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Director celebrates faculty and new courses in thriving WMS Program



Welcome to the end of fall semester, well into a very successful year for Women's Studies. Our Program is thriving.

We have increased numbers of majors (40 at this point) and minors, an internal professional development initiative that is helping us consolidate and upgrade our teaching of critical thinking skills, several new and cross-listed 21st-century courses, some outstanding new adjunct faculty teaching required courses for our majors, continued emphasis on global issues and international women's rights, and a new seminar room outfitted with new furniture and the latest technology.

In addition, we have an outstanding group of six student TAs running the recitation groups for our large lecture section of the Introduction to Women's Studies, and a superb group of graduate students advising WMS and teaching several of our Introductory and

300-level courses.

WMS is pleased to now offer "Women's International Issues" (WMS 325) as an option for WMS majors, and to have the course approved as a Letters General Education course. Majors can now choose between WMS 325, taught by Dr. Donna Hughes, or WMS 310 ("Race, Class, and Sexuality") taught by Dr. Alana Bibeau.

I am especially pleased to now have WMS 310 and WMS 315—"Feminist Theory and Methodology," taught by Dr. Gail Cohee—as face-to-face classes for our majors. We will be alternating the locations for these two required, face-to-face courses between Kingston and Providence, allowing us to build our clientele in both places.

It is also exciting to have skilled "all-but-dissertation" students extending their contemporary and cutting-edge research, energy, technological sophistication, and teaching excellence to our students. They've helped us add to our curriculum such courses as "Postfeminisms, Popular Culture, and Contemporary Gender Studies" (Jenn Brandt, English ABD), "Disability in Popular Culture: Representation and Avoidance" (Laurie Carlson, English ABD), and "Women in the Natural Sciences" (Amy Maas, Biology ABD).

New collaborations with other departments are also allowing us to offer some cutting-edge 21st-century courses for the first time: "Women and Documentary" taught by documentary filmmaker Dr. Alexia Kosmider, "The Economics of Race, Class, and Gender," and "Gender, Africa, and

Sustainable Development," both taught by Dr. Bola Akanji, last Spring's "URI Distinguished International Scholar" from the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, and "Women in Music: Multicultural Musicianship & Pedagogy," taught by Linda Pezzullo.

Our website also has several new features and photos. Thanks to Jenn Brandt for developing "Student Resources," which now makes available all of our curriculum objectives and expectations, and shows students how to format, use Sakai, and do research at URI. This engaging resource was recently featured in the Arts & Sciences Chair's meeting for all to admire.

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IN MEMORIAM AND EDITOR'S NOTE

Stephen David Grubman-Black, In Memoriam

Dr. Stephen David Grubman-Black, URI Professor Emeritus of Women's Studies and Communication Studies, passed away on November 22, 2010.

Born on May 15, 1945 in Philadelphia, he was the son of the late Fannie Grubman. Steve received his B. S. and M.A. from Temple University and his Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Steve served as a professor at URI for 35 years before retiring. He began his career in the Department of Speech Communication in the College of Arts and Sciences where he served as Director of Graduate Programs. He then moved to the College of Human Science and Services when his program became the Department of Communicative Disorders. From 1978 to 1984, he served as Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and then as Coordinator of the Bachelor of General Studies Program at the College of Continuing Education from 1993-1999. Steve held a joint appointment for most of his career with the Program in Women's Studies, teaching Introduction to Women's Studies, Feminist Methods, Sexual Victimization, and Men and Masculinity, and serving for several years as the Director of Women's Studies. He also held a joint appointment with the Department of Communication Studies where he taught Interpersonal Communication.



Steve was a talented teacher, groundbreaking scholar, dedicated mentor, and engaged citizen. Among his many publications is his acclaimed book *Broken Boys/ Mending Men*, which led to speaking engagements throughout the country. Steve also published numerous scholarly articles and poetry. Known as a caring and compassionate colleague, Steve served as a volunteer and on many boards of nonprofit organizations including Temple Sinai, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the RI Rape Crisis Center, Brother to Brother, the Wiley Center, Washington County Mental Health, the Women's Resource Center, and more. He appreciated and supported the visual and performing arts and devoted his life and career to improving the quality of life for others.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to the URI Program in Women's Studies via the URI Foundation or to Temple Sinai.

