



Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 8, Issue 4, March/April 2003

From the Director:

Women's Issues in the 21st Century

The premise of Women's Studies is twofold. First, much of knowledge as we know it – in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences – has been based on and derives from men's experiences and perspectives. This means that knowledge is incomplete and partial, and that women's experiences and perspectives have been excluded. Feminist standpoint seeks to correct this by bringing women's experiences and perspectives to bear on analyses of, for example, political structures, labor markets, cultural institutions, and so on. The second part of the premise on which Women's Studies is based is that historically and in contemporary societies, gender, like class, has been a fundamental source of societal stratification. Other forms of inequality have been or are based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. As a result of their gender, and depending on their social class, women have been at a disadvantage in access to income, knowledge, and power, and in control over key organizations and institutions. They have also lacked control over fertility and reproductive health. Feminist scholars – in Women's Studies programs and departments or in the traditional disciplines – have studied households and families, the educational system, the labor market and workplace, the legal system, the political system, and cultural institutions such as the media. They have shown not only that women are disadvantaged relative to men in terms of access, rewards, and recognition, but that stereotypes and images harmful to women and girls persist. Around the world, customs and laws perpetuate gender bias, discrimination, and inequality, while violence against women, in both domestic and public spaces, remains a major human rights problem.

Feminist knowledge and the social movement of women have resulted in important policy and legal changes, as well as cultural changes, in many parts of the world, including the U.S. The UN's Decade for Women (1975-85) brought worldwide attention to women's inequality, political marginalization, and so on. This increased global attention to gender inequality culminated in the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995), which

produced a document, called the Beijing Platform for Action, signed by governments that promised to effect the necessary changes to bring about women's equality and empowerment.

But women seek more than equality with men. They also want fundamental changes to the way that society is organized and economic and political decisions are made. We want economic policies to be more women-friendly and to bring about more social equity; we want peace education and peaceful conflict-resolution rather than the rush to war; we want taxes and government budgets used for quality social services and public services and not for militarization; we want finance ministries to include gender budgets. Feminists – and now, increasingly, male feminists – argue that hegemonic masculinity harms men and boys as much as it does women and girls, and societies. Feminine values – for example, care-giving and connectivity – should be acknowledged and valorized; boys like girls should be socialized into the ethics of care; and men should be encouraged to share in the care of children, relatives, and so on.

Women are making these claims within their own societies, but similar arguments are being made at the level of global society and the global economy. Transnational feminists, for example, are working within multilateral organizations to effect policy at the global level, for example, with respect to international agreements on trade, labor rights, and women's rights; and they are taking part in global social movements, including the global economic justice movement, to criticize harmful economic policies but also to ensure that issues of gender justice are included in the movement. We live in an era of globalization, with ever more integrated, though still unequal, societies and economies, and with ever more powerful institutions of global governance. This compels women to focus the gender lens on not only the community and the state but the global system. Women's issues in the 21st century span not only the productive and reproductive – as they always have – but now also the local and global.

This is exactly the focus of our Women's Studies program here at ISU, in terms of both our courses (e.g., WS 120 to WS 490 and everything in-between) and our co-curricular programming. ■

Inside This Issue

- 1 From the Director: *Women's Issues in the 21st Century*
 - 2 Women's Studies Position Opening
 - 3 Lavita Scott Wins Achievement Award
 - 3 First Women's Studies Certificate Graduates
 - 3 Congratulations Graduates
 - 4 YWCA Volunteer Training Information
 - 4 Women's Studies Video and Seminar Series
-

Women's Studies Staff

Dr. Val Moghadam	Director	438-5617
Dr. Sandra Harmon	Interim Director	438-7361
Ms. Rozel White	Secretary	438-2947
Dr. Ann Haugo	Instructional Asst. Prof.	438-3955
Ms. Ericka Doan	Graduate Assistant	438-2948
Ms. Dawn Peterson	Graduate Assistant	438-2948
Ms. Bethany Struebing	Undergraduate Assistant	438-2947

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's Studies Position Opening

Applications are invited for the position of Interim Assistant Director and Advisor of Women's Studies. This half-time position supports the administrative leadership of the Director of Women's Studies (1) in planning and developing curriculum; (2) in planning and implementing co-curricular programming; and (3) community outreach. In addition, the person in this position assumes primary responsibility for advising women's studies minors and graduate certificate students and in maintaining student records. This person may have responsibility for supervising independent study and professional practice students, and represents the program in the Director's absence. The person in this position teaches one section of WS 120: Women, Gender, and Society each semester.

The Interim Assistant Director must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the faculty of the University. Applicants should possess the terminal degree in their fields, show evidence or promise of leadership abilities, and demonstrate a commitment to Women's Studies.

