

# MATRIX

Spring 1996

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WOMEN'S STUDIES  
PROGRAM

WOMEN'S STUDIES  
RESEARCH AND  
RESOURCE CENTER

## A Note From the Director

As many of you know, I will be retiring from the Directorship of Women's Studies at the end of this year. The seven years I have spent with the program have been gratifying in innumerable ways. I am especially pleased with the quality of our course offerings, the new courses developed through the readership program, the caliber of faculty committed to teaching in the Program, and with the number of students enrolled in Women's Studies courses and completing the minor. Our contributions to the university range from the wealth of programming offered in Women's History Month and throughout the year, to the policy initiatives of the sexual harassment brochure and procedure, the community linkages accomplished by our establishment of the Women's Advisory Board, the advocacy that produced the university's first 69 page Financial Aid listing of Scholarships for Women and Minorities, the internship program that locates students in arenas for social change throughout the community and university, and the continued production of the Matrix thanks to the work of Terry Zawacki and Kristen Adams.

Women's Studies students, faculty, and affiliates are a group distinctive for their commitment to the university. They can be found in the leadership of colleges and Departments, interdisciplinary endeavors, student-life initiatives, university governance, and on the Presidential search committee. They are unstinting in the labor they contribute to the university and, as the Faculty News column in this issue makes clear, they are also productive and well-respected scholars. I feel privileged to have worked with a group whose vitality is so central to the life of this institution.

The strength and momentum of Women's Studies is not only a product of our individual and collective effort, however. Our impact is also attributable to the distinctive structure of Women's Studies at George Mason. Because Women's Studies combines an academic program and a research/ resource center, it occupies a unique posi-



*Karen Rosenblum*

tion within the university. It is perhaps the only program at George Mason that actively spans academic, student-life, and community domains. The breadth of scope is a clear product of the Program/Center linkage. Because the Center is embedded in the actualities of institutional policies and student experience, faculty are provided a view of university life that would otherwise be inaccessible. Faculty oversight of the Center, in turn, provides that office with some protection in raising unsettling and sometimes contentious questions. This linkage of Program and Center follows the best traditions of feminist activism; within the context of the university, it provides the bridge by which faculty may take up in their full institutional responsibilities. More by happenstance than plan, Women's Studies at George Mason has avoided the isolation of traditional academic units. As a result, Women's Studies faculty, affiliates, and students are able to assume their role as institutional leaders. I look forward to the work we will accomplish in the future. □

George Mason  
University

**Women's Studies  
Faculty**

Catherine Bateson  
Robinson Professor

Debra Bergoffen  
Philosophy

Lorraine Brown  
English

Zofia Burr  
English

Jane Censer  
History

Elizabeth Choi  
Nursing

Julie Christensen  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Lloyd Cohen  
Law School

Dina Copelman  
History

Anne Cordero  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Carol Erdwins  
Psychology

Sheila ffolliot  
Art History

Martha Francescato  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Cynthia Fuchs  
English

Paula Gilbert  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Devon Hodges  
English

Lois Horton  
Sociology

Lorna Irvine  
English

Katrina Irving  
English

Deborah Kaplan  
English

Aliza Kolker  
Sociology

Michelle LeBaron  
ICAR

## Rosenblum and Fuchs Recipients of 1996 Excellence in Teaching Awards

WMST is very pleased to announce that Karen Rosenblum and Cindy Fuchs are among the six faculty members honored by a 1996 Excellence in Teaching Award. Thirty-eight faculty were nominated for the award and were asked to submit a teaching portfolio, which was then reviewed by a selection committee consisting of recipients of the award the previous year. According to Jim Fletcher, Associate Provost, the award acknowledges "the outstanding way that [the recipients] fulfill [their] commitment to the teaching mission of George Mason University." The award—a certificate and cash prize—will be presented at the collegiate convocations which accompany Commencement.