EDITOR'S NOTE

I am proud to present the Fall 2010 Edition of the Women's Studies Newsletter. I would like to thank everyone who helped make this issue possible; you all did a great job with your articles and I could never have done this without you. I would also like to thank Jody Lisberger for being a great mentor and for helping me every step of the way.

As a writing major, I am very grateful for the chance to work as an editor. It has been a great learning opportunity for me and I have really loved learning to create a newsletter from start to finish. Recently I have also added a double major in Public Relations, which I will begin working on in the spring. I am also a Leadership Studies minor, and have had many great opportunities to work with incoming freshmen and help them adjust to college leadership. This coming spring, I will be co-teaching a first year leadership class where I will get to work with many of these students even further.

I hope that when reading this newsletter you come to see some of the wonderful things that women at the University of Rhode Island have accomplished, and that you take with you a better understanding of diversity, and the things that one person, or a small group, can accomplish if they put their mind to it.

That said, I am proud to show you what women at URI have been doing to make a difference in women's lives around the world.



~Jacqueline Atkins

WOMEN AT URI COME TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WOWW: “We’re Offering Women Wisdom” mentors help first- year women flourish at URI BY JACQUELINE ATKINS

WOWW—We’re Offering Women Wisdom—is a female freshmen mentoring group that was founded in 2006 at the University of Rhode Island. Meeting every Thursday throughout the school year, WOWW has several goals that the members work to achieve.

The first goal is to create a mentor relationship between the upperclassmen and the freshmen to help the new women transition to college life. Each year the freshmen get paired with an upperclassman mentor who is their “big.”

The bigs are in charge of helping their mentee adapt to being on their own for the first time ever. In addition to helping them with academics and life around campus, the bigs and littles go on family outings with older members of WOWW, so that the freshman can also get acquainted with life off-campus. Over the years, WOWW families have gone pumpkin picking, shopping, to the aquarium, and on road trips together.

WOWW also addresses issues and problems afflicted with being a woman in college. This includes sexual assault, date rape drugs, nutrition, health, and others. In their meetings, WOWW bigs and littles address these concepts in unique ways, such as self-defense classes and a Jeopardy game relating to safe sex.

WOWW also had a breast cancer survivor come speak last spring to teach the women the importance of checking themselves. The idea is to teach the freshmen how to have fun while still being safe.

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P.I.N.K. Women: Powerful Independent Notoriously Knowledgeable Women motivate and support excellence BY CYNTOYA SIMMONS

P.I.N.K. Women—Powerful Independent Notoriously Knowledgeable Women—is an organization that started at The University of Rhode Island campus in 2006. Their mission is to educate URI and its surrounding community on issues that pertain to multicultural and female groups.

Over the past four years, P.I.N.K. Women has embodied nothing but positivity for women involved with it.

Not only is P.I.N.K. Women a resource but it is a driving force of about sixty females who live by the motto, “We’re not just an organization, we’re a family.” P.I.N.K. Women support, motivate, and empower each other in every aspect of campus life: academically, socially, and emotionally.

P.I.N.K. Women has a mentoring program for the women involved in the organization, as well as a mentoring program involving high school students. They aim to motivate students to excel in life, make positive life choices, and encourage women to push barriers and empower themselves.

Last year, P.I.N.K. Women won “Most Active Group” at the URI Rammie Awards for the vast amount of time the women spend doing things together as a community.

The URI campus has a limited number of resources for women. P.I.N.K. Women has strived to be one of those vital resources.

Because of its vision, commitment, support, and passion, P.I.N.K. Women has become a significant contributor and catalyst for women at The University of Rhode Island and beyond.

PROF. DONNA HUGHES' "INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ISSUES" COURSE NOW APPROVED FOR GEN. ED. LETTERS

BY MORGAN WOLVEN



For the first time at URI, International Women's Issues (WMS 325) has been approved as a General Education Letters course, mainly thanks to the efforts of Women's Studies Professor, Donna Hughes. Hughes, who holds the Eleanor M. and Oscar M. Carlson Endowed Chair, has worked as an advocate against sex trafficking and published numerous writings on sex trafficking, violence against women, and women's rights.

