PROTEST BRINGS PROGRESS

Quote of the Month:

“We are male and female, heterosexual and homosexual, young and old; we disagree about many, many things. About one matter, however, there can be no disagreement. The integrity of our community depends upon mutual respect. Harassment of any of us is an offense against all of us.”

—Michael Sovern
President of Columbia University
Address to the Columbia Community
University Senate Meeting

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Recently the Columbia Gay and Lesbian Alliance (CGLA) protested an incident of homophobic harassment — and raised campus consciousness while winning the attention of University President Michael Sovern and the University Senate.

On October 19, a Columbia Football Coach complained about a Columbia Dining Services employee, Jame Mukherjee, whom he saw kissing a male friend goodbye. Assistant Football Coach Thomas Gilmore submitted a comment card which read, “Server’s clothes dirty and ripped. Playing with mouth and hair then handling sandwiches with hands. Then he and another male were kissing behind counter.” Coach Gilmore signed the card, leaving his phone number.

The very next day, Jame was harassed verbally by members of the football team during “Training Table.” In addition, two anonymous comment cards were submitted, reading, “Get the homo’s [sic] out of the kitchen you are encouraging AIDS die!” and “Get rid of the fags who serve during Training Table.”

See Harassment, page 3

FORD FOUNDATION GRANT ON RACE AND GENDER IN THE CURRICULUM

The Institute was invited, as a member of the National Council for Research on Women, to submit a proposal for the integration of the new scholarship on minority women into the undergraduate curriculum at Columbia. The project, if successful, would begin in the Spring of 1989 and involve curriculum development with senior and junior faculty; creating a Resource center at the Institute on minority women in the U.S.; hosting an interdisciplinary faculty seminar on the intersections of race and gender; and sponsoring an undergraduate essay competition. We await news from the Ford Foundation!
Visiting Scholars

In the summer and fall of 1988, the Institute was happy to have the following academic visitors:

Professor Pippa Norris, Politics, University of Edinburgh, working on comparative electoral politics and the "gender gap"; Dr. Hazel Rowley, Literature, Deakin University (Melbourne), writing a biography of Christina Stead; Professor Barbara Brenzel, Education, Wellesley College working on the impact of the Eugenics Movement on the policies and programs for supposedly retarded women. In the Spring of 1989, we welcome Dr. Harriet Lutkzy, Professor at the University of Paris X.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN

The National Council is an "umbrella" organization of 56 feminist research centers throughout the United States, creating an important network for academic and policy institutes and establishing a national forum for disseminating feminist scholarship. The Institute for Research on Women and Gender was represented at this year's annual conference of NCROW in UCLA in June. Among the resolutions unanimously passed were the following:

I. Resolution on Diversity

Whereas diversity is at the heart of US educational values and goals, we encourage colleges and universities and other institutions that influence research and policy to recognize the need to enrich themselves by hiring and promoting more equitably women and men of different racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds and different sexual/affectional preferences and as well as the differently-abled;

Whereas the academy has not adequately reflected diversity in hiring practices and promotion policies;

Whereas senior scholars, researchers, and women's studies programs have inadvertently or inadvertently perpetuated this lack;

Whereas we have been limited by implicit biases in our assumptions, methods, and training;

We call on and encourage scholars, teachers, and administrators to address and make central the issue and concepts of race, class, ethnicity, and gender as primary concepts in the development of research, policy, and curricula.

II. Resolution on Women and AIDS

The National Council deplores the racist and sexist assumptions underlying much of the media coverage and official response to the AIDS crisis as it affects women and children.

Since women are the fastest growing group of people with AIDS and 70% of women with AIDS are low income women of color who are least likely to have access to health care, social services, education, and power, the Council calls for prevention education, research and policy development that is culturally sensitive and incorporates feminist perspectives and addresses the following issues:

- the need for culturally sensitive and appropriate, nonexist prevention education.

