

Spring 1980

## Women's Studies Newsletter April 1980

Women's Studies

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# women's studies newsletter

denison  
university

April, 1980  
Volume 5, No. 4

CALENDAR FOR DENISON WOMEN'S WEEK: April 28-May 4

"No one ever told us we had to study our lives,  
make of our lives a study, as if learning natural history  
or music . . . ."

from Adrienne Rich's "Transcendental Etude"

## Monday, April 28

- The Mellon Career Exploration Trips: Students Report Back  
4:00 in Curtis West Lounge
- Women's Voices: An evening of performances by Denison women students:  
singers, writer, poets, speakers.... (Sponsored by Pan Hel)  
7:30 in Burke Experimental Theater

## Tuesday, April 29

- Lucille Clifton, Poet (Sponsored by the English Dept.'s Beck Fund;  
reception following the reading sponsored by the Black Student Union)  
7:30 in Slayter Auditorium
- Denison student Annette Modesitt in a dramatic presentation of Eudora  
Welty's "Why I Live at the P.O." (Directed by Michael Beacham)  
8:45 in Burke Recital Hall

## Wednesday, April 30

- Women in Leadership Roles--An Exchange of Experiences: a workshop for  
women students (Sponsored by DCGA)  
3:30-5:00 in Knapp 201
- Chapel Service Sermon by Religion Dept.'s Joan Novak  
7:00 Swasey

## Thursday, May 1

- Common Hour: Rita Snyder, Psychology Dept., "Helping the Blind to Read"  
11:30 in Slayter Auditorium
- Chekhov's The Seagull, directed by Elizabeth Freyberg  
8:15 in Ace Morgan Theater

## Friday, May 2

- "Redefining Female Anatomy," a slide/film presentation for women of all  
ages, presented by Ann Simon & Pat Jeanchild from Antioch  
(Sponsored by Women's Emphasis)  
6:30 at the Pi Phi House, 425 West College Street
- The Seagull, 8:15, Ace Morgan

## Saturday, May 3

- Susan Alexander, former Dance faculty member, "Moving Bodies, Moving Pictures"  
8:00, Doane Dance Studio (phone Ext. 216 for reservations)
- The Seagull, 8:15, Ace Morgan

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Marjorie Chan, Music, presented a Beethoven sonata cycle in a recital given on March 2 in Burke Recital Hall. She will be giving the same recital out of state later this year. Several students in the Department of Music have also performed during the past two months. On March 9 clarinetist Betsy McDowell gave her senior recital. On April 16 flutist Diane White was presented in a junior recital and Carolyn Stevens performed ballads in a lecture recital. On April 23 Stacie Williams, soprano, gave her senior recital. Still to come is Judy Eckstein's junior piano recital on May 11 in Burke Recital Hall at 4 p.m.

Mary Margaret Fonow, Sociology/Anthropology, will present a paper at the North Central Sociological Association convention held May 1-3 in Dayton, Ohio. Her subject is "An Analysis of Nonprofit Community Organizations and their Participation in the Implementation of School Desegregation." In August at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in New York, Mary Margaret will read a paper entitled "Feminism and Union Participation: The Case of Women Steelworkers."

John Schilb and Nan Nowik, English, will act as GLCA representatives as they participate in a panel entitled "Feminism in the Classroom" at the National Women's Studies Association convention held in Bloomington, Indiana, May 16-20.

At the same NWSA conference, Ann Fitzgerald, Acting Dean of Educational Services, will be on a GLCA panel reporting on the Ford Foundation grant given to the GLCA to assess the need for women's studies at small colleges and universities. As part of the study she will visit six colleges. Over Spring Break she travelled to Marymount Manhattan where she interviewed faculty, students, and administrators. The weekend of April 11-13 she attended the Barnard Conference on The Scholar and the Feminist; this year the focus of the conference was "Race, Sex, and Class."

Valerie Lee, English, presented the paper "The Female Voice in Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean Poetry" for the panel "Archetypes, Myths, and Images in African, Afro-American and Caribbean Literature" on March 27 at the National Council for Black Studies Conference held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

This April issue of the Newsletter marks the last regular issue of the school year. In May the members of the Denison journalism class will produce a special edition of the Newsletter devoted to women and work. Monies from the Mellon Grant and from Sara Fritz, one of last year's Mellon Visiting Professionals and Associate Editor at U.S. News and World Report, will help to finance this larger special issue.

