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Women's Studies

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

NEWSLETTER

F A L L 2 0 0 0

From the Director



Dr. Joy Ritchie

Many exciting things have been happening in the Women's Studies Office since I arrived on the third floor of Avery Hall. I feel a little dizzy, but also quite exhilarated, by all the activities and projects we have underway. My transition into this challenging job has been made much easier by Glenda Moore, our

program Secretary, by the energy and imagination of Graduate Assistants, Tagi Adams and Yeaji Shin, and by a hard-working Advisory Committee: Mary Beck, Barbara DiBernard, Carole Levin, Christin Mamiya, Adelaida Martinez, and Bobbi Shamburg.

We'll all make another transition in December when we move to the 12th floor of Oldfather Hall, the space vacated by The Center for Great Plains Studies. (Perhaps we can find a way to highlight the irony of Women's Studies being located in a building named "Oldfather.") We'll share the space with Judaic Studies and the Humanities Center also. After the boxes are unpacked, we'll invite everyone to an "Open House" in our new offices in January!

This move will be an appropriate way to begin a year of celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Women's Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Women's Studies began in the spring of 1976 and has grown and flourished with the outstanding scholarship, teaching, and activism of so many women faculty and students on this campus.

Helen Moore and Barbara DiBernard are going to coordinate our anniversary celebrations as we weave them into all the activities of the coming year.

One of the most positive parts of being Director has been meeting and working with many Women's Studies students. In September, I invited WSA members and Women's Studies majors to an informal discussion where we also previewed one of the new videos from our library, "The Life and Times of Sara Baartman, the Hotentot Venus." We plan to repeat this informal film discussion time for students next semester.

As Director, this year one of my goals is to find ways to increase the number of majors in our program. Eleven of our majors and minors graduated in May, leaving us with only fourteen majors, some of whom will graduate in December. Although we're trying new ways to make Women's Studies more visible and accessible, we also rely on faculty and Women's Studies students to help students see the possibilities a Women's Studies major offers. We do have a great Colloquium Series underway that we hope you'll invite your friends and students to attend. And now as spring registration begins, we are very excited about the new Introduction to Women's Studies course Shari Clarke will be teaching. Please encourage students to sign up.

Other new developments in the curriculum are underway. By the end of this year, we hope to have in



place the new Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies. When approved, the program will allow graduate students in a variety of disciplines to enhance their graduate study with a specific emphasis on scholarship in Women's Studies. In addition, we have applied for Diversity Enhancement funds to support a research methods course and mentoring for students doing research with diverse populations and cultural texts. If funded, this will provide an important addition to the Women's Studies curriculum.

A wonderful group of new members of the Women's Studies Faculty will contribute to the diversity and vitality of our program in many ways. I want to briefly introduce them to you here, and I encourage you to meet them in person and welcome them to Women's Studies. I hope many of you met Amelia Montes and Julia McQuillan at their excellent presentations for the Women's Studies Colloquium Series this fall.

Professor Montes recently completed her Ph.D. at the University of Denver and moved to UNL from UC Santa Barbara where she was teaching in Women's Studies. At UNL she will be teaching in both English and Ethnic Studies. Her research and teaching include 19th century American, Chicana, Mexican, Latina literary studies, critical studies of colonialism and its legacies from the 19th to the 20th centuries. At the Colloquium, Professor Montes spoke about her research on the letters of Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, a 19th century California writer. Professor Montes teaches courses in Ethnic Studies, Chicana/Chicano Literature, and American Literature.



Julia McQuillan's research and teaching in Sociology involve gender, family, and mental health. Her family research focuses on two-earner couples, specifically marital power, perceived inequity, and distress. She spoke at the colloquium about "Gender and Power in Two-Earner Couples." Her mental health research focuses on measurement issues and longitudinal relationships between distress, depression, and/or anxiety and the experience of Rheumatoid Arthritis. Professor McQuillan teaches Research Methods (undergraduate and graduate statistics

courses), Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Marriage and the Family, and Social Problems.

You probably already know Amy Goodburn and Malea Powell who have both been Faculty Associates and have served on many Women's Studies Committees.



Amy Goodburn teaches Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy Theory courses, and her research spans a range of issues concerning literacy, race, "whiteness," and religion in writing instruction; she is completing a book on the literacy practices in the Genoa Industrial Indian School in the early part of the 20th century. In 1999 Professor Goodburn received both the UNL Scholarly Teacher Award and the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Teaching Award.



Malea Powell's teaching and research are in rhetoric and composition, especially American Indian Rhetoric, Nineteenth-Century American Rhetoric, Postcolonial Theory and Feminist Theories of Ethnic Difference. She completed her Ph.D. at Miami University of Ohio in 1998 with a dissertation, *I write these words with blood and bones: Two Nineteenth-Century American Indian Intellectuals and a Rhetoric of Survivance*. Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins is one of the 19th century writers whose writing she has analyzed extensively. Look for Professor Powell's courses on Native American Literature and Native Women Writers.



