Bridging the Gap between Women's Studies and Medicine: Bradley Lewis

an interview by Molly Brown, Ph.D. student, English and Film Studies

Bradley Lewis majored in biology and studied medicine before focusing on psychiatry and psychoanalysis at George Washington University. After finishing his psychiatric training he took a faculty position in the department of psychiatry at GWU. A course in the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis inspired Dr. Lewis to begin an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in “Human Sciences,” a program in humanities and social theory, rather than continue with his psychoanalytic training.

Currently, Dr. Lewis articulates his scholarship under the broad rubric of “Medical Humanities,” but his work is most focused on feminist and cultural studies of medicine. He is the Cultural Studies Editor of The Journal of Medical Humanities, and at the University of Pittsburgh he has a joint faculty position in Arts and Sciences (Cultural Studies, Women’s Studies, and Bioethics) and in the Department of Psychiatry.

1. Can you elaborate on your scholarship in the “Medical Humanities?”

“Medical Humanities” is in the ballpark of what I do. I say ballpark because I’m more post-humanist in my approach than most in medical humanities. But, I use “medical humanities” because it is better understood and has a more established institutional structure than “feminist and cultural studies of medicine.”

2. Can you comment on your particular positivism between the sciences and the humanities?

Like many in the broad domain of feminist and cultural studies of science, I’m interested in using critical reading tools from the humanities to help tease out hidden assumptions, analogies, models, and associations in scientific texts—particularly those that foster or contribute to oppressive relationships between people. I don’t see this as “anti-science.” To me this kind of work helps science “self-correct” one of the main stated goals of science. Beyond that, it also helps valorize other forms of knowledge that are often minimized relative to science, which for me is also not “anti-science.” It’s about putting science in perspective.

3. Can you mention some of the topics of your research and writing?

I’ve tried to foster interdisciplinary work between healthcare and humanities by publishing articles like “Reading Medical Studies of Medicine,” “Postmodernism and Psychiatry,” and “Cyborgs and the Politics of P rosa.” My book-length manuscript is called “Rerouting Psychiatry: The Birth of a Postmodern Clinic.”

4. What courses do you teach through your joint appointment?

In the fall, in addition to my clinical teaching, I teach a Philosophy of Healthcare course and in the spring I teach either a Cultural Studies or Women’s Studies course. Example classes have been Feminist and Cultural Studies of Technoscience, Psychoanalysis and Cultural Identifications, and currently Feminist Theory and the Body. In the summer I teach Medical Sociology and Cultural Studies.

5. Can you explain the distinction between psychiatry and psychoanalysis?

Psychoanalysts and psychoanalysis is really more than a body of knowledge inspired by Freud. It is a specialized form of talking therapy, and a network of institutions for the training of psychoanalysts.

Up until a few decades ago, psychoanalysis was very much influenced by psychoanalytic theory in all three forms. Much of the psychiatric literature was psychoanalytically informed and many psychoanalysts taught in psychiatric training programs. However, with the publication of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III in 1980, psychoanalysis took a more “positivist” turn and became largely neuroscience and psychopharmacology influenced.

This neuroscience turn has taken psychiatry away from its psychotherapeutic practice and, relevant to this conversation, has not been particularly useful for feminist issues. Indeed, a lot of my work in Feminism and Cultural Studies of Technoscience has been about trying to tease apart the ways that technoscience “progress,” like advancement in neuropsychiatry, is often tied to political and ideological forces of sexism, classism, racism, homophobia, etc. This work has been critical for me in demonstrating clinical science so that I can imagine alternatives. That being said, however, one cannot completely demonize clinical science or psychopharmacology because, like everything else, it is a form of practice that can be helpful for some people in some situations.

My psychiatric training was more psychoanalytically influenced, because even though my psychiatric training was in the 80s, I was a bit out from the earlier psychoanalytic psychiatry days. Now, in my clinical life, I do a little of both—psychoanalytic psychotherapy and psychopharmacology.

6. How do you find your psychiatric and psychoanalytic background and training impacts women’s studies and feminism—at what junctures do the fields cross or coalesce for you?