A one-hour videotape produced by Andrew Calabrese highlighting events of last Fall's GLCA Women's Studies Conference will be premiered during Women's Week. Showings will be at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, and 3:30 p.m. on Thursday in Fellows, Room 201.

## WOMEN AND THE HOMESTEAD

by Katie Grossman

For the past three years, the Homestead has provided students with a delightful alternative to campus housing. Disillusioned by the vandalism and the restrictive social atmosphere on the hill, women homesteaders have found the rugged life a creative and challenging experience. The five women currently living there express great satisfaction with their living choice, one which enables them to acquire new knowledge in such areas as agriculture, construction, solar energy, and other environmentally-related topics.

In addition, junior Sara Storch stresses the importance of working and living with a group of people, cooperating to achieve common goals. All five women--Barb Cohen, Corney Carey, Sara Storch, Sara Ernest, and Sara Johnson--feel that their living-working experience has helped them to gain valuable insights in relating with others as well as helping to foster their own personal growth. Says Barb Cohen, "It's so nice to have a place to come back to after a long day on campus. Dinner is the best time of the day because everyone gets together and exchanges thoughts and the food is excellent!" Saturdays are work days at the Homestead: chores are parcelled out at a meeting; then the students get to work chopping wood, gardening, cooking on a wooden stove, milking Sasha the goat, or helping to build the solar greenhouse.

Male-female relations are very good because everyone shares responsibilities and men and women contribute equally to the decisions made and to the duties demanded of them. For example, two people cook together once a week and everyone chops wood. "If any of the men appear to be authoritative at times, it is only because they have been living here longer--it's just a matter of seniority," comments senior Corney Carey.

Living at the Homestead involves a strong commitment. While the short twenty-minute walk to campus presents no problem, living at the Homestead limits one's interaction on campus. "It is pretty difficult to be very involved in activities on campus while living out here--you just don't have the time," admits Corney. However, their spare time is well spent learning to master a variety of skills. "When I came out here I knew nothing about chopping wood and I'd never cooked on a wooden stove. Moreover, I'm learning to do things that have enabled me to become much more self-sufficient," remarks Sara Johnson. All the women agree that their living experience has helped them to gain new independence and has given them the courage to try other new things.

Although they lead a different lifestyle, these women are no different from other women on campus except that they are perhaps more attuned to environmental problems and concerns. They are not agricultural specialists or gourmet cooks or carpenters, but they are always learning. Anyone is willing to help or teach you something if you express an interest to learn. Those who have been there the longest act as instructors for the newcomers.

(continued on page 5)

## DISA WOMEN AT DENISON

by M. J. Hampel

There are ten women students at Denison who are unique in a special way: They are from foreign countries. They descend upon Granville from as near as Québec and from as far away as Malaysia. Some go home for vacations; others stay in the United States for four years. What is it like to be an international woman student at Denison?

Michiko Takeda came to Denison specifically to study dance. She is an exchange student from Fukuoka, Japan, and the University she attends in Tokyo does not have a dance department. This is Michiko's third year of schooling at the college level, but the credits she is receiving at Denison this year will not transfer to her University.

"It has changed somewhat, but traditionally in Japan, being a woman means being restrained and quieter. We are not supposed to be arrogant towards men." Michiko went on, "I was kind of a radical woman when I was in Tokyo, but here I am not really radical at all." She explained that although Japanese people are often considered "Americanized," she has realized since she came here that value systems are culturally based. "Compared to the American woman, the Japanese woman does things according to the wishes of other people, especially males. The American woman has her own vision of her future and is more goal-oriented." Michiko even mentioned that the emphasis on women that she discovered at Denison (for example, the women's studies curriculum) was very impressive.

