magazine Summer 1997 issue entitled "Running in Place: Economics Professor Researching History of Women Faculty." This is an article about her work on women and higher education and about a woman faculty member at UNL, Esther Anderson, who was a relative of hers and a professor in the department of Geography in the 1930s until her retirement.

Adelaida Martinez, Professor of Spanish, Department of Modern Languages, has been elected to the Delegate Assembly of the Modern Language Association of America. Adelaida is one of six regional representatives serving the Central and Rocky Mountain States of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

From Sue Rosowski: A Lost Lady (the third volume of the Cather Scholarly Edition) was published in 1997;Obscure Destinies and Death Comes for the Archbishop, both approved to receive an emblem of editorial excellence by MLA's Committee on Scholarly Editions, are in production, all with University of Nebraska Press. Sue Rosowski's feminist interpretation of the literary pulp western, "The Western Hero as Logos, or, Unmaking Meaning" appears in the latest issue of Western American Literature.

Newsletter

The Women's Studies Newsletter is published twice during the academic years. If you have suggestions for future articles or would like to submit an article or an announcement, please contact

Bidisha Nag, Newsletter Editor,
337 Andrews Hall,
University of Nebraska-Lincoln,
Lincoln, NE 68588-0303.
You may also call
(402)-472-9392 or send an email to
bbiswas@unlinfo.unl.edu

Women's Studies
Spring Hours

Monday: 9:15-4:00
Tuesday: 9:15-5:00
Wednesday: 9:15-2:00
Thursday: 9:15-4:30
Friday: 9:15-1:15

Director
Barbara DiBernard
Phone: (402) 472-1828
Email: bjd@unlinfo.unl.edu

Website
http://www.unl.edu/womenssp/wshome.html

Women's Studies Program
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
337 Andrews Hall
Lincoln, NE 68588-0303

Non Profit Org
US Postage Paid
Permit 46
Lincoln NE

Address Correction Requested

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, handicap, race, color, religion, marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation