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March 2005

Note From the Director

March, 2005

Reflections...18 faculty, students, and staff attended a GSP planning meeting on February 8, 2005. We received feedback related to current programming as well as ideas for future programming and projects here on campus and in the larger community. "Hot topics" or programming suggestions included: singlehood, masculinity, work and family, consciousness raising groups, sexuality, and using common texts addressing gender issues across campus. Other suggestions included examining Messiah College's policy of tenure and promotion and providing resources for faculty and staff such as teaching/learning lunches and internal grants.

In February/March, we helped co-sponsor "Healthy Living for Every Body" week with a focus on positive, preventative health related programming. We also co-sponsored the annual Women's Retreat whose theme was "Where are you? Listening to God."

Looking forward... We have a number of exciting events happening this spring. Our foremost event is the second annual Riegsecker Lecture during Women's History Month on March 15, 2005 from 7-8pm in Palmer Cinema. Catherine Kroeger, a board member of Christians for Biblical Equality, will be speaking on biblical equality. She has also written in the area of domestic violence.

We will also be co-hosting a display and speaker on artist's books, a primarily feminine medium, during this month. See our events calendar for details.

Work, faith, and family...we are dedicating a week in April to work, faith, and family issues. Come hear presentations by Susie Stanley, Deb Berke, and Kris Hansen-Kieffer.

FYI: In 1981, the National Institute for Women of Color (NIWC) was established to build a strong national network for women of African, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Latina and Pacific Island heritages and to advance the issues of Women of Color. These efforts resulted in National Strategies Conferences for Women of Color. NIWC also published three Fact Sheets on Women of Color and as well as several NIWC Brown Papers—researched writings on issues of concern to Women of Color. See their website for more information: <http://www.womenofcolorday.com/>.

Last, but not least, this spring we will be surveying faculty and staff about their research and teaching related to gender issues. Please complete the survey and help us document the good works being done here on campus!!

Peace...
Debra Berke
Associate Professor of Family Science and Women's Studies
Director, Messiah College's Gender Studies Project

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Against All Odds to Get Even

Part 2

By: Katherine Coates

Competent until proven otherwise

The black and white categories constructed for the sexes not only distance males and females from understanding and responding to one another, but heavily affects how advancements and change can occur.

Despite the fact that women have proven to be innovative and valuable additions to the political arena, the belief that women should remain in the home is still, unfortunately, quite prominent. Considering that in the past more money has been spent on prostate cancer than breast cancer, I believe that issues plaguing females would have continued to be overlooked by the males in power. Political women have brought to the table unique issues that directly affect women such as breast cancer, domestic violence, and other female-related issues. Women such as Connie Mirella, a former congresswoman in Maryland and Nancy Johnson, the longest serving member of congress for Connecticut, have been major players in shedding light on the neglected topics.

Medical breakthroughs, educational opportunities, and safer environment, in and outside of the home, have resulted from women speaking up despite the poisonous stereotypes and harsh criticism. If women stayed in the home to be mothers and to raise children, would the problems be fairly addressed? Previous to the breakthrough of women in power, they were neglected and or avoided. Having a sensitivity toward something does not equivocate weakness and a woman of strength does not have to sacrifice her sensitivity to be strong. In fact, the sensitivity that women have to offer can be used as strength to examine and to challenge various issues within society.

A woman's sensitivity blended with a strong will can create pivotal changes to our social problems as well as to politics. Both are assets that can exist

within both males and females and are not gender discriminate.

Armed with more than a good lipstick

As I have confronted the subject of political women, I must admit that as a result of the media's portrayal of the female political figures, I know more about their hairstyles than their political platform. Hillary Clinton has been studied over the years for her hairstyles while Katherine Harris is remembered for her preference of eye makeup. Apparently suit color, shoe preference, make-up and hairdo's seem to qualify as acceptable credentials.

Is the idea of a woman being both fashionable and intellectual an oxymoron? Why is it necessary to critique a woman's choice of eyeliner as opposed to her views?

The stereotypes are intergenerational and deeply ingrained within our society. The continuous sexualization of women in television, magazines, video game, etc., continues to compound the dilemma of females being nothing other than objects of sex and beauty.

Here's to you, Mrs. President

We have reached new heights in politics where women have made great strides in steadily shattering the glass ceiling by filling the roles in a place that was once dominated by men. Women have fought hard and have stood strong against the stereotypes and abuse from those who refuse to adapt to the progressive changes.

