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Women's Voice

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

3-1999

Women's Voice, Volume 4, Issue 3, March 1999

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program
Illinois State University

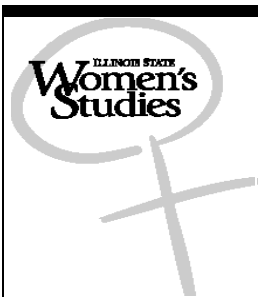
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Recommended Citation

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, "Women's Voice, Volume 4, Issue 3, March 1999" (1999). *Women's Voice*. 38.

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Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 4, Issue 3, March 1999

From the Director:

On Feminist Internationalism

It's been a busy, active, exciting month. The dynamism of Women's Studies and of the women's movement was evident in the many activities that took place during March. The month began with a live global teleconference at the University of Illinois, Springfield and ended with a march for the women of Afghanistan at Illinois Wesleyan. At ISU we had important events all month.

On March 8, International Women's Day, a live global videoconference entitled "A World Free of Violence against Women" took place, organized by the United Nations. I watched it at UI-Springfield, where the Women's Center had sponsored the satellite downlink. The teleconference consisted of live, two-way videos linking human rights activists in India, Kenya, and Mexico, among other places, with UN officials, government representatives, and media representatives in New York. The program began with images of women and girls from around the world, in different social circumstances, who have suffered domestic violence. Some of the most poignant, and also encouraging, images were from South Asia. Scenes of women burned or beaten, and of girls being sold into prostitution, were countered with incredible scenes of thousands of women marching in protest against violence and trafficking. One poignant message was from a young Indian woman, who had been mistreated by her husband and in-laws for insufficient dowry: "Before you get married, become financially independent". An Indian judge talked about how he has come "face-to-face with evidence of masculine bestiality". Saida Hamid of India's National Commission of Women called for an overhaul of the Dowry Act: "The law underestimates the extent of extortion present in our system." Radhika Coomaraswamy of Sri Lanka,

who is the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, said that her office had put together model legislation to deal with violence against women, and that its focus is the criminal justice system. The Global Alliance against Trafficking in Women has determined that poverty, globalization, and inequality are the main factors behind trafficking. I cannot underscore this enough: THESE ISSUES ARE WOMEN'S ISSUES.

Here at ISU we sponsored a very instructive talk by Luellen Laurenti, the NOW/AAUW legislative liaison for Illinois. She talked about the current legislation for priority action in the areas of reproductive rights and women's health, violence against women, civil rights, economic justice, education, consumer rights, and children's issues. We talked a little about the lobbying power of NOW and AAUW compared with the big businesses and insurance companies. For example, feminist support for HB 597, which would provide parity for contraceptive coverage in insurance, is opposed by the insurance companies. It seems they don't mind paying for Viagra for men but they do mind covering contraception for women. This example shows the collusion of capitalism and patriarchy.

Our Women's Studies Symposium was a success: the student presentations and Margaret Schuler's lecture on the international women's human rights movement were very well received. Dr. Schuler reminded us that what is now a worldwide struggle for women's human rights was begun by Third World feminists; she also showed the necessary links between socio-economic rights and civil and political rights. We cannot talk about human rights, or about citizenship, without reference to social and individual rights.

On Sunday, March 28, a march in solidarity with the women of Afghanistan took place. I spoke at the rally that took place before the march, drawing attention to the factors behind the plight of Afghan women: a Cold War-inspired civil conflict during the 1980s, Afghan patriarchy, and the country's underdevelopment. Feminist internationalism is alive and well at century's end. ✍

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Visit our website at: <http://www.cas.ilstu.edu/WomenStudies/womenstudies.html>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Hostile Environments" Exhibit

The Pigeon Gallery and University Galleries would like to announce the opening of Hostile Environments: Women, Harassment and Sexual Violence. *Hostile Environments* is a multi-media exhibit with over a dozen participating artists. The purpose of the exhibit is to heighten awareness of gender-based socialization and how its effects may result in rape, violence or harassment. This will be explored through film, video, two-dimensional work, sculpture and performance. *Hostile Environments* is curated by Catherine Preston and Shannon Widmer.

