Spring 2005

UA68/18/1 Perspectives

WKU Women's Studies & Support Program

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WALKING THE WALK:
From Books Behind Bars, to Ceramic Vagina Quilts, to V-Day 2005—WS Students are Putting the Act in Activism

Women’s Studies students put the “act” back into activism this semester! Student volunteers registered students to vote in this year’s presidential election during the “Rock the Vote” event in October. Students also volunteered at the local “Vote ‘No’ on the Amendment” campaign headquarters, attended and organized rallies, went door-to-door, made telephone calls, wrote letters, passed out literature, sold buttons, stickers, t-shirts, and posted signs.

The Vagina Monologues, performed by the students of Western Feminist Thought (WOMN-400), once again performed to a standing-room-only crowd, with $2,267.00 in proceeds donated to Hope Harbor Rape Crisis Center. Photos page 3...

Photos by Trish Lindsey Jaggers

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**From the Director's Desk**

Better late than never... a day late and a dollar short... or, to paraphrase Oscar Wilde, “We are always late on principle, our principle being that punctuality is the thief of time.” (Just google “being late sayings.”)

This is the first year since the newsletter first came out, back in 1997, that we have had fewer than two issues. This is partly because some years other faculty have served as editors, and partly because other years, here in the office, we’ve just held our collective breath and set aside other tasks in order to get the text written and edited, pictures placed, and captions aligned.

This year those “other tasks” have been noisier, clamoring at the gates like an unruly crowd... or slobbering at our knees like an even more unruly dog. (And I like dogs.)

In other words, we’ve been busy! And if that means one newsletter a year from now on, then let’s do it in the summer, when the crowds are on vacation and the dogs are panting in the shade.

I love this program! It’s been a great year and I hope you enjoy the glimpses you get in the coming pages. If you like what you see and haven’t been a part of any of it, let us know—we’ll find a way to put your skills, intelligence, and passions to good use. And if you’d like to support us in “the pocketbook way,” please do take a look at our last page.

But first, “find you some shade” and put your feet up!

Jane Olmsted, Director

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**Et cetera...**

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Shelly Glorioso, Student Office Assistant
Heather Bridges, Graduate Assistant

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**Talking the Talk**

Our fall and spring semesters nearly burst with speakers and events!

**September**
Riftat Hassan delivered a compelling lecture, “Contemporary Muslim Women: Beyond the Images,” and conducted a round-table session with interested students, faculty, and staff.

**Rock the Vote!**: Students, faculty, and staff volunteered to register as many eligible voters as they could.

**Debate Watch I** (Presidential Debate, 2004): Students volunteers worked tables for “No on the Amendment,” registered voters, brought food for a shared potluck, and watched the debate.

**October**
Carol Mason: “The Hillbilly Defense: Gender & Terror at Home & Abroad.” Mason delivered a powerful lecture-slideshow and visited classes for discussion.

**genderations Colloquia Series** (See page 8): “Families with Children by Other Means,” was the topic of presentation by Deana Groves (Cravens Library) and Katherine Pennavaria (Glasgow Library).

**Debate Watch II, 2004**: This final Debate Watch again had our students busy with fliers, posters, and registering students.

**November**
**genderations Colloquia Series** (See page 8): “Welfare & Human Services: Serving Women in Hard Times” was the basis of eye-opening discussions led by Pam Priddy, Karina Phelps, and Becky Bennett.

**February**
D.I.V.O.R.C.E., a multi-media presentation and panel discussion on the effects of divorce on individuals, was well received by all who attended. Panelists were Judge Margaret Huddleston, Jeanie Adams-Smith, and Jack Montgomery.

Western Feminist Thought students presented The Vagina Monologues, V-Day WKU 2005 to a standing-room-only crowd. $2,267.00 was raised for Hope Harbor Rape Crisis Center.

**March**
The Guerrilla Girls brought together art, feminism, and gorillas to battle discrimination and sexism in their performance.

**genderations Colloquia Series**: “Nine Months... And Then What?: Faculty Maternity Leave Policy at WKU.” A panel discussion featuring Tony Glisson, Sally Hastings, Amy Krull, Betsy Scharnfeld, and Claudia Strow, answered many questions and raised some interesting points with regard to maternity leave policy at WKU as well as other universities.

