

Women's Studies

October 1994

BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES

The Brown Bag Lunch Series meets on Tuesdays, from 12:30 to 2 p.m., in the Commonwealth Center Seminar Room at the College Apartments. The meetings are open to all members of the College community. This month's topics include: Oct. 18: Fredrika Teute, "Thrice-Told Tale: Margaret Bayard Smith and Her Censors." Oct. 25: Valerie Gill, "Catherine Beecher and Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Architects of Female Power." Nov. 1: Susan Chast, "Ellen Stewart and La Mama: The Performance of Place"

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Career Change and Exploration

The Peninsula Women's Network is hosting a conference at the Radisson Hotel in Hampton on Saturday, October 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The title of the conference is *Starting Out-- Staying Put--Starting Over*. Keynote speaker will be attorney Sylvia Clute, who has worked to reform laws in areas such as domestic violence, childhood sexual abuse, and civil rights. She will speak on "Expanding Beyond Traditional Roles." Workshops and a luncheon will follow. Reservations must be made by Wednesday, October 26. Call Paulette Culbert at 898-8110 or voice mail at 873-7066. Cost is \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members. For more information, contact Professor Debbie Green at 221-2457.

Black Women's Studies

The Seventh International Cross-Cultural Black Women's Studies Summer Institute will be held July 16-27, 1995 in Honolulu, Hawai'i. The theme of the conference will be "Pacific Women: Culture, Identity, and Self-Determination." The Institute will study the contemporary impact of racism and colonialism on Pacific culture, and will emphasize women's leadership in combatting these effects throughout the world. Workshops and seminars will include training in personal decolonization, spiritual healing, communications networking, and consensus and coalition building. For more information, contact: International Cross-Cultural Black Women's Summer Institute, Information Headquarters, Attn: Dr. Andre McLaughlin, Medgar Evers College/CUNY, 1150 Carroll St., Brooklyn, NY 11225.

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The University of Iowa will host the Sixth North American Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Studies Conference November 17-20, 1994. Cost is \$90 for faculty and professionals, \$40 for students and others (low income registration is available). The conference will include academic presentations and workshops along with cultural events. Registration forms are available in the Women's Studies Office, 327 Richmond Rd.

LET'S DIALOGUE

In order to encourage an exchange of ideas and voices of concerned women, this is the commencement of a new newsletter feature. Prof. Kate Slevin, a representative of the Women's Caucus, led a discussion at a Faculty Assembly meeting, April 1994, concerning the climate for women on campus. The survey of attitudes in the *College of William and Mary Full-Time Women Faculty Survey* revealed 49% rated the atmosphere at the College not friendly. Slevin hoped this would be the beginning of a series of conversations about the climate for women and it is our hope, in the Women's Studies Program, to present such an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff. Our question this month is: Does the leadership of the College exhibit a commitment of understanding and addressing the concerns of women? How is that commitment shown or not shown? Please send your responses to: Loralee Clark, Women's Studies, 327 Richmond Rd.

WOMEN IN THEATRE

On Friday, November 11, the Theatre Department will be making a field trip to VCU in Richmond to see *Lear*, a play adapted from Shakespeare and featuring a female lead (as Lear). For more information, or to sign up for the trip, contact Professor Bruce McConachie at 221-2668.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Women's Issues Group

Women's Issues Group is sponsoring William and Mary's annual Take Back The Night March on Friday, October 14, at 7 p.m. The group will congregate at Crim Dell amphitheatre. TBTN is a protest against violence against women, and this event is open to all members of the College community. The event will begin with a campus march and will end with song, poetry, and personal testimonials on the effects of rape and other violence against women in our community. Also planned for October is a talk on ecofeminism. For more information, or if you would like to speak or perform at TBTN, contact Melanie Henderson at 221-5623.

