



# Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 9, Issue 1, September/October 2003

From the Director:

## The Women's Studies Program: A Brief Look Back

Sandra D. Harmon, Acting Director

While Dr. Moghadam is on educational leave this year, I will serve as acting director. Professor Jyl Josephson from the Department of Politics and Government will serve as acting assistant director for the fall semester. She has taken on the advisement responsibility for the undergraduate minor and the graduate certificate and serves on both the curriculum and programming committees for Women's Studies.

On September 9, Women's Studies awarded Luellen Laurenti Scholarships to two students, Erin Whitworth and Ryan Rademacher. This was an important event in the life of the Women's Studies program—the first time we were able to offer scholarships to our minors. There is a story in this issue of *Women's Voice* about the scholarship and the two recipients, but to further mark this milestone, I would like to review briefly the history of the Women's Studies program at Illinois State University. Some of this account comes from the University archives and Women's Studies files, some from Roger Champagne's 1978 book *A Place of Education: Illinois State University, 1967-1977*, and some from my own memory.

I would like to begin this look back with the year 1968. That year was a traumatic one for the United States. It was a year of assassinations, violent demonstrations, and growing disillusionment. But it was also the year that the Women's Studies movement began on college campuses across the nation. Women's Studies, which is the academic study of women from a feminist, interdisciplinary perspective, was an outgrowth of the resurgence of the feminist movement. Betty Friedan's 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* had aroused national interest in women's status in American society. The 1964

Civil Rights Act included women in its non-discrimination in employment provision. In 1965 President Lyndon Johnson instituted affirmative action by executive order and women lobbied to be included in the non-discrimination guidelines developed by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance. The National Organization for Women, created in 1966 by Betty Friedan and state commissioners on the status of women, took up its quest for equal rights for women within the institutional life of the nation. Radical feminist groups began emerging, usually in urban areas, around 1967 and burst into national awareness with demonstrations at the 1968 Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Soon the term women's liberation was banded about in the media. Efforts to revive the push for an Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution emerged. The modern feminist movement in the United States was well under way and hardly a community in the country remained untouched.

On the campus of Illinois State University, some students, faculty, and staff were affected by these changes. They read and discussed *The Feminine Mystique*. They invited to campus speakers such as Jo Freeman, one of the founders of the Westside group of radical feminists in Chicago. In a scenario played out around the country, students asked for and faculty and staff responded by offering the first women's studies classes in 1968. At Illinois State they were experimental, non-credit classes in the residence halls. The classes were practical, not academic, that students took for personal interest: women's health, career choices, and self-defense. The success of the residence hall classes and the growing movement to write women into the university curriculum led to the creation of academic courses. In the fall of 1971, the first two academic courses, Sociology's *Human Sexuality* and Political Science's *Women in Politics* were offered. That spring, 1972, History offered *History of Women in America* and Sociology, *Sex Role Redefinition*. *Women in Literature* appeared in the English Department's course schedule the next fall, 1972. These were all "89" or experimental courses that soon were formalized through the university curriculum process.

Affirmative Action for women and minorities came to Illinois State in 1972 with the creation of an affirmative action office co-directed by Jude Boyer and George Taylor. The first Affirmative Action Plan for Women issued in May 1972 called for the creation of a Women's Studies Program "to develop sexual

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## Women's Studies Staff

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

# LUELLEN LAURENTI SCHOLARSHIP/ANNOUNCEMENT

## Luellen Laurenti Scholarship



Luellen Laurenti

The Luellen Laurenti Scholarship in Women's Studies honors Luellen Laurenti, a long-time activist in the women's movement who died June 17, 2000. A native of West Virginia, Ms. Laurenti moved to central Illinois in 1963 to teach Spanish and to direct the foreign languages laboratory at Illinois State University. She also taught in the Women's Studies program as instructor for the Women Today class, the introductory women's studies course.

She continued to support and participate in Women's Studies programming after she left the University. She got her start as an activist in the Equal Rights campaign in Illinois in the 1970s and later served as a Democratic state central committee-woman. She was married to Joseph Laurenti, a professor in Illinois State's Foreign Languages Department.