The exhibit will first be shown at the Pigeon Gallery from Tuesday, March 17th, until Saturday, March 27th. It will then move to ISU's University Galleries, from Tuesday, March 30th until Saturday, April 3rd. Please contact Catherine Preston, (309) 862-0675 or cawp7@hotmail.com if you have any questions or comments. ✍

Upcoming "Living Ethics" Presentation

On Thursday, April 1st, Dr. Alison Bailey and Dr. Mark Siderits of Philosophy and Women's Studies, will be doing a presentation as part of the "Living Ethics" series. Their presentation will be entitled "Sexuality in the Workplace: Is It Always Sexual Harassment?" The presentation will take place in the Old Main Room of the Bone Student Center. Drs. Bailey and Siderits, accompanied by student actors portraying scenarios, will address the sometimes confusing and contradictory array of state and federal laws and organizational policies that define sexual harassment at work. This program is being sponsored by the Department of Philosophy, the Department of Finance, Insurance and Law and the Women's Studies Program. ✍

Feminist Majority Internships Available

The Feminist Majority is offering full-time internships at the Washington D.C. and Los Angeles offices. The internships run for a minimum of two months and are available all-year round. They prefer that the interns work 35-40 hours per week. From September through May, a stipend of \$70/week is offered. During the summer months (June-August), no stipend is offered, but there is some opportunity to earn pocket money by doing administrative work as needed.

The Feminist Majority and Feminist Majority Foundation internships provide students with a behind-the-scenes look at the women's movement. Each internship includes a wide variety of responsibilities, such as monitoring press conferences and congressional hearings, researching, writing, policy analysis, organizing events and demonstrations, and clinic defense.

Feminist women and men in all majors are encouraged to apply. The internship is most suitable for undergraduate students. They prefer applicants who have experience working on women's issues on campus and/or in their communities, or through a previous internship or job. To apply, send resume, writing sample (3-5 pages on a topic pertinent to women's issues), cover letter and two letters of recommendation. To apply to the Los Angeles office, send it to: Diana Garcia, Internship Coordinator, Feminist Majority, 8105 West Third Street Suite 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048, phone: (323) 651-0495, fax: (323) 653-2689. To apply to the Washington D.C. office, send it to: Justine Andronici, Internship Coordinator, Feminist Majority, 1600 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 801, Arlington, VA 22209, phone: (703) 522-2214, fax: (703) 522-2219. ✍

National Women's Studies Conference

The National Women's Studies Association will hold its 20th Annual Conference June 17-20, 1999 at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference will offer more than 200 panels and workshops addressing the 1999 conference plenary themes, as well as key issues in women's studies, feminist scholarship, and feminist activism. The topics for the Plenary Sessions are Interdisciplinarity; Life After Graduation: Women's Studies Students Enter the World; and Feminism and (Post)-Colonialism. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the distinguished Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University, and life member of NWSA, will give the keynote address. For a complete description about the conference, call Women's Studies at (309) 438-2947, or the NWSA Web Site—for conference updates at www.nwsa.org. ✍

Speaker's Corner

A new column of the Women's Voice is Speaker's Corner, in which students, may submit a personal essay on their experiences.

Report on Brown Bags

**By Shamala Kumar, Graduate Student,
Women's Studies**

On September 9th, 1998, Women's Studies began the brown bag series titled "Women Across the Disciplines". The series have sessions discussing topics ranging from biology to theatre. I think the brown bags were an enriching experience for all who participated and an ideal venue for meeting others with similar interests. These meetings probably enhanced the already interdisciplinary nature of Women's Studies.

During this series I was able to participate in discussions about the natures of feminism, the nature of Women's Studies, and the way different fields integrate Women's Studies into their curricula. At times "how things are generally done" has surprising consequences for women. For instance, Bev Smith from Criminal Justice outlined some of the factors that indirectly contributed to the state of prisons for women. Because there are a lower number of female prisoners compared to male prisoners, female prisons are often not divided according to level of security (e.g., minimum-security, maximum-security). Instead the inmates are housed in the same complex. This means that even women with convictions that require minimum-security imprisonment are in maximum-security institutions. Also because not as many institutions are needed for women prisoners, they were often further away from their families. Statistics show that the further inmates are from their homes, the more likely it is that they will be ill-treated.