The "International Women's Issues" course has been in URI's curriculum for the past decade, but this past summer was submitted for status as a General Education course. Hughes had to complete an in-depth application justifying the features of the course that align it with the Letters goals of teaching "wisdom and traditions of the past and present in a global setting."

Hughes designed the course to focus on understanding women's rights globally and exploring oppressive and exploitive practices and traditions against women and girls in different cultures around the world. The course will enlighten students on international issues that often do not make their way to media in the United States and will also offer discussion on activism for women's rights.

Hughes is more than

knowledgeable in helping students gain an understanding of international women's issues, not just acquire knowledge. She has a long history of research and a wealth of knowledge on sex trafficking of women and children in various countries, including the United States, Russia, Korea, and the Ukraine, and of Islamic fundamentalism and women's organized resistance to violence and exploitation.

Hughes believes that her interest in Women's Studies and human rights is mainly influenced by being a woman with "political awareness in today's society." Hughes' intent in adding this course as a General Education option was to reflect the importance of women's issues around the world and help students open their minds to how others live and suffer.

Adding this course as General Education option will invite a wide range of URI students to benefit from global issues. Hughes emphasizes that it is "very important for U.S students to understand the status of women around the world."

A student of Hughes', Whitney Smith, said that the course has given her the ability to uncover issues that she has never seen or heard of before. She also conveys that she has "never been so mesmerized by a course in the four years that I have been an undergraduate student."



<http://culturedecoded.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/world-map-without-dots.gif>

Women's Studies Faculty Workshop September 2010



WOMEN'S STUDIES WELCOMES NEW FACULTY TO TEACH "RACE, CLASS, & SEXUALITY" AND FEMINIST THEORY

Alana Bibeau emphasizes analytical relevance and experience

BY DEVLIN HEALEY



Once again I had overscheduled my day. When I ran into Washburn 220 to observe new Women's Studies professor Alana Bibeau's class, "Race, Class, and Sexuality" (WMS 310), I was embarrassingly short of breath. I sat down at the table and pulled out my notebook, attempting to compose myself. I foolishly believed the beginning of class would offer me an opportunity to catch my breath. Dr. Bibeau, however, dove right in.

Before roll had even been called, an extremely interesting discussion of gender stereotyping in MTV's "Jersey Shore" was already in full swing. This is Bibeau's goal in her classroom: to combat laziness with challenge. When students enter her class they can expect to be challenged to tackle difficult texts (and the occasional MTV reality show).

Bibeau wants her Women's Studies students to take away a sense of how to think analytically about texts and, most importantly, how theory is relevant to everyday life, not merely an abstract dealt with in the classroom.

Bibeau is one to practice what she preaches. After earning a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Rhode Island, she went on to receive

an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Virginia.

It was while writing her dissertation—"A Cultural Analysis of Birth in the U.S"—that Bibeau began this practical application of her research, training as a doula who supports women during labor and birth.

Today Bibeau practices as a birth and postpartum doula in addition to teaching and research.

"The Belly Woman" has been put on the back burner, however, due to a new addition to her family. Small children and the unpredictable schedule of a doula do not mix. Bibeau now focuses solely on the teaching aspect of her career.

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Gail Cohee offers theory and pedagogical expertise

BY DEVLIN HEALEY

How could one resist the call of Women's Studies while the feminist movement was full of energy and Women's Studies was growing into a field of academic interest? Dr. Gail Cohee, who joined the Women's Studies faculty part-time this semester to teach Feminist Theory and Methodology (WMS 315), began taking Women's Studies courses as an undergraduate, and it has played a large role in her life ever since. In fact, when Cohee did her Ph.D. in early modern Literature at Indiana University, she chose Women's Studies as her Ph.D. minor.

Since earning her Ph.D., Cohee has taught Women's Studies as well as classes in early modern literature and literature by women. In all of her courses, Cohee hopes to accomplish two things: to challenge her students and help build a community of

engaged scholars. She wants student to talk about tough issues in a way that enables them to engage.

Cohee's own feminist teaching depends on feminist theories around intersectionality, and she strives to help students engage with theory in ways that help them make sense of themselves and the larger world—all within a feminist/gendered context. In addition, Cohee co-edits the feminist pedagogical journal, *Feminist Teacher*, one of the longest-published feminist pedagogical journals still in circulation. The journal serves as a medium for teachers to share and learn from and with each other across disciplines.