It is mainly the other way around—how have Women’s Studies and Cultural Studies impacted psychiatry? The short answer is: tremendously. It changes the way I think about it entirely. And, I would add that the support I’ve received from these areas is more than just intellectual. It is very hard, as Donna Haraway describes, to be in the belly of the beast of science and technoscience without being digested into the beast itself. Participating in Women’s Studies and Cultural Studies—teaching classes, talking with students and colleagues, going to conferences, giving lectures, reading journals, drinking beer, etc.—are all absolutely critical to maintaining the real viability of technoscience critique from within that beast for me. Foucault’s notion of a specific intellectual remains a little too caught up in the ideal of individual scholarship from my point of view. It’s hard for me to be a “specific intellectual” in isolation. I need an alternative discourse community to work from.

But back to your question. I do find that psychoanalysis is helpful for feminist and other progressive causes because it highlights that people become subjects in a developmental process, which is very much shaped by their historical and sociopolitical environments. “Psyche life matters,” “gender matters,” and “history matters” you might say. Also, I like that the psychoanalytic understanding is not always in “human” terms rather than “rational.” This helps me address debates around essentialism because
I have very mixed feelings as I write my final column as Director of Women’s Studies. I look forward to having more time for research, to start a new study of how social movements acquire and transform community spaces and built environments.

However, I will miss the many rewards of being involved in Women’s Studies on a day-to-day basis, especially the chance to work with Marilyn, Janet, and our dedicated student workers, Alice, Danielle, and Ellen.

As Director, I have had a special vantage point from which to view Women’s Studies at Pitt. I’ve seen the impressive cooperation, generosity of time and effort, and unanimity of purpose among the faculty who have guided Pitt’s Women’s Studies Program for nearly thirty years. I’ve listened to many students talk about their experiences in Women’s Studies, how in our classes they feel intellectually challenged but personally comfortable.

I’ve heard Women’s Studies variously described as a refuge, a community, a place where orthodoxies can be challenged and new ideas respected. Most important to me, Women’s Studies at Pitt is a space where feminist ideals are assumed, a space of unquestioned collective commitment to building a campus climate that is invigorating to women and men of diverse races, ethnicities, social classes, sexualities, religions, ages, and national origins. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be associated with such a program and I look forward to continuing as a Women’s Studies faculty member.

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All new $100 contributors receive a Women’s Studies mug.

Thank you!

Diversity Statement
Pitt’s Women’s Studies Program is committed to trying to understand and represent women in their real social diversity, which includes their differences in race, age, sexuality, culture, religion, and other factors. Dealing with these differences makes courses more responsible both socially and intellectually, and also helps us think about the diversity of student experience. Women’s Studies students will be encouraged to contribute to the diversity of courses offered. We encourage the taking of courses to help us become aware of the ways in which people are different and the ways in which diversity is relevant and important in the study of women’s lives.

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Please send any pertinent news to our office. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.
Deadline for the fall issue is September 15, 2001.

The University of Pittsburgh is an educational institution and as an employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnicity, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital, veteran, or handicapped status. This is a commitment made by the University and its American Association of University Professors, College-Area Agreement.
PEACE, SCREAMING AND FLOWERS

Well, hello there! That seemed as good as any other opener to this piece. It has a nice open ring to it, friendly and safe. As always when beginning to approach this subject for the first time with anyone I go through this maze of possibilities. How to tell, how to tell? And it is never occurred to me until now, until I saw that question in print, that it is a repetition of the problem for me all along. How do I tell you, friend, lover, mother, co-worker, cousin, teacher, stranger, therapist, sister? How do I tell you that I was sexually abused, molested, raped, assaulted, broken, thrown away, threatened, soul murdered? And how do I tell you that it began at four years old? And that it went on and on, no matter what neighborhood I lived in? That there were as many perps as fingers on my right hand, plus a couple from the left? How do I tell you all of that, when I could not tell my mother when it happened, or even myself for years?

