



Women's Studies

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2005

From the Director

– *Joy Ritchie*

Since this is my last column as director of Women's Studies, I want to highlight some important evolutions in the program as I step down in August. At the beginning of this semester, after considerable discussion, the faculty voted to change our name to Women's and Gender Studies Program. This change is consistent with other programs around the country. (The name change is in progress but is not yet official). As faculty and students have discussed this change over the past two years, we have recognized that this is not simply a cosmetic change. Instead it marks our intention to expand the scope of the program with an inclusive emphasis that has been emerging in our courses and to more intentionally include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies and the categories of gender, masculinity, and sexuality in our scholarship and teaching. At the same time, we affirm the program's emphasis on scholarship that informs our understanding of women's experiences.

Last spring we received a Teaching and Learning Seed Grant to begin work on the LGBTQ/Sexuality minor. Our recent grant from the Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence from the Office of the



Joy receives the Woman Artist-Written Word Award from Judith Hart

Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs provides additional important support for developing and expanding the Women's Studies curriculum. Our success in receiving these grants is due to the collaborative efforts of Amy Goodburn and the Curriculum Committee and Kris Gandara and Barbara DiBernard. We launch our Curriculum Innovation Project with a workshop on May 2, from 11:30 – 4:00. The grant will provide stipends to support faculty who wish to develop new courses, to support team teaching of innovative interdisciplinary classes, to assist us in developing the new LGBTQ/Sexuality minor, and to update our assessment of the Women's Studies Program.

All of these efforts will continue with Barbara DiBernard (English) as Interim Director of Women's Studies for 2005-06 and with Margaret Jacobs (History) as the next Director beginning in the fall of 2006. We are fortunate to have their wonderful leadership for the program. I encourage you to give them your enthusiastic support. I'm sure they will find working with all of you as enjoyable and rewarding as I have. My thanks to the faculty, students, and to Rose Holz, Associate Director, Glenda Moore, Carmel Morse, and Jenna Propp for being a wonderful team.

Women's Studies Program Newsletter
Carmel Morse,
editor and designer
(cmorse@unlnotes.unl.edu)



Women's Studies Welcomes New Faculty

The following faculty members were welcomed into the Women's Studies Program spring semester:

Thomas Gannon is Assistant Professor in the Department of English specializing in Native American literature, critical theory, and eco-criticism. His Ph.D. is from the University of Iowa (2003). Professor Gannon teaches Native American Women's Literature, Native American Literature and Literary/Critical Theory. In all of his courses he focuses on Native-feminist writers such as Silko, Hogan, Harjo and on ecofeminist theory.

Stephen Lahey is Lecturer in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut in the History of Philosophy and Historical Theology (1996). Among the courses he has taught are Ethics courses on race, gender, and animal rights issues, and at UNL, Contemporary Theology: Theologies of Liberation (including Black and Feminist Theology). In teaching courses on theology his goal is to help students consider the relation of the feminine to the divine and women's lived experience of religion.

Oksana Yakushko, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology holds a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia (2004) in Counseling Psychology. She is particularly interested in applying feminist, global, and cross-cultural perspectives to sexism, sexuality, women and body image, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies. Professor Yakushko anticipates building a research and teaching focus on issues of gender and sexuality from a feminist perspective. She is developing a course on feminist perspectives on gender that will apply these theories to clinical settings.

No Limits Conference at UNK

Twelve undergraduate and graduate students from UNL presented and/or served as moderators at the *No Limits* Women's Studies Conference held at the University of Nebraska, Kearney on March 4 & 5.

Presenters from UNL were Tamy Burnett, Whitney Douglas, Travis Groves, Kami Lott, Amber Leichner, Christine Stewart-Nunez, Carmel Morse, Mike Schueth, Melissa Swihart, and Eric Turley.



No Limits - An Undergraduate View by Katie Taylor

Having never experienced a *No Limits* conference prior to this year, I was delighted at the pursuit of scholarship and fellowship that I experienced at the 2005 conference. Panels were presented on topics ranging from Nebraskan women in the public sphere to female action heroes and poetry. Meeting with women's studies students from other campuses opened my eyes to the diversity in the ways to study women and gender issues, and time spent with fellow UNL students allowed for greater connection and a renewed sense of ambition to make achievements as a group. The amazement that I have for my colleagues has deepened as a result of *No Limits* and further strengthened my desire to see the great things that each will undoubtedly accomplish in the future.