There are a number of renowned political organizations that were formed to support the ladies of this country, including the political leaders and activists, as well as the homemakers, secretaries, and teachers. The Feminist Majority Foundation, The National Organization for Women, National Federation of Republican Women, Women Leaders Online, The White House Project, CAWP, Gendergap.com, and AAUW are current examples.

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We can look forward to seeing a woman make history by becoming the first female president of this country. I believe the time is drawing near whether every citizen is ready, prepared, or informed. Perhaps Condoleeza Rice, Hilary Clinton or another ambitious woman will embark on this breakthrough. Whoever it will be, I am confident that she will do justice for the female gender and for society.

Through gaining rights, passing laws, changing legislature, and challenging the patriarchal foundation of politics, women can be useful for more than bearing children, making beds, or to be sexually pleasing. A new 'home' for women has been established in the House of Representatives, on the Supreme Court, in courthouses, governor's offices, the white house, and in due time in the oval office.

**I would like to thank the women who through their 'obnoxious' and 'unfeminine' behavior, I am able to have the opportunity to get an education, to vote, to pursue my chosen career, and to be unapologetically outspoken.

Words from unconquerable women:

"The power I exert on the court depends on the power of my arguments, not on my gender."

-Sandra Day O'Connor

The first woman to serve on the United States Supreme Court

"The individual woman is required . . . a thousand times a day to choose either to accept her appointed role and thereby rescue her good disposition out of the wreckage of her self-respect, or else follow an independent line of behavior and rescue her self-respect out of the wreckage of her good disposition."

-Jeanette Rankin

The first female member of the United States House of Representatives

"Because man and woman are the complement of one another, we need woman's thought in national affairs to make a safe and stable government."

-Elizabeth Cady Stanton

'Mother of Woman's Suffrage' and organizer of the Women's Rights Convention

DO YOU HAVE A STRONG OPINION ABOUT A GENDER ISSUE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD? IF SO, PLEASE CONTACT THE GENDER STUDIES PROJECT!!! EMAIL US AT GENDERSTUDIES@MESSIAH.EDU. OR TO GIVE US A RING AT EXT.



*March is Women's
History Month!*

Attorney speaks out on global women's issue

Students gathered in the Barnum auditorium last night for a speech given by Layli Miller-Muro, an immigration-laws attorney and head of the Washington, DC-area based Tahiri Justice Center.

The speech, coordinated and sponsored by the University's Women's Center and the International Center, focused around the current state of women's rights throughout the world and the challenges facing women, such as mail-order brides and genital mutilation.

Miller-Muro also discussed what she saw as America's apathy and complacency while these injustices occurred around the world and even in the U.S.

"Humanity goes through different stages as it evolves, and right now I think we are in an adolescent kind of phase," Miller-Muro said. "In order to evolve into adulthood, we must first achieve perfect equality between men and women."

Layli spoke primarily from her personal experiences through her travels around the world. She spent time in Gambia, where she learned through local women the custom of genital mutilation. The custom had become so ingrained into the population that the women talked excitedly weeks before to prepare for the day of mutilation.

"Saying that the world should not take action about something like this because it is part of culture is ridiculous," she said. "Slavery was once a major part of American society, and France and Britain at different times were telling us it was very, very wrong."

The topic of conversation switched to mail-order brides coming into the U.S. from around the world. Many of them, Miller-Muro said, have gone through elaborate courtship arrangements with men in the U.S.

"When these women arrived in America, they found that these men turned out to be serial rapists or sexual predators. To make matters even worse, these women have nowhere to turn to since they aren't even legal citizens," she said.

Another problem entirely, Miller-Muro said, is that mail-order brides could gain temporary citizenship in only three months, while refugees from countries performing acts like genital mutilation could not enter the country for years, if at all.

Layli concluded the presentation with an optimistic outlook on the future of women's rights throughout the world, although movement is admittedly slow and sporadic. Casualties to women

from acid injuries in Pakistan - where a part of culture includes pouring acid on a woman who rejects the man's marriage proposal - have risen in recent years.

But, this rise is due to the fact that more women are seeking independence of thought and rejecting the forced relationships that have long been customary to their culture, Miller-Muro said.

"In order to achieve equality between men and women, two processes must occur. First, we must create laws that protect and support this equality. Secondly, and most importantly, we must transform hearts, attitudes and behaviors. We can have all the laws in the world but without attitude transformation it is worthless," she said. Miller-Muro currently works as an attorney for a private firm in the greater Washington, DC area. She previously worked for the U.S. Department of Justice and focused on immigration law.

