

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Gender and Women's Studies Publications

Gender and Women's Studies

2012

Gender and Women's Studies Newsletter for Spring 2012

URI Gender and Women's Studies Department

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/wms_pubs

Recommended Citation

URI Gender and Women's Studies Department, "Gender and Women's Studies Newsletter for Spring 2012" (2012). *Gender and Women's Studies Publications*. Paper 2.

https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/wms_pubs/2

This Newsletter is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gender and Women's Studies Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.



This year has been impressive for Gender and Women's Studies (GWS). The many programs and events our students—including 56 majors and over 50 minors—have been involved with all demonstrate the global, political, and activist priorities we emphasize in the Gender and Women's Studies Program.

On March 30, over 30 students from GWS and Political Science attended an all-day conference, "Women Making Democracy: The Arab Spring" at the Radcliffe Advanced Institute. With bus transport largely subsidized by the Provost's Office, we were able to attend lectures and panels by scholars, activists, and social media experts from Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Iraq, South Africa, Poland, and other countries.

Fifteen capstone GWS students then extended their experience with further research, which led to teaching a 75-minute class on the Arab Spring to an Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies class, and to final projects that combined key issues in "Women Making Democracy" with "critical issues in feminist scholarship."

The other students who attended Women Making Democracy, including those from "Feminist Thought Into Action," "International Women's Issues," "Gender, Economics, and African Development," and "African Conflict" also engaged in additional research and projects.

Another impressive series of events came about on February 15, March 29, and April 18, respectively, when GWS co-sponsored three prominent and inspiring feminist speakers: novelist and immigration lawyer Marlen Bodden; President of Mt. Holyoke College Lynn Pasquerella; and Tufts University nutritionist and the StrongWomen Initiative director, Dr. Miriam Nelson. In each case, a packed audience heard important arguments and ideas about race, class, and gender equality, equity, and justice.

As a result of her appearance, Marlen Bodden, author of *The*

Wedding Gift, which has several six-figure contracts for its publication, has been chosen to receive a URI 2012 honorary degree and be the 2012 commencement speaker. Several GWS students read her novel and discussed with her issues of ongoing slavery in today's world and the craft of writing.

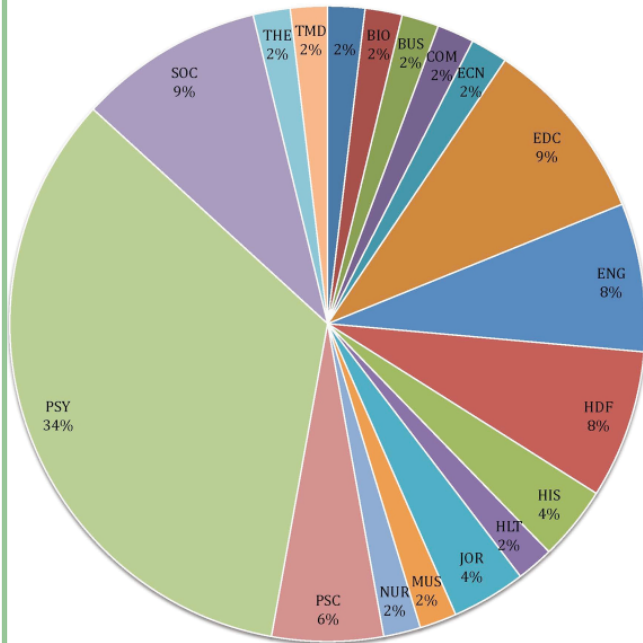
As GWS grows in stature, numbers, and excellence, we continue to build on our assessments of WMS 150, WMS 315, and WMS 400. As we strive to create consistency and excellence across our curriculum, we are also discovering the need to focus on writing and data-interpretation skills.

Con't. on p. 12

Table of Contents

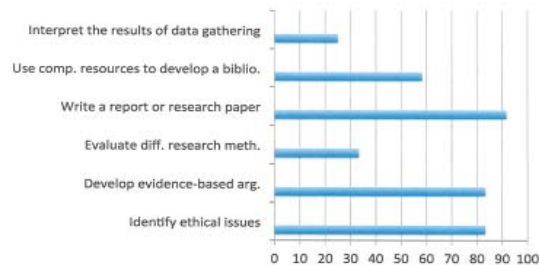
Women Making Democracy	3
Consulting Me	4
Courage of a Feminist Future	5
Erica Knowles	6
LGBTIQQ Symposium	7
Class of 2012	8
International Women's Day	10
Editors Note	11