Charlene Porsild has been at UNL for three years in various capacities. She is Assistant Professor of History, Assistant Director of Humanities, and Editor of *Great Plains Quarterly*. Professor Porsild teaches North American Women; Canadian West; and in the Spring of 2001, she will offer Women's West, a



course that examines the critical role women have played in the American West. Her 1998 book, *Gamblers and Dreamers: Women, Men, and Community in the Klondike* (Univ. of British Columbia Press) was named "Outstanding Academic Book of 1998" by *Choice*.



Susan Belasco, newly arrived Professor of English, came from the University of Tulsa, where she also served on the governing board of the Women's Studies Program. Professor Belasco teaches 19th century American Literature, American Women Writers, and Introduction to Women's Literature. She is co-editor of *Approaches to Teaching Uncle Tom's Cabin*. and has edited other important editions of 19th century women writers' books including *Ruth Hall*, by Fanny Fern and Margaret Fuller's *Summer on the Lakes in 1842*. She is currently very busy as the conference director for The Society for the Study of American Women Writers International Conference in San Antonio in February. Featured speakers include Nina Baym, Judith Fetterley, Frances Smith Foster, Annette Kolodny, and Tey Diana Rebolledo.



Patricia Draper, Professor and Chair of Anthropology and Geography came to UNL from Penn State University in 1998. Her research covers a range of topics including bio-cultural variations in human mating, hominid evolution and parent-offspring relationships, and cross cultural studies of gender relations. One of her recent publications is a case study of gender roles in the !Kung Bushmen. The article appears in a book entitled, *The Evolving Female: A Life-History Perspective*. Professor Draper teaches the course Gender and Anthropology.

With all of these new faculty members, we can see many exciting possibilities for the Women's Studies program. Soon we'll be announcing more events for next semester, with speakers on International Women's Rights, Latin American Women's history, and at the "No Limits Conference," writer Toi Derricotte speaking on racial

identity. Before the semester ends we'll also celebrate the accomplishment of faculty and students at our Awards Reception on December 8 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. at my house, 3004 Stratford Avenue. I hope to see all of you there.

Faculty Activities and Announcements

Linda Pratt, Interim Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, was recently recognized at invitation to the 10th anniversary of the University of Michigan Senate's "Davis Markert, Nickerson Symposium on Academic and Intellectual Freedom." The symposium is named after three professors who refused to give testimony to a visiting group from the U.S. House Committee on Un-American Activities. In 1995 Pratt lectured at the University of Michigan and had a chance to meet the three professors and discuss their careers.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the symposium program, the University of Michigan held a special conference by inviting back all the previous lecturers. Pratt's 1995 lecture "Academic Freedom and the Merits of Uncertainty" was one of ten lectures given in 1995 and is part of the book "Unfettered Expression, Freedom in American Intellectual Life," which contained all ten lectures.

Maureen Honey was interviewed by the History Channel for a special they're doing on Rosie the Riveter next year. She was also interviewed by *George Magazine* for its June 2000 cover story on body images of women in popular culture. The story described the risks of cosmetic surgery and the pressures on older women to get such surgery.

Sidnie White Crawford has been appointed a Research Associate and Visiting Lecturer in the Women's Studies in Religion Program at Harvard Divinity School for the academic year 2000-01. This program appoints five Research Associates each year in all fields of Religious Studies. Professor Crawford's research topic is Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls. She will be teaching a course on the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Divinity School this fall and will give a public lecture in the spring.



Christin Mamiya, Professor of Art History, co-authored the 11th edition of the book Art Through the Ages. The first editions have endured 76 years of use in major universities and is used by all sections of the two-semester introductory survey classes, Art History 101-102 at the University of Nebraska. The book itself covers art and history from prehistory to the present. Mamiya's work included writing the chapters, selection images, working with photo editors, and reviewing transparencies for color accuracy. One of the important tasks was including women artists in this edition. Mamiya started work on the publication near the end of 1997 and continued until the 11th edition went to press at the end of May 2000.

Wendy Weiss and Jay Kreimer will be exhibiting a sound and textile installation called Ephemeral Forest at the Northern Galleries at Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD Oct. 17-Nov. 22, 2000.