Ivette Camargo is a first-semester junior with a double-major in French and Literature. She has been the International Student Advisor for this school year and feels that she has the ability to evaluate problems which are of a cultural origin. Ivette went home to the Republic of Panama over January. She wasn't aware of the extent to which she had absorbed the American culture until then. "Being here in the U.S. has made me more aware of the difference between men and women. Latin American men still have that macho ideology of how to treat women." Ivette also pointed out how a person's social class has a direct impact on the relations between the sexes. She said, "The problem with women in Latin America is that they have no role in the political structure." She went on to say that most Panamanian women work outside the home. "Before I came here, I worked in a bank, the Bank of America."

A first-year student from Istanbul, Turkey, Dilek Diltemiz is Co-President of the Denison International Student Association. A mature and articulate woman, she attributes these qualities to the fact that she is an international student. "On the whole, it seems that international students are more mature, maybe because we are from another culture and we are exposed to many things." One of the things she wasn't prepared for, however, was the level of alcohol abuse she found last September when she came to Denison.

Dilek has an interesting perception concerning the attitude of male students at Denison toward her as a woman from another country. "Overall, they are polite and friendly," she said, "But they have this notion that overseas women are kind of wild. I don't know why, but they seem to have this notion that we are loose and exotic. It's strange. I never thought it would be like this."

All three of these women felt that opportunities for women are more accessible here than in their home countries. They all stressed the value of studying abroad, not only because of the quality education they are receiving, but because of the positive influence their studies will have when they pursue their own career interests after returning home. When asked about going home again, Dilek summed it up well: "When I go home this summer, I will have been gone for nine months. I know I have changed, and it is a positive change. When I go back, they will no longer see a little girl...they will see a woman now."

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#### WOMEN AND THE HOMESTEAD

(continued from page 3)

In ending, the women mentioned the sacrifice of vanity. While they sometimes feel self-conscious because their mode of dress contrasts sharply with the unwritten campus fashion code, they readily admit that a bit of dirt and a few dirty looks are trivial concerns when compared to the advantages of living at the Homestead. In essence, foregoing some vanities is well worth the far-reaching, longer-lasting satisfaction gained by this type of living experience. These women encourage anyone interested to come out to the Homestead for a visit or for a meal. They always welcome visitors and after you have tasted some of those delectable sweet breads and fresh vegetables, you'll never eat Saga food again!

\* \* \* \* \*

#### ROSEMARY MAZON TO BE MELLON VISITING PROFESSIONAL

Rosemary Mazon, Vice-President of Corporate Affairs for Pullman, Incorporated, of Chicago, will serve as the final Mellon Visiting Professional of the year. On Thursday, May 15, at 7:30 p.m., she will address the topic, "The World of International Finance." The lecture will be held in Herrick Hall.

Ms. Mazon has blended accounting, public affairs/relations, international banking, and corporate affairs into a successful career. Students interested in talking with her informally during her time on campus should contact Mary Schilling in the Mellon Office, Ext. 366, mornings only.

## THE BEAR

by Ruth Danon

### I.

When I fell in love  
With the bear I did not think  
Of winter. Here where snow  
Falls daily, I took all risks,  
Forgot my sense. So much  
I loved his large feet.  
Nocturnal life was fine,  
Love swimming between us,  
Glistening in the current  
Foolish as a trout.  
I learned to be silent.  
Learned to carry my weight.  
Ate berries, sweet things,  
Drank water, clear and cool,  
Straight from the heart  
Of the mountain. And always  
There was honey to lick and lick.  
By day, rest, more swoon  
Than sleep. I curled away from  
Heat and light. And I did not hear  
The katydids, nor think of winter,  
The seasons of bears, their six month sleep.

### II.

Then winter. And his sleep  
Stunning me, sudden and cold  
As anger. I was in danger.  
I could no longer see colors.  
I did not know what to do.  
At first I tried to sleep,  
Tried to curve my back  
Into stone. The bear gave  
No warmth, his great hulk  
Cooling, scarcely breathing.  
I could not touch him. He  
Would not move. I was afraid.  
There was no warning.  
He was like a dead thing.  
I thought "love has seasons,"  
And began to count days,  
Waiting for the first sign of  
Color, the wan pink light  
Of spring. But I have always  
Hated to wait for anything.

III.

