

Dr. Leisa D. Meyer to present Riley-Russell Lecture

3/20/09

Dr. Leisa D. Meyer will present "Speaking Sex: Women 'Talking Back' About Sexual Knowledge," at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 6, in the Knight Club, Powell Campus Center, Alfred University. The program, this year's Women's Studies'/Human Studies' Riley/Russell Lecture, is open to the public free of charge. All are welcome at a reception following the presentation. This is the first time the University has combined the two distinguished lecture programs, Riley and Russell allowing for contemporary discussion of the significant issues which touch both women's studies and history. "I think combining the Riley Lecture with the Russell Lecture in history underscores the interdisciplinary nature of Women's Studies, and offers greater visibility to both programs," said Vicki Eaklor, professor of history at AU. Meyer is a distinguished associate professor of history and American studies at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA, where she also serves as the director of Graduate Studies for the Lyon G. Tyler Department of History. Her research and teaching focuses on women's, gender and sexuality studies, as well as history, popular culture, and cultural history. In discussing her presentation, Meyer notes she will be talking about women's sexual knowledge in the post-World War II era, and the impact of that knowledge on their lives. The presentation will focus on what women know about sexual knowledge, what they are told they "should" know about it and by whom, and what influence this "sexual knowledge" and others' perceptions of it have on their lives. Meyer is the author of "Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II" (1997). She is currently working on another book titled "Knowing Sex: Sexuality in America Since World War II." She is also the author of many articles including her most recent, "Interrupting Norms and Constructing Deviances: Competing Frameworks in the Histories of Sexualities in The United States," and "The Practice of Women's History: Narratives, Intersections, and Dialogues." Meyer has worked through the New Jersey teacher's project and the Organization of American Historians to integrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender experiences into high school and college history curriculums and has participated in efforts to publicize issues facing women veterans through the National Congressional Black Caucus and The Women's Resources and Education Initiative. The Riley Lecture series has been made possible over the past 14 years by a gift from Pamela Riley Osborn, a member of the Alfred University Class of 1962; Patricia A. Riley, a 1965 graduate; and Melissa Riley, in memory of their parents. Elizabeth Hallenbeck Riley, a member of AU's Class of 1936, was an activist involved in issues such as pay equity for women. Charles Riley was a 1935 graduate who supported his wife and her efforts. They were married in Alfred's Seventh Day Baptist Church in 1938. The Willis C. Russell Lecture in History has traditionally featured prominent historians speaking in honor of the late Dr. Russell, who was a professor of history at Alfred University for 32 years.