Women's Studies Faculty Achievements

Mary Beck (Animal Science) is receiving a College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Distinguished Teaching Award this spring.

Amy Goodburn (English) has received a \$5,000 Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE) Teaching Fellows Grant to help in the creation of her book *Reading and Writing Difference in the English Classroom* which is designed for pre-service undergraduate English education majors. In addition, Amy was one of three coordinators of the Peer Review of Teaching Project to receive the national certificate of excellence in teaching development from the TIAA-CREFF Theodore Hesburgh Foundation.



Faculty Achievements (cont.)

Mary Ann Holmes (Geosciences) published a workshop report “Where are the Women Geoscience Professors?” in January 2005. It is available for download at: <http://www.awg.org/gendereq.html#wwgp> or a print version can be requested from Mary Ann at mholmes2@unl.edu. The report summarizes data compiled at a workshop on this eponymous topic and provides strategies for administrators and aspiring female scientists for successful, diverse academic careers.

Rose Holz (Women’s Studies and History) received a UNL Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students awarded by the UNL Parent’s Association.

Maureen Honey (English) met with women making a documentary of women war correspondents in World War II in New York this past fall. She is one of the consultants for the project which has received NEH funding. Maureen also attended the premiere of another documentary on women in World War II, *Government Girls*. She appears in the film which aired on PBS in Washington, DC in July.

Margaret Jacobs (History) has been awarded a grant from the Spencer Foundation for 2005-06 to complete her book manuscript, “White Mother to a Dark Race: White Women and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the United States and Australia, 1880-1940.”

Carole Levin’s (History) article “Elizabeth I and the Meanings of Motherhood” was published in the journal *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* (Vol. 30, #1, 2004). She also co-edited (with Donald Stump) this special issue entitled “Images of Elizabeth I.” Carole’s article “Elizabeth I: Dreams of Danger” was published in the anthology *Queen Elizabeth I: Past and Present*. In addition, Carole was awarded a Folger Shakespeare Library Short Term Fellowship in 2004.

Christin Mamiya (Art & Art History) was recently selected for membership in the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. In addition, the following spin-offs of Christin’s 2004 publication *Gardner’s Art Through the Ages* (12th edition) were published in March: *Gardner’s Art Through the Ages: A Concise History*; *Gardner’s Art Through the Ages: The Western Perspective*; *Gardner’s Art Through the Ages: Non-Western Perspectives*. All of these are 12th editions and were co-authored with Fred S. Kleiner and are published by Thomson Learning/Wadsworth.

Adelaida Martinez (Modern Languages and Literatures) was awarded the Annis Chaikin Sorensen Award from UNL on April 17.

Amelia M. L. Montes (English & Coordinator of Latino & Latina American Studies) has received a UNL College Distinguished Teaching Award. In addition, Amelia was the keynote speaker for the conference “Exploring and Challenging Fronteras in the Midwest and Beyond” at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her speech was entitled “Chicana and Latina Perspectives in the Great Plains and Midwest.”

Ruth Nisse’s (English) new book *Defining Acts: Drama and the Politics of Interpretation in Late Medieval England* was published in January by Notre Dame Press. Ruth has also received a fellowship to the National Humanities Center. She will spend the 2005-06 academic year at the center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina working on her new project, “Jacob’s Shipwreck” on Jewish and Christian narratives of Diaspora in the Middle Ages.

Hilda Raz (English) received this year’s May Sarton Award which is given intermittently to a poet whose work is an inspiration to other poets. Hilda also gave readings in New York at the School of Visual Arts, taught at the Split Rock Writers’ Conference at the University of Minnesota and the University of Nebraska’s Summer Writers’ Conference, was a panelist at the Associated Writing Programs annual meeting, gave the Council of Editors of Learned Journals keynote at MLA, and published poems in *Pleiaides* and essays in *Fourth Genre* and forthcoming in *Creative Nonfiction*.