Cohee is no stranger to juggling many roles. Currently she co-edits *Feminist Teacher*, directs the Sarah Doyle Women's Center, and teaches at Brown University. She also

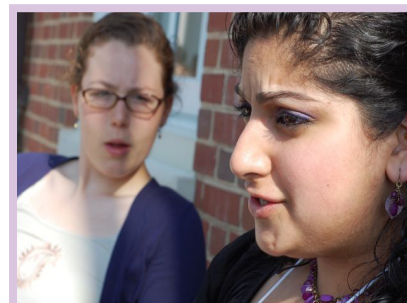
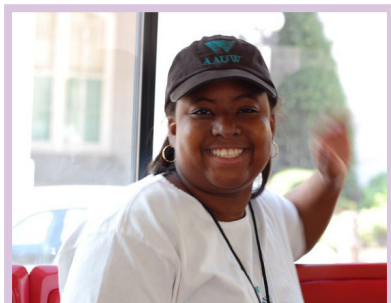
coordinates Brown's Sexual Assault Advocates program.

URI is lucky to have a Women's Studies professor with such a depth and breadth of knowledge—and even luckier, perhaps, to be benefiting from Cohee's talents as she works on publishing more in the field of feminist pedagogy and gender studies. We, in the Women's Studies Program, are delighted to be her sounding boards.



STUDENT GIVEN FULL SCHOLARSHIP TO ATTEND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY AAUW

BY DANIELLE HENDERSON



This June, I attended the annual meeting of the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. This conference invited and showcased diverse women from across the globe committed to socially conscious, female-empowered projects.

The three-day event was held in College Park, Maryland. I was able to attend with a scholarship from the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Each of the attendees was a leader in her own right. My roommate started a math group for women at her college in Virginia. I met Kelly, a student at Three Rivers College in Connecticut, who is passionate about helping women gain access to political venues by encouraging them to vote. I met several other powerful women, trumpeting various causes like civil rights, educational access, and globally focused women's rights.

It was the first time I have been surrounded by so many like-minded, similarly aged women. We gladly stayed awake until 2 a.m. most nights talking about how we will help solve the problems of the world.

I elected to go to Maryland one day early so I could volunteer at the Mt. Carmel house, a women's shelter in Washington, D.C. The program director showed us the living arrangements of the tenants and gave us an overview of how the shelter works.

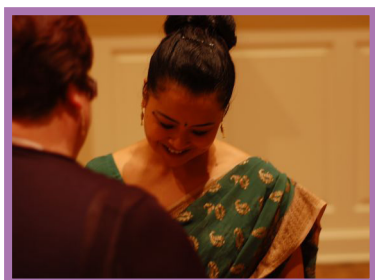
After a brief tour, I volunteered with two other attendees to help clean and clear their garden. We grabbed some rakes, shovels, and bags and began the work of clearing overgrown bushes and shrubs, cutting back plants, and sweeping the small sitting area so they may enjoy the newly cleaned view. It was difficult but rewarding work, and I was happy to help these women after meeting them and hearing about their lives.

The weekend kicked off with the Women of Distinction Awards. Each speaker brought us to our feet in a wave of cheering and praise. Christina Lagdameo spoke of her commitment to helping educate and house the women of India who had been recent victims of sex trafficking; Marie Tillman told us of her passion for advocating on behalf of veterans in the wake of her husband's tragic death; Patti Solis Doyle reminded us that humble beginnings can yield a fruitful life; and Nomfundo Walaza encouraged us to go to other countries to learn, not just to take. Each of these women inspired me.

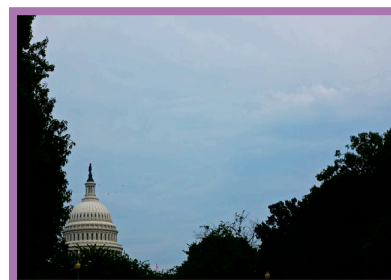
I also attended several breakout sessions, including "Female Empowerment: Reclaiming Feminism in 2010," "Women in Leadership 101: Success Starts with Self-Love," "Organizing Through Telling Your Story," and "Beyond Prestige: Selecting a Graduate School That Fits You."

