

Alphadelphian

The official newsletter of the Women's Studies Program at Alfred University

Volume 11, Issue 1

Spring 2007

Riley Lecturer Gives Higher Ed ACCESS to CNY

Abby Tripp

If coursework in women's studies teaches us one thing, it should be that our daily experience in the shelter of AU's privately funded academic buildings does not mirror the experience of most people in the world around us. Whatever our individual backgrounds or histories, we all reap the privileges of a college education.

I know that I enjoy this privileged status; I also know that my education has opened my eyes to what takes place in my surroundings.

On campus, I see iPods and Victoria's Secret PINK sweats. I see the ubiquitous Terra Cotta cups in the hands of my professors and peers. And I see myself: single, childless, and financially secure. I work a part-time retail job because I relish the discount, and I think nothing of spending a few dollars on a magazine to read at the gym. I have a car on campus that I could live without, a car that my roommates and I take to Wegman's to purchase the ingredients for full-course meals and lavish desserts.

My friends and I were all raised in solidly middle class households, and I doubt most of us will ever experience true poverty. Despite a less-than-stellar job market for twenty-somethings with shiny new bache-

lor's degrees, we're all better off with our college educations than without. When I look at us, I see a sense of security, of ease.

Only a few miles away from campus, however, I see an entirely different picture.



Dr. Vivyan Adair, founder of The ACCESS Project at Hamilton College, presented the 2007 Riley Lecture on Apr. 2.

While we may not realize it as we drive back and forth to Wegman's/Wal-Mart, our campus is situated in the midst of significant poverty. The town of Alfred has a poverty rate of over 20 percent. In Wellsville, the rate hovers between 15 and 20 percent. In fact, only three towns in Allegany County have a poverty rate below 10 percent.

In Steuben County, more than 14 percent of families in Greenwood, Jas-

per, Troupsburg, and Hornell live below the poverty line; most of these families have children under age five.

The poverty that surrounds us is part of a cycle – we know this. This pattern is particularly applicable to education, in that poverty can hold people back from obtaining education, and a lack of education in turn holds them back from getting a foothold out.

Hamilton College's Elihu Root Peace Fund Associate Professor of Women's Studies Dr. Vivyan Adair understands this cycle. Raised by a single mother on public assistance, Adair herself was on the welfare rolls after the birth of her daughter. For Adair, welfare checks were a temporary means of financial support that helped her complete college. Today, she is a past winner of the New York State Professor of the Year award, the author of 2003's *Reclaiming Class: Women, Poverty, and the Promise of Higher Education in America*, and this year's Riley Lecturer in Women's Studies.

During her Apr. 2 talk, titled "Poverty, Higher Education, and the Politics of Representation," Adair addressed the systemic pressures that position women in poverty and render it difficult for them

Continued on pg 2

Take Back the Night



WIC members gather for a candlelight rally and speak out during Apr. 11's Take Back the Night activities. The event raised awareness of violence against women.

Allen Awardees Announced

Abigail Allen, the wife of AU's second president, famously urged young activists to be "radical – radical to the core." Each year, the Abigail Allen Award is presented to the faculty or staff member, student, and alumna whose contributions to the AU community put Allen's sentiments into action.

The 2007 faculty honoree, Professor of English Fiona Tolhurst, was recognized "for the quality of her work and the generous way she gives of her time, sharing her broad intellectual passions with students, for consistent commitment, and for exceptional scholarship and service," said presenter Susan Strong.

In her 11 years at AU, Tolhurst has supported feminist scholarship through her extensive study of female figures in medieval literature. Twice a recipient of the Excellence in Teaching award, Tolhurst encourages students to analyze gender roles and stereotypes in all of

Continued on pg 6

Riley continued from cover

to escape. She stressed that each person who lives in poverty has a complex story.

Many of these stories are told through Adair's photographic exhibit, *The Missing Story of Ourselves: Poverty and the Promise of Higher Education*. The show, displayed in the Women's Leadership Center during the month of April, combines text and images to tell the stories of parents who, through higher education, removed themselves and their children from the welfare rolls.

Many of the individuals who share their personal narratives through *The Missing Story* participated in The ACCESS Project, an initiative founded by Adair at Hamilton College.

ACCESS was established in 2001 to aid welfare-eligible parents who want to further their education. It is not a funding program. Rather, it provides students with the support they need to leverage what resources they do have in order to care for themselves and their families while attending school full time.

ACCESS also provides an extensive

emotional and intellectual support system. As a result, program participants are better able to successfully transition into college life while simultaneously juggling numerous demands on their time and energy.

Rooted in the study of liberal arts rather than vocational skills, ACCESS prepares participants to be good citizens rather than just cogs in the machine. Indeed, Adair said, one of her goals was to demonstrate that higher order habits of thought and work would prepare participants for more lucrative jobs than those offered through late 1990s welfare-to-work programs.

ACCESS participants' children also benefit greatly from their parents' encounter with the liberal arts. These students often become their children's chief role models as their educational pursuits become central to family life. In one ACCESS family, mother and sons gather around the dining room table each night and do their homework together. In another household where both parents are enrolled in the program, the children proudly proclaim that they too will someday attend

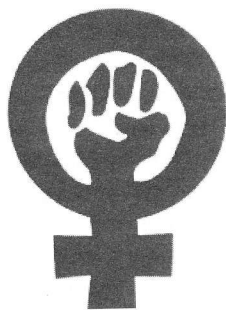
Hamilton. Adair's own daughter Heather became passionate about learning as she watched her mother's studies progress; today she is a student at Smith College.

Given the economic similarities between the Mohawk and Allegany Valleys, it seems likely that a program like Adair's would have a valuable impact on our region. It would be worthwhile for AU to seek funding sources for a program similar to ACCESS. If it is within our power to extend the opportunity for a broad-based liberal arts education to those who could benefit most, it is our responsibility as an institution to do so. To do anything less would be to blind ourselves to what goes on outside the boundaries of campus.

Sources

The Missing Story of Ourselves: Poverty and the Promise of Higher Education. Gallery Guide.

RJI GIS Mapping Center. Alfred University Rural Justice Institute, Alfred, N.Y.
<<http://rji.alfred.edu/GIS-index.asp>>.



The Alhadelphian is published
by the Alfred University
Women's Studies Program.

The Alhadelphian Staff

Managing Editor: Abby Tripp

Copy Editor: Jodi Andersen

Layout Editor: Lily Katz

Staff Writers

Abigail Griffith

April Jewett

Crystal Lehman

Aaron Margulis

Advisor: Dr. Melissa Ryan

alhadelphian@alfred.edu
www.alfred.edu/wmst/

A Message from the Director

This has been another exciting year for WMST, thanks to the efforts of committed students, faculty, and staff. I want to take a moment to thank them for making this year such a success.

First, Professor of German Sandra Singer put together a wonderful series of speakers for the WMST Roundtables. Presenters included Kellee-Sue Henry, Catherine Lynch, Jessica Webster, Caroline DeLeon, Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Stein, Planned Parenthood Public Affairs Director Sara Palmer, WLC Graduate Assistant Stephanie Fukes, Professor of Sociology Karen Porter, Professor of Theater Becky Prophet, Assistant Professor of English Emerita Carol Burdick, Professor of History Linda Mitchell, Paula Epps, Crystal Lehman, and Abby Tripp.

Under Amy Jacobson's innovative leadership, the Women's Leadership Center has continued to offer interesting new programs to Alfred, including a Good Sense Gourmet dinner, a Women's Restorative Retreat, a mother-daughter reception and poetry reading, and a student art show. The WLC also hosted five Women of Influence speakers, including Alfred alumnae Jessica Gottlieb '98 and Dr. Peggy Wozniak '72.

Senior business administration major Jessica Webster received a Women's Excellence in Leadership Award, with honorable mentions going to senior biomedical materials major Erin Collins and senior fine arts major Sarah Hall Weaver. This spring, the WLC's Women's Leadership Academy welcomed its first 10 members.

This year's Riley Lecture was given by Dr. Vivyan Adair, Director of The ACCESS Project at Hamilton College. Dr. Adair's talk on "Poverty, Higher Education and the Politics of Representation" gave an inspiring and informative look at The ACCESS Project's efforts to provide higher education opportunities to welfare-eligible parents.

WIC had a busy year as well, as they raised funds with a chocolate vagina pop sale, celebrated Women's History Month, and sponsored a Take Back the Night march and rally.

Once again, the efforts of committed members of the Alfred community have helped to connect women's professional experiences, personal lives, and academic achievements. We can all take pride in these accomplishments.

Dr. Laura Greyson

AU Alumna Shares Secrets of her Success

April Jewett

It is 3 p.m. and I am racing back to my dorm after eating at Nana's with acquaintances so I have plenty of time to get my thoughts together before calling Patricia Gardner for an interview. Gardner earned a B.A. in sociology from Alfred University in 1973. Since graduating from AU, she has lived all over the globe, developing a unique perspective on American culture through her experiences in Uganda, Pakistan, and Mexico; written a book, *The Million Dollar Sale*; and appeared in such prominent media outlets as the *Wall Street Journal* and *Entrepreneur Magazine*. She is currently the Director of Executive Programs at Penn State's Smeal College of Business and the CEO of her own company, Maximum Sales Inc. I have spoken with Gardner on the phone before, so I already know she is lively and a great person to talk with, but I am still nervous because she is a professional speaker whose impressive list of engagements includes the Wharton School of Business and the National Association of Women Business Owners. She immediately puts me at ease, however, and I genuinely enjoy our conversation about her experience at AU, her opinions about feminism, and her perspective on women in business.

Patricia Gardner on Life at Alfred

Gardner says her Alfred experience was "wonderful." At the time of her graduation, there were not a lot of women in the corporate world. She remembers the top woman in her class getting a secretarial job after graduation because that



Patricia Gardner '73

position was the only one being offered. Gardner's mentor, AU sociology professor Sharon Rogers, helped her to see the need for more women in business. While working for Rogers as a research assistant, Gardner read great material on the women's movement that furthered

her interest in women's issues.

A growing awareness of the women's movement inspired many women to

join the work force; at the time of her graduation, she remembers, women were eager for – and beginning to demand – a wider range of career opportunities.

Gardner expresses gratitude toward AU for her education and for the life skills she learned here. She especially emphasizes the importance of mentoring. If she hadn't met Rogers and been introduced to women's issues, Gardner says, she would not have thought of the many possibilities open to her at the time.

The Changing World of Business

Since her graduation in 1973, Gardner has seen more female CEOs and more women in leadership positions, such as Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi

and presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton. Gardner is impressed with the increasing number of "brilliant female minds in the military and corporations." As more women attain higher education, they are developing the kind of specialized knowledge that allows them to advance professionally, she says. With "very specific areas of focus," women are able to take control of their futures. The changing roles of women in society, Gardner says, have opened new doors for women in business.

"Feminism Saved My Life"

Feminism, to Gardner, means women helping other women succeed, both in business and in their private lives. "Feminism saved my life," she says: it showed her that she didn't have to choose between professional fulfillment and personal satisfaction, but could have both a family and a career.

