

Women's Studies

November 1994

WOMEN WARRIORS

On Thursday, November 10, in Chesapeake Room B of the University Center, Professor Jon Kerner of Sociology will give a presentation entitled "Women Warriors." His presentation will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will incorporate poetry and slides. The talk will focus on female environmental activists, and will be followed by a question/answer session and interactive discussion.

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: Nov. 8: Nancy Gray on Postmodern Women Writers. Nov. 15: Colleen Kennedy, "Over Her Dead Body: Images of Female Transcendence in Contemporary America." Nov. 29: Patrick Hagopian, "Women and Children Last: The Vietnam Women's Memorial." Dec. 6: Kirsten Gruesz, "Masculine Sentiment, Feminist Criticism, and the Feel-Good Fireside Poets."

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER/WRITER TO SPEAK

On Tuesday, Nov. 29, Patricia Rozema will hold an open discussion about filmmaking at the Williamsburg Theatre following the 6:30 showing of her film, I've Heard The Mermaids Singing. The Williamsburg Theatre is located on Duke of Gloucester Street, where Rozema's film will play every evening at 6:30 from Sunday, Nov. 27, to Tuesday, Nov. 29.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

United Nations Fourth World Congress on Women

The Non-Governmental Forum on Women (pre-conference to the Congress) will be held in Beijing from August 30 to September 8, 1995. Virginia Commonwealth University will offer travel and accommodations to and from the conference, along with pre-conference seminars at VCU. These evening seminars will occur in the summer of 1995, and will focus on feminist theories of international relations, current Chinese affairs, and many other global issues and their impact on women. Participants may choose to attend only the seminars or may combine the seminars with travel to Beijing. For more information, contact Dr. Judy Twigg, Department of Political Science, VCU, Box 842028, Richmond, VA 23284.

Women, Religion, and Spirituality

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will host a conference December 2-3,

1994. Delores Williams, Womanist theologian and author of Sisters in the Wilderness, and Gloria Karpinski, teacher, counselor, and author of Where Two Worlds Touched, will be the keynote speakers. For more information, contact Women's Studies Conference, 200 Foust Building, UNCG, Greensboro, NC 27412-5001.

LET'S DIALOGUE

In our attempt to encourage an exchange of ideas and voices of concerned women, we introduced this new newsletter feature and asked the question, "Does the leadership of the College exhibit a commitment of understanding and address the concerns of women? How is this commitment shown or not shown?" We received no responses. In order to make this section of the newsletter "take off" we need support from the community. We encourage feedback from faculty, students, and staff alike.

This month's question is: Are women's values taken into consideration and considered equally with those values traditionally considered male? How is this demonstrated or not demonstrated?

If you would like to respond to either last month's or this month's question, please send your responses to: Lorelee Clark, 327 Richmond Road, Women's Studies. Please indicate whether or not you would like your anonymity maintained.

CALL FOR PAPERS

19th-Century American Women Writers in the 21st Century

Trinity College and the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center of Hartford, Connecticut is planning a conference for May 30-June 1 of 1996. The conference committee seeks papers addressing topics including the following: After more than 20 years of feminist scholarship, to what extent have women writers been integrated into the field of 19th-Century American literature? How has their presence changed our understanding of the field? What writers have been "recovered" and what theories of the "literary" or the "American" have informed these recoveries? How have issues of race, class, and ethnicity operated within the processes of recovery? What work still needs to be done? The committee encourages innovative formats for sessions, including workshops, panels, seminar-style discussions, as well as individual papers. Proposers should indicate preferred format as well as subject. Send one-page proposals (max. 300 words) and one-page c.v. to Jo Blatti, Director, Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, 77 Forest St., Hartford, CT 06105. The deadline for proposals is May 15, 1995.

The First International Symposium on Women and Literature

From June 20-23, 1995, the Society for the Study of Women's Literature and the English Department of Peking University will sponsor an international symposium on "Women and Literature" together with the Free Forum of Literature in Tianjin and World Literature of the Institute of Foreign Literature of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Sponsors of the conference are issuing a call for papers (in English or Chinese) for possible presentation on any aspect of the theme "Women and Literature." For more information on suggested topics, or for conference information, contact Professor Jie Tao, Department of English, Peking University, Beijing 100871, China.

WOMEN ON INTERNET

UNDERCURRENT is a free journal available on the Internet through e-mail subscriptions. The journal seeks article submissions or queries with abstracts providing an analysis of the present from diverse intellectual perspectives (including feminist, sociological, political, philosophical, historical, and so forth). The journal seeks applied analysis rather than theory, and especially encourages interdisciplinary work. Articles may be short (500-1000 words) or feature-length (up to 7500 words).

UNDERCURRENT's intent is to reach an audience wider than that of traditional academic journals. To do this, the style must cater to an educated audience which is not necessarily familiar with either the jargon or the debates within fields. UNDERCURRENT wishes to publish articles that address this broader audience while also conveying a vivid sense of how current academic scholarship can contribute to our understanding of the present.

All submissions will receive a reply; however, no copies can be returned. Any major citation style is acceptable, although endnotes rather than footnotes must be used. Submissions and queries can be sent in any of the following ways:

1. e-mail to "heroux@darkwing.uoregon.edu" and note in the subject field that this is a submission to UNDERCURRENT.
2. Mail a floppy diskette with your text in ASCII or WordPerfect (address below).
3. mail two copies of your essay by traditional post to:
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WHAT CAN I DO?: THE ELEMENTS OF TRASHING

Trashing is used as a means of social control and affects us all. Let's consider this phenomenon, how it works, how we respond to it, and maybe we can give some thought to what we will do the next time it happens. Because there is always a next time.

What is trashing? According to Amazons, Bluestockings, and Crones: A Feminist Dictionary (1992), trashing is "a particularly vicious form of character assassination which amounts to a psychological rape. It is manipulative, dishonest, and excessive. It is occasionally disguised by the rhetoric of honest conflict, or covered up by denying that any disapproval exists at all. But it is not done to expose disagreements or resolve differences. It is done to disparage and destroy" (p. 457).

Who gets trashed?

1. A woman who is achieving her goals. (Otherwise, what's the point?)
2. A woman who is deeply conscientious. She would rather indulge in soul-searching than self-defense. This is highly desirable for the trasher.
3. A woman who believes in community. She will bare her soul to strangers, will attempt to dialogue with them--in every instance she digs a deeper grave for herself in the eyes of the trasher.
4. A woman who makes mistakes.
5. A woman whose oppression is not visible. Again, this makes her an easier target, as it is easier for the trasher to deny the trashing.
6. A woman who is underpaid. She is generally hungry for recognition and appreciation. This raises the stakes for her at the trashing.
7. A woman who has opposed the trashing of others. She's out to ruin the trasher's sport.

How to participate in trashing:

Covertly: Validate the trasher's action by addressing the issue instead of the abusive dynamic. Defend the trashes to the trasher. This is very safe--you get to look loyal, but you're really on the trasher's agenda.

Overtly: Just say nothing. You can pretend you're not involved.

How not to participate in trashing:

Speak out! Confront the abusive dynamic, name specific behaviors, demand the trasher stop or be removed, and if the trashing continues in any form, leave. If enough women do this, trashing as we know it will become extinct.

(Paraphrased from Carolyn Gage, "Invitation to a Trashing," Off Our Backs, April 1993.)

Kay Domine
Swem Library
University Archivist