WMS: Percentages of Other Majors February 2012

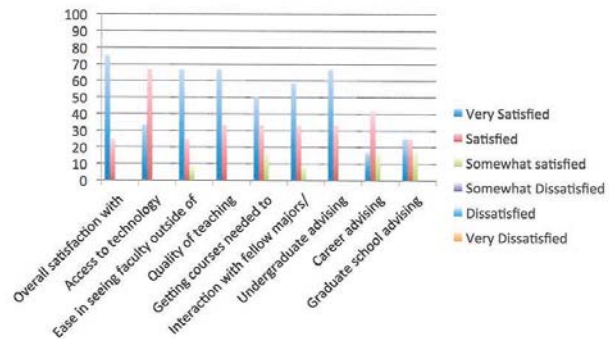


Erika Munoz receives a URI Rainville Finalist Award; Munoz has worked as an Office Assistant and Publication/Web Designer in the GWS office since Jan '10. According to her supervisor, "Erika has been our cohesion, our leader, our organizer... we would be lost without her."

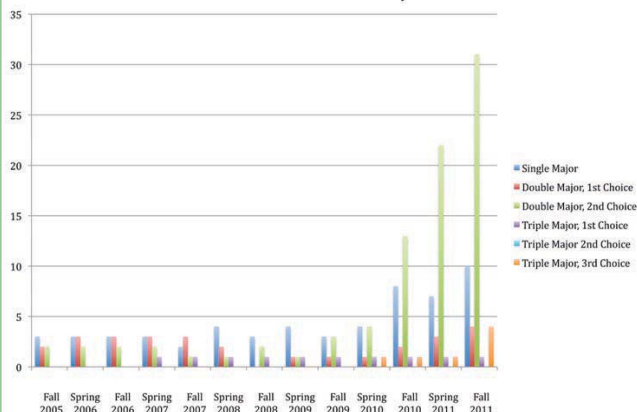
Which of the following skills or abilities did you gain as a WMS major or minor? The ability to:



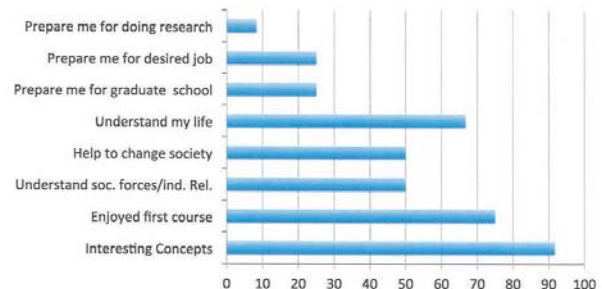
Overall, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of your education in WMS?



WMS as Choice of Major



Why did you choose to major or minor in WMS?



WOMEN MAKING DEMOCRACY

BY REBECCA ROQUE



“Arab Spring” is a complicated term. Not all the countries associated with this phenomenon are “Arab” nor did the revolutions that characterize this movement all actually begin in the spring. It was with such a lens of shared readiness to learn and skepticism that the students in Gender and Women’s Studies approached the “Women Making Democracy Conference,” at Harvard’s Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study on March 30th, 2012.

Conference panelists included journalists, activists, scholars, and heads of organizations throughout the world. The conversation began with the renown Shahira Amin, the Egyptian journalist who refused to report the events at Tahrir Square the way the

state-run television program she worked for urged her to, and consequently quit at the height of the protest. She gave some positive reports on women’s active participation in the protests, and complicated the treatment of women as she spoke about her expose on state-performed “virginity tests,” for unmarried female protesters.



One major theme of the day was the amazingly powerful role social media has played in the revolutionary victories. Social media sites such as Twitter allow people to communicate, organize, and mobilize in the wake of authoritarian regimes that would do anything to maintain power. Phillip Howard, professor and author of “The Digital Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,” spoke about how the government “shut off” the Internet in Egypt, but then people took to the street to find out why and ended up causing the mass march to Tahrir Square, where the people claimed the Square in the name of a free and democratic Egypt.

The conference explored how the Internet is fundamental in revolutionary progression. Viral images informed civilians about the very real violence that the state and military forces were employing, such as was the case with the viral “Woman in the Blue Bra,” picturing a female protester who had her ribs kicked in by a circle of armed police combatants in Cairo. This tear-jerking video was the catalyst that opened the door for negotiation.