**April**
**genderations Colloquia Series**: Women’s Studies graduate students Lindsey Bake, Leigh Johnson, and Misty York presented their work: forming a reading group with incarcerated women in the Warren County Regional Jail, researching bee imagery in women’s literature, and examining the rhetorical arguments of women’s consciousness-raising blogs (internet weblogs).

Wow!

I refuse to think of them as chin hairs. I think of them as stray eyebrows.

Janette Barber
The Virginia Monologues, performed by the students of the Western Feminist Thought class, raised $2,267.00 which they donated to the Hope Harbor Rape Crisis Center.

Kentucky Feminist Writers Series

November, 2004: KFWS editors Elizabeth Oakes and Jane Olmsted celebrated the publication of their third book in the series, I to I: Life Writing by Kentucky Feminists, with a book party at the lovely home of Jim Skaggs. Several contributors were present for autographs as was Andee Rudloff, whose paintings were chosen to illustrate the covers. If you would like to purchase a copy of this book ($10), stop by the WS Center (address on page 12), call us at 270-745-6477, or visit us at http://www.wku.edu/womensstudies (click on “Publications”).

Andee Rudloff, proudly displays two of the books in the KFWS series — the covers of which feature her paintings.
FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2004, WOMEN’S STUDIES HELD ITS ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY & LUNCHEON IN THE GARRETT BALLROOM

Jane Olmsted and Elizabeth Oakes, recipients of the 2004-05 Catherine Coogan Ward Feminist Action Award

Amanda Rose Biggs, recipient of the 2004-05 Seneca Falls Personal Empowerment Award (presented by Farrah Ferrell)

Kelli Person, recipient of the Valere Scott Scholarship (presented by Patti Minter)

Heather Bridges, recipient of the Women’s Studies Graduate Scholarship (presented by Patti Minter)
We wish to express our gratitude to Jeanne Fiene for her commitment to fund a Women’s Studies graduate scholarship:

**The Esther Fund**

This fund honors Jeanne Fiene’s mother and all the Esthers in the world who have lacked only opportunity not ability. This scholarship funds graduate students enrolled in the Women’s Studies Graduate Certificate who will further serve and educate on behalf of women.

Dr. Fiene writes, “Mom was taken out of school after 8th grade and she was an education advocate. No one in my family has gone past a bachelor’s except me, and many haven’t finished college. Many days, her support and encouragement carried me.

“So, in her honor—in that Esther moved me just as Esther moved Haman, ruler of the enemy camp, on behalf of her people—let the Esther fund move women forward.”

Women’s Studies honors **Judy Owen** (retiring) for all her hard work on behalf of WS.

Students (led by Heather Bridges) put on a “mock classroom” skit that had us rolling on the floor!

Women’s Studies would like to thank **Farrah Ferrell** for her hard work and dedication over the past four years as graduate assistant, instructor, activist, and friend.
GUERRILLA GIRLS

Bridgette Jaggers, student, with GGirls

Galen Olmsted with a Guerrilla Girl (in front of, and partially obscured by, the Powerpoint Screen) prepares to "read" his script.

GGirl signs a book while Heather Bridges, WS graduate assistant, and a student look on.

Jenna Vondran (WS minor), G-Girl, and student

G-Girl performs reenactment of a museum encounter—with Galen Olmsted (not pictured).

Shelly Glorioso, WS minor, student assistant, with G-Girl

Photos by Trish Lindsey Jaggers
Spotlight on Speakers

CAROL MASON: HILLBILLY DEFENSE

Linking military and popular culture, Mason's "Hillbilly Defense: Terror at Home and Abroad" showed ways that "the hillbilly" is used in numerous acts of scape-goating.