Joy Ritchie (English) was awarded the Chancellor’s Award for GLBT Concerns on April 8. Joy also received the Woman Artist - Written Word Award from the Lincoln-Lancaster Women’s Commission on March 11. The award was given in recognition of the book *Available Means*, published in 2001, which she co-edited.

Carleen Sanchez (Anthropology) is a 2005 Future of Minority Studies Research Project - Mellon Fellow. She also received an invitation to participate in “The Future of Minority Studies Research Project” to be held from July 25-August 5, 2005 at Cornell University. This is a summer seminar and conference entitled “Feminist Identities, Global Struggles.”



Faculty Achievements (cont.)

Loukia K. Sarroub's (Teaching, Learning & Teacher Ed.) new book *All American Yemeni Girls: Being Muslim in a Public School* was recently published and concerns Yemeni American girls and their identities. This book is available in the Women's Studies Reading Room.

Loukia's article "Reframing for Decisions: Transforming Talk about Literacy Assessment among Teachers and Researchers" is included in the 2004 book edited by Rebecca Rogers entitled *New Directions in Critical Discourse Analysis: The Role of Language and Learning in Social Transformation*.

Victoria Smith (History) has been awarded the Harold and Esther Edgerton Junitor Faculty Award from UNL.

Wendy Weiss's (Textiles, Clothing and Design) exhibition entitled *Traveler's Field*, a textile and sound environment in collaboration with Jay Kreimer, was at University Place Gallery in Lincoln during March 2005. It will be at Design Gallery at the University of Wisconsin, Madison from April 3-May 1.

Donna Akers Provides Insight into the Pocahontas Myth at March Colloquium



Donna Akers began her discussion with Euro-American images depicting America as a dangerous yet ultimately submissive "Indian Queen," and then turned to the life of Pocahontas and the myths that have grown around her participation in "saving" the life of John Smith. Akers explained that if Smith's life was truly in danger, Pocahontas, then a ten-year-old,

would not have had the power to plea for his release. In addition, Akers explained that Pocahontas did not marry John Smith, but another Englishman by the name of John Rolfe.

Akers showed images of Pocahontas through the centuries, first as depicted by Euro-Americans, and then as an advertising icon. She then discussed the Disney representation of Pocahontas which depicted her not as the Native child she was in real life, but as a light-skinned, attractive young adult woman.

No Limits 2006

Riding the Waves: Feminism Across Generations, Difference and Community

March 3 & 4, 2006

at the University of Nebraska at Omaha

For information contact: Karen Falconer Al-Hindi at 402-554-3834 or kfalconeralhindi@mail.uomaha.edu

Congratulations to Judith Hart, the 2005 Melba Cope Women's Studies Community

Associate. Ms. Hart is co-founder and Executive Director of the Angels Theater Company, has directed more than two dozen productions around the U.S. and in Lincoln, "The Vagina Monologues" (2003-2005) and "The Lysistrata Project."

Congratulations to our Women's Studies Majors who will be Graduating in May 2005:

Graduate Specialization:

Amber Leichner

Graduating Majors:

Rachel Johnson

Rachel Kaiser

Kami Lott

Katherine Ngaruiya

Melissa Swihart

Graduating Minors:

Rachel Battiatto

Holly Gay

Sara Giboney

Brook La Brie

Jessica (Jess) Ritsch

Kellie Wulf

Please join us for the Women's Studies Spring Graduate Reception & Awards Ceremony

April 28, 2005

3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Nebraska Union (room posted)

Family, friends and partners are invited.

Refreshments will be served. Please R.S.V.P. to Glenda Moore at 472-9392.



Guerrilla Girls Take UNL by Storm



Frida Makes a Point

At the presentation on February 24, Guerrilla Girl Frida Kahlo began by inviting the audience to move closer to the stage stating, "We want to get up close and personal with you." For the next hour and a half Frida Kahlo and Roselyn Franklin (pseudonyms) presented "The Subversive Use of Informa-

tion" to an audience of students and faculty from UNL and Lincoln Public Schools. This lecture detailed Guerrilla Girls history and activism. That evening, the Guerrilla Girls presented a performance art piece for the opening of "The Collector's Eye: Amish Quilts from the IQSC" at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery. The two events were sponsored by the Department of Textiles, Clothing & Design with additional support from the Department of Art & Art History and Women's Studies.