While in law school at American University in 1996, Layli met a young female immigrant from Togo who sought refugee status in the U.S. to escape the genital mutilation occurring in her native country. She worked to defend that girl, and her work became a groundbreaking precedent-setting case in the realm of immigration law in this country.

"I think Miller-Muro's comments about America's role in these problems were very controversial but very true," senior Deirdre Brodie said after the speech. "The majority of Americans don't travel enough and don't see how the rest of the world is. We have such a huge potential to change the world we should start taking advantage of that potential."

*Written by Brian McPartland
Daily Editorial Board*

Campus celebrates Women's History Month

In commemoration of Women's History Month in March, California State University, Sacramento will host an expansive array of events and exhibits that honor the achievements of women and examine new issues surrounding feminism.

The celebration opens with the International Women's Day Celebration concert set for noon on Wednesday, March 2 in the University Union Redwood Room. The concert, which is cosponsored by UNIQUE Programs, features University favorite Sacramento Taiko Dan drummers and other women performers.

One of the most anticipated events of the month, "Women Mentoring Women," a conference that connects women community leaders from various fields with Sacramento State students, will take place on Friday, March 4. The event will feature 50 women from the greater Sacramento region who will serve as mentors for students. Mentors will represent a wide range of fields including education, business and industry, politics, social services, sciences, sports and the arts. Mentors and students will spend the day together attending the keynote address by Donnie Bloomingstock, executive director of the American Leadership Forum, and the smaller break out sessions focused on the leadership development and mentoring.

The month-long "The Phenomenal Women Exhibit" will also occur, featuring a multi-media presentation of student work showcasing the accomplishments and contributions of "phenomenal" women. The project will open on Tuesday, March 8. It will be displayed in various locations on campus throughout the month.

Madam President, a film depicting the controversial cover-up of President Woodrow Wilson's illness in 1919, will be shown on Tuesday, March. The

film tells the story of Edith, Woodrow Wilson's second wife, who assumed presidential duties for more than a year during Wilson's illness. Perhaps one of the most poignant events on campus this month, "The Juarez Project: Femicide on the US-Mexico Border," will be held on Tuesday, March 15. The discussion will feature the story of the mother of a woman murdered in Juarez, Mexico and her struggle for justice. The economic and social context in which these murders occur will also be discussed.

Focusing on the popular television show "Desperate Housewives" and current media portrayals of motherhood, a panel discussion "Desperate Housewives: Stripping Away at Motherhood," will also be a part of Women's History Month. The discussion will take place on Wednesday, March 16.

In addition, the celebration includes a faculty symposium addressing research in women's issues, a lecture about women in Islam, a forum discussing pro-choice and pro-life issues, the film *V-Day: Until the Violence Stops*, a panel discussion about the war on terrorism's impact on women's lives and a performing arts project depicting two women's journey toward self-acceptance.

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*By Katherine Coates
Deeply lost in their eyes
Blinded by deceiving eyes
Standing alone
Naïve and hypnotized
'Tis quite a shame
But not a surprise
A tragic reality
Heartless guys
Objects and property
A worthless prize
Hands of hate
And words that kill
Leading women
To their demise
Echoes throughout history
Stories told inbetween the cries
Still a struggle
Still a fight
Even with changing skies
Do we sacrifice our sensitivity?
To stand as equals
Side by side
Must we compromise our femininity
As our gentle hearts die?*

Time and tide wait for no (wo)man.

*If my bathtub wasn't
a gray glossy oyster,
with mildewed tongues and soap
crusted pearls,
it would have been crystal blue.
Like the sea,
in children's bitter
sweetly misguided
seascapes
dreamscapes.*

*I know water is white.
White like me and
sound and season, which swiftly sweep by.
My real bathtub is blue
Holy and childlike
Cleansing and sweating
Desiccating, rejuvenating
Headlines:
Woman lives in tub: Keeping Age at Bay
Says No Matter What the Facts, Water isn't Gray*

By Elizabeth Yopez

Genderlects: What color is this poem

*couched
between gem and gene
This word. Means
sex
and life both.
I am gendered
when I say,
nailing my chipped
polish,
You
can take those tulips home
when I mean
I need them to wake up.*

By Elizabeth Yopez

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Events Calendar

Feb. 28-Mar. 4: Eating Disorder Awareness Week

Mar. 1: 12:15pm Lunch with Kris-Hansen-Kieffer in Frey 241

Mar. 15, 7-8pm: Riegsecker Lecture in Palmer Cinema. Catherine Kroeger, a board member of Christians for Biblical Equality, will be speaking on biblical equality. All are welcome. If you would like to attend a dinner with Dr. Kroeger before the lecture, please contact the GSP. Alternate Chapel credit will begin to students who attend the lecture.