In 1979, while working at Xerox, Gardner ran a program that helped women write proposals. There, she encouraged women to support one another in the workplace rather than battling for individual gain. Rather than competing with female colleagues, Gardner encourages women to break down the "walls" of isolation that confine women to traditional gender roles and go to "the next level of feminism [that will] tear down these walls so women can be supporters of other women."

Gardner makes a distinction between "internal and external" feminism. External feminism, she explains, means fighting for equal rights and wages, while internal feminism involves women supporting and working with other women to reach equality. Women cannot achieve equality by just fighting sexism externally, she maintains: "When

we start supporting each other – that is when we will be fully evolved."

The unequal earning power of men and women is an important women's issue that is still being raised in today's work environment. "This is 2007," she says. "How can this [gender pay gap] still exist?" She uses Wal-Mart as an example of how women are going to have to hit big companies hard financially in order to get equal pay. In February, 1.5 million of Wal-Mart's female employees filed a class-action lawsuit against the company, protesting inequality in the workplace.

Does Corporate Success Mean

Honorary Manhood?

Gardner remembers being taken aside by her male supervisors while working at Xerox and being "told never to become one of the guys." Gardner believes feminine traits in business are "wonderful traits." She insists that for a woman "to imitate a man is a huge mistake and you will fail every time." Gardner emphasizes the unique advantages of feminine leadership styles, claiming that the ways women work are valuable. For example, she says, women are more likely to "nurture" their relationships with clients and tend to "ask lots of questions to be sure they get what the clients want." As a result, she says, women's relationships with clients are often "more personal." Rather than adopting masculine traits, women should "use [their] God-given talents" and construct a workplace persona that balances gender identity with the conventions of the office environment. If you "don't wear short skirts and if you are professional," she says, "people will know you mean business."

Who delivered her famous "Ain't I a Woman?" speech at an 1851 women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio?

- A. Sojourner Truth**
- B. Sally Hemings**
- C. Susan B. Anthony**
- D. Gloria Watkins**

Answer on back

Paula Epps will graduate this May with a BFA with a concentration in expanded media and printmaking and a minor in WMST.

For her senior project, titled "Female Sexual Advocacy/Agency," Epps is interviewing Alfred women aged 18-25 about the sex education they received as adolescents from family, school, and religious institutions.

She will then look at how this education has affected respondents' decision-making, with an eye toward comparing abstinence-only and comprehensive sex education.

"If ... not providing life-saving information about the most intimate decisions we can make becomes the norm, then women are slipping again

into a place where we are not the agents of our bodies," said Epps. "I think that is the most dangerous place we can go back to."

Ideas from the research and interviews for the project inform the artwork for Epps's May 5 BFA thesis show.

Epps is co-coordinator of WIC, WMST assistant, and student liaison for the WMST Executive Board. She designed and taught leadership workshops for Wellsville High School students and participated in the WLC mentorship program. She has previously served as a member of the *Finding the Line* CAP team, a WLC Student Advisory Board member, and a staff writer for *The Alphadelphian*.

WMST Senior Spotlight

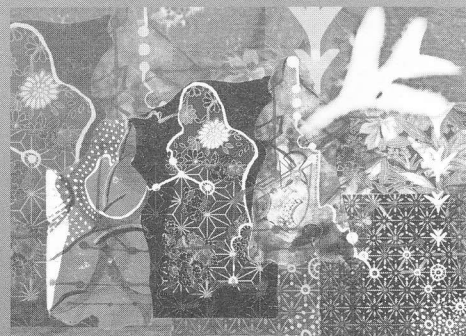


Paula Epps



Epps's feminist sensibility informs the pieces in her BFA senior show.

Above: Dress Series 1 (lithograph)
Below: Airplane Series 1 (digital print from painting)



WIC Chats Run the Gamut in '06-'07

Abby Tripp

Provocative questions, compelling discussion, and homemade guacamole were all on the menu this year as members of the Women's Issues Coalition gathered for our weekly meetings at the WLC.

Some of our discussion topics were timely. In March, for example, we responded to an e-mail from AU Public Safety that described a recent attack on a female student. We were all shaken by the memo's contents, but rather than dwell on our fears we turned the meeting into a work session and made plans to contact administrators about our concerns over malfunctioning street lights, defunct blue lights, and the lack of a comprehensive safety training session for incoming students. In only two hours, we went from a place of anxiety to one of activism.

Our Nov. 16 meeting coincided with AU's observance of Love Your Body Day, and after discussing what we loved (and sometimes hated) about our own bodies we shared a plate of brownies, watched a film about advertisers' portrayals of women's bodies, and got suggestions on fighting back against the media from event organizer Jodi Andersen.

WLC Director Amy Jacobson joined us for our discussion of women in the workplace and gave valuable input on gendered leadership and communication styles.

A nationwide debate over the so-called "boy crisis" fueled a heated debate about gender in education, single-sex classrooms, and the place of women's studies in the academy.

Other discussions were concentrated at the intersection between personal and political. Our conversation on marriage, which began at 5:30 p.m. and lasted well into the night, afforded us the opportunity to interrogate our own beliefs within the context of legal, social, and family histories.

A discussion titled "The Difficulties of Speaking Up" was equally emotional as we addressed the little, everyday ways that patriarchal values silence women.

We began the 2006-'07 academic year with one big question: "What are we doing and what can we do to change the world?" After a year of discussing our own experiences as women and our place in the world, it's safe to say that we each came a little bit closer to answering that oh-so-daunting question.

A Feminist Lens on Language

Crystal Lehman

During his pregnancy, a man might experience unusual food cravings.

Crystal Lehman will graduate this May with a Track II major in Feminist Studies, a major in English, and minors in WMST and philosophy.

Her Track II baccalaureate project, which also serves as her WMST senior project, consists of two parts.



Crystal Lehman

In "Gay Gene Theory," Lehman examines and interprets efforts to portray homosexuality as a hereditary condition. She argues that such movements respond to, and work to subvert, feminist political advances.

Proponents of gay gene theory – including many political liberals today – hold that gay people cannot be blamed or punished for a trait with which they are born, an "orientation" rather than a "preference," said Lehman.

"My argument," said Lehman, "is that while this theory seems like an advance, it is not very liberatory."

In the second part of her project, "Lesbian Sexuality as Feminist Strategy," Lehman explores "how lesbianism has over time fit into a feminist framework and been part of feminist strategy."

The political power of sexual choice binds the two papers.

Lehman is co-president of WIC and a staff writer for *The Alhadelphian*. She co-hosts *Lesbian Radio: Music By, For, and About Womyn* with her partner Bethany and has, in past semesters, been an officer of WIC and Spectrum.

Abby Tripp will graduate this May with a major in English and

a minor in WMST.

Her senior project, which will also garner her English and University honors, is titled "Doubly Damned: Women and Miscegenation in the American South."

Tripp is "looking at four texts from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and studying their portrayal of mixed-race women."



Abby Tripp

If the above sentence jars you as it jars me, I contend that we have discovered what linguists call a "false generic"; that is, a term used to refer to a class or group when, in fact, it is not applicable to all the group's members. Scholarship tells us that, in Anglo-Saxon England, "the word for an adult male was 'waepman,' while 'wifman' referred to an adult female," and so the word "man" was legitimately applied to both genders. Over time, however, these words evolved to become "woman" (for females) and "man" (for males), and the use of the latter to apply to females and to all-female or mixed-gender groups grew less appropriate. Though many people still try to stretch them to fit any occasion, male "generics" clearly do not work today to represent both genders equally.

During a WMST course, one of my professors chose deliberately to address this point by using the female generic to address the entire class, which included a handful of male students; we had discussed numerous times the problematic nature of using of the male generic to refer to mixed-gender and all-female groups, and she had decided to implement an object lesson. "Each student should remember to bring a pencil with her to tomorrow's test," she reminded us at the end of a particular class session. Immediately, one of the male students objected. "You mean to say with him or her," he corrected, crossing his arms over his chest. She raised her eyebrows. "No," she replied, "I don't." Once again, she explained her reasons for using the female term as a generic. The student who had objected never seemed to grasp the concept, but the rest of us experienced two lessons: first, that use of the female term as generic is jarring, and sounds "wrong" even though it is technically just as accurate (or inaccurate) as the male generic; and second, that at least some men would find it offensive to be referred to by "she" or "her," though we females were expected as a matter of course to accept being referred to as part of a generic he/man.

That particular false generic – while especially pervasive and often pinpointed by critics – is but one of myriad "generic" terms that are, in fact, male-specific. Many such terms are so commonly used that most people fail to notice the problem. Consider, for example, the term "guys." Whether you are male or female, you are likely lumped under the heading "guys" several times a day without even noticing it. It happens in classes, in extra-curricular groups, informally among friends.

Why should we care, you ask? Everyone knows that "guys" can mean a mixed-gender group just as easily as it can mean a group of men, you protest? This is where my professor's concept of applying an object-lesson once again comes in handy. Try this test: the next time you're in mixed-gender company, refer to everyone as "girls" or "gals"; then ask yourself why, if it's no big deal to refer to mixed groups as "guys," it should upset men to be referred to with an equivalent female-specific term. Or, for a slight variation on the same experiment, tell a

Continued on page 6

She argues that, in the era's literature and society, being both mixed-race and female put one at a significant social disadvantage. One focus of her thesis is the role of the mixed-race mother in these texts. She also deals with the particular cases of Louisiana and South Carolina.

Tripp is co-managing editor of *The Alhadelphian* and secretary of WIC. She has held offices in both organiza-

tions before, and she has been an administrative intern at the Women's Leadership Center, a member of the WLC Student Advisory Board, and a member of the *Finding the Line* CAP Team.

This fall, she will begin a master's degree in English literature at the University of Kentucky, where she has been awarded a teaching assistantship and merit fellowship.

Feminist Lens continued from pg 5

mixed-gender group of people that you'd like "the guys" to raise their hands; then ask yourself why, if "guy" is gender-neutral, only men lift their hands in response to this request.

There are other male-specific false generics that escape our daily notice, such as "manpower," "man-made," "man the booth," "unsportsmanlike," and "seminal" (a great alternative to this one, by the way, is "germinal"). Even phrases such as "mastered the art of" cannot be ignored as unproblematic. Try substituting the female-specific term "mistress" where you normally find "master," and in most cases the sentence will become meaningless, or the meaning will change considerably.

There are also male "generics" that apply specifically to a collegiate setting. Upon entering college for the first time, for example, all students – female and male – are commonly labeled "freshmen." The male-specific term "alumni" is used to refer to graduates both female and male. The word "fraternity" (from the Latin *frater*, meaning "brother") is now sometimes employed to describe mixed-gender organizations.

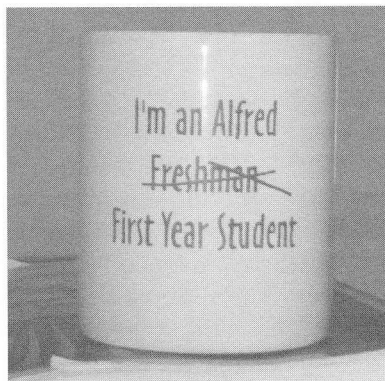
Another area of language that deserves consideration is the common phraseology urging people to toughen up. "Grow some balls," comes instantly to mind, as do "man up," and "nut up." Boy children are constantly told to "take it like a man," and ridiculed for "screaming like a little girl." How many times can you remember a girl being told to "stop acting like such a little boy?" Recently, I overheard a conversation between two women who were experimenting with female-based phrases like "woman up" and "girl up," to be used as equivalents to "man up." As they concluded, laughing, "Wow! That sounds like you're saying something else altogether! Not good."