For three decades, Luellen Laurenti was a major force behind the women's movement in Illinois. She attended the first United Nations conference on women in 1975 in Mexico City and was executive director of the International Women's Year Conference in Bloomington in 1977, a major event that attracted some 2,000 women. As 44<sup>th</sup> District Equal Rights Coordinator, she conducted workshops and organized local lobbying efforts in the district on behalf of the Amendment.

She was long associated with the National Organization for Women (NOW), the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the League of Women Voters, and the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. For two decades she was the State House lobbyist for Illinois NOW and other women's organizations. She was a tireless worker for women's equality and dedicated herself to legislative and electoral issues to advance the status of women and create opportunities for the next generation of women.

This scholarship was established in her name by her husband, the Women's Studies Program, and her friends and colleagues. It will help preserve her memory and legacy through the successes of the Illinois State University Women's Studies students who will be the recipients of the scholarship. ■



Luellen Laurenti and President Clinton

## Whitworth and Rademacher Scholarship Recipients

Erin Whitworth and Ryan Rademacher, both Women's Studies minors, are the first recipients of the Luellen Laurenti Scholarship in Women's Studies. The two students were awarded their scholarships at a reception on September 9, 2003, in the Women's Studies Resource Room.

Erin Whitworth (left) and Ryan Rademacher (right) with Roberta Trites, Acting Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.



Whitworth is a senior social work major who also will receive a women's studies certificate from the School of Social Work. The certificate requires a Women's Studies minor and a practicum in an agency focusing on women. Erin believes that her women's studies work "challenged her to think about things in a different way than I had before," and helped to make her a better social work student. She plans to work toward a master's degree in social work. She is active in Illinois State's Social Work Club, has been a child care worker with Chestnut Health Systems in Bloomington, peer counselor with the Illinois State Counseling Services and a personal assistant with Disability Concerns Office at ISU.

Rademacher is a junior English major who plans to obtain a Ph.D. in English Studies. He would like to teach literature at the collegiate level. The area of literature that he is most interested in is feminist literature and theory, which led him to the Women's Studies minor. He says that Women's Studies helped to expand his "myopic focus" to give him a better view of society and he sees himself as an ally in breaking down inequalities between women and men. He has volunteered with the Partners in Reading Program at the Normal Public Library which pairs college students with elementary children to spend forty-five minutes a week together reading, playing games, and being a mentor. ■

## Jyl Josephson is Acting Assistant Director

Dr. Jyl Josephson is serving as acting Assistant Director and Academic Advisor for Women's Studies the fall semester. She came to Illinois State University in 1999 to join the faculty of the Department of Politics and Government where she is an associate professor. Her areas of professional interest are social policy, gender and public policy, state and local government, feminist theory, theories of democracy and citizen activism.

She has served on the Women's Studies Curriculum Committee and wrote the proposals for two new Politics and Government courses—POL 337 Lesbian and Gay Politics and POL 338: Gender and Public Policy—which are included in the electives for both the Women's Studies minor and graduate certificate. She is currently teaching Lesbian and Gay Politics as well as a section of WS 120: Women, Gender and Society. Her most recent book is a co-edited volume, *Fundamental Differences: Feminists Talk Back to Social Conservatives* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

In January, Josephson will take a new position at Rutgers University, Newark, where she will be director of Women's Studies and associate professor of Political Science. The Women's Studies Program there offers an undergraduate major and minor as well as a graduate concentration. She is excited about her new position in a school that has one of the most diverse student bodies in the country. The Women's Studies program at Illinois State wishes her well in her new position. ■

*Laughter is a tranquilizer with no side effects!*

# WOMEN'S STUDIES ALUMNI AND STUDENT NEWS

## Women's Studies Minors

Thirty-four Women's Studies students are currently working to complete their Women's Studies minor. They are enrolled in majors from various departments spread over several colleges of the University.