## News From the Center

*Rose Pascarell*

When the Women's Center opened its doors in 1990, we were housed in a small room in Student Union Building I. Students would mill outside of 206A SUB I (anyone remember?) helping to plan events and student meetings. No more than three people could squeeze into that space comfortably but students still came by for information and discussion. In 1993, we moved to 234 SUB I into a space which allowed people to meet inside the doors and to use the small library of donated books we had accumulated from Women's Studies students, faculty, and the editorial staff of Women and Language. Student groups held their meetings in the Center space and people expressed that they felt more comfortable coming in for confidential meetings. However, we quickly began to outgrow Room 234 as more students and student groups used the Center for their discussions, meetings, and individual visits. In November 1995, we were given the opportunity to move to a larger space located in the Johnson Center (Room 240K). This new space provides us with the opportunity to host programs in the Women's Center, accommodate more and larger group meetings, and display more information and resources. Since November, several on and off-campus groups have held meetings in the Center, as well as some of the Women's Studies classes, and the External Women's Advisory Board.

The Women's Center sponsored and participated in several activities during the 95-96 year. We worked and played with 60+ Camp Mason children at the start of the fall semester, participated in New Student Orientation programs, cosponsored several coalition building workshops (one full-day workshop for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students), and organized the Clothesline Project and the annual Take Back the Night rally. The Clothesline Project (a clothesline of t-shirts made by survivors and friends of sexual abuse victims/survivors) attracted several hundred people on the quad for the four days that the clothesline was displayed. At the end of the week, students and faculty rallied and marched through campus for the annual Take Back the Night Rally Against Sexual Assault. More than 40 volunteers worked to make both the Clothesline and Take Back the Night happen.

In March of this year, as Women's History Month activities began, we were delighted to host the Sixth Annual Women's Leadership Conference. The conference featured Susan Rook (a member of the GMU's Women's Advisory Board and host of CNN's "Talkback Live"), Marty Langelan (with years of expertise on combating sexual harassment), and a number of interactive workshops and presentations. The conference drew more than 150 students from 6 different colleges and universities and we were able to attract a group of students new to the services the GMU Women's Center provides. We found that participants expressed a strong interest in issues of multiculturalism, feminism, and activism, and we look forward to planning for next year's conference with those interests in mind.

We continue to work with and refer students on issues of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic abuse, divorce, and child support enforcement. The 95-96 academic years also saw an increase in reports to the Center by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students who were victims of bias-related incidents on campus. We continue to work with the university to make the campus safe for all students.

As a result of several requests for information on scholarship opportunities for women students, the Center produced a Fall and Spring edition of Scholarships for Women and Minorities at GMU. We're in the process of producing a graduate version of that publication which should be ready mid-May.

The Women's Center remains open during the Summer Break. If you haven't already seen our new space, come by 240K for a tour. □

## MATRIX

Women's Studies Program

Women's Studies Research  
and Resource Center

George Mason University  
Spring 1996

Guest Editor: Terry Myers Zawacki

Production and Layout Editor, Contributing Writer: Kristen Adams, Student Intern

Editorial Staff: Rose Pascarell  
Karen Rosenblum

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# A Rich Understanding of Spirituality

Kristen Adams

The Spirituality in Women's Spirituality: Myth, Symbol, and Ritual is not necessarily religious. The instructors, Sara Looney and Michelle LeBaron, believe that everybody has spiritualities of varying sorts. In teaching this course, one of their goals is to raise consciousness of the spiritual. Both instructors accentuate the importance of the spiritual journey. To help students discover their own spiritualities, Looney and LeBaron begin by establishing a relaxed and supportive atmosphere where even the professors are called by their first names. One important goal is to give students an intellectual understanding of spirituality as it is explored by women who are reclaiming their voices.