After attending the sessions, I attended the "Secrets of Powerful Women" panel discussion, where women active in the political and executive arena shared their insights with us.

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<http://www.aauw-tacoma.org/>



URI Student Teaches Health to Women in Prison

BY ASHLEY COVIELLO

Much of my summer of 2010 was consumed by an internship, one I never thought I would get. Internships are few and far between. My first choice was the women's prison at the Department of Corrections in Cranston.

When I received the go-ahead, I was excited and admittedly very nervous. Unsure of what to expect, I accepted and was able to design my own internship to fit my needs.

Knowing that many offenders are undereducated, I decided that I wanted to teach because knowledge truly is power. Being a Women's Studies major and a nursing major, I wanted to apply both domains.

Hours and hours of work resulted in activities, power point slides, and information sheets. Considering the information I was given about prevalence of problems and the research I had done about women in prison and their needs, I focused mainly on three areas: stress, anxiety and depression, and eating disorders.

I scheduled a series of "classes" each week. I went to the women's prison and discussed each topic with the participants; attendance was optional. I tried to make each

“Education is so important; without it, we will get nowhere.”

session collaborative in the sense that I wanted every woman to participate and discuss their own views and experiences if appropriate.

I gave the women activities to take with them for future reference, such as distress tolerance activities, emotion regulation activities, and interpersonal effectiveness activities. I also offered the option of speaking privately about any issue related to women's health and wellness, such

as communicable diseases, mental health issues, contraception methods, female anatomy, decision-making skills, and communication skills.

As much as I wanted every woman to be excited about learning

“But most importantly, know that the few you will positively affect will finally have the knowledge and resources to change their lives.”

and to love my lessons, not every woman responded as I wished. Many attended each week and many participated and returned the following weeks.

However, many did not show interest in the lessons once they learned they would not receive time off their sentence for attending. Many women do not have interest in education at all. But I definitely believe those who attended weekly and showed interest got something out of the teaching I offered.

It is amazing how undereducated in health issues most of these individuals are. One might expect

many people to understand about the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. But what if you do not know what that term means, or which diseases fall under this category?

This lack of information is the rule, not the exception, at the women's prison. The majority of female offenses are drug or sex related, both which can result in serious health problems. Education can solve most of these problems, but most of these

women have not had the opportunity for education. This is a continuous cycle that needs to be broken.

For those who may consider work or an internship such as this, know that you will work hard and

positively affect few. Know that you will rarely be appreciated. Know that you will receive disrespect. Know that you will be disappointed and discouraged.

But most importantly, know that the few you will positively affect will finally have the knowledge and resources to change their lives. Education is so important; without it, we will get nowhere.

I will not lie and say my internship was easy, but I would do it all again if I had the opportunity.



DIVERSITY WEEK 2010

“OUT OF DIVERSITY WE SPEAK”



Speakers left to right: Helen Mederer, Stephanie Lavallee, Alycia Mosley Austin, Danielle Henderson, Zuleika Toribio, Ian Reyes, and Adeyemi Ogunade

BY MADELEINE MORRIN

When I attended URI orientation last summer, I was surprised to find that URI was not as diverse as I hoped it would be. At all three meals, the seating in the dining hall had an element of de facto segregation. An aerial view photograph would have made us look like sorted jelly beans: reds at the red table, greens at the green table.

It was only at the Diversity Workshops in October that people started openly addressing the issue of diversity.

One particularly exciting event was “Out of Diversity We Speak,” in which members of the URI community talked about what made them diverse as individuals. They spoke as black and white, students and faculty, young single mothers, and mothers in the workforce.

I was pleasantly surprised to hear several speakers refer to misconceptions of diversity. Zuleika Toribio, a junior who is Dominican, started out the event by asking, “What color is my skin? Is it purple? Brown? White? Black? Or is it yellow?”

She went on to say, “Diversity should not be the number of colored or white people we have in a group. Diversity should be the different

ways we think, the different things that we do, not the different ways that we look or where we come from.”

Stephanie Lavallee, a senior from Woonsocket, said, “Diversity is much more than just race. It incorporates social class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, being a minority. I am a minority on the URI campus because I am a mother.”