RIFFAT HASSAN: CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WOMEN

Riffat Hassan, in addition to her lecture, "Contemporary Muslim Women: Beyond the Images," answered questions and shared personal experiences from the perspective of a Muslim woman with those in attendance at the round table discussion.
Spotlight on Student Activism
What Do You Call “It”?*
Photos by Trish Lindsey Jaggers

Just days before she walked
the line to receive her diploma, WS
minor Jenna Vondran (Art
Ceramics major) had her final
showing in the Fine Arts Center.
She chose to show her pieces in
the cube,” to give her Feminist Art
Show more freedom and room.
Quilts comprised most of her
work — quilts created by an
interesting fabric: ceramic.
“I’m a ceramics major, and

Above: Jenna Vondran with "Cunt Quilt," the ceramic
and fabric version of "Vulva Quilt," a drawing by Jenna
that now hangs in the Women’s Studies Center front
office. Between the ceramic "blocks" are color photos
(on fabric) of volunteers vaginas—twelve total.
Left: "What Do You Call it?" installation of etched plates.

while I like to do sculptural art, I also
enjoy the functionality of ceramics
and for people to be able to use it in
everyday life. The original title of the
drawing was "Vagina Quilt," but after
more reading I decided to title it
"Vulva Quilt," because the term
vagina refers only to the canal,
whereas vulva refers to all parts of the
female genitalia.”

From "Vulva Quilt" Jenna
created "Cunt Quilt," a ceramic
installation that builds on actual
photos (printed on fabric) of the
vaginas of twelve volunteers.
"The concept behind "Vulva
Quilt" is to celebrate the bond among
women and to celebrate female sexuality. Through my work I hope to
expel the concept of our bodies being something to be
ashamed of."

Above: Colored pencil drawing of
"Vulva Quilt," the prototype for
"Cunt Quilt."

Quilting has typically been
done by women in groups, which
creates a bond between them.
Through research I found out
that women made "friendship quilts,"
where each woman has her name on
a patch in the quilt (documenting the
bond between friends. Although
much of women’s history has been
lost, one way that women made their
own record was through quilts. Too
often, women weren’t able to voice
their political ideas, and some of the
quilts made political statements. One
pattern I found was called the
"drunkards path," which made a
statement about prohibition. Susan
B. Anthony and other suffragists discussed and came up
with political action while quilting. Thus, quilting has been
a way both to make statements and tell history and to plan
ways to change the status quo.”

Jenna (background) and detail of "March" plates

Left: "March Quilt" with engraved quotations from twelve
WKU persons who attended the March
for Women’s Lives in D.C. last spring.

Right: Thirteen place settings feature
"March" quotes and clippings.
Spotlight on Student Activism

Books Behind Bars: Book Club at Warren County Regional Jail

"I need you to turn around and put your hands up against the wall," the guard said to me.

"But, I'm just here for the book club."

"We need to frisk you anyway, because you could hide files in the books or take in pens, which the inmates may use as a weapon," he said.

"Pens?"

"Yeah...some inmates have tried to stab others with them."

"Oh," I said aloud, but to myself I was thinking, What the hell am I doing here?

Walking into the Warren County Regional Jail for that first book club meeting, I was equipped with four paperback books, as hard copies are not allowed; notebooks, having no spiral binding; names, which meant nothing to me; and ignorance, as I thought this was just going to be a project. And, like the many other areas of my life, I was going to compartmentalize it—family and friends, masters pursuit, leisure activities, and the jail project. Easy enough...

So, when I was told by the guard that actual danger could occur, an overwhelming fear rushed over me. What is this going to do me? And, I was scared.

I was scared as I stood there with my legs spread, feeling hands roughly pushing into the crevices of my body. I was scared walking down a sterile hallway having doors with massive locks and bolts. I was scared when four faces, reflecting the bright orange of their shirts, sat in front of me. I was scared when I opened my mouth and said, "So, let's talk about some literature, girls."

But, we did talk and have continued. We've talked about life. We've talked about humanity. We've talked about hate. We've talked about love, death, birth, poverty, drugs, evil, history, religion, time, and hope. We've even talked about being scared.

It was during these conversations that I realized I had found more reasons to want to come to the jail than I had reasons to be scared of it. I watched the women laugh as I stumbled through the word-bilding woman, I heard a woman interpret a Shakespearean sonnet after the first reading. I listened as the women became more confident in their opinions, and I learned not only their names, but those of their families and of their friends. I, too, even felt as if I were included in the latter, which shattered my itemized categories and "project" forever.

For, the book club is not a project that can be graded, and it is not about me or incarcerated "criminals." It is about women—women who want to learn and are capable of doing so. And, although I thought I would be the teacher, I am as much a student as they are, because each person in the group has shared their insight and listened and discussed those of others.