Listed as Women's Studies 300 and crosslisted as Communication 300 and Conflict Analysis and Resolution 695, Women's Spirituality is an interdisciplinary course that focuses on how women develop and express spirituality, through communication and conflict transformation. Students use a historical perspective to study the growth of women's spiritual pathways. They analyze the relationship between decision making and spirituality, examine the ways spirituality relates to social constructs, and contrast the gender constructs of varying religious movements.

Creating personal and social metaphors for female spirituality, through art, music, or literary expression, are an important part of the course. The class studies the nature of myth across cultures and traditions, and explores the process of creating new myths. And they also study the meaning and roles of ritual and experience while observing the cultural variation in women's experience and expression of spirituality.

The class is inclusive to students of both sexes; the topic may be Women's Spirituality, but this means that male students are also included. According to Sara Looney, the males in the class appear to be very conscious of women's issues and actively search for sexism.

Throughout the semester, the class engages in feedback sessions, where students and professors discuss the topics they would like to study. Assignments consist of weekly readings and journal entries. At the end of the semester, students turn in a portfolio of finished work. The portfolio is worth half of the final grade and can be compiled of essays, drawings, paintings, photos, pottery, and journal entries, as well as one required paper, using several references. The graduate students have additional requirements.

Both Sara Looney, Professor of Communication, and Michelle LeBaron, Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, agree that teaching exceptionally aware students produces a more easily acquired sense of trust, where it is possible to discuss issues deeply as a small and comfortable community. The professors try to foster a sense of community by inviting students to exchange personal journals, thereby beginning to create a spiritual journey together. Students are encouraged to look at their own spiritual legacy, their heritage through generations and culture. These legacies create the world now, and they will stretch to the future.

Michelle LeBaron says, smiling, that teaching this class has been "rich and affirming;" Sara Looney nods vigorously in response. □

## Women's Studies Faculty

Cindy Lont  
Communication

Allison MacFarlane  
GESS

Marilyn Mobley  
English

Tom Moylan  
English

Karen Oates  
New Century  
College

Aine O'Brien  
English

Lisa Rabin  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Victoria Rader  
Sociology

Janine Ricouart  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Karen Rosenblum  
Sociology

Linda Samuels  
Business  
Administration

Eileen Sypher  
English

Anita Taylor  
Communication

Ellen Todd  
Art History

Toni-Michelle  
Travis  
Public Affairs

Lenore Weitzman  
Robinson Professor

Herma Williams  
Graduate School of  
Education

Joseph Wood  
GESS

Margaret Yocom  
English

Ruth Zambrana  
Center for Child  
Welfare

## Announcement of the Cynthia Wynn Herman Scholarship Fund for Women Students

As most of you in the Women's Studies community know, Cindy Herman, a valued colleague, friend, and past editor of MATRIX, died unexpectedly this past summer. According to Cindy's father, Michael Wynn, Cindy felt a special connection to George Mason, first as a returning woman student and subsequently as a member of two academic communities she found particularly welcoming—WMST and the English department.

Rosemary Jann, one of the English Department co-chairs, notes the wide range of activities in which Cindy Herman excelled: "She was an excellent student, a talented teacher, an active member of the department; I always valued in particular her thoughtful responses to pedagogical issues. Cindy was deeply dedicated to the life of the mind, to integrating her scholarship and her teaching, and to thinking through the ways her feminism informed both."

In Cindy's memory, her father has established with a generous gift the Cynthia Wynn Herman Endowed Scholarship Fund, which provides a scholarship each year to a female student who is at least 25 years old and who is pursuing a BA or MA in English. Contributions to the Fund are invited. They should be sent to Elizabeth Bolan at GMU Foundation with checks made out to the GMU Foundation and marked for the Herman Fund.