Sometimes, the gendered nature of language is so insidious that in-depth scholarship is required to uproot it. For example, consider the word "hysteria," which, according to the popular Web site Dictionary.com, means "an uncontrollable outburst of emotion or fear, often characterized by irrationality, laughter, weeping, etc." Does the definition bring to mind a stereotypical, sexist image of "the weaker sex"? It should. Hysteria comes from the Greek word "hystera," meaning womb. When "hysteria" first came into use, it referred to neurological conditions in women, thought to be caused by an impairment of uterine functioning. This further harkens back to classical and medieval medicine, which taught that a woman's womb could migrate to different parts of her body, thus causing a variety of different ailments. Of course, you won't find that information in the five definitions provided by Dictionary.com, just as you won't find any word – on Dictionary.com or even in any other, more scholarly dictionary – suggesting uncontrolled emotional states that derive from ancient terms for male anatomy.

There are many books and Web sites that offer non-gender-specific substitutions for terms in which a male-specific false generic is normally used, but people often shy away from disrupting established norms. Even many feminists will shrug and laugh weakly at themselves for questioning the universal he/man, or the use of "alumni" to describe female graduates; they'll use phrases like "man up" because those phrases are popular, and they won't mention the problematic roots of words like "hysteria" because they don't want to seem nit-picky, extreme, obsessive, or "humorless."

Admittedly, change happens slowly, and those who choose to advocate for linguistic revolution right now will have to suffer the mocking laughter, the rolling eyes, and the recurrent variations on "You're so uptight!" In honesty, I can't offer too many immediate perquisites to tempt the reluctant toward linguistic mutiny; but isn't it appealing to think that we could make changes up-and-coming generations will appreciate in the same way that we have appreciated having a choice besides "Mrs." and "Miss"?

As humans, we think in language; if our language isn't gender-neutral, our thoughts never will be, either.



An AU mug illustrates an alternative to a common male "generic."

Allen continued from cover

her classes. She also advised the Women's Issues Coalition for four years and *The Alphadelphian* for two, and has served on the WMST executive committee for several years.

Crystal Lehman, a Feminist Studies/English double major and WMST and philosophy minor, earned the student award for her "commitment to challenging complacency," her "principled activism," and her "leadership in the classroom," according to Strong. Lehman was WIC co-coordinator in 2006-'07 and Spectrum's political coordinator in 2003-'04.

The 2007 alumna award will be given this June.

The 2006 alumna honoree was Sara Wall-Bollinger '76, who has devoted her career to helping individuals with special needs. Since 1991, she has been the Executive Director of Enable of Central New York; she was also instrumental in the development of Self-Directed Personal Services, a program that empowers persons with disabilities to manage their own care.

Strong, a Herrick reference librarian, was the 2006 faculty honoree. The first woman in AU's history to serve as Associate Provost, Acting Provost, or vice president – Strong did all three – she is responsible for the award's existence. Allen was "largely unknown in our time before Susan's research reintroduced her to 20th- and 21st-century Alfred," said Associate Professor of English and award presenter Susan Morehouse. Strong's book on AU's co-educational history is currently under consideration at an academic press.

2006 student awardee Meg Gray, who graduated with a BA in fine arts and a WMST minor, was honored for her two years as WIC coordinator, participation in Women's Leadership Center activities, and feminist scholarship, particularly her WMST thesis on sexual education policy.

Sources

"Non-Sexist Language: A Guide"

<http://www.ucc.ie/equalcom/language.html>

"Latin Dictionary and Grammar Aid"

<http://archives.nd.edu/latgramm.htm>

The Skinny on New Catwalk Requirements

Jodi Andersen

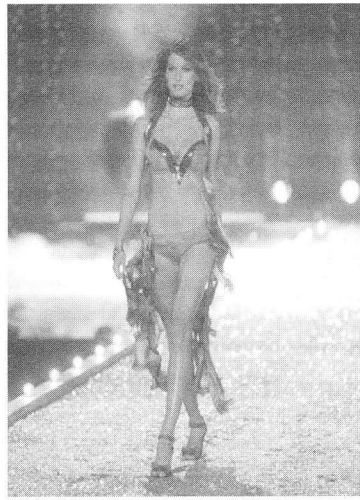
Fashion events around the world will soon see more flesh on the catwalk, according to a code created by the Italian fashion industry and government. No, Italy is not demanding more revealing couture, but rather that models have a little more meat on their bones – a Body Mass Index (or BMI) of 18 or over, to be exact.

Ana Carolina Reston, a 21-year-old Brazilian fashion model represented by such prestigious agencies as Ford and L'Equipe, had a BMI of 13.4 when she died of complications from anorexia. Her diet consisted solely of apples and tomatoes. Uruguayan model Luisel Ramos, 22, suffered a heart attack after subsisting on a three-month regimen of lettuce leaves and Diet Coke.

Who is responsible for the deaths of these models? At Madrid Fashion week, shortly after Ramo's death, the Spanish Association of Fashion Designers stepped up to the plate, issuing a minimum BMI for all participating models. Italy soon followed suit, and in December of 2006 required all models to produce medical certificates stating that they didn't suffer from an eating disorder.

The Academy for Eating Disorders (AED), a prevention-focused special interest group led by psychologist Eric van Furth, is presently issuing guidelines to "create a dialogue with the fashion industry and assist them with taking appropriate measures to protect the health and well-being of models." According to Furth, "The response from the fashion industry has been one of resistance." He believes that AED's guidelines are about raising awareness of eating disorders, not "policing" the industry.

Currently, there are no repercussions for not following the guide-



Gisele Bündchen blames parents for young models' deaths.

lines; however, there is a possibility of being excluded from major fashion events if regulations are ignored.

"It's about technical punishment. But these technicalities are very important in fashion," said Stefano Dominella, who spearheads AltaRoma, the group that coordinates fashion events in Rome.

It is true that not everyone agrees that the fashion industry is to blame. Gisele Bündchen, whom Guinness World Records claims is "the richest supermodel" in the world, is quick to point her finger at families. She told Brazilian newspaper *O Globo*, "I never suffered this problem because I had a very strong family base. The parents are responsible, not fashion."

Cathy Gould, from New York's Elite modeling agency, shares this opinion: "I understand they want to set this tone of healthy, beautiful women, but what about discrimination against the model and what about the freedom of the designer?" she asked.

It's undeniable that we live in a world in which girls are dying to fit into the cultural ideal of "skel-ton chic." Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders,

Incorporated claims, "That means that about one out of every 100 young women between 10 and 20 is starving herself, sometimes to death."

How much of this responsibility should the fashion world shoulder? Since the average American is bombarded with over 3,000 ads a day—up to a million a year—it makes sense to say quite a lot. The fashion industry is right to hold itself at least partly accountable, but it will only hold this position until it negatively affects its business and its wallet.

In order to promote a truly

healthy body image, Italy and Spain's mentality needs to infiltrate more aspects of women's lives. Fashion designers need to stop designing clothes for stick-figure drawings.

Negative-size jeans should not exist. Food should not be marketed as a reward or sinful pleasure, but as the nourishment a body needs.

For now, BMI is the last word. One can only hope that this is the first step of many needed to correct the unhealthy body image touted by fashion designers and advertisers everywhere.

What is BMI?

In a world obsessed with numbers, the BMI has recently been in the spotlight. Many Americans, however, are confused about its significance. The BMI, which the American Heart Association defines as "a mathematical formula to assess relative body weight," is calculated by dividing one's weight in kilograms by one's height in meters squared. It is ideally supposed to fall between 18.5 and 24.9 for healthy, normal adults.

This number can be deceptive, however. According to a study of over 25,000 men conducted by the Cooper Aerobics Center in Dallas, TX, men with a BMI less than 27 were at a greater risk for life-threatening diseases including diabetes and several cancers. Furthermore, the rating doesn't distinguish between body fat and muscle mass, so a high BMI will wrongfully label a body builder or athlete as obese.

Sources

"Italy Pact to Stop Skinny Models"

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6204865.stm>

"For Some Fashion Models, Thin Is Definitely Not In"

<http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/42/3/10>

"Quick, Do You Know Your BMI?"

www.nytimes.com/2006/12/28/Fitness.html?ex=1173934800&en=0638957baef4be64&ei=5123&partner=BREITBART

"Madrid Bans Waifs From Catwalks"

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5341202.stm>

"NEDA's Response To Fashion Model Gisele Bündchen"

http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/p.asp?WebPage_ID=918

Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, Incorporated

www.anred.com

Doing the (RED) Thing for African Aid

Abigail Griffith

The (RED) movement hasn't just made fighting AIDS seem sensible; it's made it seem downright sexy.

Launched at the World Economic Forum in January 2006, Product (RED) is the brainchild of U2 frontman Bono and DATA (Debt, AIDS, Trade, and Africa) chairman Bobby Shriver. Created to help halt the spread of AIDS on the African continent, (RED) is a business model designed to encourage philanthropy in the private sector. While nonprofit organizations have always proven effective at fighting the AIDS pandemic, the founders of (RED) argue that these public groups could greatly increase their success by joining forces with private donors.

(RED) isn't a charity, but a corporation in which companies can participate as partners. Product (RED) corporate partners pledge to donate a portion of their profits from (RED)-branded products to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. In return, these corporations receive all the perks generally associated with signing on for a Bono-approved project: big-name celebrity endorsements, a slick worldwide advertising campaign, and the trendiness that comes with being a "socially conscious" company.

The beauty of Product (RED) is that it taps into the capitalistic cultures of the world's richest nations to help its poorest. Consumers can buy (RED) products "guilt-free" and make a difference by doing



Gap is one of several Product (RED) partners raising cash for the Global Fund.

what those living in the Western world already do best – shopping. The campaign has been especially successful at grabbing the attention of the socially savvy Generation Y-ers, who have proven to be lucrative targets for cause-marketing. Utilizing the Internet, (RED) has caught the attention of thousands of young people through its blog and MySpace account. (RED) products also naturally appeal to the teen population; (RED) iPods, (RED) Gap tees, and (RED) RAZRs have all helped make global awareness fresh and funky for the 21-and-under set.

Though it has been only a year since its launch, (RED) is proving to be a particularly promising program. It has already raised over \$10 million for the Global Fund, most of which has gone to purchase antiretroviral drugs for women and children in Swaziland and Rwanda.

The initiative also gives feminists a

chance to utilize capitalism for a good cause. (RED) works the system by taking advantage of the consumer-driven culture of the West to help the impoverished culture of the East. Some critics of (RED) have said that it operates on consumer guilt alone. They believe that while the initiative may make shoppers feel better, it doesn't succeed in inspiring Westerners to take any further action beyond buying a T-shirt.