The Gender and Women’s Studies Program is committed to investigating these intricate issues, talk at length about gendered power relations, and communicate our disdain and plans for addressing the treatment of women abroad. We do not intend to impose our Western ways on countries that are capable of developing culturally relevant tactics and becoming empowered as illustrated, but in the wake of the ceaseless violence and stripping of human rights, we hope to employ our scholarship and activism to show our full support for the freedom of women in the process of dismantling oppressive regimes and rebuilding nations.

ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH LECTURE

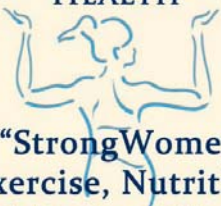



Fiction reading and discussion by attorney
Marlen Suyapa Bodden


THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Robert L. Carothers Library and Learning Commons, Galanti Lounge
February 15, 2012, 4:00 PM
FREE ADMISSION
Hosted by URI's Africana Studies

ANNUAL SCHWEERS LECTURE IN WOMEN AND HEALTH



"Strong Women: Exercise, Nutrition, and Optimal Health"




presenting
Miriam Nelson, Ph.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

April 18, 2012, 7:00 pm
Kingston Campus, Swan Auditorium
Lecture, 7:00 - 8:15 PM
Free Admission

ANNUAL CARLSON LECTURE IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES & SECOND ANNUAL URI SPRING HUMANITIES FESTIVAL



MARCH 29, 2012
4:00 PM, SWAN AUDITORIUM
"Women's Leadership, Generational Forgetting, and the Problem of Speaking for Others"

7:30 PM, LIPPITT 402
"Humanities and Social Justice"

DR. LYNN PASQUERELLA
PRESIDENT OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Kingston Campus
FREE ADMISSION
<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/events>
<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/cfh>

CONSULTING ME: WRITING CONSULTANT IMPRESSED BY FEMINIST THOUGHT INTO ACTION

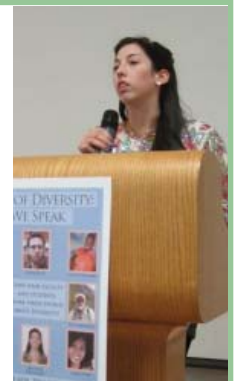
BY BRITTANY PAILTHORPE

To the squinting judgmental eye, URI appears to be the home to an active majority of students swimming in a sea of vapidty. These students seem biologically connected to electronic devices, and less and less concerned with the world's climactic and ideological shifts. I, in all of my haughty glory, fell victim to this untrue opinion. Up until now, I hadn't seen anything to contradict the notion that the lackadaisical student population was the majority, growing every year. Then I became a writing consultant, or in-house tutor, to Jenn Brandt's WMS 320 Feminist Thought Into Action class my last semester at URI and discovered a new beautiful truth: a small group of student activists ready to take on the world.

Believe me, I am not saying that this minority will never have the ability to change the world—quite the contrary. If I could convince everyone that they are part of what (I believe) will be history's most important and influential generation, I would. I would strap speakers to my chest blaring Katy Perry's "Firework," and hope others believe that hundreds of Mandelas, Curies, Deweys, Wollstonecrafts, and Kings, are getting their education now, just at URI alone. If I could do yell out this promise without looking like Norman Bates, I would. Bet it all, I would.

But the point is, I wasn't rolling my eyes because I was the writing and activist elitist like I thought. No. After becoming a consultant, I realized I was rolling my eyes out of fear. Fear that not all of my peers would reach their fullest potential, and that, consequently, we would all fail to change the world.

The students of WMS 320 made me think differently about those not yet ready to engage. For every one student who temporarily rests on the status quo, there are eighteen who have already begun to challenge it. Who now think above it. Who now think beyond it.



Con't. on p. 12

ON THE COURAGE OF A FEMINIST FUTURE

BY JENN BRANDT

This year, Jenn Brandt earned a Ph.D. in English at URI and was honored with a URI Diversity Award for Graduate Student Excellence in Leadership and Service. Dr. Brandt was also this year's speaker at the GWS graduation celebration. The following is an excerpt from Dr. Brandt's address.

When Jody approached me about speaking to you all today, I believe it was with these concerns in mind that she asked that I talk about what might “surprise” you as you go out in the world, or what “challenges” you might face—but I’m not going to do that. I don’t have a crystal ball, I can’t predict the future, and besides, it is both the fear and beauty of the unexpected that motivates us to do and be our best.