**Women's  
Studies  
Affiliates**

Victoria Balenger,  
Counseling Center

Adrienne Barna,  
Counseling Center

Marion Deshmukh,  
History

Ruth Fischer,  
English Language  
Institute

Nancy Fitzgerald,  
PAGE

Dolores Gomez-  
Moran,  
Minority Student  
Affairs

Bethany Hall-Long,  
Nursing

Kristen Johnsen-  
Neshati,  
Theater

Gladys Illarregui,  
Foreign Languages/  
Literatures

Connie Kirkland,  
Sexual Assault  
Services

Barbara Knight,  
Public Affairs

Yuen Liu,  
Nursing

Barbara Melosh,  
English

Sondra Patrick,  
English

Roy Rosenzweig,  
History

Kristin Samuelian,  
English

Zeljka Sporer,  
Sociology

Susan Tichy,  
English

Terry Zawacki,  
English

# Fall 1995 Violence and Gender: A Learning Experience For Teachers and Students

*Paula Ruth Gilbert*

In the fall 1995 semester, Lorna Marie Irvine (English), Michelle LeBaron (Conflict Analysis and Resolution), and I (Foreign Languages and Literatures/ Women's Studies) taught a 6 credit course dealing with the issues of violence and gender. The course was offered as a "learning community" under the auspices of New Century College, but was open to the entire GMU student body. The concept of a learning community combines traditional teaching and learning styles with more innovative approaches involving, for example, collaboration among a team of faculty, study groups for students, creative presentations, and service/ experimental learning.

Over a year in preparation, this course attracted 45 students, wonderfully diverse in age, disciplinary backgrounds, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual preference, political and religious views, and economic and social class. The syllabus covered the following areas: explorations of violence and gender; roles and the masculine self; masculinized history and landscape; backlash; case examples (the Montreal Massacre, American Cyanamid, widow burning), oral histories; female genital mutilation; rape and murder; family violence and women's anger; contemporary media; television and media; film; southern narrative; pornography, censorship, and first amendment rights; violence and culture; women who kill; visual violence; rap music—the alternative; from victimization to reconstructing a life. These foci were studied through fiction, poetry, feature films, documentaries, music, dance, the visual arts, and a series of essays on sociology, psychology, biology, history, and the like, compiled into a reader for the students. There were few lectures, some outside guest speakers, much discussion, and collaborative projects presented by groups of students at the end of the semester. Students also corresponded with a journal partner weekly and were required to complete at least 20 hours in service learning outside of the classroom in locales where the work related to the class content. They reported on these activities regularly.

A very difficult, demanding, and exciting course to develop and teach! At times the instructors felt that the learning community was, perhaps, too ambitious. The class diversity was, in the beginning, a bit of a problem, especially when some of the men in the class became quite defensive about issues of violence and masculinity, and when other students were disturbed by the course content because of religious and ethnic beliefs. But as the semester progressed, the class miraculously coalesced: people became more and more interested and moved by what they were learning; they began to relate the material to their own lives and to the lives of others round them; defensiveness literally fell away, as they re-

ally began to grapple with the realities of our violent world; and most wonderfully, a true sense of bonding and trust developed throughout the entire class, as individuals felt increasingly free to express their viewpoints and ultimately to "tell their own stories" to the rest of the class (sometimes in straightforward ways, oftentimes in some form of creative representation). By the time the final presentations occurred, the atmosphere was truly electric, as students performed and dealt with powerful issues in sensitive ways. There were times when most of the class was in tears. Students said that they had gone through a lot together in that course, that they had learned together about issues that affected all of them, and that they were better people for the experience.

Yes, this type of experience often occurs in women's studies courses, especially in the introductory course, but its occurrence in such a diverse course, with such a wide range of students, was an especially appreciated outcome for the instructors. We all felt that we had really made a difference in the lives of these students.