While this may be true, (RED) is still bringing funds to Africa that wouldn't otherwise be coming in, and every little bit adds up. Anti-capitalists and some radical feminists might argue that the initiative's methodology still leaves much to be desired. However, until an anti-capitalist program is created that could compete with (RED) on a global fundraising level, the campaign remains one of the few viable hopes for African families hoping to fight the HIV virus. It's hard to argue against an initiative that keeps Western consumers happy and African women healthy.

However, (RED) is not without faults. While the initiative is aimed at helping women, it could also end up harming them. (RED) companies claim that their products are manufactured in safe working environments, but Gap has faced harsh criticism in the past for its use

of sweatshop labor. It's important for (RED) and associated human rights groups to keep a close eye on the initiative's partners; it would be a shame if a program with such great potential ended up destroying the quality of life for some women in an attempt to improve the lives of others.

(RED) is exciting not only because it provides an effective new way to help African women, but also because it offers a basic structure that could eventually be modified to help impoverished people from Australia to Alaska. It's a business model that encourages long-term commitment in the corporate sector. Companies tend to care more about a good cause when they too have something to gain. (RED) has already proven profitable for businesses and the Global Fund. Though the initiative is still in its early stages, it has already succeeded in saving thousands of lives and with a plethora of new products due to be released throughout the upcoming year, it could save millions more. Hopefully, other companies and charitable organizations will become involved or create similar initiatives to bolster awareness of poverty-related issues. After all, it's a lot easier to earn money than it is to beg for it.

Sources

"Why the New Amex Card Makes Me See Red"

<http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/1723/>

"Products Turn Red To Augment AIDS Fund"

http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB114488885543224665-bif_cx3sx15lOnzXjXjdXxRfTE8_20070412.html?mod=rss_free

"Bono's Red Campaign is Cross-Media Magic"

http://searchviews.com/archives/2006/10/yesterday_oprah.php
www.red.org & www.data.org

Our Common Interest, The Commission for Africa

"Social Consciousness for Sale," *Abroad View*, Volume 9, Issue 2

Who was the female mystic responsible for the earliest example of an English autobiography?

- A. Gwenna Veer
- B. Julian of Norwich
- C. Margery Kempe
- D. Fiona of Tolhurst

Answer on back

World News

Jodi Andersen

UNITED STATES

Because of a Black Jack, Missouri, ordinance forbidding more than three people to share the same living quarters "unless they are related by blood, marriage, or adoption," an unmarried couple may have to pay a \$500-a-day fine. Olivia Shelltrack and Fondray Loving moved to Black Jack after living together for 13 years with two children of their own and one child from Shelltrack's previous relationship. The ACLU says the couple has its support in court.

BRAZIL

2.4 million people gathered to celebrate gay pride in Sao Paulo's parade last June, making it the biggest LGBT parade ever.

LIBERIA

Save the Children, a non-profit organization concerned with children in need, claims that girls in Liberia continue to be sexually abused by aid workers and UN peace keepers. After visiting refugee camps, the organization discovered that girls ages 8 and older were being pressured by aid workers to have sex in exchange for food.

UNITED KINGDOM

J.K. Rowling, the wildly successful author of the Harry Potter series, recently spoke out on her Web site against the media's glorification of thinness. "I've got two daughters who will have to make their way in this skinny-obsessed world," Rowling wrote. "I'd rather they were independent, original, funny, a thousand things, before 'thin.'" But she herself may be following the "skinny equals good" trend: the good-hearted hero of her novels, Harry Potter, is a lanky, thin-limbed boy, while his rude and selfish cousin Dudley Dursley is frequently mocked for being fat.

RUSSIA

In the face of a rapidly declining birth rate, President Vladimir Putin has announced that he will offer a "big increase" in benefits available to mothers of more than one child, along with a one-time bonus of 250,000 rubles (approx. 10,000 USD). The Russian population has been diminishing by an estimated 700,000 a year.

KUWAIT

For the first time in Kuwaiti history, women can vote and also run for office. Women and men voted in gender-specific polling stations in late June 2006.

CHINA AND INDIA

Due to a deep-seated cultural favoritism for males, many men in China and India will become what are known as "bare branches": men unable to find a partner or produce children. It is estimated that in 2020, there will be 28 million males without a female opposite; in India, 3.1 million. Currently, there are 119 men for every 100 women in China.

TANZANIA

At least 59 out of 61 expectant mothers who suffered from obstetric fistula in Mwanza, Ruwuma, and Singida regions lost their babies immediately after delivery.

According to a report by the Women's Dignity Project, pregnant girls and women faced difficulties in delivery, with labor being the main cause of contracting fistula.

The report further states that the majority of expectant mothers did not get comprehensive clinical examination during their pregnancy.



WMST Faculty Factoids

Associate Professor of French and Chair of Modern Languages Cecilia Beach went to Argentina last summer to attend the wedding of Assistant Professor of Spanish Ariana Huberman. Beach split her holiday season between Mexico, England, and France. She was fascinated by the ceramics at the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, and she is trying her hand at wheel throwing at the Wellsville Creative Arts Center.

Beach continues her research on French author André Léo. Her essay on one of Léo's characters, Marianne, will appear in *Le Bulletin des Ami d'André Léo*. Beach also has an article on integral education in Léo's novels in the works.

Léo argues for equal education regardless of students' sex or socioeconomic status, according to Beach. "Léo's characters created schools for working-class women after the work day," said Beach. They try "to make education come alive" and get "the church out of the school."

Interim Vice President of University Relations Sylvia Bryant is now located with the development staff in the Welcome Center at Fasano House, which opened in June 2006. "It's a beautiful front door for the University," she said, "and I hope everyone will feel welcome to stop in and say hello."

Bryant oversees all development activities for the University and enjoys the opportunity to meet alums and help them connect with current AU students.

In November, Bryant taught a grant writing workshop at the WLC to students, faculty, and staff.

Bryant enjoys playing soccer, watching movies, and exploring the Box of Books with her two sons Duncan and Parker, aged six and nine.

Assistant Professor of English Emerita Carol Burdick continues to declare herself a feminist at the beginning of each course she teaches. She challenges students who don't want to claim that word to try life without feminism and then get back to her.

C.B.'s feminist sensibility also informs her writing. In "Trashed," a poem recently published in the collection *Cut Loose: (Mostly) Older Women Talk About the End*

of (Mostly) Long-Term Relationships, she shares the experience of sorting through "a few of the souvenirs" from twenty years of marriage after her husband left her. "It was - ok (well, not too bad)," she writes, "until I found/the dusty broken music box/you'd brought me back/'for a surprise'/ fifteen years ago." C.B. concedes that "the music box did come to life when I tried to discard it, but the marriage did not," applying the characteristic honesty and wry sense of humor that mark both her writing and her teaching.

C.B.'s Pondhouse serves as the unofficial site for each year's final WMST/WIC potluck, where faculty and students get together to share conversation, good food, the stunning view from the back porch, and the exuberant attentions of C.B.'s two dogs, Cindy and Wisty (short for Wistful).

Professor of Philosophy William Dibrell is working on a project called "Virtue, Character, and Evolution," examining why "very nice people may do very awful things." He presented some of his research at a Bergren Forum in February.

Dibrell is exploring "the nature of fundamental emotions which guide how we judge our values" in his Honors Seminar titled *The Good, the Bad, and the Revolting*. He and his students examine the similarities and differences between men and women in relation to how they react to different stimuli. "We don't know what these differences are caused by, but we do know that they exist," he said.

Professor of Art Theory and BAFA Director Elizabeth Ann Dobie is researching "how we use the word 'art.'" Her Bergren Forum last fall explored how art can be extended "to practices and objects that are not traditional fine-art objects, such as cooking or sports." She will spend significant time this summer researching the topic in between gardening, home improvement projects, and walks with her German Shepherd-Husky mix, Zeno.

Dobie's current courses include a new Honors Seminar on unconventional art, titled *Rebels, Mystics, Outcasts, and Visionaries*, and *Philosophy of Art II*, which focuses on the relationship between post-modernism and feminism.

Dobie serves as a reviewer for *Hypatia*:

A Journal of Feminist Philosophy, and she has juried articles for the National Women's Studies Association's journal.

While Professor of History Vicki Eaklor says she'd always "rather be playing jazz," her passion for music hasn't stopped her from being passionately involved in the WMST Program this past year. In March, she participated in a panel at the Organization of American Historians' annual meeting. She also plans to return to Dublin over the summer for the annual Lesbian Lives conference. Eaklor hopes to spend a good part of the spring semester finishing her book, a narrative of 20th-Century GLBT U.S. History, for Greenwood Press. Eaklor's edition of Human Rights Campaign founder Steven Endean's memoirs, *Bringing Lesbian and Gay Rights Into the Mainstream: Twenty Years of Progress*, was published by Haworth Press in May 2006. Eaklor also taught Women in Society this spring and introduced women's studies to a whole new group of prospective WMST minors.

Professor of Communication Studies Robyn Goodman has continued to spread the word about WMST both on and off campus. She recently completed the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications' (AEJMC) program that facilitates women and minorities gaining major journalism leadership positions at universities across the nation. Goodman is also in charge of programming for the AEJMC's first World Education Conference, which will take place in Singapore this June. She is working on a book, "the first of its kind," that will describe journalism education practices worldwide and efforts to improve them.

At Alfred, Goodman continues to advise the *Fiat* and push her students to improve their coverage of women and minority issues. She traveled to New York City with the *Fiat* in March, where she led a workshop on how to improve college newspaper coverage of women and minorities. And if all that weren't enough, this California native finally found the time to learn how to surf.

Despite spending a large portion of this year in the classroom, Professor of

Sociology Larry Greil still found the time to become involved with a major WMST research project. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, Greil and his fellow researchers are currently interviewing a nationwide random sample of women and their partners for what will become the first population-based study of infertility. This project focuses on both the "psychological effects of infertility and [the] patterns of infertility help-seeking." Greil has also coauthored several papers on the subject including the most recent, "Infertility: Testing a Helpseeking Model," which appeared in *Social Science & Medicine* in 2006.

When he's not researching or engaging students in the classroom, Greil enjoys listening to jazz and reading the latest installment in Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch detective series.

When she's not busy trying to prevent her "big old moose" of a puppy, Bailey, from devouring snow boots, **Professor of Political Science and Director of WMST Laura Greyson** continues to enjoy her involvement with the WMST Program. Her current courses, including Classical Politics in the Ancient World, offer students the chance to reconsider "gendered assumptions about politics." Greyson also continues to pursue research related to civic education and thoroughly enjoys her growing relationship with the WLC.

This summer, Greyson plans to attend a seminar in Spain and Morocco. She hopes her attendance will help her to better understand the role of women in Islamic culture and "the way in which that contrasts to women in the West."

Last spring, **Associate Professor of English and First-Year Experience Director Allen Grove** spoke to *The Alpha-dolphian* about his WMST teaching and research in his exceedingly tidy workspace. Since then, he admits, "entropy's taken over my office."

Nonetheless, Grove had a busy year of WMST-related teaching and publications. His fall 2006 course on Jane Austen was cross-listed with WMST, and this spring his course on the Romantics features two female novelists and several female poets. The goal of this nontraditional syllabus, Grove says, is to "challenge the picture of the Romantics as the big six men."