Ha, see that is how I do it! I always just end up blurring it out. Drop the news like a bomb over folks' heads, except I am telling the truth and the information concerns my freedom, my world, and my experience. Well, except that it has also come to mean the truth and experiences of many millions of other women and men around the world and back through time to God only knows when. (And why hasn't God done anything anyway? A larger issue.) Is there any other way to tell? Do I spring my past eventually to people who get to know me because the little girl within me is frozen and knows no other way to tell you?

Or, is it possible that there are not words, or protocol established firmly in our culture to open, friendly, safe dialogue regarding sexual assault in general. Let alone personal stories of assault. Can you think of one smooth icebreaker on this subject? Have you ever had to tell someone? Have you seen the look of absolute horror? Pity? Fear? Confusion? Shock? Disbelief? It is honest the worst moment, no matter how positive the outcome. You feel more on the spot than one can previously imagine. You worry you won't be believed; hell, you often don't believe the weird sounds forming the words and thus the personal history coming out of your mouth as you say “I was raped. I was assaulted. I was molested.” Whatever, it is one moment that feels like a day or a week. It is your life. You are confronted by the fact (again) that this is your life. These awful things happened to you. When you tell, when you disclose this about yourself, there is nowhere to hide. And once you have told, there is no going back. To the listener, whether they believe you or not, support you or not, you are a different person forever. You are always you to you, but now you are you to anyone you tell your story to. There is no more anonymity in owning your assault. Even if the telling means saving only “Me too.”

On a great day, disclosure sucks. It is painful, scary, nauseating, and highly stressful. I have told people who were incredibly supportive and still needed to vomit, had stomach cramps, migraines and the like for days afterwards. You see, you are not supposed to tell. Clearly it serves the needs of the rapists and abusers, but it also serves the culture at large to be silent. Everyone can remain calm and feel safe that none will not happen to them or anyone like them as long as they follow the mythological rules and buy into the rape myths. Don’t go out at night alone, don’t wear that outfit, don’t drink, don’t don’t don’t.!! Funny how the myths and rules revolve around what women should and should not do to prevent rape instead of prohibitions against rape and rapists existing in our society. Real funny.

The taboos are so repressive that we are actually put into danger. The stranger myths don’t cover women who are attacked in their homes behind locked doors, or by co-workers & bosses, dates, boyfriends, platonic friends, family friends, relatives. Men, who are known to and trusted by the women who are subsequently raped. The truth is most women know their attackers and this is not what the myths tell us. When you know your attacker, odds are that many people in your life also know your attacker. This alone makes it much harder for many survivors to even conceive of disclosure, and it changes the daily meaning and consequences of telling in a completely different way than what the myths allow for in stranger rape. Imagine trying to find the words to tell a co-worker that Tim, the hilarious guy from accounting, raped you last night when you gave him a ride home “cause his car is the shop.”

A few years ago I had just finished my first successful semester of college. Previously I was so depressed and susceptible to panic attacks that I was unable to finish a full course load. One in four, one in four, one in four! These are the sexual assault statistics of U.S. women, by the age of 18, as computed by the Department of Justice, culled from police reports of incidents of both attempted and completed (for lack of a much needed better term) sexual assault. One in four women will have experienced some kind of forced attempt or assault by the time they are able to vote. And when one considers that 98-year-old women are targets of rape too, well the Magic 8 Ball of my youth says “Outlook not so good.” Yeah, tell me about it.

Sitting in a classroom of 25 was tough with that statistic hanging over me, on me, choking me. Being in a class of 125 was like sitting on pins and needles and fire. I would miss lectures entirely because I was busy counting the number of women, and then figuring out how many were statistically likely to have been involved in some form of assault and from that number adult rape, now child sexual assault...and I wanted to scream out “Who else here has been sexually assaulted? C'mon! Let's see a show of hands!” while I stood with my arm stretched upwards, five fingers arched and reaching for the sky. At the University of Pittsburgh, there are not enough visible support groups for women to join. It took me two semesters to find that Sexual Assault Services even existed, and another one and a half to learn that they do run a very small group, generally no more than six-eight women. Out of the some 30,000 students, roughly 17,000 are women, and statistically then one in four, or 25% of my peers have been assaulted and so about 4,250 women on campus will represent the women who have told some form of police authority.