Winged Nation Magazine

Winged Nation, William and Mary's women's art and literature magazine, is now accepting submissions of poetry, prose, art, and photography. Submissions must be signed (though we will publish works anonymously if requested) and placed in the submission box by the circulation desk in Swem Library or in the folder in the Tucker office. If you are interested in joining the board of Winged Nation or would like submission guidelines, please contact Tara Kelly at 221-5487.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Women in Law

The Hastings Women's Law Journal is seeking submissions pertaining to women or other underrepresented groups. While the Journal's main emphasis is on traditional legal articles, book reviews, and commentaries, the format will also include personal narratives, fiction, and poetry. To request guidelines for submission, or to order a subscription to the Journal, contact Raegen Rasnic at (415) 565-4870 or write: Hastings Women's Law Journal, University of California, Hastings College of the Law, 200 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

Queering the Gaze

Papers are now being accepted for the 1995 Association of Art Historians conference in London, England entitled "Queering the Gaze." Especially sought are papers addressing the modern tendencies to "Queer" the work of past artists who did not self-identify as working in a gay/homerothic vein, as well as papers exploring Western and non-Western objects in the broadest sense (environment, film and video, etc.). British Academy funding may be available to cover travel costs. For more information or to submit proposals contact: J.C. Steward, Curator, University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94720.

WOMEN ON INTERNET

The Les Ac mailing list has been set up to serve the needs of lesbian graduate students (and friends). To subscribe, send an e-mail message to: LezScholar@aol.com, with "les ac (your e-mail address)" in the subject line, and something like "sign me up" in the body.

Sister-L is a new e-mail discussion group focusing on the history and contemporary concerns of Catholic women religious (sisters and nuns). To subscribe, send a message to: listserv@sum.syr.edu; leave the subject line blank, and in the message area write: subscribe SISTER-L (your full name).

Ecofem, Studies in Women and Environment, is a new list providing an open space for diversity of thought and multiple approaches to the topic of women and environment. To subscribe, send this message: Sub ECOFEM Yourfirstname Yourlastname, to listserv@csf.colorado.edu

LGBPSYCH is a forum for information exchange, support, and discussion among lesbian, gay, and bisexual graduate students in psychology. To subscribe, send the message JOIN LGBPSYCH@VM1.MCGILL.CA your e-mail address firstname lastname to NEIL@PSYCH.MCGILL.CA

WHAT CAN I DO?: WAYS TO ANALYZE BOOKS FOR SEXISM

We are continually exposed to sexist attitudes in books and other media which, after time, distort our perceptions until stereotypes and myths are accepted as reality. If we can learn to detect sexist attitudes and messages, we can begin to do our part to confront these destructive forces in our society.

1. Look for stereotypes. Stereotypes are over-simplified generalizations about a particular group, race, or sex which carry derogatory implications. For example: The completely dedicated mother; the demure, doll-loving little girl; the brainless sex object; the wicked stepmother. Stereotypes may not always be blatant. Look for variations which in any way demean or ridicule characters because of sex.

2. Look at who is doing what. Who is in the subservient or passive roles as a general rule? Who is in active, leadership roles most of the time? Who is, or has, the "problem" of the story and who is the problem solver?

3. Notice whether the achievements of women and girls are based on their own initiative and intelligence, or whether they are a result of good looks or their relationships with men.

4. Weigh the relationships between characters. Who possesses the power and makes important decisions? Who is in the supportive, nurturing role?

5. Note the heroes and heroines. Ask whose definition of success is being valued and served.

6. Consider self-image. Are standards established which say "You are only acceptable if...you have fair skin, a slim body, etc."?

7. Consider the author's background and perspective. What values does the author bring to the task which might limit the objectivity of the work? Are omissions or distortions made as a result of their perspective?

8. Watch for loaded words. Be aware of the use of words which carry insulting overtones: emotional, reactionary, docile, moody, pushy, etc.

9. Look for sexist language and adjectives that exclude women. Note attempts to use gender-free or gender-neutral descriptive words.

--Adapted from "10 Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books for Racism and Sexism" by the Council on Interracial Books for Children.



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