We had become a book club. Although we may not be conventional and sit on overstuffed couches sipping coffee, we are a dedicated and growing book club, learning from and discussing not only the classics, such as Jane Austen's Persuasion or J.D. Salinger's The Catcher and the Rye, but also the literature of all of our lives.

Lindsey Bale, WS

Faculty/Staff News

SALLY O. HASTINGS, Department of Communication, had a paper, "Motivating Students to Develop Social Awareness," accepted to Academic Exchange Quarterly. She was also awarded the 2003 Stanley L. Saxton Award for Applied Research.

MOLLY KERBY published "Social Identity and Substance Use Among Lesbians," in the Journal of Lesbian Studies. She also presented her work at one regional and two national conferences.

DEBORAH LOGAN hosted Victorians Institute conference on British Empire studies at WKU in Fall 03. She published two articles in Victorian studies and is working on a five-volume series on Harriet Martineau. Logan received a National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Grant for research and travel, spring 2004.


Additionally, Lumsden presented her work on Inez at five venues and published five additional articles on various topics relating to journalism.


ELIZABETH OAKES, English Department, won the 2005 Pearl Award for her collection Farm Girl Poems, forthcoming this fall.

ELIZABETH OAKES & JANE OLMSTED coedited I to I: Life Writing by Kentucky Feminists, a collection of essays by Kentucky women. See more about the book release on page 3.
Pix from the 2004-05 genderations Colloquia Series... ~

Photos by Trish Lindsey Jagers

Katherine Pennavaria
Deana Groves

Families with Children by Other Means
October 2004

Pam Priddy
Katrina Phelps

Becky Bennett

Welfare & Human Services: Serving Women in Hard Times
November 2004

Tony Glisson, Sally Hastings, Amy Krull, Betsy Schoenfelt, and Claudia Strow

Nine Months... And Then What?: Faculty Maternity Leave Policy at WKU
March 2005

Misty York, Leigh Johnson, and Lindsey Bale

Women's Studies Graduate Students Present Their Work
April 2005
Friends of Women’s Studies serves as a bridge between the Women’s Studies Program at WKU and the broader communities of Bowling Green and Kentucky. Its goals are:
1. Carry the Women’s Studies mission into the broader community
2. Increase awareness about women’s issues
3. Serve as a catalyst for change
4. Fund scholarships, events, and other activities that support women

OFFICIAL FRIENDS OF WOMEN’S STUDIES
* indicates Life Member or Life Patrons

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*Dawn Bolton
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Martina Cockerel Gibson
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*C.G. Shahmir
Patsy Sloan
*Cori Jane & Col. Spiller
*Dr. Robert Spiller, Jr.
*Katie & Bob Ward
Your name could be here!

Persons wishing to be a member of FOWS can do so at various membership levels. Contributions and membership fees support FOWS initiatives: Graduate scholarships, travel scholarships for students (assistance to attend conferences, research, and internships), and community projects such as the Jail Project (see pictures and story on page 9).

2005-2006 WOMEN’S STUDIES MEMBERSHIP/CONTRIBUTION FORM*

*All donations are tax-deductible

I am a Friend of Women’s Studies!

The name(s) shown on this gift receipt should be

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Please make my gift in □ honor □ memory of:

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Address (to send receipt):

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Send to:
Women’s Studies Program
Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd., 21066
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1066
WOMEN'S STUDIES GRADUATES
FALL 2004, SPRING 2005
UNDERGRADUATE MINOR AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

Congratulations to those who completed their undergraduate WS minors in May 2005:

Ann Carman
Stacy Coons
Nicole Dorris
Lauren N. Fromme
Candice Gregory
Benjamin Steven Hagan
Misti D. Harmon
Terry Mollie Honeycutt
Meghan Nacke
Lindsey Ransdell
Laura A. Simpson
Robyn Trivette
Jenna B. Vondran

Congratulations to those who completed their WS graduate certificates in May 2005:

Lindsey Bale
Leigh Johnson
Yasamin Shariat
Misty York

If you can't be a good example, then you'll just have to be a horrible warning.

Catherine Aird