At the existing level of service, eight women a semester out of

continued on page 4
4,250 are statistically able to come forward and discuss specifically their issues together in a group therapeutic setting. If this does not illustrate the taboos which create the profound difficulty of telling and disclosing, acts of rebellion and healing that are absolutes in the process of recovery, then there is nothing more I can do to open the eyes of the culture around me. It is also highly illustrative of the denial in the University and the culture at large.

Speaking from experience and the words of women in that group over several semesters, we feel like freaks. Without any visible signs of other survivors, it appears as though we are the only ones despite the clear statistical impossibility.

Driving home one afternoon, I noticed a small flower arrangement on the side of the road right before my usual exit. I realized that I had subconsciously noticed it before but never really understood that it was a memorial to a loved one killed in a car accident at that spot. I was also reminded of the use of flowers as a symbol of peace and protest via education for the White Rose, an anti-Nazi student protest group that sprang up in Munich in 1942. I began to connect this personal and powerful symbol of remembrance and mourning to the difficulty of talking about taboo subjects. Pain is one of the most difficult kinds of violence to talk about because it is so personal. Life altering, so painful, and therefore silent. The reactions from people in your life are also extremely volatile and unpredictable. It is difficult to initiate and sustain in a world where silence truly is golden to the perpetrators.

An image of a single white flower to pin down an incident of sexual assault to a place and possibly a person began to crowd my mind with possibilities. The White Flower Campaign was born. Left intentionally bare, people were attacked similar to the car accident memorials. It was easy to open discussion when words are too much and when words are not enough. I could stand at the intersection of Forbes and Bigelow with a sandwich placard proclaiming my surviviorhood, ringing a bell and shouting out my story. But who would connect with me? Whose life would be stopped and changed by this? Or could I encourage the use of flowers as a symbol of peace, my Philadelphia Quaker education sunk in after all, light, hope, recovery, and solidarity to open people to the dialogue. Rape is a socio-cultural term, so disturbing that even the simple act of talking too often silences survivors and listeners alike.

Imagine stepping into an elevator at work, and there is a white flower tied to the handrail, on a car the front door of a house, inside a house, telephone pole, public restroom, private restroom, office space, bus, biking trail, nightclub, parking garage, restaurants, nursing homes, day care centers... everywhere and anywhere. Everywhere and Anywhere human beings are sexually assaulted is Everywhere and Anywhere human beings go. One of the most devastating and imprisoning results of the silence that surrounds rape is that we assume too much. We assume that if we have not been assaulted then no one else we know is likely to have been assaulted either. On the flip side, if we have been assaulted, we assume that we are the only ones and that no one else will understand us, our experience, and our pain. But the math simply does not bear out that way. We all need to talk about it, if we cannot use words, then we must use symbols to open up and express our experiences. To break down the myths, we have to face truths in one another. To speak sometimes means we cannot use words. Verbal language can be a surprisingly large and actively obstructing barrier to communication.

Last April, I told a friend, Janet Syphax, about my idea and she encouraged me to include it in the spring semester's Take Back the Night Rally. With the support of Janet and CWO president Laura Garvin, I felt like it was possible to make a positive impact on the world. For me, this was the first time I spoke out in public about rape. I guess it was the first time I knew that I was able to. However, I never knew for the first time that I was going to speak out, nor will I be able to forget or be ashamed of the panic attacks or days when I could not get out of bed. That was back in the days when I knew instinctually that I was not alone, but I knew personally no one like me. I was in the press of the crowd on camera. I want to leave little lanterns on in the world behind me so that others are growing through the dark of recovery can find their way too. I want to leave flowers where horror and pain once existed to symbolize the life and strength that survives and thrives within every sexually assaulted person. I have only just begun to figure out how to implement my idea. But I have begun. I am a snowball, rolling down the hill, and I am taking every little piece of the snow with me on the way to breaking the walls of silence and invisibility. For every flower left behind, a survivor moves forward and our culture sees the epidemic. Silent no more.
We are pleased to report the success of the LINCS (Learning Integrated with Needed Construction and Service) project that I recently led in Andean Peru. Women's Studies contributed a cornerstone of financial support for this service-learning program that was hosted by the School of Education. Twenty-four undergrads, grads, staff, and faculty (including our own Adrienne Andrews) participated in a graduate seminar on leadership and philosophy of service-learning and then went to the Andes in May. The majority of participants were women, a point that continued to amaze the men and women we worked with in Peru.