In the fall 1996 semester, Lorna Irvine and I will be teaching this course—probably substantially revised—for 9 credits. Students will spend 6 hours in the classroom and will receive an additional 3 credits for an outside internship/ service learning requirement. Many of the students will be from the first class of New Century College students (sophomores when they take the course), but it is hoped that a wide range of students will continue to be attracted to this exciting learning community. □

## Violence and Gender Fall 1996

- New Century College Learning Community 310
- 6 disciplinary credits and 3 service/ experimental learning credits.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays in class 10:30- 1:15 with additional three hours in flexible internships.
- Faculty: Paula Ruth Gilbert  
Lorna Marie Irvine
- Equivalencies:
  - Women's Studies 300 (3 or 6 credits)
  - English 369 (3 credits)
  - Communication 399 (3 credits)
  - Art Institute 399 (3 credits)
  - New Century College 365- Experimental Learning

# “I’m Not a Feminist But...” Workshop Popular Feature of March 2nd Women’s Leadership Conference

Terry Zawacki

Karen Rosenblum, Director of WMST and the Women’s Studies Research and Resource Center, opened the Women’s Leadership Conference, which was attended by 160 people, mostly women college students and recent graduates from the mid-Atlantic area.

The all-day conference consisted of an address by keynote speaker Susan Rook, a GMU alum, who hosts CNN’s “Talkback Live”; concurrent interest sessions; an afternoon plenary session entitled “On Being a Women Leader: A Sociocultural Perspective,” with a panel of five culturally diverse women; and a closing keynote “So, Just Who Do You Think You Are?” given by Marty Langelan, president of Langelan and Associates, a Washington consulting firm specializing in labor force diversity issues, sexual harassment policies, and conflict intervention.

One of the four concurrent interest sessions/ workshops was “I’m Not A Feminist But I Play One On Campus,” facilitated by Kristin Samuelian, the only WMST faculty leading a session. The topic of this workshop had proven to be particularly popular in the past when others had led it, so Kristin was asked to work with the topic this year. She began by asking the 40 participants to free write about why they had chosen to attend this session, the different women’s issues they supported, and the reasons they might be uncomfortable with the term “feminist.” Following the writing, groups discussed their responses and reported back the key ideas that kept coming up.

According to Kristin, she was surprised to hear that almost all of the women in the workshop did identify themselves as feminists; reports from previous years indicated that the session tended to draw “non-feminists” or even “anti-feminists.” Still, women reported encountering tension and hostility when they identified as feminists and told stories of needing to keep a low profile “until you win people over and then you can come out as a feminist.” The few women who did not call themselves feminists said they did not want to be seen as having chips on their shoulders, a situation some had experienced; others asked why such labels were necessary.

To stimulate discussion of some popular myths about feminists, Kristin gave participants a list of six statements: 1) feminism is by definition an extremist position; 2) Feminism is a closed shop: the feminist establishment won’t tolerate differences of opinion; 3) I can’t be a feminist because I wear makeup, wear dresses/ skirts/ high heels, wear a head covering, am married; 4) A man can’t be a feminist; 5) Feminism is the theory, lesbianism is the practice; 6) Feminism is a white, middle-class movement.

At the conclusion of the workshop, Kristin asked partici-

pants to write for approximately fifteen minutes in response to her question “Where do we go from here?” As a prompt, she handed out a statement about the history of the term “feminist” and suggested that as we move into the 21st century we need to examine the “choices for women committed to the support of women’s issues and the improvement of women’s lives— economically, politically, personally.” Kristin concluded by giving three possible options: Can we reclaim the word “feminist” from conservative detractors, “making it a positive rather than pejorative label?” Do we need to find a new word “that reflects both the level of our commitment and our changing status?” Or, finally, do we even need a name at all.

In response to these questions, Susan Rook, who attended the workshop, wrote,

We need to reclaim the word and the movement. I think we need the label— it is a term that defines us and establishes a set of expectations. We need to emphasize that the ideology within the word itself is positive, i.e. defined by feminists, not coopted by the opposition. When I am asked, I say, with great pride, “I am a feminist” and I tell the reporter to put that in all caps and italicized! ☐

## GMU’s Presidential Search

Three women from GMU served on the Presidential Search Committee: Anita Taylor, Chair of the Faculty Senate (who also spoke at the April 12 dedication of the George W. Johnson Center); Jenna van Hook, student representative to the Board; and Erin Koch, Chair of the Graduate Student Council.