Guerrilla Girls organized in 1985 to protest the rarity of women artists in New York City art galleries. Because the Guerrilla Girls were artists who were attempting to get their work exhibited, they wore gorilla masks and took on the names of deceased women artists in order to remain anonymous.

According to Frida, their first public work consisted of posters that were about "naming names because everyone in the art world was passing the buck." The initial poster that was pasted to buildings in New York City listed the names of male artists who considered themselves to be politically liberal. They put these artists to task by asking them why they exhibited in galleries that showed 10% or less women artists. Frida was happy to announce that twenty years later, many of these galleries are now out of business.

In the beginning, the Guerrilla Girls attempted to "scrutinize the art world in a way it had not been scrutinized before." Eventually, they took on a wider political agenda by addressing issues such as homelessness, lack of public health insurance, and cutbacks in education. In addition to the posters and billboards, they began publishing a newsletter entitled, "Hot Flashes from the Guerrilla Girls."

Additional information about the Guerrilla Girls can be found on their website at: www.guerrillagirls.com.

Women's Studies Alumni & Student News

Melba Cope has been elected to the Women's Studies Advisory Board at the University of Arizona at Tucson. Currently, Melba works as a professional photographer in Tucson.

Kris Gandara was awarded the Chancellor's Award for GLBT Concerns on April 8. Congratulations Kris!

Trina Smith (2000) is in her 5th year of graduate work in sociology at the University of Minnesota. She is now officially ABD. Her dissertation will focus on globalization, international organizations, and reproductive rights. She is involved with the organization Sociologists for Women in Society and was able to observe at the 49th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in March. Trina teaches both at the university and at a community college and is presently teaching the class Sociology of Gender.

Vera Drake Film Spurs Discussion by *Rose Holz*

In cooperation with Planned Parenthood of Nebraska and Council Bluffs, the Women's Studies Program hosted a February 17 discussion of Mike Leigh's new film, *Vera Drake*. The conversation was especially interesting because it was informed by a variety of perspectives, including those of several Planned Parenthood members as well as a nurse, a student, and a professor of history. Part of our conversation addressed some of the larger historical, socio-economic, and ethical issues the movie raised, with particular emphasis on matters of women's health. But what drove our conversation forward was the film itself as we found ourselves asking various other questions. For example, what sympathy did Mike Leigh evoke for his characters, not just for Vera but for all of them? What language did Vera use to describe her work, and what does this mean? What were the differences between the illegal abortions provided by Vera and the legal ones provided by the medical profession? And finally, what were the relationships like — between women and men, parents and children, police and criminals, and of course between abortionists and the women they served? Mike Leigh's exact goal with this film is not entirely clear, but if it was to use art to get people talking about a controversial issue, then I think those of us who participated in this conversation would agree that he succeeded.

Dorothy Allison Motivates & Illuminates



Dorothy Allison with Women's Studies graduate student
Kris Gandara

Lesbian feminist writer Dorothy Allison spoke to a capacity crowd at UNL on March 3, 2005. Allison is author of the prize-winning novels *Bastard Out of Carolina* and *Cavedweller* as well as collections of poetry, short stories, essays, and a performance piece.

Allison discussed issues of class, sexuality and feminism. She talked about her own life and the discrimination she faced growing up in poverty and being a lesbian activist.

Allison posed the question, "What if you talked about unspeakable acts in everyday language and created a counter narrative, a radical act?" She did this in her first novel, *Bastard Out of Carolina*, through the main character, Bone, who struggles with childhood sexual abuse, violence, sexuality, and class issues. Allison admits that

this book is autobiographical in nature although she changed and/or combined several of the characters. *Bastard* was one of five finalists for the 1992 National Book Award and it won the Ferro Grumley and Bay Area Book Reviewer's Awards for fiction.

Allison believes that everyone is given a story from the moment of birth, and that we gain a sense of who we are from the stories we get back from our family combined with the information that surrounds us in the outside world. "You take it in and you give it back," Allison asserts. "The world changes when any damn body at all tells the truth about their life ...reclaim your story, learn how to love yourself."



WE'RE MOVING! In mid-April Women's Studies will be moving to: 327 Seaton Hall, Box 880632, City Campus 68588-0632. Our phone number will remain the same. Come visit us!

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