I began to count stars,  
Points of light. I learned  
To navigate outside the cave  
On all fours. I dreamed  
Artificial light, heat lamps,  
Rubbed two sticks together,  
From smoke made fire.  
I stayed warm. The bear slept on.  
I prodded him with clean sticks.  
But no fire could rouse him.  
I learned the terrain,  
Feeling land under snow,  
Found my way to water.  
I made holes in the ice,  
Sat on my haunches,  
Caught silver trout,  
Ate them raw.

IV.

Today I gather  
Sticks for fire.  
I place some  
In a jar.  
They sit  
In the cave.  
Shadows  
Flicker and grow.  
Branches bend  
To the light.  
They break  
And bloom  
Yellow as sun.

V.

The sleeping bear  
Does not wake  
He does not snore  
He is not obnoxious  
In any way.  
He is merely large  
Unassuming  
And asleep.



## WHAT IS FEMINISM?

Recently we asked members of the Denison community (students, faculty, and staff) to respond to the question "What is feminism?" In presenting a selection of these largely unedited definitions, we demonstrate the variety of responses our community has provided to this provocative question. As you will see, feminism is variously called a movement, an ideal, an awareness, a principle, a value system, a belief, a study, a communist plot, and a gut feeling.

### Feminism is:

A woman's awareness of her own mind and body, an awareness defined by women and not by men.

The feeling that women are not inferior to men and that they should have equal rights with men. I don't think they should be considered superior to men--just equal.

Advocating equal rights for women until they reach complete equality with men; loving women, working for women, and furthering the cause of womanhood. (I classify myself as a moderate feminist because I'm not into taking action myself. I think an active feminist is willing to take action.)

Bringing women to the level of equality so that they may be free to choose their lifestyles. Also it is standing up for these ideas.

An ideal possessed by some women which sets forth their beliefs about discrimination against women, women's inherent rights, and what should be done to secure these rights. Can be in a militant form or in various less severe forms.

It is not a radical movement backed by pushy women or baby killers. Feminism is a movement designed to provide a framework for a new consciousness among both women and men in today's society. This new consciousness consists of ridding society of the stereotypes that have plagued women for centuries, providing equal opportunities in all occupations with equal pay, and assuring women that they have the freedom to choose over their bodies with respect to birth control and abortion. This new consciousness has taken substance as well. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights act prohibited discrimination based on sex, race, and creed. The ERA, three states away from ratification, is a major step towards assuring women equal rights under the law and equal opportunity. Many women have entered fields like construction, lumbering and coal-mining, areas which had been traditionally male-dominated. The U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 decided in favor of the right of women to choose abortion.... To conclude, feminism is not some abstract, radical movement but a new consciousness to be grasped by today's society.

An awareness of who you are as a woman or where you are in society and perhaps a vision of who you could be. Feminism tends to imply striving for higher goals and achievement--in other words, not complacency or acceptance of the status quo. Feminism also implies frustration with the change of pace.

Feminism is:

A communist plot aimed at turning the young women of this country into irritable amazons directed by their female cadres in Moscow who have had a bad mixture of hormones while trying to compete against the USA in the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal.

The effort by women to assert their individuality and the importance of their worth and value in our society.

A principle stating that women should be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities in areas where they have traditionally been barred due to the artificial barrier of sex.

A value system through which I evaluate my experiences. It serves as a framework as I make choices and consider alternatives, particularly in professional situations.

A way of looking at the world; a perspective grounded both in theory and "in the gut." A meta perspective, overriding all other considerations. Viewing items of interest to women affirmatively; striving to compensate for past injustices and inequities through strong affirmative action. A presence, a way of life, an anger that stays with you 24 hours a day and compels you to action.

The study of limits and constraints which are placed on women because of their gender. It may also involve politicizing of the outcomes of this study.

A belief in the importance of women. The term has a special meaning right now, because it implies women's struggle for equal rights with men in the legal and economic sectors which confer status in our present world. As a visionary term, however, it implies a feminizing of the future, the creation of a gentler society than the one we have now, a celebration of creativity above the status conferred by competition and law. It prophesies a world of the androgynous spirit.

A concern or preoccupation with social, educational, and political issues which primarily affect women.