Instead, I want to speak to you today about courage. Not because I am an expert on the subject—far from it—

but because it is the one thing I know for sure that you will need to possess as you set forth to claim your futures. Fortunately, I believe this is something all of you know a little bit about. Courage, not unlike the activism we teach in the Gender and Women’s Studies Program, need not be revolutionary. It starts small. The seeds were planted the day you signed up for your first Gender and Women’s Studies course. It began to sprout when you started to talk to your friends and family about things like intersectionality, privilege,

and equality. Your courage grew the day you declared Gender and Women’s Studies as your major, despite what others may have advised you to do, what your friends thought, or the secret stigma that you may have felt inside. And, most importantly, your courage came in to bloom the day you first called yourself a feminist.

“Each semester I witness within students an awakening into a feminist consciousness.”

ently, it doesn’t speak to your generation. It’s too outdated, too old, too political, or so the argument goes. But I do not believe any of these descriptions to be true. I think that men, but even more so women, particularly those who are your age, avoid the word feminism out of fear. Saying you are a feminist is an acknowledgement of the fact that just one year after graduation female graduates will earn only 80% of what their male counterparts make; it’s an awareness that our Senate almost did not reauthorize the

Yes, I said it, the “F” word. This past week I sat in a meeting where some suggested we step back from the word feminism. Appar-



Violence Against Women Act, despite the fact that each year battery continues to be the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the United States; and its knowing that being the victim of domestic violence, along with other “pre-existing conditions” such as having a Caesarean Section, or hell, even having a vagina, raises a person’s insurance premiums and can even disqualify her from receiving medical coverage.

As the late Adrienne Rich wisely stated, “It’s exhilarating to be alive in a time of awakening consciousness,” but “it can also be confusing, disorienting, and painful.” Each semester I witness within students an awakening into a feminist consciousness that quite often mimics Rich’s reflection. Students believe in equal rights and they believe in social justice, but they don’t believe themselves to be feminists because doing so means they must also believe that they live in a world that I just described to you, one where not all men—and certainly not women—are created equal.

Con’t. on p. 12

GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES REMEMBERS ERICA KNOWLES

On February 15th, 2012, Erica Knowles was killed in a tragic car accident. She was a presence full of light and a gift to the Program. We especially want to remember her as she was--a poet--which is why students of Jenn Brandt's "Feminist Thought into Action" class hosted a poetry reading in Erica's honor at the 193 Coffeehouse on April 24th. At this event, attended by over 70 people, they dedicated hand-made pieces of art to Erica's family, who attended and performed at the reading. In attendance was Erica's stepmother, Carla Cesare Knowles, who wore a dress that she said Erica had chosen for her, along with a pair of Erica's yellow rain boots. Carla also brought a flower to place by the microphone, because, "Erica never went anywhere without props." The event was full of laughter and tears, and proved to be the perfect way to celebrate Erica's spirit. It was wonderful to come together and feel Erica's presence among her loved ones, and to remember the powerful impact she has had on everyone she met. Her exceptional poetry was read by her family and the students of Feminist Thought into Action. An additional piece of art was commissioned to hang in Roosevelt Hall, through which every new student will pass. This way, generations to come will think of Erica and remember her fondly.



WMS 320 and friends pose with Erica's stepmother after the poetry reading.



Erica with her sister Ashley.



Erica's stepmother Carla reads one of Erica's poems.

LGBTIQQ SYMPOSIUM SEEKS TO HONOR CONNECTIONS AND GENERATE OPEN-MINDEDNESS BY AUSTIN ROUND

URI's 17th annual LGBTIQQ Symposium concluded Friday, April 6, showcasing a wealth of information about LGBTIQQ issues, including an expansive display of intellectual, medical, and professional perspectives. This year's symposium theme was Connected Communities, featuring numerous events focusing on topics of interest and issues pertinent not only to LGBTIQQ communities, but to LGBTIQQ issues that affect outside societies, such as schools, governments, and racial communities.

URI is currently working hard to become a school known for its open mindedness towards the LGBT community; it's currently ranked #14 on the Princeton Review's list of Top LGBT-Unfriendly Schools and has had some overt instances of gay bashing, notable enough to make the evening news. With these statistics in mind, the LGBTIQQ Symposium's message is that it is more important than ever that we make our LGBTIQQ students aware of the resources available in an environment striving to counteract bullying and discrimination.