One of the texts on the syllabus, Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, is being taught from an

edition edited by Grove that was released in July under the Valancourt Classics imprint.

Also released last year was Grove's edition of George Brewer's *The Witch of Ravensworth*, "one of the first novels about a witch figure."

Professor of English Emerita Sharon Hoover continues work on an extensive bibliography of Willa Cather's reading. "Her reading is not obtrusive in her writing," Hoover said, "but it lies just under the surface in almost every story and novel." Hoover and her partners for the project have compiled approximately 1,500 entries of seven fields each, which they hope to have "clearly presented and accurate" by this coming spring. The final product, however, will continue as a dynamic document; once it has been published on The Willa Cather Archive Web site (<http://cather.unl.edu>), other Cather scholars "who have studied particular novels in depth" will be able to submit further titles for addition into the bibliography.

After wrapping up several WMST-related projects, including an article currently under review by *Hispanic Journal* about the travel writings of Maria de las Mercedes Santa Cruz y Montalvo, **Assistant Professor of Spanish Ariana Huberman** has shifted her research focus to the field of Jewish studies. This fall, she was listed as a co-editor of *Memoria y Representación: Literatura y Cultura Judía en América Latina*, a text for which she co-wrote the introduction and contributed a paper on the legacy of the Holocaust in Sergio Chejfec's novel *Lenta Biografía*.

In 2006, Huberman presented papers on Alejandro Jodorowsky's films and his interest in Jewish mysticism and exoticism.

This summer she plans to write a paper on the influence of Kabbalah in Jodorowsky's narratives that she will present at the Latin American Jewish Studies conference in Buenos Aires.

While Huberman has no WMST courses on her spring schedule, she has integrated numerous women writers into her Latin American Literature II syllabus.

Director of the Women's Leadership Center Amy Jacobson, together with Graduate Assistant Stephanie Fukes and Professor of Sociology Karen Porter, has been analyzing the results of last spring's

Campus Action Project (CAP), *Finding the Line*, a sexual harassment survey conducted at AU. She and members of the CAP team have presented their research to the regional and state chapters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Jacobson will also present and co-facilitate a session titled "Building Women's Leadership and Activism on Campus" at the National Women's Studies Association's conference this summer.

Jacobson has a son, Nathan, who is five and a half and taking karate, and a daughter, Abigail, who is "two and a half and potty trained . . . yay." Jacobson is "looking forward to spending time at the ocean – on both coasts – this summer."

In Fall 2006, **Associate Professor of Spanish Kerry Kautzman** presented her paper "El acercamiento a la identidad lesbiana en *A mi madre le gustan las mujeres*" ("The Approximation of Lesbian Identity in *My Mother Likes Women*"), which analyzes the "tons of credit" the 2002 movie has received for its "lesbian angle, when in truth the two women never touch, are never intimate, and the one marries a man at the end for immigration reasons."

Kautzman has raised a few eyebrows this year with her choice of posters to hang up for the Division of Modern Languages. Though she didn't realize it when she purchased the posters, other members of the department have since pointed out that all of them represent some form of violent death. "I didn't realize there was a pattern till colleagues complained," Kautzman said. "They don't buy my 'social commentary' justification."

Herrick Librarian and University Archivist Laurie McFadden recently wrote a paper on the history of women's and minority education at AU, which she presented at the ALANA reunion and at a fall 2006 Bergren Forum. She also sent out a summary to the University administrators in hopes that they will "continue to use that information as a selling point for new students and as we develop the University's strategic plan."

Sponsored by the Hornell Rotary Club, McFadden will travel to four African countries – Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe – in May through a Rotary International Group Study Exchange program.

She said that she will be "closely watching the family dynamics and the way that

women are viewed and treated in their roles as mothers, wives, and community members." She plans to visit educational institutions in the countries she visits to learn more about those cultures' ideas regarding the education of women.

McFadden also serves on AU's Affirmative Action-Title IX Committee.

WMST teaching and research has given **Professor of English Susan Mayberry** an opportunity to "go back and recall my heritage and my career as a woman."

This semester, Mayberry's upper-level English course, Literature of the American South, includes readings by several female authors. Mayberry said the first two texts on the syllabus, Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, let her reflect on her personal experiences.

"I can identify with the kind of thing Edna Pontellier experiences, along with the freedom – because I'm not of the upper class – that Janie experiences," she said.

This September will bring the publication of *Can't I Love What I Criticize?: The Masculine and Toni Morrison* by the University of Georgia Press.

Mayberry traveled to Paris in November for an international conference that coincided with the opening of an exhibition Morrison curated at the Louvre.

Mayberry's proudest moment in 2006, however, came when she gave daughter Caroline "a first-rate manicure and pedicure" in preparation for her first semi-formal dance.

In the past year, jet-setting has been the name of the game for **Professor of History Linda Mitchell**, who returned from sabbatical this fall. Between completing research at Ireland's National Archives, touring the castles and monastic sites of southwest Wales, and presenting papers on identity and notions of gender in the Middle Ages in Norwich, England, and Evansville, Ind., Mitchell also managed to crank out the manuscript for *Family Life in the Middle Ages*, which will be published this summer by Greenwood Press.

This semester, Mitchell gave two talks at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, a paper on "Girl Power in a Man's World" at the International Medieval Conference, and a WMST Roundtable right here in Alfred. Next, she will head back to Wales to

wrap up her research, present a paper, and work on a text that she is co-authoring for Longman Press.

Between her travels and her new gig as senior editor of *Historical Reflections*, Mitchell has had little time to hit the links. In fact, as she spent the December heat wave finishing her manuscript, she could only look out her window at the dozens of people taking advantage of the extended golf season. "There's just something so wrong about that image," she said.

Professor of English Susan Morehouse is keeping a full schedule and biscotti tin this semester. Her International Women Writers class explores an eclectic selection of contemporary responses to war and love. She wants to "open up a dialogue between the students and the books" and examine "what it means to be a woman in different societies and times."

Morehouse is teaching an Honors Seminar on children's literature in which students work with pieces ranging from Dr. Seuss and "listening books" to young adult and adventure fiction. She is also team-teaching a playwriting course with Professor of Theater Becky Prophet.

Next year, Morehouse hopes to take a sabbatical to continue various writing projects. Most of the works "will emanate from the traditions of women writing about family," said Morehouse. "It's not what happened in your life that distinguishes stories worth telling," she said, but rather "an interesting way of thinking about it." Morehouse also plans to learn Spanish, as her mother recently moved to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

Professor of History Gary Ostrower is keeping his hands full with United Nations-related articles, history classes, travel, and the occasional latke. Ostrower's current research, which focuses on U.N. conferences and resolutions regarding women, examines the "huge gap between United Nations pronouncements and day-to-day realities, especially with social issues."

Ostrower was the featured guest on a U.S. State Department Web chat on the origins of the U.N. and will contribute three articles on the organization's history to the upcoming *Encyclopedia of Transnational History*.

Ostrower incorporates the history of gender relations into Modern Western History. In Post World War II America, he covers

the women's movement, especially in the late '60s and early '70s.

Ostrower reminds us that while potatoes, onions, and flour make up the bulk of latkes, oft-forgotten baking powder is key. He enjoys homemade applesauce with his, especially from Virginia Rasmussen, who "makes terrific applesauce."

Professor of Sociology Karen Porter's passion for research is apparent in her courses, including Introduction to Data Analysis and Statistics, Research Design and Strategies, and Social Welfare Institutions, which draws from the disciplines of women's studies, social work, political science, history, and sociology.

She is advising an independent study of "secondary victims" of domestic violence, primarily children who witness such scenes.

Porter is chairing the committee for Paula Epps's senior project, which studies the relationship between the sexual practices of women ages 18-25 and the sex education those women received in adolescence.

Through the Rural Justice Institute, Porter is tracking data on domestic violence incidents as reported by the New York State Police. She supports the minimum wage increase, since people supporting families "cannot be self-sufficient at \$5.15 an hour," and she noted that the RJI deals with broad-based issues of justice.

It is an understatement to say that **Professor of Theater Becky Prophet** is "deeply involved" with Alfred and theater. In January she attended the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival's Region II event at SUNY New Paltz where she ran a directing laboratory, taught a seminar on textual analysis, and served on a panel called "Teaching Theater Across the Campus" in which she highlighted ways of linking theatre with women's studies. "I feel that [KC/ACTF] is a good place for me to emphasize women's roles in theatre and academics," she said. Prophet is also on the Region II Executive Committee and Leadership Task Force.

In addition to her membership in Omicron Delta Kappa, Shades, and Alfredian Dramatists, Prophet is a community leader, serving on the Alfred Village Board and co-chairing the Alfred Bicentennial Committee.

During her "free time," Prophet enjoys cross-country skiing, hiking, cooking,

reading, and spending time with her family. "I used to scuba dive," she said, "but it's difficult in the Kanakadea."

Assistant Professor of English Melissa Ryan has remained very involved with WMST this year. She published an article on Native American writer S. Alice Callahan in March. She has also completed an essay on Central New York suffragist Matilda Joselyn Gage for a forthcoming book of collected essays in women's history and is wrapping up a study of Lydia Maria Child's Indian fiction. And while she didn't teach any WMST courses this year, she "did some soul-searching" on fundamental questions of feminist theory in her fall 2006 literary criticism seminar.

Being the faculty advisor to WIC continues to be one of the most rewarding experiences of her professional life; Ryan notes, "These fabulous women have tremendous feminist energy, and their numbers are growing – and that just perks me right up."

Major developments in Ryan's life include a gym membership and the acquisition of an iPod, which she promptly filled with 12-minute mile songs for the treadmill.

Associate Professor of Communication Studies Pamela Schultz is incorporating gender communication in her Interpersonal Communication class this semester.

"I try to cover gender communication issues in all the classes that I teach," she says. Schultz is also working with John Douard, a Rutgers University professor and New Jersey assistant district attorney, on a chapter for a volume of a groundbreaking series on sex offenders. She is also working with Douard on a prospectus for a book on "moral monsters" and how the metaphor influences approaches to criminal justice and public policy.

Schultz's 2005 book, *Not Monsters: Analyzing the Stories of Child Molesters*, was translated into Japanese and released last fall.

Off campus, Schultz has been "having fun doing the mom thing." Daughter Elieah is "quite the drama queen," playing the violin, singing, and performing. Son Brysen turned two in March. "He's in constant motion," she said. "He makes me wish I were 10 years younger and didn't tire out so easily!"

Associate Professor of German and Chair of Modern Languages Sandra Singer has organized WMST Roundtables for the past three years. Her research focuses on 19th- and 20th-century American and Canadian women seeking higher education in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. She presented a conference paper on the subject this year and will give one next year. "There are some really neat, active women in the 1870s and 1890s who really inspire me," she says.

In between teaching and research, Singer enjoys walking her "darling" dog Kory and spending time with her extended family. She is learning to knit – her first project was a scarf for Associate Professor of Spanish Kerry Kautzman.

Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Stein has yet to teach any WMST courses here at Alfred, "but I bring those issues in all my classes regularly." He has, in the past, taught Feminist Political Theory, Introduction to Women's Studies, and Sex and the Body Politic. He is also writing a paper about Virginia Woolf and how she helps us critique liberal political theory.