Feminists are people (men or women) looking or striving for equal rights in all aspects of life-business, homelife, social life. Trying to change the attitudes of both men and women, not to each other's way of thought, but to thoughts and understandings of equality.

The ability as a woman to have confidence in what and who she is and to move in any direction she chooses, overcoming inequality and other obstacles in her way.

Feminism disputes the law of the Father, exalts the Power of the Mother, and elevates us all into Brother-and-Sisterhood. It is not only a demand for social justice, but also an anatomy of the collective mind which forbade it in the first place.

## THE ROLE OF MOTHERS IN LIVES OF COLLEGE WOMEN

by Ellen Brumback

The first word usually spoken by a baby is "ma" or some other derivative of the noun "mother," a fact which somehow metaphorically suggests the dependence on the mother figure. During childhood maternal love and discipline guide and form the offspring. Daughters often plan their values and goals around those of the mother. But during the time of puberty, girls begin to question these values and usually reject them. The mother then becomes a restricting figure, and as the high school years pass, the daughter turns against the mother's discipline in favor of independence.

But once the first independence is finally attained, many changes take place. For me, college was the first big step into my own life. For the first time I had no parental limits such as curfew and general household responsibility. Subsequently, I took full advantage of my freedom. Like many women I know, my freshman year of college was a painful experience in which I would have totally lost myself if it weren't for the support of my parents, especially my mother.

Suddenly, the nag who was constantly telling me to clean my room, empty the dishwasher, or set the table became my friend. As a friend of mine once said, "I had never imagined that I would enjoy talking to my mother on the phone. I figured that once I got to school, she would just be a nuisance, barging in on my life. But the conversations we have had and her advice are irreplaceable in my life. I don't know how I would have gotten through some situations without her."

Obviously a mother, as well as anyone else, looks better when she isn't around on a day-to-day basis. And when the daughter is in a "foreign" situation such as college is, the old equilibrium is upset. In my case, I had many new friends, but no one to confide in. I wasn't yet sure whom I could trust and who would understand me. And being over a thousand miles from home didn't help matters. In the beginning when I was still caught up in the novelty of my freedom, I took pleasure in shocking my mother (though I'm now sure she was never shocked--after all she was a college student once too.) I'd tell her about how wild everything was: the parties, the people, the lifestyles. Instead I was shocked to discover how much SHE knew. It's funny for any daughter to discover that her mother isn't naive. One girl's mother picked her up for Thanksgiving vacation and on the ride home, the daughter was explaining about a guy she had just met. "Of course, I left out many details so it floored me when my mother's first response was, 'Did you sleep with him?' I tell you, I almost drove off the road!"

Another maybe ironic observation I have made is that once a girl goes away to college, she is finally accepted as a true family member. When I asked a freshman woman how her relationship with her mother had changed, she noted: "It's as if she can finally tell me all of the old family secrets. For instance, I never knew that she had had miscarriages. Now I don't feel so intimidated about talking to her. I think I could confide the worst of my sins and she would match me with some of her own experiences."

It's also interesting to see how many mothers support their daughters' career plans. (Sociological studies have demonstrated that the daughters of working women are most apt to assume careers themselves.) It's not as frequently that mothers want their daughters to get married. In fact, I'm sure my mother would be quite disappointed if I graduated from college and got married. Though she only worked for a couple of years, my mother feels that every young woman today should have some type of career. And she is not alone in her viewpoint. One girl I talked to said, "My mother is all for me going to grad school. She feels that since she didn't have the wide opportunity that I do today, I should take advantage of it. It's funny, but it used to be that only fathers felt that way about their sons."

In fact, the mother/daughter relationship has undergone much change over the years. In a long-ago age, mothers passed down recipes and husband-catching tips, maybe even instructions on how to properly starch a man's collar. Today, however, though not every woman wants her daughter to be an executive, the emphasis is not focused on finding her a husband.

But there are still the women with college-aged daughters who try to run their lives. It's always sad during sorority rush to see several girls pulled between their own choice and their mother's. I had a friend last year whose mother had been in a certain sorority at Denison. The mother assumed that since she liked it so much her daughter would too. Her mother gave her such a hard time that she joined and was miserable with it for a whole year until she deplored. Obviously, this girl was just not the type for that kind of life.