The presentation by Rina Ghose and Shannon O'Lear (Geography) showed that each field can have a substantial influence on women's lives. Among the many interesting issues they presented was the effect of bad lighting on the security that women felt at night in public places. I identified with what they were saying. I had not realized, however, that study in Geography could improve these conditions.

The brown bag series highlighted how certain fields contribute to Women's Studies and are probably not given the full credit that they deserve. For instance, I was impressed by the two presentations by Maria Canabal and Deb Gentry. I did not know how broad the field of family and consumer sciences was. I did not realize the important role women and gender issues play in that field.

Overall, I think the brown bag series made me more aware of how gender influences all aspects of life. I think the most significant thing I gained from this series was the awareness of the way that seemingly innocuous factors could strongly affect the well being of an under represented segment of the community. The series was definitely a success. I think many of those who participated received a much broader idea of what gender meant in the different disciplines. The series was to last only a semester, however, because of its success the brown bags were extended to the Spring Semester 1999. This fact alone, I think, is indicative of its success. ✍



Did you know that Women's Studies has a Resource and Documentation Center available to use for your research studies that focus on women's issues? Photo copy service available. We do not allow materials to be checked out. Call 309/438-2947 for information, hours available, or scheduling study-groups. You may also e-mail Rozel White at rwhite@ilstu.edu

Women's Studies Students: News and Profiles

By Sandra Harmon

In this month's column we will profile some of the thirteen women's studies students who will graduate either in May or August.

Laurie Beth Hartzell will graduate in May with a BS in anthropology. She presented her senior thesis "The Political Construction of the American Woman Soldier," at both the 1999 Undergraduate Research and the Women's Studies symposia. Laurie was also a presenter at 1997 Women's Studies Symposium. She served two semesters as an undergraduate teaching assistant in anthropology and is employed as a student manager at the Bone Student Center. This summer she will begin graduate studies in the Illinois State University Peace Corps' Master's International Program in non-profit management and community development. She has requested Peace Corps placement in Africa.

Tracy Kremer will receive a BA in public relations in May. Tracy has a second minor in sociology. She is co-president of PAMA (People Against Mistreatment of Animals) and a member of Women's Coalition and Campus for Choice. Her goal is to do PR for a women's organization or an animal rights or environmental organization or, as she says, "preferably all three!"

Dawn Minor, a May psychology graduate, served as co-president of Campus for Choice, and is a member of Women's Coalition and Student Psychology Association. She plans to work in social services in Peoria for several years before attending graduate school.

Libby Molnar plans an August graduation with a degree in criminal justice sciences. She spent the 1998 spring semester in the Study Abroad program in Canterbury, England, and is a member of Phi Beta Delta, the Honor Society for International Scholars. She volunteered at Clare House all four years of her undergraduate career and is currently completing a CJS internship with the Division of Child Protection at the Department of Children and Family Services in McLean County. Her immediate career goal is to work for DCFS as an investigator, preferably in the Chicago area. She hopes to earn a master's degree in social work in the future.

Tracy Vernor will graduate in May with a degree in psychology. She works as a gymnastics teacher and volunteers for the Rape Crisis Center. She is applying to graduate schools with the goal of earning a Ph.D. in psychology. Tracy would like to work with victims of domestic violence and in education/prevention programs focusing on domestic violence and sexual assault.

Faculty News

Dr. Valentine Moghadam, **Women's Studies and Sociology**, participated in a conference on "Women, Livelihood, and Globalization" at the University of California, Santa Barbara, on 25-26 February. The conference was organized by Kum-Kum Bavnani of the Department of Sociology and Mary Jacob of the Office of International Affairs. Dr. Moghadam presented a paper on globalization and women's employment in the Middle East and North Africa. Other speakers were Cynthia Enloe, Jane Parpart, Caren Grown, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, and Dessima Williams. The keynote address was by Margaret Randall.

Following this conference, **Dr. Moghadam** presented a paper on March 1st at California State University, Northridge, on "Women's Labor and Mobilization in a Global Context". Her talk was sponsored by the Women's Studies Department, the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus, and the Greater San Fernando Valley Business & Professional Women.