In the recent search, two women candidates were finalists. The two women were Dr. Martha W. Gilliland and Dr. Peggy G. Elliott. Gilliland is currently Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Human Resources at the University of Arizona. She is also a faculty member in the departments of Hydrology and Water resources, Renewable Natural Resources and Civil Engineering. She holds degrees from Catawba College, Rice University, and the University of Florida.

Dr. Elliott is currently President of the University of Akron in Ohio. She is also a professor of Education, and holder of the Harrington Distinguished Chair in Education. She holds degrees from Transylvania College, Northwestern University, and Indiana University.

# New Science, the Feminist Principle, and Political Community

Barbara B. Knight

Developments and discoveries in the new sciences referred to as chaos and complexity provide metaphors and concepts to serve as lenses through which to envision political community in new ways. They also bear striking resemblance to what Carl Jung referred to as the Eros or "Feminine" principle.

## Images from the New Science

Chaos and complexity theory shift our viewpoint away from the Newtonian oppositional dualism to a holistic perspective. In complex dynamical systems order and disorder appear connected in a deep level "both/and" mutuality, much like the Greek view of Gaia and Chaos as partners in an ongoing duet of opposition and resonance, creating everything.

Complex systems are nonlinear; all components affect each other and small changes in one variable can have disproportionate impacts on other variables, however distant. "Complex" comes from the Latin for "weave together," describing systems so webbed with feedback that a small twitch anywhere, a flap of a butterfly's wings, may be amplified sufficiently to transform the whole system. Webs of interrelatedness manifest the holism inherent within complex systems.

Fractal images track spatial movements of complex systems, manifesting qualities of scaling, self similarity, boundedness provided by strange attractors, and self organization. Holograms, fractals and strange attractors evoke a deep recognition within us, similar to the fascination of mazes and labyrinths in mythology, iterative language games of children in all times and places, patterns in chanting, Celtic interlacing, and Hokusai waves.

## New Science and the Feminine Principle

Psychologist Carl Jung used the terms Eros and Logos to refer to archetypal principles of feminine and masculine, not gender-specific characteristics. While the Logos principle points to qualities of objectivity, separation and differentiation, Eros qualities are rational, intuitive, and integrational. Although Eros and Logos came to be seen as "either/or" oppositional and Eros was devalued in Western thought, they are referred to in Eastern symbolism as yin and yang and represented symbolically as complementary, with each containing a dot of the other. Both are necessary to compose the whole.

Eros qualities strikingly resemble findings in the new science. Both emphasize patterns of emerging or hidden order underlying apparent chaos, webs, or networks of rela-

tionships and connections among things. The new science offers visions of order and pattern in the richness of diversity where once we saw only the erratic and messy. Evelyn Fox Keller shows that as metaphors shape our thought, so chaos science shifts our view of the world and "...as a voice of the Feminine, chaos theory is changing science at its roots by changing its language."<sup>1</sup>

## Toward a Politics of Integrity

Metaphors and images from new science provide a way to revision and transform political communities and to restore the Eros principle to partnership with the logos principle in political theory. Metaphors from chaos and complexity, along with the feminine principle they include, point to a cooperative partnership model of power with," replacing a dominator model of "power over."<sup>2</sup> From this new world view we transcend polarities of public/ private, community/ individual. The "politics of integrity" in the basic meaning of the term signifies a polity of wholeness or completion achieved by bringing parts together. We know ourselves as individual members of the community, public and private aspects of our lives distinct and interconnected. Small actions and political dialogue at the local level take on new significance in light of the nature of nonlinear relationships. All players and all parts of the system are important.