There is also the case of the clingy mother. Her daughter is usually the first or the last to leave home and the woman realizes that her grip is loosening and she is aging. The girl doesn't get a chance to live her own life at school, because her mother is constantly reminding her that she is lonely at home without her. I know of one freshman whose mother calls several times a week although she never has much to say. And she constantly nags her daughter to come for the week-end because she misses her "baby."

Still I feel that a majority of mothers have positive influences on their daughters. Once a girl is old enough to go away to college, the mother can respect her independence and relate to her more easily. Yet the two women are not and will never be on the same level. Mom is still the one who usually has the best advice and general guidelines for life. She'll always be there when you've got problems and, most important of all, she's always there to tell you that you're wonderful.

The support obtained from a mother is necessary in a woman's college years. During these four years, more problems arise than almost all of the other years put together. And for everything from the incompatible roommate to the impossible physics exam, Mom has just the right words to say. The only thing I haven't been able to figure out is if my mother's always so sure that I'll make the right decision, how come I'm not?

## IN SEARCH OF A CAREER: THE MELLON GRANT TRIP

by Ann Pollock

Why am I at a liberal arts college? I supposed when I first came to Denison that a liberal arts background would give me exposure to many fields and create a special interest in a particular area out of which I could make a career. Well, it's my junior year and instead of creating a special interest, my liberal arts background has given me several potential areas of study. In fact, I realize more and more what opportunities exist for my eventual career, especially as a woman.

Of course, I understand that academia is certainly not all that is involved or represented in a career. Therefore, I found myself needing a "hook up" to the outside world, a way in which I could relate what I was studying to the work world. Various January terms and summer jobs have provided me with excellent opportunities to test out my knowledge and abilities in a job. But these opportunities, especially in a highly professionalized field, have been hard to come by. Moreover, when I have found opportunities, they have only given me experience in a few areas and have never matched the breadth of my learning experiences. Seldom have I been able to be in contact with women professionals.

Luckily, I had the opportunity to participate in the Mellon Grant Career Exploration Trip in Washington, D.C. over spring break. The trip was designed to provide women and men with first-hand information about a wide variety of professional careers. In a five-day program, the groups had the opportunity to interview women about both their professional and personal lives.

For example, my first interview was with Dr. Susan Streufort who is a social psychologist at the National Institute of Health. She works in the field of behavioral science and reviews all the grant applications that come to the Institute in that field. Her present position she sees as a form of post-doctoral work because she learns a great deal but desires to get back into academic research so that she might do some work that "produces a finished product." Dr. Streufort stressed the fact that she had made few career decisions to guide her directions; rather she felt she luckily "fell" into her work. She discussed her personal life, especially living away from her husband at present because his job is out of state; the difficulties of having a two-career commuter marriage are many.

Our group had another interesting interview at the Federal Reserve in Washington with Dr. Barbara Lowry. Before the interview, Dr. Lowry took us to see the Board of Governors convene. She has a Ph.D. in Economics which she pointed out is a must for almost everyone at the Federal Reserve. Dr. Lowry first held a teaching position but now feels she would not return to teaching because she is content in her work and with the money she makes. She was full of advice for us--important undergraduate courses she felt were statistics, calculus, economics, and English. Dr. Lowry also introduced

us to two other staff members who were honest about both personal and professional aspects of their lives. Dr. Lowry was recently promoted as a director, one of only twelve women who have reached that level in the Federal Reserve. All of the women generally agreed that the organization had a long way to go in working with women as professionals.

One Denison graduate we spoke with was Mrs. Andrea Price Stevens who works with the Smithsonian in the traveling exhibitions department. Mrs. Stevens came to the Smithsonian straight from Denison in 1970 and worked in putting ideas for exhibitions and the shows themselves together. When Bicentennial monies were appropriated to the Smithsonian, it was discovered that Mrs. Stevens was the only history major in the department so she had a major role in putting the exhibits on the road. She has recently branched out in her work and now deals in business by marketing the old exhibitions and in publications by putting together catalogs and newsletters about the works. She hopes that this museum marketing business will boom and that catalog sales will grow in the next few years. Mrs. Stevens has a husband and children. She discussed the problems they have encountered, particularly in finding adequate day care.