Profile of ISU Child Care Center

The ISU Child Care Center provides services to ISU students with children aged 2-8. They are accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs and are licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Currently, the number of children at the Center are 32, with 41% male and 59% female. The number of ISU Student-Parents is 34. The constellation of these families is: 47% are single-parent families, 53% are two-parent families, and 42% of these families have more than 1 child. Within the student families 85% are undergraduate students and 15% are graduate students. The cultural background of the children is 22% African-American and 78% Caucasian. There is one child with very involved cerebral palsy, 2 children with slight vision impairment and 2 children with asthma that requires treatment during day care attendance. The families of the children are of all income levels; 60% are eligible for food subsidy the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program, 50% free category, 13% reduced category, 40% paid category and 25% of the families qualify for child care cost subsidy through the Illinois Department of Human Resources. The cost of the Child Care Center is \$75/week part-time; \$95/week full-time, \$145 full time for those taking less than 4 credit hours. Full time is anything over 20 hours per week or any schedule using morning and afternoon child care hours, unless using only Tuesday/Thursday child care hours.

Pro-Choice Benefit Concert

Illinois State University Campus for Choice will sponsor its annual Pro-Choice Rocks benefit show, 8:00 p.m., Thursday, April 8, at the Agape Java Hut located in the basement of University Christian Church on the corner of North and Fell in downtown Normal. Several pro-choice bands will donate their time. Proceeds will go toward clinic defense and reproductive rights. Tickets, available at the door, are \$3.00. T-shirts and buttons will also be on sale at the event. For more information, contact Sarah Anderson at 862-0976 or campusforchoice@hotmail.com.

WOMEN ON THE MOVE!

In future issues of *Women's Voice*, a new section will focus on *Women on the Move* and to bring attention to the efforts of women taking action that will make a difference locally and/or globally for all women.

If you have information that you would like to have included in this section, please contact Women's Studies at 309/438-2947 or e-mail at rwhite@ilstu.edu.

ISU Women's Coalition

This semester, Women's Coalition meetings are going to be held on **Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in Stevenson 223**. Women's Coalition meetings are open to everyone. The following are the events for the rest of the Spring Semester:

April 5th: Assertiveness Training with Dr. Karen Pfof of the Psychology Dept.

April 12th: Film Night: "Righteous Babes," a film about women in the music industry.

April 19th: Dr. Alison Bailey of the Philosophy Dept, will lead a discussion about peace politics and how Militarism affects our lives.

April 26th: End of the semester party!! TBA

For more information, suggestions, questions, contact Liz at 662-2906 or Becca at 451-8744.

Women's Voice
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Women's Studies Program
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Women's Studies Brown Bags

The Brown Bag series "Gender Across the Disciplines" will continue through April at the Women's Studies offices, Rachel Cooper, 2^d floor, Room 234. Speakers will discuss the integration of women and gender issues in their disciplines and the way they address women and gender issues in their own research and teaching. Please bring a sandwich. We will provide coffee, tea, and juice. For further information, call 438-2947.

Wednesday, March 31st—12:00-1:00 Karen Pachis and Sarah Campbell, College of Nursing.

Monday, April 12th--12:00-1:00 p.m. Richard Dammers, English: "18th Century English Women Writers"

If you have a disability and need accommodations, please contact 438-5853. ✍

Contested Citizenship Conference

The Interdisciplinary Group on French Culture and Society, Northwestern University announces *La Citoyenneté en question: France/Amérique* CONTESTED CITIZENSHIP, French and American Perspectives on:

Thursday, April 22, 5:00 p.m. and Friday, April 23 at 108 Harris Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

For full program information as well as information about travel and accommodation consult their website at: <http://www.citizenship.nwu.edu>.

Keep in touch!

 ✍

As the spring semester comes to a close, we would like your help so that we may stay in touch with you and to continue to send you *Women's Voice*. Please send us updates of your address, career activities, and/or education. Do your plans for the summer include special plans that you would like to see included in upcoming issues? We want to hear from you and about you.

Name _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: Home (____) _____ Business (____) _____

Employer/Business _____

Information _____

Yes! I would like to continue to receive *Women's Voice*.
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Please mail this form to Women's Studies, Illinois State University, Campus Box 4260, Normal, IL 61790-4260; or E-mail the information to rwhite@ilstu.edu. ✍