Stein is co-hosting a jazz show on WALF this semester with Professor of Sociology Larry Greil. He also enjoys traveling to Santiago, Chile, with his family.

Reference Librarian Susan Strong spent six weeks of last summer on the coast of Maine with her husband, Professor of English Paul Strong, indoctrinating their grandchild into the intricacies of New England vacationing. Sophia, then about 14 months old, learned such important vocabulary as "monkey," "chimpanzee," "kayak," "boat," and "lobster buoy." Golden retrievers Siena and Jamison came along for the trip as well. In Fall 2006, Strong "was a delegate from Alfred's Phi Beta Kappa chapter to the Triennial Council meeting of Phi Beta Kappa in Atlanta." She continues to edit her manuscript on the experience of Alfred women in the 19th century, and she enjoyed serving on the selection committee for the 2007 Abigail Allen Award.

Though only one of the classes she taught this year officially cross-lists as WMST, Professor of English Fiona

Tolhurst takes the opportunity in all her classes to dash students' misconceptions of medieval women as damsels in distress. "It's important to know we didn't invent cool female characters in the 1960s," she said. Doing her part to bring that knowledge to the masses, in 2006 Tolhurst contributed an entry on Guinevere to *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*, and published the article "Why We Should Teach (and Our Students Perform) *The Legend of Good Women*" in *Teaching New English*. She has also been working on a third article, "The Sacred and Profane in the Books of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe," for a festschrift in honor of Princeton's John V. Fleming.

Tolhurst served on the WMST executive committee during the 2006-'07 academic year, helping to standardize methods for evaluating minors' senior theses and presentations.

Longtime radical and Associate Professor of Management Frances Viggiani continues to make gender issues a focus in College of Business classrooms. Her students "examine notions of 'male' and 'female' management styles," explore changing gender roles in the workplace and in the home, and discuss diversity in a global business environment." Her classes also address "the strains and successes of combining a corporate management role with managing a household" and consider how corporate policy could be shaped by "a vision for work-life integration."

This semester, Viggiani presided over a joint meeting of her graduate class and the Women's Leadership Academy seminar, giving students an opportunity to discuss sexuality in the workplace.

In her research, Viggiani continues to pursue questions raised in her doctoral dissertation, "Democratic Hierarchies in the Workplace." Her several works in progress use case studies to explore "cultures of democracy," analyzing the implications of corporate structure and asking, for example, "What does it mean if [a company] says it is a collective organization?"

Proving that CoB professors are not necessarily conservative, Viggiani owns a surfboard and has taken surfing lessons.

Fun, Fluffy YA Lit Fails Teen Readers

Lily Katz

Lauren Barnholdt has capitalized on the genre of reality television with her new young adult novel, *Reality Chick*.

Barnholdt's story focuses on Ally, a Syracuse University freshman who becomes a part of the reality television series *In The House*. As Ally navigates her first year of college, she also deals with the constant presence of cameras as every aspect of her life is publicized.

Reality Chick adheres to all the conventions of a romance novel, following Ally through the good and the bad of college life and taking readers on a familiar plot-based roller coaster ride.

Barnholdt's genius lies not in her writing but instead in her Web-based marketing strategy. In addition to a Web site, Barnholdt also maintains a MySpace page and a Livejournal. These sites allow those not inclined to enter a bookstore to discover the world of the novel and Barnholdt's own world through the online medium.

Barnholdt's Web site presents her in classic MySpace fashion. The 27-year-old's featured headshot is a poorly lit self-portrait that depicts her clad in a white spaghetti-strapped camisole. The site's palette is predominantly pastel as Barnholdt showers her audience with a pink, white, and purple floral motif.

Both the language and content of the site are geared towards a younger audience. In the "About" section of her website Barnholdt says that she "spends most of her time reading and watching lots and lots of reality TV," and begins the next section with "Hi, I'm Lauren." She is nothing if not personable, and her short narratives and synopses are easy to read. There is no attempt at sophisticated language or detailed explanations.

The next section, titled, "All You Really Want to Know," contains random bulleted facts and echoes the Internet surveys and "memes" so popular among the adolescent set. Barnholdt reveals her favorite reality

show, color, book, and beverage and ends with, "If you want to know anything else, you can email me and I'll probably tell you."

The site also includes Barnholdt's contact information, details on her online course for aspiring YA authors, and a form that lets users book her for speaking engagements at schools and libraries.

Barnholdt's sunny online persona and teen-like tastes entice adolescent girls to purchase her nine-dollar novel. In a nation where the literacy rate seems to be in perpetual decline, the enthusiasm she prompts for reading seems encouraging.

The problem, then, lies in the context of adolescents' reading. When reading *Reality Chick*, young adults can surf through the pages without feeling

challenged by language or content. Intensive analysis is neither necessary nor possible.

While we hope that adolescents are doing that intensive analysis in the classroom – on perhaps more canonical literature – the reality is that they aren't always getting that reading experience during school hours. For many teens, light reading is the only reading.

Is this what we really want? Many college students break out the beach books each summer to wind down after an intense semester, but they do not make up the core of our reading material.

What's more, should someone whose only YA novel contains pure fluff be teaching classes? Barnholdt's course content suggests that YA fiction is formulaic and one needs merely to understand the conventions. The implication, then, is that young adults have no ability to appreciate literary depth. This undermines a large group of intellectually advanced adolescent readers who desire reading that is both fun and complex.

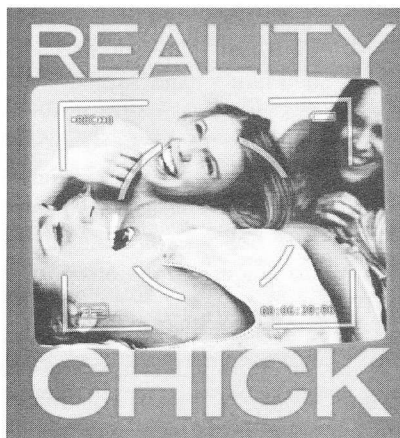
Young adults are not unintelligent people, and while we all deserve a trashy novel now and then, adolescent readers also de-

serve texts that challenge them. Books like Barnholdt's are entertaining, but texts with real literary value can be life-changing. Be they classic or contemporary, canonical or not, these are the stories we need to share with the up-and-coming generation of young readers.

According to the 1970 feminist document The Woman-Identified Woman, "A _____ is the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion."

- A. consciousness-raising group**
- B. feminist**
- C. lesbian**
- D. protest**

Answer on back



Barnholdt's novel cover

From the Journals of the WLA

The primary text for the "Introduction to Gender and Leadership" seminar is Deborah Rhode's essay collection, *The Difference Difference Makes: Women and Leadership*. WLA participants reflect on the readings in weekly journal responses; they "show amazing perspective and introspection, which are essential to leadership development," says Jacobson.

"The aspect I found most interesting was ... about the lack of [female] leadership today when so many women before us have started to lead the way. And maybe it's a misconstrued perception of feminism young women try to avoid because they find it completely intimidating and a brutal competitive lifestyle that they simply want to not concern themselves with."

WLA Launches at AU

it, "Madam Speaker" has entered the lexicon of American politics, and "President Clinton" may soon develop a whole new meaning; women are running classrooms and courtrooms, companies and countries.

"Women arguably have more opportunities than ever before," agrees Women's Leadership Center director Amy Jacobson. And yet, says Jacobson, "I believe an examination of women and leadership is absolutely critical for college students at this phase in our history."

Young women have taken such full advantage of educational programs designed to maximize their success that it might seem there's little to examine.

According to Jacobson, "Studies show that women generally enter college with academic qualifications similar to, or perhaps even superior to male students. And women typically perform well academically while in college."

However, such studies may not tell the whole story. As Jacobson points out, "That success does not always translate into 'success' after college in terms of pay scale, job satisfaction, or positional leadership." She adds that "women

are still vastly underrepresented in certain fields, such as engineering and politics. And in fields such as the law, women are graduating in equal numbers as men from law school, but are not equally represented in judgeships or partnerships in law firms."

To address these disparities, the Women's Leadership Center has created the Women's Leadership Academy, a program "designed to benefit students who may or may not envision themselves as leaders right now, but who are willing to push themselves a little to realize their potential."

Participants begin with an introductory seminar on gender and leadership, take two other relevant regular-curriculum courses, and complete the classroom requirements with a "capstone" seminar in the senior year focused on individual student projects that put "their leadership skills into action."

Academy participants also develop relationships with off-campus mentors, perform community service, and develop a portfolio of leadership activities completed during the program.

The inaugural class of the Academy met weekly this spring to discuss readings in leadership theory, share ex-



Members of the Women's Leadership Academy gather for a photo. Pictured (clockwise from bottom left) are Erica Banks, Nikki Giraffo, Jessica Henderson, Mae Pennisi, Jessica Cabrera, Jessy Santana, Brittanie FitzGibbons, and Amy Putnam.

periences from their own lives, and benefit from a variety of perspectives. Guest lecturers this semester included Provost Suzanne Buckley, Vice President for Student Affairs Kathy Woughter, and faculty from across campus, a reflection of the "truly interdisciplinary" nature of the topic and of the program's emphasis on collaboration.

The Academy's focus on collaborative relationships extends beyond campus as well. "Being able to tap the wonderful pool of talent and inspiration" provided by AU alumnae has been central to the Women's Leadership Center's success, says Jacobson.

"Alumnae are the majority of our Women of Influence speakers, they serve as mentors for cur-

rent students, they host site visits at their places of employment, and they have provided summer internship opportunities," she notes.

The Academy promises "a network of women who help each other succeed"; accordingly, each participant "is matched with an alumna mentor in her field of interest, and they correspond via email. These mentoring relationships have been of tremendous benefit already," says Jacobson.

Jacobson has particularly enjoyed watching this first Academy class develop into a community of leaders. "They are an incredibly diverse group, with diverse opinions and experiences. And yet they have coalesced in ways that surprise and impress me."

"The double standard as Rhode describes it is when men are held to different standards than women... We assert more masculine stereotypes and are condemned or we assert female ones and are condemned....Have I ever experienced the double standard? Yes at my summer jobs, where I ... help out with maintenance and dirty work. Although I might not be as knowledgeable about mechanic stuff, I'm a quick learner and I'm not afraid of heavy lifting and dirty work. My bosses tend to overlook me or ignore me. The other guys are asked to do tasks twice as much as me. I feel very un-useful and superficial. I always feel I need to prove my abilities and don't feel included in the boys' club."

"I don't think that all men follow the masculine style and I don't think all women follow the feminine style. I do feel, however, that sometimes women feel it is necessary to take the male approach to gain respect, while men can feel comfortable in whatever role they choose ..."

"As for the differences in leadership style – well, it depends on the person, again. I have a female professor who is really pretty, nice, and sweet – but do not mess with her! She is tough. So, while she may have more nurturing qualities, that does not mean you can show up late for class, not do your homework, or not respect her."

"[Rhode's claim that the lack of mentoring perpetuates the lack of women in certain fields] is one of the truest statements I have ever heard and it really strikes a chord with me, especially when you have no real connections in the workforce. It just seems especially [true] in the incredibly individualistic society we live in."