- the needs of women as caretakers of people with AIDS

- the treatment of women with AIDS and women at risk by the health care system

- reproductive rights issues, particularly related to mandatory testing, sterilization abuse, and abortion rights

- civil rights and discrimination issues

- victimization of women and girls—specifically rape, child sexual sexual abuse, and other forms of sexual abuse—and the extent to which AIDS is, for women, a disease of sexual oppression and violence.

For further information on NCROW, contact the Institute at 280-3277 or Deborah Schultz at 570-5001.
Harassment (Cont’d from Page 1)

Jame brought the incident to the attention of the Columbia Gay and Lesbian Alliance (CGLA). We notified the Deans, the Athletic Department, and the University Administration that we, as members of the gay and lesbian community at Columbia, will not ever tolerate this type of behavior.

CGLA stated that letters from the University President and the Athletic Department, sensitivity training for athletes, and an official investigation of this incident will help prevent future incidents of homophobic harassment. The Athletic Department issued a letter restating the University Policy on Nondiscrimination, but up until now, none of the other demands have even been acknowledged.

In a letter to Coach Gilmore, CGLA demanded that he apologize publicly in writing. To this date, he has not apologized, and he has refused to meet with Jame and representatives of CGLA. CGLA asked him a third time to meet with us to discuss the issue—this request was not acknowledged.

In protest, CGLA staged a kiss-in during Training Table at the Dining Hall where the harassment had occurred. CGLA staffed an informational table on College Walk during the weeks following the incident. CGLA also held a Rally on November 10 to call attention to this incident as well as many other recent racist and sexist incidents and attacks on campus.

Out of this protest has come three things. First, University President Michael Sovern has formed a committee to investigate the incident. Second, at the November 11 meeting of the University Senate, President Sovern issued a statement stressing the importance of diversity in our campus community and denouncing harassment of any form. At the same meeting, the Senate passed a resolution which requires the formation of a committee to review and revise existing harassment policy to include special procedures for victims of homophobic harassment and victims of racial or religious harassment.

These bits of progress do not mean that we have won our fight against homophobic harassment. President Sovern’s address to the Columbia Community is not incident specific, as was his address following the explosive racial incident of

Women’s Studies...

Welcome!

We are delighted to welcome the new Director of Women's Studies at Barnard College, Professor Natalie Kampen, who teaches in the Department of Art History and the Women's Studies Program. Professor Kampen comes to us from the University of Rhode Island.

New Course on Race and Gender
Professor Valerie Smith (Princeton University) will teach a course on Race and Gender: Afro-American Women Writers, as part of the Columbia College Women's Studies Program, in Spring 1989. Call 280-3277 for further details.

Women and Men: Power, Politics and Poetry
This interdisciplinary feminist course will be offered again in the Spring, taught by Professors Betsy Blackmar (History, Columbia) and Celeste Schenck (English, Barnard) with Julie Abraham (English, CU). Syllabus and readings available from the Columbia Women's Studies office, 763 Schermerhorn Extension.

March, 1987. By appeasing CGLA's demand for a letter addressing the issue with this more general address, President Sovern seems to deny that this incident of homophobic harassment occurred. It is a bit dismaying that the President's Committee to investigate the incidents of November 19 and 20 seems to be more concerned with the tactics of the CGLA than with the homophobic actions. Furthermore, we are upset that the Committee has offered no assurance that the results of the investigation will be made public.

We can not win until the University Administration acts more aggressively and publicly against harassment and until new procedures for filing complaints of homophobic and racial or religious harassment are put into place. Most importantly, the University Administration must take responsibility for the proper education of the members of its community.

Margarita Suarez, CC '89
Co-Chairperson, Columbia Gay and Lesbian Alliance

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Publications Available at the Institute

Research Directory (1987) — a guide to research on women by Columbia faculty and students, (update planned).

Guide to Courses 1988-1989 — graduate courses of interest to feminists.

Women's Studies Guidebook — for undergraduates interested in Women’s Studies.


CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FACULTY
for two important recent publications:

Carolyn Heilbrun, Writing a Woman’s Life (W.W. Norton, 1988)


And look out for:

Jean Franco, Plotting Women: Gender and Authority in Mexico (Columbia University Press, 1989)

Elizabeth Blackmar, Manhattan for Rent, 1785-1850 (Cornell University Press, 1989)

There are four ways to write a woman’s life: the woman herself may tell it, in that she chooses to call an autobiography; she may tell it in what she chooses to call fiction; a biographer, woman or man, may write the woman’s life in what is called a biography; or the woman may write her own life in advance of living it, unconsciously, and without recognizing or naming the process. ...In this book, I want to examine how women’s lives have been contrived, and how they may be written to make clear, evident, out in the open, those events, decisions, and relationships that have been invisible outside of women’s fictions....

Carolyn Heilbrun, from the Introduction to Writing a Woman’s Life

DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE

The lectures sponsored this semester by the Institute illustrated the diversity and range of feminist scholarship. At every event we welcome newcomers, women and men from all over the university, and outside, as well as a regular band of “loyalists”, faculty and students who sustain the Institute with their humor and wisdom(s). The highlights included:


SEARCH

The Administration has approved the appointment of a new, full-time Director of the Institute and the Women’s Studies Program. A search has begun, chaired by Caroline Bynum, Professor of History, for a senior feminist scholar who will be tenured in the appropriate department of the Arts and Sciences. Applications should be received by December 1st.
VIOLENCE and GENDER

In the Fall Semester, the Women’s History Seminar, co-sponsored with the Barnard Center for Research on Women, was organized around the theme of Violence and Gender. Each well-attended presentation provided new insights on familiar stories and problematized, in very different historical contexts, texts and orthodoxies about women and violence. The speakers were Judith Walkowitz (Rutgers), Natalie Zemon Davis (Princeton) and Veena Oldenburg (Sarah Lawrence).

Every 60 Seconds
A Woman is Raped.

New York Women Against Rape
666 Broadway, Room 610
New York, New York
10012
Office: (212) 477-0819
Hotline: (212) 777-4000

Programs in 1989

Upcoming in the Spring — a conference on Women in the Middle East and seminars on Women and Development and Women’s History and much, much more...

We are currently planning our 1989 schedule of events and would welcome your critical input and entusiasm. We especially need feedback from students and faculty in areas and departments where feminist perspectives are marginalized or where feminist scholarship is under-represented. Come by or call us!

Selected Grants and Fellowship in Fields Relating to Women

The following is a brief listing of selected grant and fellowship information in fields of particular interest to women. Titles and brief descriptions are given. Further information regarding applications can be found on file in the Institute’s Seminar Room, 754 Schermerhorn Extension. The files are available from 10am-4pm, Monday through Friday.

JEANNE HUMPHREY BLOCK DISSERTATION AWARDS — to support research on women’s and girls’ psychological development.

LIFE PATTERNS/LIFE CHOICES DISSERTATION AWARDS — to support research on the life choices and patterns of women, regarding the issues of balancing work and family goals and commitments.

WOODROW WILSON WOMEN’S STUDIES DOCTORAL DISSERTATION GRANTS — support for doctoral students to pursue dissertation research pertaining to women on such topics as women’s role in society and contemporary America, in history, psychology and literature.

BPW CAREER ADVANCEMENT SCHOLARSHIPS — for women to pursue full- or part-time programs of study that may be academic, vocational, or paraprofessional in nature.

CLAIRIEL SCHOLARSHIPS — same as BPW but women must be 30 years of age or older.

NY LIFE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS FOR WOMEN IN THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS — for women to pursue a full- or part-time program of study that will lead to a career in the health care field.

LOAN FUND FOR WOMEN IN GRADUATE BUSINESS STUDIES — for women seeking an M.B.A. who are enrolled in full- or part-time programs of at least six semester hours or the equivalent each semester.