Applications and nominations are invited. To assure full consideration, interested individuals should send a letter of application, a curriculum vitae and a list of three references to the Women's Studies Search Committee, 4100 Arts and Sciences by April 16, 2003. The position is available beginning August 16, 2003. ■

State Representative Flowers Speaks

Mary Flowers, State Representative from the 31st District, visited Illinois State University as the guest of the Women's Studies Program and MECCPAC on Monday evening March 24. She presented a program, "An Overview of Issues Facing Women from the Statehouse to Your House," to a standing-room only audience of ISU administrators, faculty, staff, and students in the Founder's Suite of the Bone Student Center. Flowers has represented the 31st District on the southeast side of Chicago since 1984. She sits on several committees: Health Care Availability and Access; Commerce and Business Development; Conference on Women Legislators; Appropriations—Human Services; Inter-Governmental Cooperation; and Guardianship and Advocacy. In her remarks she spoke about a number of troubling issues with the Department of Children and Family Services; access to health care; welfare reform; and funding for education. She encouraged audience members, especially the students, to become involved with politics because, whether they realize it or not, politics affects their lives from the cradle to the grave. ■

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION UNIVERSITY
ENCOURAGING DIVERSITY.

WOMEN'S STUDIES EIGHTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Keynote Speaker
Professor Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa,
speaking to a full house.

Twenty-four students made presentations at the Eighth Annual Women's Studies Symposium. The day-long event took place at the University Galleries on Friday, March 21. Two sessions featured women's history papers. Other sessions were "Globalization, Sexuality, and Politics," "Women and Religion," and "Subversive Readings." The papers were originally prepared for classes in History, English, Politics and Government, Sociology, and Women's Studies. Seven members of the Illinois State University Model United Nations team also participated. The team will represent the non-governmental organization, Association for Women's Rights in Development, at the Model U.N. in New York in April. Students read their policy position papers on a number of issues that will come before the Model U.N. student delegates. Keynote speaker for the event was Professor Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa, filmmaker and film professor at Columbia College, Chicago, who spoke on "Iranian Cinema: In Search of Women." The symposium was organized and sponsored by Women's Studies with grant funding from the United States Department of State through the Cooperative Grants Program of NAFSA: Association of International Educators; MECCPAC; Parent Services; and the Department of Physics. ■



Panel 5
Women and Religion



Panel 6
Subversive Readings



Panel 1
Women's History I



Panel 2
Women's History II



Panel 3
The Model UN: Representing the Association
for Women's Rights in Development.

WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENTS

Lavita Scott Wins Achievement Award

Senior Political Science major Lavita Scott is the 2003 Women's Studies Academic Achievement Award winner. The award is given to a student who has maintained high academic standing overall and in the minor and who has engaged in campus or community service. The award is presented at the annual College of Arts and Sciences Awards Ceremony.



Lavita Scott (left) and Dr. Val Moghadam

Lavita is a university honors student majoring in Political Science with a pre-law concentration. She has twice received the Alice Ebel Award from the Department of Politics and Government. The award is given to a female student who has both a strong academic record in Political Science and a commitment to public service. Among other activities, she has participated in the Student Dispute and Resolution Services Office Hearing Panel, the Black Student Union, the Guerilla Theater Troupe, and the Illinois State Mock Trial Tournament where she earned the Outstanding Witness and Outstanding Attorney awards. She plans to pursue a career in law as an advocate on behalf of women, children, and families. ■

First Women's Studies Certificate Graduates

Congratulations to the first two students to complete the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies, **Jude Geiger** and **Delois Gibson**.

Delois Gibson will receive a masters degree in Sociology. She first came to Illinois State as a first-year student in the fall of 1974 but left after three years to marry. Twenty-five years and three children later, she took a position at Diamond Star (Mitsubishi Motors). After working there for six years, she decided to return to ISU to finish her undergraduate degree, majoring in Sociology. She credits her wonderful Sociology professors for her decision to pursue a masters degree. She currently teaches Introduction to Sociology part time at Illinois Central College while finishing her thesis. She hopes to use her Women's Studies Certificate to implement women's studies classes at ICC and eventually create a Women's Studies curriculum there. She is very grateful to her husband Spencer and children Constance, Cheasa, and Spencer, Jr. for their support as she continued her education.

Jude Geiger will receive his M.S. in Political Science. Next year he will attend Yale University Law School and hopes eventually to pursue a Ph.D. in Politics and Government or Communication. Jude writes, "The work that I did for my certificate helped me gain a deeper understanding of gender and also of theoretical approaches to the social sciences. This has definitely helped me prepare for my thesis, but it has also helped me prepare for future courses focusing on gender. In any future Ph.D. work that I do, I think that one of my primary areas of emphasis will be gender. Most important, I think the Women's Studies program helps prepare students for their future lives by encouraging them to gain a deeper perspective of the world and to think more critically. The faculty are very supportive and encourage their students to think beyond traditional assumptions and beliefs. I found the program to be very intellectually stimulating and challenging. I think all students at ISU would benefit from participation in the Women's Studies program."

Both Delois and Jude presented papers at the Eighth Annual Women's Studies Symposium on March 21. ■

Congratulations Graduates

Debbie Armstrong, Procedures and Systems Manager in the University Registrar's Office, will receive a B.S. degree in Family and Consumer Science in May. She plans to continue her education with graduate work in FCS and Women's Studies.

Nicole Berg, an August B.S. in Mass Communication graduate, will seek employment after graduation. On campus she has worked at the *Vidette* and at TV-10 where she produces the weather maps. Nicole served on the Women's Studies Programming Committee.