You've Come a Long Way, Bond

Aaron Margulis

Casino Royale has long action sequences in exotic locales, a tricked-out car, over-the-top product placement, and a large-breasted woman who rides a white horse on a beach before being seduced by 007. But for all that, liberal feminism is the chief concern of the movie.

Casino Royale was Ian Fleming's first book, and it deals with the beginning of James Bond's career. Daniel Craig makes his debut as Bond, taking over for Pierce Brosnan. Director Martin Campbell (*GoldenEye*) and screenwriting partners Neal Purvis and Robert Wade (*The World is Not Enough*, *Die Another Day*) take this movie as an opportunity to recreate perhaps the most prominent figure of masculinity in popular cinema.

The first new female character, Solange (Caterina Murino), literally enters on a white horse, with gawking children in tow. She is unquestionably objectified: her conventional, voluptuous physical beauty and beach attire define her entrance.

But the very next shot undermines the notion that she is objectified *because she is a woman*. Bond emerges from the nearby water in a glamour shot straight out of *10*: a slow motion zoom of the wet, well-muscled man barely contained by designer hotpants. (See photo.) The juxtaposition of these shots is no accident.

Solange is the lover of domineering midlevel villain Alex Dimitrios (Simon Abkarian), so when she appears to succumb to Bond's seduction, compromises her lover, and is later killed, she seems to take on a familiar role. In *Goldfinger* (1964), the archetypal Bond movie, this character is Jill Masterson (Shirley Eaton).

However, Solange defies the floozy stereotype; she is immediately aware that Bond is after Dimitrios, but she seems content to use Bond for her own pleasure. Regardless of her inability to change her situation, she is entirely aware of the nature of her two lovers and her relationship to them.

When Solange turns up dead, presumably tortured and killed by henchmen of Le Chiffre (Mads Mikkelsen), we come to another intentional departure from the more traditional, chivalrous Bond of *Goldfinger*.

Sean Connery took Masterson's death personally and regarded her as innocent. However, *Casino Royale* makes a point of showing Bond's reaction to Solange's murder as neutral. He does not take personal offense, and he does not regard her as innocent. This is a deliberate departure from Bond tradition, as well as a sign that the purpose of this installment is to redefine Bond himself. *This* Bond regards women as free-thinking people.

Enter Vesper Lynd (Eva Green), the most important character of the film. As Bond Girls go, Lynd is shockingly normal. From *Dr. No* to *Die Another Day*, nearly all female protagonists in the series have been in some way striking. These characters have been famously beautiful, super-competent, or both.

Perhaps the apex of the "big breasts-big brain" era was 1999's *The World is Not Enough*, in which Denise Richards plays atomic scientist Dr. Christmas Jones.

But Lynd is different. She works for the English treasury, speaks intelligently but not absurdly, and dresses appropriately. She acknowledges workplace difficulties that are meant to be interpreted as normal: respond-

ing to actual and perceived sexism by adjusting the way she performs gender. Lynd is certainly meant to be attractive, but in contrast to characters like Christmas Jones, Pussy Galore, Miranda Frost, Octopussy, and May Day, neither Lynd's name nor her character can reasonably be viewed as a joke.

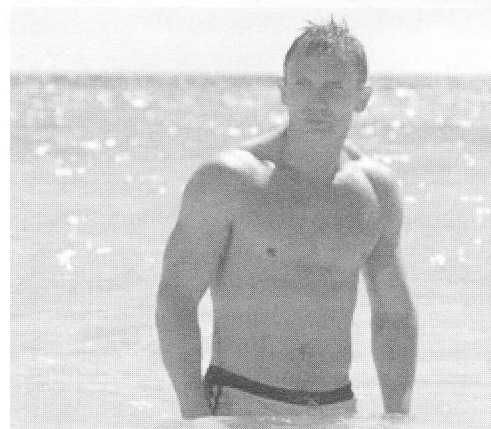
Casino Royale continues to deal with issues of gender, doing so rather directly in a torture scene. But the position of the film on gender relations is not always clear. For instance, the villain Le Chiffre gets emasculated in part for failing to protect "his woman." Stephen Obanno (Isaach De Bankolé), whom Le Chiffre owes millions of dollars, nearly takes a machete to the wrist of Valenka (Ivana Milicevic), then mocks Le Chiffre for his failure to object, suggesting to Valenka that she should find a more manly lover.

Should we hear Obanno as the voice of the filmmakers, pointing out the personal weakness of the story's chief villain? Or is Obanno, himself a terrorist, meant to be an unreliable philosopher of sorts?

The film's position on gender relations becomes even fuzzier through the romantic relationship between Bond and Lynd. It is difficult to tell which aspects of the relationship are genuine and which are performed.

Perhaps the punctuating moment is when Bond utters the final line from the book: "The job is done, and the bitch is dead."

The film clearly presents this



Daniel Craig does his best impression of Bo Derek, circa 1979.

line as that of a wounded, defensive man responding to betrayal. The word "bitch" is not used lightly, and M (Dame Judi Dench) responds immediately by explaining Lynd's actions as those of a rational, vulnerable, and considerate person. She eliminates any justification Bond thought he had to use the word.

Casino Royale does not fundamentally challenge contemporary, liberal conceptions of gender, at least not when seen in isolation. However, even where it establishes fairly conservative values as normative (the somewhat thin, moderately breasted, white woman as beautiful; women as less comfortable with hand-to-hand violence than men; men and women as only heterosexual...) it is clear that the writers and director chose to redefine Bond through his relationships with women.

I am not sure whether *Casino Royale* constructively challenges the misogynistic values of its predecessors or sneakily re-establishes similar values. But if you are interested in gender roles and their portrayal in popular media, this film offers many thought-provoking scenes.

Children of (Wo)men

Abigail Griffith

It's hard to believe that one of the year's most feminist films was released under the title *Children of Men*. Yet, the title of director Alfonso Cuarón's latest film is meant to be ironic.

Loosely based on the P.D. James novel of the same name, *Children of Men* takes place in a dystopian world in which women can no longer bear children. The story follows Theo Faron (Clive Owen), a reluctant hero who must protect Kee (Claire Hope-Ashitey), the first pregnant woman in almost twenty years. Theo and Kee must contend with the threat of an increasingly totalitarian British government and a desperate immigrant-friendly faction, the "Fishes," that plans to use Kee's child as a political bargaining chip. Together with Kee's caretaker, Miriam (Pam Ferris), Theo must get Kee safely to the mysterious "Human Project" to deliver her baby away from danger.

Despite its setting in 2027, *Children of Men* has much more to say about today's world than about tomorrow's. While Cuarón avoids heavy-handedness, he manages to give every detail political and social weight, from Theo's faded 2012 London Olympics sweatshirt to the Homeland Security sign over the entrance of a rundown refugee camp.

He also weaves feminist themes throughout *Children of Men*.

Moral Mothers and Warring Brothers

Leftist Julian (Julianne Moore) plays a brief but crucial part in *Children* as the leader of the Fishes, a separatist group fighting for the rights of immigrants, or "fugees." Once a terrorist organization, the Fishes have

eschewed violent tactics by the outset of the film.

Julian is the person who views Kee as an individual, and not as some object to be manipulated to serve the Fishes' cause. Her morality wins out over ideology.

Unfortunately, Julian's strict moral code and concern for Kee annoy some of the men in

the pro-fighting faction. Cuarón emphasizes that the cooperation of these women and similarly minded men will save humankind, not the male ideologues who kill in the name of preserving life.

It's a Girl

One of *Children of Men*'s most powerful moments occurs



Clive Owen and Claire-Hope Ashitey star in *Children of Men*. While the film contains clear feminist themes, its treatment of race is problematic.

the group who hope to incite a violent uprising against the government.

Julian's appreciation for humanity has kept the Fishes from crumbling into chaos, but following her murder the group backslides into terrorism. The men's fanaticism overshadows their appreciation for human life, and they quickly become as ruthless as the government.

Julian, as a mother who has lost her own child, understands the sanctity of life. Miriam also understands Kee's rights as a mother and a person, as do all of the other female characters that strive to protect Kee and her baby.

It's difficult to ignore the fact that all the women in *Children of Men* are staunchly anti-war and respect both life and one another, while men constitute

when Luke encounters Theo and Kee shortly after the birth of her child. The Fishes' leader reverently acknowledges the second chance this baby boy represents for humanity.

Theo then snorts and smugly corrects the confused man: the child isn't a boy. The first baby born to humanity in almost two decades is a girl.

For months, the majority of the Fishes, and Kee herself, have assumed that her baby will be a boy because it is supposed to be a messiah. Thus, *Children of Men* demonstrates society's absurd commitment to patriarchal ideals even in the face of danger and extinction. If these characters' minds hadn't been tainted with such prior beliefs, they too might have seen the benefit in Kee having a female child.

Who's Your Daddy?

In a film called *Children of Men*, it's rather humorous that we never learn the identity of the child's father. Kee is no Virgin Mary; she wryly states that even she doesn't know.

Kee's lack of concern over her child's parentage is justified, however. It is Kee who has overcome infertility, set humanity on a course to salvation, carried the baby, and worked tirelessly to protect it. However, the film seems to give more credit to Theo than Kee.

This failure to recognize Kee as an active hero is one of *Children of Men*'s greatest flaws. Theo, a white male, is often cast as a protector and an intellect, while Kee, a black woman, gets a strictly supporting role. She's objectified by all parties and portrayed as "rustic" and uneducated, two traits that become glaringly apparent in the scenes she shares with Theo. Given the strong feminist themes in the movie, it's disappointing that the film slips into insulting racial stereotypes.

**In what year
was the
National
Organization for
Women
founded?**

- A. 1906
- B. 1936
- C. 1966
- D. 1996

Answer on back

Shades and the Women's Issues Coalition: Two Groups Covering the Same Ground?

Crystal Lehman

Four women's student groups exist at AU: the Career Women's Association, the Society of Women Engineers, Shades, and the Women's Issues Coalition (WIC). Of these, each of the former two concerns itself with a particular career field and how women can excel in those fields. WIC and Shades, on the other hand, are two groups that focus more generally on "women's issues," with the dividing factor of race. WIC is made up almost entirely of white members, whereas Shades – formerly "Shades of Ebony" – primarily attracts women (and men) of color.

As a white woman and long-time WIC member, I have found this divide both uncomfortable to think about and impossible to stop thinking about. Why had Shades been created in 1989, when WIC already existed? What about WIC pushed away those who would become the first Shades members? I guessed that in the late 1980s WIC must have had the same problem as the larger Women's Liberation Movement – a focus primarily on white, economically privileged women. Discussion and activism based on, for example, the issue of reproductive rights would

have centered around the right to terminate a pregnancy, when many women of color would have been more concerned about the right to bring pregnancies to term in the face of forced sterilizations and other methods of population control that have targeted Black women, Indigenous women, and others.

I envisioned a

**"Shades was
no 'reaction' to
white women."**

history wherein the soon-to-be-founders of Shades took one look at WIC, raised a collective eyebrow, and set to work forming a group that would address their needs. I assumed Shades had begun as a reaction to WIC. When a current Shades member indicated that, as far as she knew, Shades had been created before WIC, my theory tottered; and when I had the opportunity to correspond via e-mail with Shades founding member Cheryll Sibley-Albold, my theory evaporated.