Keynote speaker Ryan Sallans, who works as an LGBTQ Healthcare Consultant and as a national speaker on LGBTQ issues, had forthright hopes for the events of the week. "[The symposium] is about honoring who you are and not allowing yourself to fit into boxes or fit into labels," he said. This message is not only important to our LGBTIQQ students, but resonates with the entirety of the student body. Sallans spoke on body image and sexuality and gave a keynote presentation about his second book, *Second Son: Transitioning Toward My Destiny, Love and Life*, which chronicles his transition from female to male and the tribulations his transition entailed.

This symposium and others like it teach the importance of the human condition. I had the opportunity to attend several events over the course of the week, and was slightly surprised by how comfortable and intimate the event seemed. The programs exuded the theme of community in a way that wasn't artificial or forced; it was a genuine closeness with people I'd never met before that was remarkably refreshing.

"[The symposium] is about honoring who you are and not allowing yourself to fit into boxes or fit into labels."

Monday, April 2

- 11am-1pm: *Tomboy* Film Screening and Discussion with Director Céline Sciamma. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 7-9pm: *Gay Life in Brazil* by Jonathan Posner and Hilda. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center

Tuesday, April 3

- 11am-12pm: *Coming Out in the Classroom* by Lynn McKinney. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 1:30-3:00pm: *Sharing Her Story: Finding Solutions: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in the LGBTQ Community*. Women's Center Library
- 7-9pm: *It Gets Better at URI: Coming Out for Change Film*. Screening and Discussion by LGBTQ Women's Group. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center

Wednesday, April 4

- 10-11am: *LGBT Issues in Local Government* by Gary Blazewski. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 12-1pm: *Infusing LGBTQ Consciousness in the College of Nursing* by Delores Walters. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 2:30-4:30pm: *Sexuality and Body Image* by Ryan Sallans, Keynote Speaker. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 6-8pm: *FTM: Scouting the Unknown* by Ryan Sallans. "Keynote Address & Book Signing". Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center

Thursday, April 5

- 10-11am: *Intersections of Race and Sexual Orientation* by Daniel Traoum. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 1-2pm: *History, Current Practice, and Construction of Drag* by Drs. D. DeLaRosa (Phyl Anderson) and Benjamin De La Rosa (Ben Feby). Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center
- 4-6pm: *Queer Life After College: Finding Career by LGBTQ Alumni and Friends*. Lunch. Alumni Center
- 8pm-11pm: *Queer Prom and Drag Show*. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center

Friday, April 6

- 10am-12pm: *Safe Zone Workshop*. Multicultural Center 005
- 10-11pm: *Safe Zone: Not A Long, Schools and Communities*. Welcoming to LGBT Youth by Annemarie Vaccaro, Gerri August and Megan Kennedy. "Discussion and Book Signing". Multicultural Center 005
- 2-3pm: *LGBT Faculty Fellows Program* by Delores Walters and Annemarie Vaccaro. Hardge Forum in Multicultural Center

LGBTQ Center Presents
17th Annual LGBTIQQ Symposium:
Connected Communities

Sponsored by LGBTQ Center, French Studies, and Student Affairs Diversity Fund

UNIVERSITY OF Rhode Island

THINK BIG WE DO™

For more information, visit www.uri.edu/GLBT or call (401) 874-2894

SENIORS REFLECT ON THEIR TIME WITH GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES AND ANNOUNCE FUTURE PLANS

Jill Rounds: Next year I will be getting my Master's in Higher Education and Student Affairs at the University of South Carolina and holding a Graduate Assistant Hall Director position in a first-year residence hall. Gender and Women's Studies has not only opened my eyes to issues that women face, but has motivated me to know more about my world, and the world around me, and to get active and involved in the issues.



Rebecca Roque: Gender and Women's Studies has been life-transforming, from building empathy and tolerance by coming to understand oppression discourse, to the strength and solidarity built with my fellow students, who I now bring with me everywhere. I have learned how to communicate effectively, and point out injustices as soon as I see them, and help empower others to do the same. Before pursuing a graduate degree, I plan to take a year to mentor high school students, most likely in Miami-Dade County, to advocate for higher educational attainment, in order to break down the boundaries, fences, and ceilings that allow inequality to persist in our world.



Anna Vaccaro: In the fall, I will be starting the Masters Program in Human Development and Family Studies at URI, as well as working toward the graduate certificate in Gender and Women's Studies. My involvement in the GWS program has challenged me to claim my own education and inspired my confidence, which has powerfully impacted me both as a student and an individual. For this reason, I hope to eventually be a professor of Gender and Women's Studies: I want to challenge, inspire, and empower other students in the same way I have been challenged, inspired, and empowered.