**Margaret Austin**—Political Science

**Mary Baker**—History Education

**Lindsay Barnes**—Public Relations

**Nicole Berg**—Mass. Com.

**Gloria Berry**—History

**Jamie Berry**—Family & Consumer Sciences

**Amy Blankenberger**—History

**Rita Bourell**—Sociology

**Nicole Brooks**—General Student

**Stacey Concannon**—Social Work

**Joni Cowden**—Mass Com.

**Julie Dawson**—Speech Com.

**Jennifer Egert**—Mass Com.

**Sarah Ehlers**—English

**Christine Esposito**—Business Mgmt.

**Carrie Gillfillan**—History

**Gwen Givens**—General Studies

**Jacqueline Guca**—History Education

**Sarah Henschel**—Psychology

**Arshia Ilyas**—Family & Consumer Sciences

**Val Laymon**—Theatre Education

**Jessica Lensink**—Public Relations

**Michelle Moore**—English

**Shara Netterstrom**—Political Science

**Ryan Radamacher**—English

**Loretta Santejka**—Sociology

**Julie Simonsen**—English

**Sara Stead**—Early Childhood Ed.

**Jessica Surd**—Physical Education

**Stephanie Swartz**—Psychology

**Estelle Taylor**—Mass Com.

**Tangela Taylor**—Political Science

**Amanda Watts**—Psychology

**Erin Whitworth**—Social Work

## Mother and Daughter Minors

By Ericka Doan, Women's Studies Graduate Assistant

It is fairly uncommon that you have the chance to meet your mother for coffee and compare notes on college classes. However, that is exactly what Gloria and Jamie Berry can do. Gloria and Jamie are both undergraduate students at Illinois State University, and both are pursuing a minor in Women's Studies.



Gloria and Jamie Berry

Gloria is a first time college student, encouraged by her oldest daughter to go to college. She began pursuing her degree about six years ago at Heartland and recently transferred to ISU. "I see this kind of as a goal...a dream," says Gloria. Always interested in history, she chose that as her major. After transferring to ISU, she took a history class taught by Dr. Kyle Ciani who sparked Gloria's interest in women's studies. Gloria recalls being surprised by her first women's studies class; "I just took it because I like history, and I thought 'ugh, it's going to be the same old thing; Clara Barton, Florence Nightengale'...and I was blown away! I was so impressed with the fact that there's actually another world, another side of women..." Planning to graduate in May 2004 with a Bachelor of Science in History and a Women's Studies minor, Gloria hopes to continue on and pursue her Masters degree in History. Citing historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich as her idol, Gloria also says that she would "love to be a professor of Women's Studies."

Jamie Berry, a fourth semester Illinois State University student, is Gloria's daughter and also is pursuing a Women's Studies minor. While Gloria is working on her Bachelor's degree, Jamie already has one. Jamie graduated from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in December 2001 with a degree in History. She enrolled at ISU after being accepted to the Family and Consumer Sciences program through which she plans to obtain her teaching certificate. Jamie chose to minor in Women's Studies after her mother talked about how much she enjoyed her Women's Studies classes. Jamie was also enrolled in a history class taught by Dr. Sandra Harmon whose discussion of women in history sparked Jamie's interest. After obtaining her teaching certificate, Jamie hopes to share her knowledge of women's studies with her junior high and high school students. She says, "growing up I always saw it as 'his' story. We never really got to learn about women and now I'll have more of a background."

Overall, mother and daughter enjoy the experience of attending school simultaneously. However, they do make a conscious effort not to enroll in the same classes in the same semester. As Jamie says, "you don't want your mom in your class!" And while that may be true of Jamie, the Women's Studies department enjoys having this dynamic duo as part of our Minors program. ■

## Graduate Certificate Students

Eleven students are working towards completion of the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate. They are

Oforiwa Aduonum—Postgraduate in Music

Debbie Armstrong—Masters program in Family and Consumer Sciences

Teresa Farr—Graduate Student at Large

Elizabeth Gilhouse—Masters program in English

Aisha Ibrahim—Ph.D. program in English Studies

Grace Foote Johns—Graduate Student at Large

Susan Larkin—Ph.D. program in English Studies

Darcie Punke—Master program in Art

Teryn Robinson—Masters program in Educational Admin. and Foundations

Makoto Sakamoto—Sociology

Kate Schenk—Graduate Student at Large

## Alumni News

**Rae-Ann Cebulka Wade** (Mathematics Education, 94) received her masters in Curriculum and Instruction from Illinois State and taught math at Bloomington High School from 1995-2001. Currently, she is a homemaker, mother of one son, and volunteers as the coordinator for the Toddler/Preschool Ministries at the First Assembly of God as well as volunteering with Home Sweet Home Mission and Habitat for Humanity.