A stewardship role for leaders recognizes that control and certainty are illusions and "power with" citizen participants, as well as power concentrated at points, enhances organizational openness and flexibility. Commitment to the value of open dialogue seeking shared vision and purpose serves as a strange attractor to maintain the systems' boundedness. As compared with the dominator model, the partnership model may more accurately describe the deeper reality of ourselves and our relationship with the rest of our world.

1. Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985) 30. See also N. Katherine Hayles, *Chaos Bound* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

2. See Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade* (San Francisco: Harper, 1987) 58-9.

*Barbara B. Knight is An Associate Professor of Government and Politics at George Mason University and a Women's Studies Affiliate. This article is adapted from a paper presented to the American Political Science Association, New York City, September 2, 1994.*

## Faculty and Staff News

### And in Their Spare Time...

**Debra B. Bergoffen** presented "Sartre and Beauvoir: the Body, the Caress, the Other" to the Sartre Society in December 1995. She also recently published "Queering the Phallus" in *Disseminating Lacan* from The State University of New York Press, due out in 1996.

**Marion F. Deshmukh's** article "Recovering Culture: Berlin's National Gallery and US Occupation, 1945-1950" appeared in *Central European History* in the fall of 1995.

**Sheila ffolliott's** anthology chapter "Exemplarity and Gender: Three Lives of Catherine de' Medici" appeared in *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early Modern Europe: Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis XIV*, University of Michigan Press, 1995. Another anthology chapter entitled "Teaching a Gendered Renaissance: Putting Women into the Picture," in *Attending to Women in Early Modern Europe*, University of Delaware Press, 1996. Her forthcoming review article titled "Women and Gender in the Renaissance Visual Field: Current Research Trends" appeared in the *EMW Newsletter* in Winter 1996.

**Devon L. Hodges** received an NEH grant for a project called Memory Matters. The projects focuses on the way that memory problems have been gendered and psychologized in recent American literature written by women and in public discussion of traumatic memory.

**Gladys M. Illarregui** presented in Spanish "El Huipil y el Abanico: construccion de genero, ideologia y espacio cultural" (or, The Huipil and the Fan: construction of gender, ideology and cultural space in New Spain) at the "Fifth Conference on Ibero-American Culture and Society: Latin American Women Writers- Discourse on/of the Feminine" at the University of New Mexico.

**Connie Kirkland**, in collaboration with Women's Studies, Counseling Center, Health Education Center, University Police, and Institute of the Arts, applied for federal funds under the Violence Against Women Act. The proposal is titled "Restoring Trust: A Proposal to Encourage Criminal Justice System Participation by Campus sexual assault Victims." In February 1996, she was a presenter for the Northern Virginia Youth Services Coalition training seminar "Media and Violence: What is the Influence?"

**Barbara Melosh** reviewed Jackson Lear's *Fables of Abundance* on the history of American advertising for the forthcoming *Winterthur Portfolio*, and Carol Martin's *Dance Marathons*, forthcoming in *American Studies*. She also participated in a symposium in honor of the late historian of New Deal art Richard McKinzie in Kansas

city, speaking on "The Politics of Public Art" and leading a workshop of teachers.

**Sondra K. Patrick, Sara Looney, and Jim Fletcher** presented "Meaning and Media: Understanding the Relationship" at the International Conference on Qualitative Research in Education at the University of Georgia in January 1996. **Patrick and Fletcher** gave a presentation entitled "Teaching and Scholarship: The Role of Peer review" at the January AAHE Conference on Faculty Roles and Rewards. They also presented "Broadening the Definition of scholarly Work: George Mason University's Experience" at the March AAHE National Conference.

**Lisa Marie Rabin** gave an invited talk on "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" at New York University in April 1996. Her publication "Mito petrarquista y transformación criolla en un romance de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" appeared in March in *Tema y Variaciones de Literatura* from Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Azcapotzalco División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades. She spoke on "Petrarca y Sor Juana" at the Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, University of Birmingham, England in August 1995, and organized and moderated a special session "Creole Visions of the Patria in the Colonial Mexican Baroque," where she spoke on "Petrarchan Ekphrasis and Sor Juana's Creole Vision" at the 1995 MLA.