Lavallee talked about her incredible journey to overcome the ways society discriminates against her as young mother.

Prof. Helen Mederer from Sociology discussed her own challenges many years ago as a young mother and Ph.D. student, and helped the audience understand the ongoing “Mommy tax” and difficulties women in the workforce still face today.

Adeyemi Ogunade, a Nigerian graduate student in economics, reminded the audience that “our failure to fully embrace...[diversity] has led to a pervading sense of national sus-

picion, racial unease, and mutual distrust, which often- times erupts into violence.”

Alycia Mosley Austin, who came to URI in late April 2010 to work in the Graduate School as the Director of Graduate Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives, talked about doing a Ph.D. in Neurosciences and suddenly realizing the lack of representation of women of color as role models.

“No matter how many papers we publish, or how many faculty members win the Nobel Prize,” she said, “how can we be the best in the country if we aren’t the best at training a diverse cohort of scientists? Many people view diversity as a threat to excellence, but I know I’m not alone in the belief that diversity is a requirement for excellence.”

I was especially pleased when Danielle Henderson, a senior, referred to the same dining hall image that had made an impression on me at orientation. “There seems to be a constant level of comfort here,” she said. “People of color sitting with people of color, sorority and fraternities sitting with other sororities and fraternities.

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Out of Diversity Continued

“There is a point where this comfort becomes stagnation,” she said.

Her honest and inspiring words were followed by the reflections by Ian Reyes, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, about how it felt to grow up with a Puerto Rican father and a Caucasian mother, and have the coloring of his mother. The story he told of the school’s not allowing his father to take him home without calling his mother first made everyone stop and think.

The honesty of all the stories, along with the rest of Diversity Week, pushed students out of their comfort zones and into awareness.

Perhaps people came to realize, as Henderson suggested at the end of her speech: The problem is not that there is no diversity on campus—there is—but that diversity requires an effort to pursue and appreciate interactions with people who are different from you.

WOWW Continued

WOWW also does philanthropy work. They have an annual date auction, where they sell girls as dates to a party that the whole club attends, and all the money raised goes to help women in need. WOWW has also helped work the Gloria Gemma fashion show, which features cancer survivors as models, and the funds raised from this event go toward the Gloria Gemma Breast Cancer Resource Foundation.

All in all, WOWW tries to promote a positive atmosphere for the bettering of women to help them achieve the most out of their college experience with friends who will last a lifetime.

Fiction writer Joan Leegant explores religious extremism and the challenge of writing fiction about Israel

BY MADELEINE MORRIN

Joan Leegant, author of *Wherever You Go* (Norton, 2010), came to URI as a part of Diversity Week to talk about religious extremism and read from her novel. Her recently published novel details three well-developed characters caught in the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Like all good writers, Leegant offers more questions than answers. How far is a person willing to go for

“How far is a person willing to go for a cause?”

a cause? Is killing for a cause ever justified? She said she wrote the novel hoping to learn the answers through her characters, to try to understand through them “the passions and pulls of religious extremism.”

Though Leegant says she is no longer religious herself, she has always been intrigued by the pull of religion. She wanted to understand how far a person is willing to go for a cause, and what drives them to that point.

Because Leegant was born and raised in the U.S., she said it is somewhat controversial for her to be writing about political issues in Israel. She reported that some Israelis are offended by her portrait of the “good American” and “bad Israeli,” but it is clear that Leegant did not have malicious intentions. She followed her “passionately disturbed” characters on their paths because she wanted to learn more about human beings looking for belonging, sometimes in extremist groups.

Although Leegant spends half the

year teaching fiction in Israel, since she is an American, she said she has the benefit of writing as an outsider. She chose fiction as her medium because she believes that fiction can sometimes hold more emotional truth than journalism.

Fiction, she said, also gave her the protection she needed to write about a country which did not belong to her. “Fiction is literary art, and art, by definition,” she said, “pushes audiences out of their comfort zones and into something better.”

Whether it is enlightenment, realization, or just a deeper understanding of something that once caused discomfort, to Leegant, art serves as a teacher for society. Leegant’s writing is eye-opening because of the believable and emotionally driven characters.