Mar.: Artist's Books: A Woman's Medium. Come and see Messiah's elite collection of artist's books on display in Murray library.

Mar. 19, 4:30-5:30pm: Krystyna Wasserman, a curator at the National Women's Art Museum will speak on her work with artists'

books and women in the field. There will be a reception at 4pm prior to the talk.

Mar./Apr.: Human Rights Fair

April 20th: 7pm Bosnia Mass Rape as a Weapon of War (Location?)

Save the Date

Apr 4-9: South Complex Uplifting Women Week

Apr. 11 and 12: Alternate chapels on Holy Boldness Reflected in Work and Family. Boyer 336, 7:30-8:30pm

Apr. 21: Service Day Project at the YWCA: If you are interested in participating, please contact us at ext. 7214.

Apr. 25: Senior Women's Dinner at Grantham Church. If you are interested in helping to plan the dinner, please contact Campus Ministries, ext. 6017.

Quote of the Month:

▶ "There have been others also just as true and devoted to the cause - I wish I could name every one - but with such women consecrating their lives, failure is impossible!"
— Susan B. Anthony (b. 2/15/1820)

WHAT ABOUT WOMEN?

By Andrea Parker

So often it is easy to become so involved in our own world that it becomes difficult to see other things that are around us each and every day. The things that are a part of our everyday routines are easily taken for granted or just fall into the mediocrity of existence. On an exceptionally beautiful day, when the sun shines on my face, I will stop and close my eyes and thank God for His goodness. There are some things like that which make us take a moment and stop and realize what we have. It is different for each and every person though. There is a myriad of ways in which we take the time to "stop and smell the roses." This really seems to be the deeper meaning of why we celebrate events. Why do we celebrate birthdays? Anniversaries? Valentines Day? We do it as a way of taking a moment out of our lives and being grateful for a friend or loved one.

March marks the celebration of Women's History Month, a time to "stop and smell the roses" - to reflect on women, their accomplishments, their identity as women, and just to celebrate them for being who they are. This March of 2005 carries the theme "Women Change America." The theme for this month honors and recognizes the role of American women in transforming culture, history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and informed citizens. The "Women Change America" theme also celebrates the various ways in which the spirit, courage, and contributions of American women have added to the vitality, richness, and diversity of American life. A previous theme was "Women Pioneering the Future," which focused on women who led and won struggles for equality and civil rights, created and advanced educational and professional opportunities, and made great contributions to the arts, sciences, and humanistic causes, and innovative women of today who further these efforts and continue to expand the frontiers of possibility for generations to come. I urge all of us to not recognize the amazing accomplishments of women in this month alone, but to celebrate women's history all year long. Simply use this month of March to highlight and heighten your appreciation and your awareness of women who make a marked difference in their world.



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It's official! Registration for the 2005 CBE Conference "One Body, Many Gifts" is now available online!

This conference will truly be an amazing experience, as believers from all over the world including China, India, Congo and England gather to discuss how God gifts ALL people to serve. Come and hear from lay leaders, missionaries, scholars and pastors as they discuss God's call for gender equality in the church. Besides four plenary sessions, conference attendees will have the opportunity to choose from over fifteen different work shops sessions through out the course of the conference.

The conference will be held on the beautiful campus of Eastern University in St. David, PA. This premier, Christian University provides attendees with a great environment to study, pray, fellowship and shared meals. The university is only 25 minutes from downtown Philadelphia, where attendees can find fine dining, historical sites, and a diverse culture.

As a special bonus for registering early, we would like to offer the first 50 registrants a free copy of the recently released TNIV as a gift. Be among the first to register, and pick up you TNIV this summer!

Thank you for your support of CBE and hope to see you in PA!

Registration is available at:

<http://www.equalitydepot.com/index.asp?PageAction=VIEWCATS&Category=124>

Check out the CBE website for more conference information:

http://www.cbeinternational.org/new/events/PA_conference/PA_conf.shtml

*We would love to hear from you! If you have ideas or submissions for **Who I Am**, please contact Andrea Parker or Heather Breining at ext. 7214 or email GenderStudies@messiah.edu.*