LOAN FUND FOR WOMEN IN ENGINEERING STUDIES — for women in their final two years of any accredited engineering program including undergraduate, graduate, refresher and conversion programs.
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS ON CAMPUS

We have tried to compile a comprehensive list of women's organizations on campus, only to find it was difficult to get in contact with many of them. We hope this will help to give you a sense of what is available and, perhaps, ideas for other organizations that can be formed to meet the needs of the Columbia community. If there are any organizations we left out, please accept our apologies and make your organization known by contacting the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, 763 Schermerhorn Extension (x3277). Please provide us with complete information regarding the group's name, contact person, address and/or phone number and we will list it in our next newsletter.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT AWARDS — to expand the research opportunities for women scientists and engineers with the goal of advancing the applicant's research career.

INDIVIDUAL GRANTS — for a woman or two women working together who will conduct research in the public interest, prepare literacy works for publication, or implement community service projects.

PROJECT RENEW GRANTS — for women to update coursework toward employment goals or to resume interrupted academic work.

BRANCH/DIVISION PUBLIC SERVICE GRANTS — for branch and division projects that address specific community needs or provide information to educate and benefit the public.

ISSUE FOCUS GRANTS — to encourage active participation in the following topics: promoting individual liberties; women's work/women's worth; and public support for public education.

LENA LAKE FOREST FELLOWSHIPS — for contemporary and historical research on economic issues of importance to today's working women.

BPWF RESEARCH GRANTS — same as above.

SALLY BUTLER MEMORIAL FUND FOR LATINA RESEARCH — for Latin American women by descent or citizenship who are engaged in predoctoral or advanced research on issues of importance to women.

Compiled by Kathryn Furano
December is a slow month for on-campus events, so we've decided to supplement this issue's calendar with a handful of interesting events taking place around the City. For next semester, we would appreciate any relevant calendar contributions. Please contact the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (212-280-3277) or mail a copy of your upcoming spring events to us at 763 Schermerhorn Extension.

ON CAMPUS:

DECEMBER 6 - Teacher's College Women's Center will be hosting an International Women's Night. Call Angela Bruno during office hours at 678-3468.

DECEMBER 9 - Columbia College Women's Center will be holding a Feminist Politics Forum between 2pm and 5pm in Hamilton 413.

OFF CAMPUS:

DECEMBER 2 - The Project for the Study of Women in Music: "Mean Mama Blues: Life and Times of Bessie Smith" at the CUNY Grad. Center. The FREE performance will be held at 8 pm at 33 W 42nd St, Third Floor Studio. For info, call 741-1669 or 505-7259.

DECEMBER 3 - The Crystal Quilt is hosting a lecture/discussion on Lesbian Mothers at 100 Bleecker St. (btwn Mercer/La Guardia Pl), #10E. Entry is $10. Call 529-7579 for further details.

DECEMBER 5 - Brooklyn College Women's Center will be presenting "Passionate Political Poetry and Songs," performed by November Belford and Carol Rose Livingston at 8pm in the Student Center. (718) 780-5777 for details.

DECEMBER 8 - A dinner meeting entitled Radical Women: "The Campus Revolt" will be held at the NYU Loeb Student Center, located at 566 LaGuardia Place - Rm 413. The dinner will begin at 7pm and the meeting at 7:30 pm. A $5 contribution for dinner is requested. Call 677-7002 for information.

SOME REGULARLY SCHEDULED ON AND OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS:

Columbia Gay and Lesbian Dance happens every first Friday of the Month! 10PM-2AM, Earl Hall. Admission $5, Students $3, WOMEN FREE. Call 854-1488 or 280-5113 for more info.

Columbia W.O.W. (Women-Oriented Women!) meets alternating Mondays and Wednesdays from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. at 754 Schermerhorn Extension. Call Margarita for details (212-280-7814).

Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, located at 208 W. 13th Street, has a long list of regularly scheduled events. You can come by the Institute and check out the list or call 620-7310.

Compiled by Danielle Klainberg

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