Katie Branch: Being a Gender and Women's Studies major has taught me so much about life and the world we live in, and I am grateful for that. I have learned how to be a leader, voice my opinions, and understand how capable I am. I think that the most important thing I learned by being a Gender and Women's Studies major is who I am as a person, and how much I've grown in these past four years.



Courtney Findlen: Earning a BA in Gender and Women's Studies has helped me grow intellectually and truly given me the opportunity to use what I learn in the classroom in my real life. I hope to incorporate this degree in my future, by further helping victims of sexual and domestic violence take back control of their life.



Morgan Gould: Being a Gender and Women's Studies student made me truly believe that my education and opinions are powerful tools for fighting against the many injustices of the world. I will earn my Gender and Women's Studies degree in August as well as a degree in HDF. This summer I am completing an internship at Child and Family Services. I am eager to be gaining field experience and applying to graduate school.



Dennis Belanger: Being a male GWS major has brought me a greater understanding for a discipline I was not familiar with in my first years of college. I hope to use the information I learned in my real life experiences and my future career. I will be taking one graduate level course next year at URI before deciding on a particular program to prepare me for a career in higher education administration.



Mindy Walls: Thanks to the Gender and Women's Studies Program, my perspective of the world has changed; my scope has become larger; my consciousness more fine-tuned. I am planning to one day go into private practice as a therapist and to always keep an eye on the ground with social justice issues so that I may give, challenge, grow and heal.



Laudine Koster: The Gender and Women's Studies Program has made me realize the importance of equal rights, and how being a feminist impacts my daily life in a positive way. I am not sure what my future holds, but I know that I want to work for a nonprofit organization for a year and then go to grad school.



Kristine Ramirez: The way I perceive the world has changed since becoming a Gender and Women's Studies major. I now strive to break through the various brick walls or "glass ceilings" in every area of my life. There are many forms of oppression that any of us can encounter; now, I choose to challenge those forms rather than be oppressed by them. I hope to continue with my Nursing degree and eventually work in hospitals specializing in women's health.



Rachel Hockhausen: Being a member of the GWS Program has helped me shape my writing to be more detailed and specific. It has also taught me to think both more critically and abstractly in regard to women's issues and feminist theory, two subjects I did not realize my interest in before becoming a member of this major.



Zuly Toribio: I have been accepted to Boston University's Graduate School of Social Work Program, where I will begin in September. Since graduation in December, I have served as a City Year Corps member in Boston. Whether it's giving me a simple piece of advice or guiding me through my entire career at URI, I want to thank the GWS Program for all it has done to get me to this point in my life.



Ashle Ashby: After graduation, I plan on continuing my work at Sojourner House as a Domestic Violence Prevention Advocate. The Gender and Women's Studies Program has impacted me by giving me a different outlook on issues that affect women worldwide.



Alexa Rama: GWS has changed me as a person and a thinker. I feel like now I have a more feminist outlook on life and I am not afraid to stand up for what I believe in. This summer I will begin graduate school at Caldwell College for my teacher certification and my Masters in reading literacy.



Monika Johnson: Being a GWS major has helped shape my view and perspective. Since graduating in December, I have been an active member of the Sociologists for Women in Society. This fall, I plan to attend graduate school at Brandeis University to further explore Women's Studies and obtain my MA.





WMS 325 REFLECTS ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On, March 8, 2012, marking the 101st anniversary of International Women's Day, we took time to reflect on things that need to change. Following a brief workshop during our International Women's Issues class, we brainstormed and reflected on personal life, college-campus life and life of women across cultures.

Reflections on our personal lives:

Elizabeth Vinci: It is assumed that because women have the right to vote, to pursue education, to own property, that gender inequality does not exist and there is no need for feminism. We strongly disagree. As young women of modern times, we see the essential need for feminism everyday, in our homes, in our schools, and in our workplaces.