Alyssa Bursott, a Psychology major, will graduate in May with a B.S. degree. She is a member of the Golden Key Honor Society and a volunteer research assistant to Dr. Gary Creasey in his romantic couple study. She is a part-time residential assistant at Neville House, the local shelter for battered women. Her future plans include graduate study and a doctorate in clinical psychology. Her career goal is to work with families in a community counseling setting and eventually establish her own practice.

Laura Elliff will receive her degree in Anthropology. She served as vice president of the Native American Student Association for the past two years. She plans to take a year off from school to volunteer with Americorps. Graduate school is also in her future plans with a career goal of teaching about indigenous nations.

Colleen James, an English major, will receive a B.A. in May. She works as a supervisor for the Telefund, the annual fund campaign for Illinois State. Her career goal is a position as a non-profit organization fund raiser.

Amanda Karvelaitis will graduate in May with a degree in English/ Publishing and the Nonprofit Literary Arts. For the past three years, she has had an internship at the Unit for Contemporary Literature and the English department Publications Unit. She is a Presidential Scholar in the Honors Program, and works as a copyeditor at the *Daily Vidette*. She hopes to find a job in publishing near Chicago.

Lavita Scott will receive a B.A. Magnum Cum Laude in Political Science in May. She is a national Collegiate Scholar, a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the Illinois State University Student Dispute Resolution Services Hearing Panel, the Illinois State Guerrilla Theatre Troupe, and the Illinois State Mock Trial Team. In November 2002 she won the Outstanding Witness Award and in January 2003 the Outstanding Attorney Award in ISU Mock Trial Competitions. In February 2003 she won Outstanding Attorney Award in the Midwest Regional Mock Trial Tournament. She is a two-time winner of the Alice Ebel Political Science Award and received the Women's Studies Academic Achievement Award for 2003. She has been accepted at a number of law schools and plans to pursue a career as an advocate for women, children and families.

Megan Volpert, an English major, will graduate in May with a B.A. degree. This academic year she served as vice president of the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance and was co-director of the campus production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. She will present a paper at the ISU Political Science conference on April 10 entitled "see no [tranie]/ hear no [tranie]/ speak no [tranie]: an overview of the lessons and applications of transgender case law."

Other graduating seniors are **Audrey Goudreau**, a History major, and **Melanie Manego**, a Political Science degree recipient. ■

New Minors

Women's Studies welcomes the following new minors to the program:

Amy Blankenberger - History
Sarah Ehlers - English
Colleen James - English

Val Layman - Theatre Education
Jessica Lensink - Public Relations
Stephanie Swartz - Psychology

Women's Voice
Illinois State University
Women's Studies Program
Rachel Cooper 2nd Floor
Campus Box 4260
Normal, IL 61790-4260

YWCA Volunteer Training Information

The McLean County YWCA Sexual Assault Program, Stepping Stones, needs volunteers to provide phone counseling and medical or legal support. The volunteer training is 40 hours long and includes information about rape culture, types of sexual assault, medical and legal procedures, myths of rape, how to counsel a client and local services available. After training, volunteers will carry a pager and be on call once a month for approximately two days. The training sessions will be on on May 12, 14, 16, 19, 21 from 8-4 at the YWCA; June 16-20 at Hawthorn Suites (presented by ICASA); In September on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the YWCA, 1201 N. Hershey Road, Bloomington, Illinois. For an information packet call the Program Director, Vickie Smith, at 309-662-0461. ■

Video and Seminar Series

The Women's Studies program has developed a video series dedicated to "Understanding the Status of Women in Muslim Societies." The video series takes place Tuesdays from 12:30-1:30 PM in Rachel Cooper 234 and all are invited. Cookies and fruit juices will be served. Additionally, the International Studies program is hosting a seminar series on Wednesdays from 12-1 PM in Stevenson 401. The seminar series events are open to all and a free lunch is provided.

Women's Studies Spring 2003 Video Series

Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 PM, Rachel Cooper 234

- 4/8 **Daughters of Allah**
Modern Palestinian women face dramatic choices. (1999, 25 minutes)

Seminar Series

Noon, Stevenson 401, FREE Lunch

Please Note: * Indicates Sponsorship by Women's Studies

- *4/9 "Globalizing Women: The Case of the Middle East"
Dr. Valentine Moghadam, Director of Women's Studies and Associate Professor of Sociology, Illinois State University
- 4/16 "The World Trade Organization and the Future of African Culture"
Dr. Godson Obia, Geography, Eastern Illinois University
- 4/23 "Political Culture and Participation in Rural China: Some Empirical Evidence"
Dr. Yang Zhong, Political Science, University of Tennessee
- 4/30 Middle East and South Asian Studies (TBA)



Students attend "Understanding the Status of Women in Muslim Societies" presentation by Ms. Charity Crouse, Not In My Name, Chicago, who spoke on "Update on Palestine and Israel: The Conflict and Women."

Partial support for these projects has been provided by the US Department of State grant for the Cooperative Grants Program of NAFSA: Association of International Educators.