I am an American-born Gentile, and I cannot speak for Jews or Israelis who were made uncomfortable by Leegant’s novel, but I can say that every word that Leegant spoke was said with grace and compassion, along with a desire to understand human being.



Writers coming this spring!

March 8- Jill Ker Conway
March 15- Elaine Orr
March 29- Nancy McCabe

“Greening the ghetto and how much it won’t cost us”: Prize-winning environmental justice advocate, Majora Carter, honors URI and Women’s Studies with the Annual Carlson Lecture

BY REBECCA ROQUE



<http://www.metropolismag.com/webimages/1691/>

MajoraCarterRooft91_t346.jpg

This year’s 2010 Honors Colloquium on Race opened on September 14 with the MacArthur prize-winning environmental justice advocate Majora Carter presenting the Annual Women’s Studies Carlson Lecture.

“You don’t have to move out of your neighborhood to live in a better one,” Carter said from the start, voicing her mantra on how we can and must approach severe environmental degradation in our communities.

Carter presented staggering and irrefutable evidence to help illustrate the connection between the location of environmental exploitation, waste treatment and waste facilities, and low income neighborhoods. She showed charts revealing how one does not find such harmful practices and plants in neighborhoods of economic prosperity.

Carter is primarily responsible for the formation of numerous eco-projects, such as the Majora Carter Group LLC, Sustainable South Bronx, B.E.S.T.

(Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training), and others, which have become the model of success in the invention of green jobs and pursuit of environmental sustainability.

In her lecture, Carter presented several studies that overpoweringly demonstrate the link between fossil fuel emissions sites and learning disabilities and respiratory distress. She also cited University of Illinois’s findings about Cabrini Green, a housing project without green spaces as opposed to a housing project with direct access to green spaces: young girls with access to the green spaces had lower stress levels, higher test scores, a lower crime rate, and higher self-esteem.

Carter posed a crucial question: “How do we make the poor less poor?” She stated that in order to accomplish strides in the community and to rectify the unjust realities of environmental exploitation, one must start right in their own community to fight to stop the poverty cycle.

Carter encourages political activism, empowerment of the masses for action, starting innovative green companies, and providing green training and jobs to the community.

She discussed her B.E.S.T. program, where trainees learn technical skills such as wetland and urban restoration, green roofing, and even workplace etiquette. The program boasts 85% employment and 10% enrolled in college, which is staggering considering most of the participants were formerly incarcerated and didn’t fall back into the 70% recidivism rate statistic, as normally expected.

The success of her program, she argued, ought to persuade some skeptics why they should care or get on board, considering it costs approximately

\$70,000 per year to keep an individual in jail here in the U.S., which is coming right out of the taxpayer’s pockets and pocketbooks. Green jobs, she said, are labor intensive and in no way can they be outsourced.

Carter is a natural social entrepreneur and full of creative business and non-profit opportunities and ideas on how to improve the outlook of industry and the government’s reckless handling of waste, fossil fuels emissions, and other harmful pollutants on today’s inner city neighborhoods.

She has been named Essence magazine’s top 25 most successful African Americans and 50 most influential women for the past two consecutive years. For one of her first projects, Sustainable South Bronx, she obtained a \$1.25 million grant and completely transformed a polluted riverside dump into South Bronx first waterfront park in 60 years.

My heart wrenched as she alluded to people’s hesitation to play upon this newly formed green space, as they found it hard to believe it was for them, due to their humbled lack of expectations.

Carter’s reasons, passion, and track record for addressing environmental justice and strategizing for change are so strong and incontestable that she makes even the most accomplished feel lazy. When later in the night, she joked why Obama hadn’t hired her already, I have to say, I was wondering why the heck he hadn’t either! She is an amazing woman, speaker, activist, and forerunner in the Green Movement, who shows us how we must and can proceed in our invention of green jobs and pursuit of environmental sustainability.

Continued on page 10

Fall 2010 Women's Studies 150 TA's Recap of Past Events & Spring Classes



Small Pictures (counterclockwise): Joan Leegant reads from her novel; Anna Vaccaro and son Eli celebrate at a WMS event; students in Jenn Brandt's WMS 150 perform a skit; TA's present their information front of WMS 150 large lecture; students in the large lecture WMS 150 show off their Turning Technology clickers.