Reflections on our lives in and around URI:

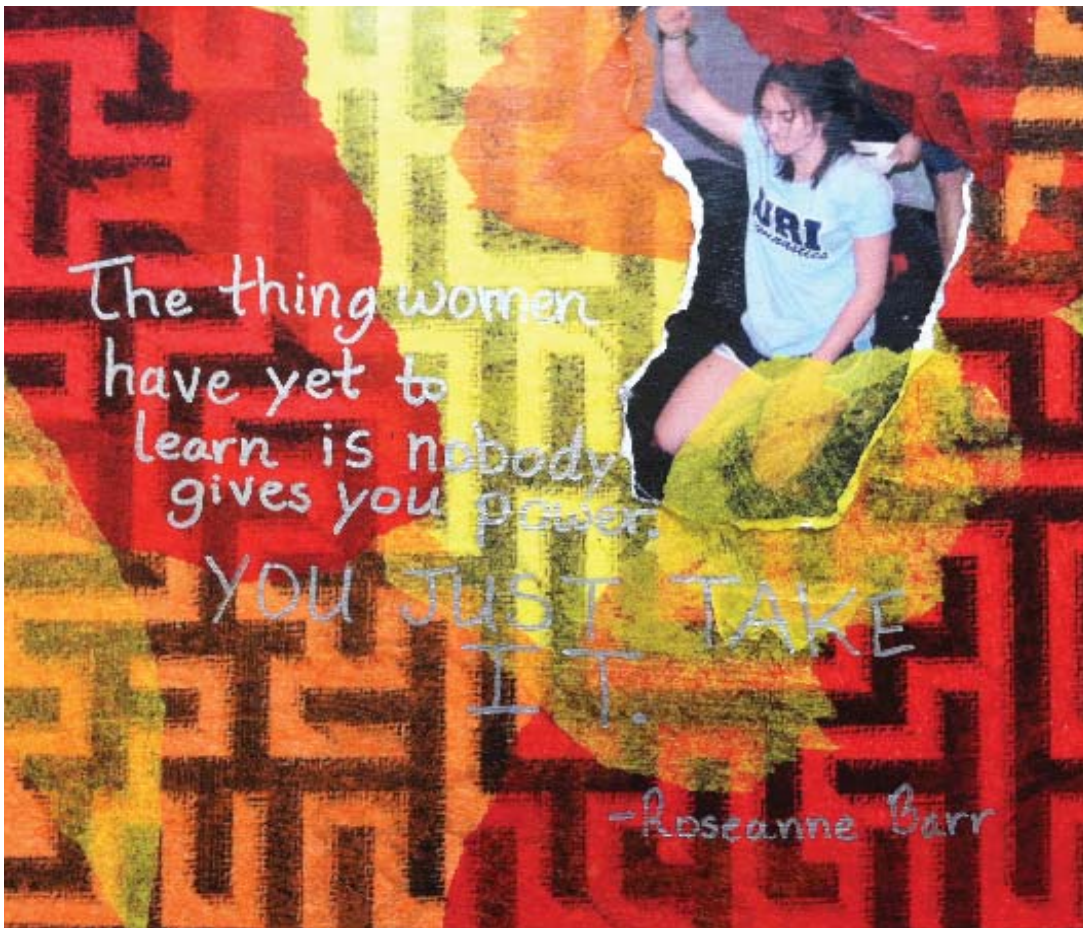
Other students: The problem: Gender Stereotypes from early life (early education, socialization by society). A more balanced rounded education will result if both males and females are exposed to similar issues. Indeed, male students who have taken the WMS 150 have testified to dramatic alteration of their views of life, and they are now shun acts of discrimination, intimidation and sexism which they had been brought up to consider "normal".

The biggest concern faculty faces at URI is the unequal pay. Male and female teachers with the same qualifications receive a considerable difference in wage. It is not fair that females are getting paid less when they start working because of different bargaining strength. This may not be clear on the surface, but considering other factors such as rate of progression, types of initial contracts, access to tenure and so on, there is marked gender wage-gap here in URI like in many Institutions in United States, in spite of

Reflections on Cross-Cultural Condition of Women:

Other students: We emphasize our reproductive rights - to choose whether or not we want to give birth; we demand the right to access birth control without shame, guilt, or questioning. All women who procreate for humanity deserve access to quality care during and after pregnancy.

On behalf of the many "missing women and girls" in developing countries, we demand that structures that privilege men and promote son preference should be dismantled and criminalized. Sex-selective abortion, infanticides and high female infant mortality must be stopped. It is our right to survival.



"THE THING
WOMEN HAVE YET
TO LEARN IS THAT
NOBODY GIVES
YOU POWER, YOU
JUST TAKE IT."
~ROSANNE BARR.

Victoria Lombardi, artist, gave this statement on the pictured collage produced for her GWS 301 course: "This piece is about the passion, drive, and persistence that women must embody in order to excel in the professional field. The quote has stuck with me and been a source of inspiration throughout my college experience."