**Janine M. Ricouart** presented a paper on Nicole Brossard's book *Baroque d'aube* at the North-East MLA Conference in Montreal in April 1996. She will present a paper on Mireille Best at the Conseil International d'Etudes Francophones in Toulouse, France in June 1996. Her collection of essays titled "Relectures de Madeleine Monette" will be published by XYZ in Montreal. Her article on Jovette Marchessault will be published in a collection called *Women on Women*.

**Karen Rosenblum and Toni Travis** edited *The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex and Gender, Social Class, and Sexual Orientation*, McGraw Hill, 1996.

**Margaret Yocom and Linda Pershing** published "The Yellow Ribboning of the USA: Contested Meanings in the Construction of a Political Symbol" in *Western Folklore*, March 1996.

**Ruth E. Zambrana** edited *Understanding Latino Families: Scholarship, Policy, and Practice* in 1995.

**Terry Zawacki** presented a paper entitled "Free? Writing Within Gendered Lines" at the annual convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Milwaukee. She also co-authored (with **Chris Thaiss**) "How Portfolios for Proficiency Help to Shape a WAC Program" in *WAC and Program Assessment*, forthcoming from ABLEX Press. □

**1995-96 GMU  
Women's Advisory Board**

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Susan Rook  
Talkback Live!

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Communications Department

Regina Smith

Patricia M. Woolsey

**The Women's Studies Research and Resource Center**, the traditional complement to a Women's Studies Program, was established by George Mason University President George Johnson in November 1989 at the request of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and with the support of the Associate Vice President for Administration, the Associate Vice President and Dean of Students, and the Deans of the Schools of Business Administration, Information Technology and Engineering, Nursing, and the College of Education and Human Services.

The Center, which is open to the general public, as well as to all members of the University community, performs the following important functions:

- houses and distributes informational literature on issues and regional activities
- houses information on Women's Studies programs
- organizes lectures, workshops, and other activities on topics relevant to campus life
- links the University to women's organizations in the metropolitan area
- encourages faculty, staff, and student research on topics of sex and gender

The College of Arts and Sciences faculty approved the 21-hour minor in Women's Studies in Spring 1990. The first GMU Women's Studies course was offered in Fall 1990.

## Update on Work of WMST Curriculum Committee

*Lorraine Brown*

The Women's Studies Curriculum Committee, composed of Aine O'Brien, Lisa Rabin, Debra Bergoffen, Paula Gilbert, and Lorraine Brown, has spent a great deal of time this year talking about WMST 200. We have discussed various alternatives for improving the course, including the possibility of requiring a core reading list of materials that would be covered regardless of who taught the course. We have also discussed the value of the special projects required in the course. Central to our concern was the mission of the course. It seems to us at this point that a group of faculty who have taught the course should meet and discuss the mission of the course and the core reading list. □

### **MATRIX welcomes letters to the editor.**

Please send your comments to:

**MATRIX**  
Women's Studies Research and  
Resource Center

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### **Required Core Courses for the Minor in Women's Studies**

- **WMST 200** Introduction to Women's Studies
- **WMST 300** Current Issues in Women's Studies
- **WMST 330** Feminist Theory Across the Disciplines

### **Women's Studies Electives**

The following course listings are not exhaustive. Complete listings of courses that can be applied to the Women's Studies minor are made available every semester.

Courses that may be counted include:

- **COMM 465** Topics in Communication and Gender
- **ENGL 369** Women and Literature
- **PHIL 333** Feminism and Philosophy
- **PSYC 362** Psychology of Women
- **SOCI 315** Sociology and Sex Roles
- **WMST 100** Representations of Women

Other courses may be acceptable depending on specific course topics. The coordinator of Women's Studies, in conjunction with the Women's Studies Advisory Board, determines which courses a student may count toward elective credit. □