WS Program Newsletter

Please join our Spring Women's Studies Newsletter editorial committee. There are many positions available from designing and writing to the proofreading of the newsletter. For more information, please contact:

Yeaji Shin,
editor and designer
(yshin@unlserve.unl.edu)

Tagi Adams,
assistant editor
(tadams6@bigred.unl.edu)

Note From The Women's Studies Association

Andrea Skiles

This is an invitation to all feminists eager to be involved at UNL and in the community. The Women's Studies Association is a proactive group of feminists who care about women and recognize the need to work together to bring about change on our campus, in our community, and across the globe. We need new members with new ideas willing to work hard, learn much, and enjoy themselves. WSA is involved in and sponsors several important events at UNL, including the No Limits Conference, the Vagina Monologues and Take Back the Night, and we continuously engage in new activities as well as work with other feminist organizations on and off campus.

WSA is important to me as a Women's Studies student. For me, learning about women and studying feminism in my classes is ineffective if I don't take my classroom experiences and knowledge and put it to good use.

I think that most Women's Studies majors and minors consider themselves activists. WSA has allowed me to be both a student and an activist, to learn while doing my work. WSA is important to me as a feminist, too. It is important for me to know and work with other feminists in order to grow as a feminist and to feel supported in what I believe. It is also vital for WSA to have women with different experiences, in different places in their lives, to join us, teach us, and become active with us.

Now is an exciting time to join WSA as we are getting to know our new members, planning next semester's events, discussing hot feminist topics, and socializing. If you are interested in joining WSA or have questions about us, feel free to call me at 474-7344 or email me at askiles@lycos.com



Introduction to Women's Studies with Shari Clarke: A New course Offered Spring 2001—WMNS 101, Section 001, 3 credit hours. MWF 10:30-11:20 A.M.



Introduction to Women's Studies will be offered in the Spring of 2001. The instructor, Shari Clarke, is a Woman's Studies Program faculty associate. She currently serves as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity & Equity at the University of Nebraska. Introduction to Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary course designed to familiarize students with the fundamental concepts and analysis in personal, interpersonal and institutional dimensions that shape women's lives. This introductory course will critically examine the lives of women and women's experience from various academic perspectives. The course will provide an opportunity for students to hear presentations from women on campus and local community leaders, and to engage in discussion on topical issues affecting women.

Notice of Our New Office Location

We are excited to announce the new location for the Women's Studies Program. Please visit us at our new office 1s209 Oldfather Hall starting January 1, 2001.

Address correspondence to

**Women's Studies Program
1209 Oldfather Hall
P. O. Box 880341
Lincoln, Ne 68588-0341**

**Our Telephone Number,
(402) 472-9392, remains the same.**

"Writing the Past, Claiming the Future: Women and Gender in Science, Medicine, and Technology"

Saint Louis University, October 12-15

Jocelyn Bosley

As I prepare to pursue graduate study in history and philosophy of science, and particularly in the relationship of women to scientific culture, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to attend this conference. There were papers on the lives of women scientists whose stories have not been included in traditional historical narratives of science, such as Pearl Kendrick and Grace Eldering, who developed the pertussis vaccine; the creative ways that women have positioned themselves in the field to establish scientific authority, how these strategies have taken shape relative to evolving scientific cultures of individual branches of science, and how/whether feminism has altered the structure and culture of these disciplines; how scientific views reflect and shape a social construction of women, as have medical representations of women in the case of menopause and hormone replacement therapy; science as a gendered form of knowledge; and papers that situated this interplay of gender, class, and science in an international perspective.

One plenary session was structured like a dialogue between practitioners *in* and historians *of* science, medicine, and engineering. Its aim was to explore the dynamic between history and practice, as well as among historians of science, medicine, and engineering, to consider how the perspective offered from each of these positions informs and enriches both scholarship *about* and expertise *in* these three facets of science and its study. Particularly interesting was a discussion presented by Dr. Wanda Ronner, a Philadelphia gynecologist, about the ever-rising stock of female gynecologists because of their desirability to patients, and how women have and have not managed to transform this "power of the exam room," as she calls it, into institutional and economic power. The extreme underrepresentation of women in engineering, relative even to physics, was also discussed. A number of causal factors were considered, and it was suggested that women engineers must break two sets of barriers—male engineers are uncomfortable with women



in their ranks, and furthermore, according to Ruth Schwartz Cowan of SUNY, feminists are uncomfortable with women engineers, since they are often employed by the defense industry and big business and are thus allied with political and economic institutions many feminists oppose. Ultimately, discussion turned to the stories we tell girls about science, the stories we know how to tell, and how these stories inscribe women in or out of science.