Center Picture: Fall 2010 WMS 150 TA's Front row l to r: Melanie Carrazzo is a Women's Studies major who will be graduating in May. She hopes to someday be a professor herself. Courtney Needham is a Communicative Disorders major minoring in Women's Studies. She has been a TA for WMS 150 for two semesters. Nelli Ruotsalainen is a senior WMS major from Espoo, Finland. Jessica Williams is a double major in Biology and Women's Studies. Carlene Fiorito is a senior majoring in Psychology and minoring in Women Studies. She's planning on enrolling in a Ph.D program in Clinical Psychology and pursuing a career focused on Women's Health Psychology. Back row l to r: Jody Lisberger (Director of WMS); Danielle Henderson is a double major in Women's Studies and English Literature.

Spring 2011 Classes Offered in the Women's Studies Program

- | | |
|---|---|
| WMS 150 - Introduction to Women's Studies | WMS 351 - Women and Documentary |
| WMS 220 - Women and Natural Science | WMS 351 - Violence Prevention |
| WMS 300 - Field Experience Women's Studies | WMS 360 - Men and Masculinities |
| WMS 301 - Women's Professional Development and Leadership | WMS 370 - Sex Trafficking |
| WMS 310 - Race, Class, and Sexuality | WMS 385 - Women Writers: Toni Morrison |
| WMS 315 - Feminist Theory and Methodology | WMS 386 - Economics of Race, Class, and Gender |
| WMS 317 - Contemporary Women Novelists of the Americas | WMS 387 - Latin America at the Movies |
| WMS 320 - Feminist Thought Into Action | WMS 400 - Critical Issues and Femenist Scholarship |
| WMS 325 - International Women's Issues | WMS 402 - Campaigns & Services for Victims of Trafficking & Slavery |
| WMS 350 - Women and Mental Health | WMS 450 - Independent Study |
| WMS 350 - Women and Health | WMS 490 - Women in Music: Multicultural Musicianship & Pedagogy |
| WMS 350 - Women Poets: Modern and Contemporary | WMS 490 - Gender, Africa, and Sustainable Development |
| WMS 350 - Disability in Popular Culture | WMS 490H - Women Writing Their Lives |
| WMS 350 - Women in Sci Fi | WMS 500 - Colloquium in Women's Studies |
| WMS 351 - Women and Judaism | |

Director's Note Continued

Thanks also to our savvy work-study students, Erika Munoz and Audrey O'Neil, for continuing to upgrade our website, including the faculty page, which now features many of the covers of our faculty's publications.

Finally, thanks to Provost Don DeHaye's for funding our new seminar room in Roosevelt. WMS, other departments, and several working groups are thrilled to have such a quality place to teach and convene.

We look forward to seeing you in our classes and hallways as we continue to bring to URI top-quality gender and women's studies scholarship, teaching, and opportunities for significant local, national, and global change.

Alana Bibeau Continued

Though having taught in the Sociology Department since 2006, Bibeau is new to the Women's Studies Program, but not new to Women's Studies. She took a Women's Studies course her first semester of college with Lois Cuddy, faculty emerita, that opened her eyes to major social issues, and she's never looked back.

She's thrilled to be a part of the Women's Studies Program at URI and says that everyone has been extremely "warm and welcoming."

I speak on behalf of the Program and students when I say we're proud and honored to have Bibeau on the faculty. With her current endeavor of turning her dissertation into a book, I can see that she, like me, loves to over-schedule her day. She, however, does so with poise and elegance (and better lung capacity). Welcome!

Danielle Henderson Continued

We were also treated to an evening in Washington D.C. I explored the city with my new friends; we ate ice cream and cupcakes on the hottest of summer days; we walked to various different tourist sites (the White House, the Washington Monument), and dipped our feet in the pond at a local park .

More than anything, these incredibly informative sessions, events, and trips reminded me that my growth as a student depends greatly upon my ability to nurture my whole self. This conference confirmed my beliefs that we are not just students, but leaders.

Majora Carter Continued

If you missed this amazing lecture, you can still listen to it on the URI YouTube site at <http://www.uri.edu/hc/watchcarter.html>.

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