These three examples are just a small sample of the women I interviewed; indeed, many more professionals were interviewed by our group and another group that traveled to New York City. Six individuals participated in the program in New York accompanied by Dr. Robin Bartlett: Lizanne Brickman, Pam Warbasse, Rachelle Lovelady, Joan Sawyer, Juliann Cecchi, and Leslie Phillips. Six others went to Washington, D.C. for the trip with Ms. Pat Somers: Lise Kirk, Lai-Yin Chow, Darrel DeBerry, Tammy Reichenbach, Susan Altemus, and myself.

For me, the trip provided the type of practical exposure to many fields that I had wanted and needed. Another advantage of the program was that several of the women we interviewed began at Denison or comparable liberal arts backgrounds and could easily relate to our academic experiences. Finally, I had the opportunity to make several contacts to help me in my eventual career.

On April 28 at 4:00 p.m. in Curtis West Lounge all of the trip participants from both the New York and Washington groups will meet. We would like to share our experiences with you and possibly generate more discussion about different career paths and the personal and professional obstacles that could be encountered in them. The program will be sponsored in conjunction with Women's Week (April 28 through May 2) and we urge all of the Denison Community to attend.

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The Denison Women's Studies Newsletter--

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Women's Coordinator: | Nancy Nowik    |
| Assistant Editors:   | Ellen Brumback |
|                      | Cathy Desmond  |

## ACADEMIC FOREMOTHERS

by Ellen Brumback

Second in a series of essays on women who pioneered in their respective fields.

For many years, whenever Americans read great Russian fiction in translation, they were probably reading the work of Constance Black Garnett, one of the most famous English translators of Britain's Georgian era. How she learned Russian and became an expert translator is useful for us because it demonstrated how many women who later gained fame in a given field entered that field from the back door, often through their husbands or families, often because they needed mental stimulus or wanted to be useful or simply had time on their hands at the right time in history. Constance Garnett's story fits those categories in several ways.

Born in 1861 into a family of eight children, Constance Black was a cripple until the age of six. Her father was a coroner and wrote novels in his spare time. She had an extremely good education for a woman of her time, going to college in Cambridge, England and becoming a librarian upon graduation.

Then in 1889 Constance Black married Edward Garnett, a man renowned for his work as playwright, editor, and critic. Edward had many friends who were Russian exiles, and through talking with them, Constance became interested in Russian literature. To keep busy while expecting David, her only child, she taught herself the Russian language. That winter of 1892 she went to Russia, travelling most of the way by post sledge. She took with her money for famine relief and papers to be delivered for Socialist friends.

In early 1893, Garnett began to translate Russian literature into English. Throughout her life, she translated over seventy volumes which included all of the more important works of Russian prose literature--all of Turgenev, Dostoievski, and Gogol, and most of Chekhov. She loved Tolstoy and translated Herzen's memoirs as well as a novel by Goncharov, a play by Ostrovsky, and a story by Gorky.

Constance Garnett felt a deep affection for the people of Russia and her emotion came out in her work. Her writing style was noted for being simple, clean, and direct. She also worked quite rapidly with intense concentration. This British woman revealed a totally new world to a large number of readers and thereby exerted a deep influence on English literature and thought in the first half of the twentieth century.

Constance Garnett was an important foremother not only because she was one of the first important women translators to gain an international reputation, but because she helped bridge the gap between Socialist and Conservative thought. During her younger years she was a Rationalist, but as she aged she became a strong conservative. And as she aged her eyesight grew very poor, so that eventually she had to dictate her translations after hearing the Russian read aloud. She died in 1946, and we remember her now because she is another of those foremothers whose achievements, no matter how accidentally they seemed to take place, had important ramifications for those of us who came later.