**Christine DeMonte** (English, 91) received her MA in Teaching Elementary Education from National-Lewis University in 2000. Presently, she is at home rearing a seventeen-year-old boy whose parents died and her own six-year-old and infant daughters.

**Christy Eyre** (History, 02) is enrolled in the Archives and Records Management program of the Graduate School of Information of the University of Michigan.

**Sarah Mae Grant** (History, 02) lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, where she works for a company that does research for construction projects in northern Colorado and is establishing a new museum about Wounded Knee in Wall, South Dakota. She has had the opportunity to work with Lakota from various reservations in South Dakota on the museum project.

**Laurie Beth Hartzell Sweeney** (Anthology, 99) received her Masters in Political Science with a focus on community development non-profit management from Illinois State. She is director of development for the Boys & Girls Club of Columbus, Ohio. She married Ryan Michael Sweeney on May 17, 2003.

**Liz Lammert** (Speech Communication, 98) received her MA in Sociology from the University of Washington and is currently working toward her Ph.D. ■

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From the Director (Continued from Page 1)

identity, awareness, leadership potential, and opportunities for women." In addition, the plan recommended "The total University curriculum shall be reviewed periodically in terms of relevance for women students. Special needs of women students shall be considered in changes in curriculum and in development of policies for curriculum." (p. 8)

The first part of that proposal became reality with the approval of the Women's Studies minor by the University Curriculum Committee in November, 1974, as a sequence within the Ethic and Cultural Studies minor, which had been created in 1972.

Students could choose courses for the new twenty-four credit hour minor from the following:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Interdisciplinary  | Women Today  |
| Interdisciplinary  | Women in Fine Arts                                   |
| Interdisciplinary  | Independent Study                                    |
| Interdisciplinary  | Research for Women's Study                           |
| Sociology          | Sociology of Sex Roles                               |
| Sociology          | Contemporary Social Movements                        |
| Political Science  | Internship for Women in Politics                     |
| Political Science  | Women in Politics                                    |
| Psychology         | Psychology of Women                                  |
| History            | History of Women in America                          |
| English            | Women in Literature                                  |
| Philosophy         | Philosophical Foundations of the<br>Women's Movement |
| Physical Education | Women in Sports                                      |

Over the next few years, other experimental, but short-lived, courses were offered: *Women and Religion: Protestant, Catholic, Jew; Women's Health Problems*, and *Philosophical Foundations of Humanistic Psychology*. For a while, *Automotive Fundamentals* was listed as a Women's Studies course.

Since the 1970s, the program has grown and evolved with more classes and faculty. In 1991, Women's Studies became a free standing minor and in 2002 the program offered a graduate certificate as well. The number of minors usually varies between 30 and 45 in any given semester. Last spring the first two graduate certificates were awarded and currently eleven graduate students are enrolled in the certificate. Both required classes and elective classes in the Women's Studies minor, however, enroll far more students than the undergraduate minors. This semester over 1660 students are enrolled in classes that are part of the Women's Studies minor. These classes are offered by eleven departments and some are part of the General Education program. Many other offerings across the University that are not included in the minor also pay some attention to gender in the course content. While the recommendation offered by the first Affirmative Action Plan for women, that "the total University curriculum shall be reviewed periodically in terms of its relevance for women students," has never been implemented, the movement that began in the late 1960s and 1970s, nevertheless, had a significant impact on the University curriculum. ■

**Did you know Women's Studies  
 offers both a Graduate  
 Certificate and Women's  
 Studies minor?**