A second plenary explored the role of gender in future scientific scholarship. This was an especially exciting part of the conference for me as it gave me the chance to participate in discussion with women from a variety of academic backgrounds. A prominent thread in our dialogue was the generational differences in our academic experiences—namely, to what extent women are still positioned as “other” in the history of science, and to what extent boundaries have been dissolved so that women are an integral part of this history. Particularly, we discussed how we fail to capitalize on the gains made in bringing women’s voices to the fore by habitually framing our questions so as to reflect our assumption that women are still on the margins of scholarship. It is the nature of the questions which restricts us to arguing from a marginal position. The strong interest in interdisciplinarity reflected in the first plenary was also evident here. Much discussion was devoted to determining what interdisciplinarity means in the abstract, how this might be translated into concrete practice, and why it is useful and important to attempt to incorporate such practices into the historical study of science.

While these plenary sessions drew out the themes of the conference and provoked thought concerning how we might best draw upon and direct these themes to shape future study, the *spirit* of the conference was perhaps best captured in a talk by independent scholar Judith McGaw, entitled “Why Not Outhouses? Technological Change Through Women’s Eyes,” which examined the historical narrative attached to technological innovation and how the stories of ordinary women who made these changes are left out in the traditional account of “progress.”

A dynamic speaker who often flies in the face of academic convention, she skillfully and sensitively drew out a diversity of women’s voices, both historical and contemporary, as well as the resonance between them. Her aim was to encourage personal reflection through her accounts of women’s experiences, and her interest in

inspiring new questions that stretch the bounds of what we consider the province of scholarship is exactly the shared sense of purpose which pervaded it from start to finish. In terms of my own experience, this purpose was certainly realized.

Pictures from Women's Studies COLLOQUIUM



From left: Barbara DiBernard, Tagi Adams, Amelia Montes, Malea Powell, and Yeaji Shin



Julia McQuillan at her presentation on October 24, 2000.

*Congratulations to the following
Women's Studies Majors and Minors
who will be graduating:*

Francie Elder and Andrea Skiles

No Limits Conference 2001

March 2 & 3, 2001

Nebraska Union, Regency A, B, C

* The conference is free and open to all interested

No Limits Luncheon:

Saturday, March 3rd, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Ballroom, Nebraska Union (to reserve luncheon tickets, or for information, call 472-9392)

* The luncheon requires payment only if you reserve a meal.

Keynote speaker:

Toi Derricotte, No Limits Luncheon, 12:00 p.m.

Ballroom, Nebraska Union



Toi Derricotte

The Women's Studies Association and the Women's Studies Program are proud to announce Toi Derricotte as our No Limits 2001 keynote speaker. Derricotte, a professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh, is a nationally acclaimed African American poet and essayist, and author of the critically acclaimed memoir, The Black Notebooks. Derricotte's publications also include several collections of poetry: *Tender* (1997), *Captivity* (1989), *Natural Birth* (1983), and *The Empress of the Death House*, (1978). Her numerous awards include the Black Caucus of the American Library Association's Literary Award in Non-Fiction, the Folger Shakespeare Library Poetry Book Award, the Lucille Medwick Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, the Pushcart Prize, the Distinguished Pioneering of the Arts Award from the United Black Artists, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for non-fiction from The Cleveland Foundation, and nomination for the prestigious 1998 PEN/Martha Albrand Award for the Art of the Memoir. We are excited at the prospect of her visit and hope that all of you attend the conference and her address at the No Limits Luncheon, March 3rd, 2001 in the Nebraska Union Ballroom at noon.



the
black

notebooks

an
interior
journey

TOI DERRICOTTE

"An soaring chronicle of racial anguish and personal growth." —Espresso
A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR

The Black Notebooks:

"*The Black Notebooks* is the most profound document I have read on racism in America today . . . (It) is not just one of the best books on race I have ever read but just simply one of the best books I have ever read."—Sapphire

The *Black Notebooks* is one of the most extraordinary and courageous accounts of race in this country, seen through the eyes of a light-skinned black woman and a respected American poet. It challenges all our preconceived notions of what it means to be black or white, and what it means to be human. —The Norton Spring 1999 catalogue

"The elegant combination of defiance and devotion that is *The Black Notebooks* speaks volumes about how perceptions of racial identity remain sharply divided."—Essence

"My skin causes certain problems continuously, problems that open the issue of racism over and over like a wound."

Toi Derricotte

NO LIMITS 2001: Can We Dismiss Identity?

Please submit a 500-word abstract outlining your proposal (CREATIVE WRITING, film, photography, music, performance, and scholarly papers are welcome-anyone may submit a proposal) with a self-addressed, stamped envelope by *January 15, 2001* to:

No Limits Conference

C/o Women's Studies Program-UNL

307 Avery Hall

Lincoln, NE 68588-0136

Phone: (402) 474-4538, e-mail abstracts to tadams6@bigred.unl.edu

The conference is free and we invite everyone to attend and participate.

Sponsored by the Women's Studies Association and the Women's Studies Program

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2 & 3 March-City Campus

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