In each issue, the Denison University Women's Studies Newsletter interviews a woman faculty member, student, administrator, or supportive staff member. This month's interview is with Beverly Purrington.

by  
Cathy Desmond

Bev Purrington, assistant professor of Sociology, will be taking over the position of women's coordinator next year. Bev came to Denison last year and is currently teaching two sections of Introduction to Sociology and a course on sexual inequality. Next semester she will be teaching two classes, "Family" and an honors section of Introduction, while handling the responsibilities of women's coordinator and editor of the Women's Studies Newsletter.

Bev is originally from the east coast. She attended Tufts University, as a French major, for three and a half years. She then moved to North Dakota with her husband who was attending graduate school there. Nine years after she began her college career, Bev became interested in Sociology as a discipline. As a student wife and mother of two small children, (Teal now 15 and Colin now 13) in an environment she describes as "grim and dismal," she felt a need to alleviate some of the problems of her married housing living situation. Bev administered surveys around her neighborhood to find out the problems that other people were having. She discussed the results with the president of the University, who was impressed with Bev's findings and ultimately awarded funds to the married students. With the funds, Bev involved herself in setting up a day care center, counseling for married students, and a resource center. This experience made Bev realize the importance of Sociology.

After spending two years in North Dakota and a year in Hawaii, where Bev taught French, she left for Michigan State University in Lansing, where she began her graduate studies. Soon after the move Bev was divorced. But she continued with her studies and caring for her children while working part time. During this period she did some part-time teaching and opened two alternative (free) schools. Bev sees herself as a person who "likes to do more than one thing at once." Bev remembers her years in graduate school as being hard, not only because she was a woman in a male discipline, but also because she was older than most of the other graduate students. For most of the time she was at M.S.U., she was the only graduate student who had children. Of these years Bev says, "I didn't have much in common with the other people and I didn't have the kind of time that other people had to socialize. That was hard." Bev knows of only one other person who received a degree from M.S.U. while balancing the familial responsibilities of raising children.

Currently Bev is working on her dissertation which deals with reverse socialization--how children influence parents. "I am trying to understand what there is about children that forces people into certain kinds of change during adult life that they wouldn't necessarily be forced into if they didn't have children." The idea for the research and dissertation is a result of Bev's personal experience. In addition, Bev has administered



surveys to seventy people in Michigan and will be looking at the results which will show "the different situations that children provide for parents that non-parents aren't exposed to or can avoid if they want to."

Bev remembers the 1960s as both a time that made her question and as a time of optimism. She feels that it is hard to still be working on issues now that she was working for in the '60s. As a teacher, Bev feels that students today want more direction. Bev thinks, like Eleanor Norton Holmes, that issues today are not as clear and students are indecisive because of this. "Norton is right, it was easier to be alive in the '60s because things were clear and it was easier to make a beginning. But I feel that students in the '60s had some advantages that students now don't have; the economy was booming and all the students were sure that they could get jobs, so they could afford to take chances. I suspect that students now could afford to take chances because there are other possibilities for ways to get through life, but because jobs are scarce, I feel that the conservatism that students feel about taking risks is warranted."

Bev is looking forward to her job as women's coordinator. She hopes to build a structural support for women on campus, especially for women who are feminists. "I'd like to make a more supportive community for better social relationships in general. I would like to make it possible for women and men to meet each other on grounds that are not traditional to the Denison campus." Bev would like to see the Women's Resource Center become more lively and hopes to attain this by using the Center for art shows and speakers.

Next year Bev would like to include student research in The Women's Studies Newsletter. "There are a lot of studies that students do on sexual inequality at Denison or patterns between the sexes at Denison, and I would like to see these studies printed in the Newsletter in short form." Bev would also like to publicize women's events going on in Columbus. She hopes to use the Center as a place where students can meet to go to Columbus to hear feminist speakers or singers. "My sense is that women who consider themselves feminists feel renewed when they come in contact with other feminists outside of the Denison campus. I would like to get more information out to students on courses that deal with women's issues." Bev feels that an essay on a women's course would let students know what is going on in women's studies classes. Also, Bev would like to publicize national women's conferences so that students can arrange to participate in the events.

Next year, Bev will be balancing the responsibilities of professor, women's coordinator, and mother. The combination of old jobs with the new will promise Bev a hectic new year. She says of the upcoming semesters, "It reminds me of the old days."

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