EDITORS NOTE



We are excited to present the first edition of the Gender and Women's Studies Newsletter. We are very pleased with our program's name change and feel it better reflects the learning we do in the classroom and in life.

We would like to thank Jenn Brandt and Jody Lisberger for all of their guidance and support during the editing and publishing process, and for being incredible professors and mentors to us throughout our academic careers. This semester has been filled with highs and lows.

As a program, we were saddened by the death of our classmate Erica Knowles. As members of Feminist Thought into Action, we both had the opportunity to participate in hosting the Erica Knowles Open Mic Memorial Poetry Night this April. Another high point of the semester for GWS was Dr. Jenn Brandt's recognition for her work and leadership when she received a URI Diversity Award. We are so proud of her for completing her Ph.D. in English this semester and wish her the best of luck.

We hope this edition of the newsletter showcases the exciting accomplishments, events, and opportunities afforded by the GWS Program. In closing, we would like to congratulate the GWS graduates of 2012, who "survived" Jody's capstone class and can now look forward to a bright future with the tools and education you "claimed" (thank you, Adrienne Rich) from the GWS Program.

~ Devlin Healey and Maddy Morrin



Jenn Brandt Con't. from p. 3

And, yet, into this world you must go. This, then, is where your education, and your courage, will come in handy. What you have learned these past four or more years should not be the answer to what you should do or who you should be, but the question of how you might live and who you may become. Your courage is your hope that change is possible, the remembrance that much has been accomplished, and your conviction that equality is a right for all, and not just a privilege for the few.

Gender and Women's Studies encouraged you to claim your education by stressing that you take an active part in your learning experience through the intersections of scholarship, activism, and teaching. As you move on to the next stages in your life, it is imperative that you continue to recognize the relationship between knowledge and power and continue to ask questions and seek information that will allow you to make the most informed choices for your own lives.

So, as you embark on your journeys, I offer you the following advice:

Ask for directions, but always be your own GPS. The quickest route isn't necessarily the best, and only you can decide which path your future should take.

Spend less time on Facebook and more time with a your face in a book. You may be done with school, but your actual learning has only just begun.

With that in mind, don't forget the power of actual face-to-face interaction. Seek out mentors and become a mentor to someone else. These relationships will be some of the most transformative and important ones in your life. Feminism is about cooperation, not competition, which is why Adrienne Rich cautioned that "The connections between and among women are [some of] the most feared, the most problematic, and the most potentially transforming force on the planet."

Your future is up to you. Only time will reveal the challenges you will face and the surprises that may be in store. However, if you keep your minds sharp, your hearts soft, and your voices loud, the strength that you each possess today will become the courage of a greater tomorrow.

Jody Lisberger Con't. from p. 1

These skills will be crucial as we move to create a solid foundation for students going into careers in global development, law, business, medicine, health, politics, and policy.

Our assessments have also encouraged us to do two recent surveys—one of all GWS majors and one of graduating GWS students. The general survey shows that GWS students are most satisfied with the knowledge they have acquired about the world and themselves. They praise the diversity in our students, the discussion orientation of our classes, their sense of growth in self-expression and confidence, and their sense of career potential.

The general survey also found students concerned about the "stigma" of being a "women's studies major," the wish to have more men in our classes, and a need to examine not only oppression but positive change and strategies. Students are keen for structure, contemporary emphasis, and consistency across the curriculum.

The graduating student survey also revealed some key information that will help us continue to shape the GWS Program for maximum impact. As the graphs included in this newsletter reveal, students report greatest learning in writing research, developing evidence-based arguments, and identifying ethical issues.

Faculty members were curious to see why students chose to major or minor in GWS. While the attractions of "interesting concepts," "first course enjoyment," and "understanding my life," are significant, the faculty also seeks to build into the major the importance of professional, graduate, and research development.

As people head off for the summer, and as our 16 graduates set forth, we have much to be proud of and excited by in the Gender and Women's Studies Program.

Brittany Pailthorpe Con't. from p. 4

As a writing consultant, I learned invaluable elements of feminist theory, activism, and history. I learned a lot about the students themselves through reading their papers and talking about classes, writing, and life. But I am sure they would be surprised to know that they also absolved me of my paranoid veil, restored my faith, and gave me an antidote to administer when I hear poison slandering the potential of my generation. Because of those young women and man, and their pioneering Professor, I honestly know that the minority is just sleeping. Slumbering quietly and unknowingly waiting until the moment something wakes them to the infinite power they already possess.