Noting that the group's name was meant to reflect their desire to "represent all the different colors of African Descendent women," Sibley-Albold explained

that Shades had been created "to bring Black women together on the campus." She made no mention of tensions between white and Black women, simply stating that AU students had tried and failed to create Black sororities and fraternities, and that "Shades was seen as an alternative to starting a sorority and [as] a group that could have a broader mission."

A coordinator in the campus minority affairs office first suggested forming the group, and started gathering potential members. "She thought it was important for us to come together as women because there was a lot of back biting," Sibley-Albold remembered, "women fight[ing] over men on campus, people accusing people of not being Black enough." She described the coordinator's suggestion of creating Shades as a call to "stop the madness and let us talk about these issues as a sisterhood of Black women."

Perhaps, she acknowledged, things have changed since her time on campus, now that we are "a more multi-racial society" – but she maintained that "it can be important for women or anyone of like experiences, issues and goals to bond together." This, I realized, applies

not only to women as a group, but to women of color as a particular subset of women; while there is a use for a general women's group on campus, and while that group should represent issues of interest to the widest possible range of women, there is also a need for a group specifically for and about women of color – and that need isn't about what white women are or aren't doing, or what the white-dominated women's group is or isn't doing. "I personally joined [Shades] because I am a woman of color and I want to hear the opinions of other women on issues that affect us all," said Caretta Morris, a current Shades member. Shades exists not because its members wanted to join WIC and were not welcomed, but because women of color have things to discuss and hash out amongst themselves. No matter which group came first – and, after some research into the AU archives, this question is still open to debate – Shades was

no "reaction" to white women.

Finding myself in favor of the continued separation between Shades and WIC – with, mind you, as much collaboration as suits both groups – I hope I am not being the white feminist of whom Angela Davis speaks, offering "such frail excuses as, 'We invited them to our meeting, but they just don't seem to be interested in women's issues.'" This conclusion is not meant to serve as an excuse for WIC to stick to traditionally "white" feminist concerns and ignore issues more pertinent to women of color; it is meant to express my realization that Shades would exist no matter what WIC did or didn't do – because Shades creates a necessary space on this campus, and, though it took more time than I wish it had for me to realize it, white people are neither the reason for which that space formed a couple of decades ago, nor the axis around which that space revolves today.

**In what year did India
give the vote to women?**

- A. 1924**
- B. 1950**
- C. 1962**
- D. 1973**

Answer on back

Alumna Thrives in Male-Dominated Field

Lily Katz

I met AU alumna Jen McClure on the grid, or catwalk, of C.D. Smith Theatre. She, though far more experienced than I, was also struggling to hang lights for the upcoming show because the cords, which we both like to tie up neatly, were scattered all over the narrow footpath, making working in the dark space incredibly difficult. We shared the annoyance and displayed our frustration by yelling at the lights we were trying to get up. She laughed when she noticed that I too was blaming the inanimate object in my hands, and introduced herself.

In the AU scene shop, she made herself known because of her incredibly strong work ethic and her willingness to learn and understand. As a transfer from a community college in New Jersey, she graduated with a BFA from AU's School of Art and Design. During her time here she welded, created extraordinary props (a bear skin rug complete with claws, teeth and a head that could support human weight, and an old-fashioned printing press, among others), and handled almost every tool in the shop by her senior year. The Division of Performing Arts welcomed Jen to its staff in the spring of 2005, following her December 2004 graduation. She became the Assistant Technical Director (ATD), working under then-Assistant Professor of Technical Theater Sean O'Skea.

"I was a bit spoiled because I was working with people who didn't work me into the ground, and I had the ability to ask questions without feeling admonished," Jen said.

I have always admired Jen for her attention to detail. Because I tended to be a perfectionist, she would show me when it was all right to let the unimportant things go. She forced me to ignore the stapled mess I had made while making a slip cover for the top of a wooden bench, explaining that it didn't actually matter because the back of the bench would never be seen by an audience. As my boss, commonly referred to as "Boss Lady," she would often turn to me and ask, "So, do you know how to do [fill in an array of odd jobs I usually had never heard of]?"

Much of the ATD job consists of training and assisting both the work study students and those who take Technical Theater. As with many general education courses, there were some students who took the class to fill the requirement and cared little about absorbing information.

According to Jen, "The problem with the shop is that men who have been exposed to carpentry think that it will be like shop class, and try to play around in the shop." These boys had a tendency to take one look at the thin, 5'3" 25-year-old, and assume that they would need to assist her. "It always took a few weeks for them to realize that I really did know what I was doing, and that they would have to follow my directions, but eventually they all started listening to me, with only a few exceptions," she said.

After leaving AU in May 2006, Jen worked at Merry-Go-Round Playhouse as the props manager under AU alumnus and former ATD Shaminda Amarakoon. Jen speaks favorably of him because he "was fabulous to work under because he always says 'I don't care what parts you have.'"

Currently, Jen is on the props crew for the Ringling Brothers Circus where of the roughly 40 to 50 crew members, only four are women. Three of those women are working wardrobe. The switch to this male-oriented job happened this January, and "it took a lot of adjustment." According to Jen, "Working harder than everyone else can often get you a lot of attention, but should this be necessary because I'm a woman?"

"Women in the field seem to approach



Jen McClure '04 and Lily Katz '07

tech jobs in two ways," says Jen. The first is to be aggressive, always take initiative, and loudly announce that the work can be done alone, without assistance. The second is to "smile sweetly and always offer to help," quietly pushing your way into independence. Jen chooses the latter and says, "Unfortunately, I think it helps to be an attractive female. I can show people a flashy smile and, eventually, people will acknowledge that I can do the work. When I first got [to the circus] and would go to lift something, people would always say, 'Oh no honey, here, I'll help you.' Now, however, I've proven that I'm competent, I work hard, and I'm not ashamed to ask for help when I need it or ask how to do something if I don't know how."

Jen stresses the importance of professionalism in the work place. "Demanding respect as women in exceptionally challenging," she cautioned. "As a women, you're either being 'a bitch' if you are forceful, or 'a flirt' if you're friendly."

Jen feels successful and speculates that there should be some changes made to the world of tech theatre. This is due to the movement of more college graduates to the field, many of whom are taught by people who embrace a multi-gendered scene and costume shop. She reminded me to "make sure you're not backing the female stereotype; always lift something you know you can, be professional, but friendly, and always ask for help when you need it. Don't try to prove yourself by doing a project you don't know how to do, or using a tool you don't know how to use; being humble is important."

In what year was the decision made to pay female champs at Wimbledon the same amount as males?

- A. 1919**
- B. 1941**
- C. 1978**
- D. 2007**

Answer on back

Alfred's Hidden Home Ec History

Abby Tripp

The history of women at Alfred University is one that I, like most students involved with WMST, know well. When I joined *The Alphadelphian* as a sophomore, I got a crash course in AU's co-ed history and quickly learned how much we have to be proud of.

Something nagged at me, however. The dates at the beginning of our timeline were cause for celebration:

In 1836, women made up the majority of the first matriculating class at the Alfred Select School.

In 1846, Abigail Allen founded The Alphadelphian Society.

In 1917, Julia Wahl became editor-in-chief of the *Fiat Lux*.

It was during the latter half of the 20th century that women faculty gained full professorships and administrative positions. At the same time, Title IX increased funding for women's varsity athletics. And, of course, we have 1983: the year our WMST Program was born.

The middle of the timeline, however, has a lot more gaps in it. For three years, a question has lingered in the back of my mind: What were women at AU doing then?

According to University Archivist Laurie McFadden, the potential reasons for their absence were myriad. Most of them, however, tied into what

she cited as a general shift in American culture and social mores during the 20th century.

Wartime was a good time for college women, she conceded, as it opened up more leadership opportunities for such women as Wahl and Doris Hill, who won the Student Senate presidency at the end of World War II.

By the time World War II came to a close, however, many women across the U.S. saw the pursuit of a BA as secondary to the pursuit of an MRS.

One educational trend that both arose out of and fed into this phenomenon was the rise of home economics.

At Alfred? Yes, here too.

In her essay "Women at Alfred: Pioneers of American Coeducation," Kathryn Kerns traces the evolution of AU's home economics curriculum from its birth out of AU's own New York State School of Agriculture in 1908, when cooking and sewing courses were offered to women as the men down the hall took general agriculture courses. In 1927, home science became a major offered through the agricultural college.

AU's program was part of a nationwide movement that began in the late 19th century under the leadership of MIT graduate Ellen Richards and former AU student Melvil Dewey.

While the idea that home eco-

nomics curricula subsumed liberal education opportunities for women has a high "ick-factor" for many contemporary feminists, home economics educators believed that they could generate greater opportunities for women by working within the system. Many home ec proponents suggested that this course of study was the most effective way of getting women into the science classroom and, eventually, out into the world as activists for social reform through better nutrition, more hygienic living and working environments, and healthier lifestyles. It was also suggested that home economics afforded future farm wives the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the family business; indeed, this was a driving force behind the field's success at AU.

Critics of home economics made the same arguments we make against it today, foremost of these being that the study of domestic activities promotes traditional and, therefore, oppressive gender roles. Ultimately, these critical voices won out, and by the 1960s and '70s, home ec faded from the college landscape.

Today, however, there is an increased interest in home ec's history, with Cornell University at the movement's forefront. Interestingly, some of the biggest advocates for building a record of home ec's history have been

feminist scholars. Joan Jacobs Brumberg (author of *Fasting Girls* and *The Body Project*) has spoken out in favor of Cornell's archival projects, commenting, "What other group of American women did so much, all over the country, and got so little credit? ... We must do everything we can to preserve and organize records and materials from this important female ghetto."

At AU, we have thus far failed to heed Brumberg's advice. Special Collections has course catalogs and photographs that document our institutional foray into the field of home economics, and it is our responsibility as feminist scholars to bring this information to light alongside stories of publicly read graduation essays, women in engineering, and the Brick girls who went on to great things.

We need to embrace this moment in our University's history. At Alfred, the home economics curriculum served a pretty radical function. In a rural community such as this, it mattered that farmers' daughters, sisters, and wives had access to higher education that met their needs.

Rather than regarding our home ec history as a source of shame, we need to remember it for what it was — a practical and effective way to keep women in Alfred's classrooms when society was pushing them out.

What was the name of the first women's organization at Alfred?

- A. Fiat Femina
- B. The Alphadelphian Society
- C. The Ladies' League
- D. The Abigail Allen Fan Club

Sources

"From Domesticity to Modernity: What Was Home Economics?"

<<http://rmc.library.cornell.edu/homeEc/>>.

HEARTH Home Economics Archive

<<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu>>

"Women at Alfred: Pioneers of American Coeducation" *A Sesqui-centennial History of Alfred University: Essays in Change*

Women's Trivia Answers

Alphadelphian Society
 page 20: B. The Alphadelphian Society
 page 19: D. 2007
 page 18: B. 1950
 page 17: C. 1966
 page 14: C. Lesbian
 page 8: C. Margery Kempe
 page 4: A. Sojourner Truth