Our partner site was located in the small farming and trading community of Rumichaka, which is located in the Sacred Valley of the Incas just north of Cusco. Through their own democratic, indigenously-controlled planning process, they decided that one of their greatest needs was for a permanent home for their preschool (PRONOEI). The PRONOEI operates somewhat similarly to Head Start, providing young children with literacy skills, a nutritional snack, and early school socialization. We had the chance to work hand in hand with community members from elders to the preschoolers to complete the new structure.

Two things about this program strike me as particularly interesting for Women's Studies members. First, many local women participated first hand in this development project. Because the project was tied to the only early childhood program in the area that is in turn linked to a milk-subsidy program, mothers were involved in this project in a greater number than is usually the case in construction-development projects. Many more women came to our work site to join in (see the photos) than our non-governmental site coordinator had ever seen. At first many participated primarily as representatives in the conscription system of farm work, in which each family has to contribute so many person hours to communal projects. They were also encouraged by local officials to come in order to continue their eligibility in the milk program. However, despite their reservations about what we were trying to accomplish together, they came. Many also had reservations about working directly with us.

...
Melissa Ricker (98-ENGLIT) is a Peace Corps Volunteer teaching English and Literature at Kolonna State Teacher Training Institute in Russia and with World Wise Schools, a Peace Corps program that encourages cultural exchange between school students in Russia and the U.S. After completion in July 2001, she plans pursue a master's degree in English Literature at Columbia University, <m.ricker@excite.com>

**WOMEN'S STUDIES TEACHING FELLOW**

Women's Studies has a Teaching Fellow (TF) position to teach one undergraduate course per term. You must be an advanced graduate student in good standing who has a research interest in and/or course work in women's and gender studies. A new TF will be selected every year. APPLICATIONS ARE DUE DECEMBER 15, 2001 for the 2002-03 school year.

**BOARD OF FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL BOOK SHARE 50/50 RAFFLE**

by Deborah Katcher, Fundraising Chair

The Board of Friends held a raffle to raise money for the International Book Share. The proceeds will be used to send textbooks to women in third world countries who do not have access to these materials. We were able to raise $800 for the project. CONGRATULATIONS TO LINDA WRIGHT, THE WINNER OF OUR RAFFLE. I would like to thank everyone for making our raffle a great success.

**WOMEN AND DIVERSITY FRIDAY FILM AND FOOD FESTIVAL**

The Board of Friends of Women's Studies, in conjunction with Vice Provost Jack Daniel and CWO (Campus Women's Organization), is pleased to announce the following schedule of films on the theme "Women and Diversity":

January 19  "Body of a Poet"
February 16  "Honey Moccasin"
March 16  "Passion of Remembrance"
April 13  "Kiss on the Mouth"

We want to give a special thanks to Kelly Allen of the Board of Friends for organizing this series.

The Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Concerns (PACWC) was created in March 1995 by former Provost Smith to investigate the status of women at the University. Identify and recommend solutions to areas that are not responsive to women, and ensure that women are represented in all areas of the University. Of utmost concern to the members of PACWC is to ensure a healthy educational and work environment for faculty, staff and students. Each year the chairmen and subcommittee chairs meet with the Provost to share their concerns and provide recommendations. This year PACWC is focusing on three concerns: Recruitment and Retention of Faculty Women and Minorities, Staff Development, and Marginalization of Women Faculty. The Recruitment and Retention sub-committee has been contacting other universities to determine current practices. The Staff Development sub-committee is reviewing the support of a staff recognition award. The Marginalization sub-committee is examining ways to identify marginalization. www.pitt.edu/~provost/pacwc.html

**FEMINIST SELF-ESTEEM (SE) DISCUSSION GROUP**

by Courtney Caudill

SE had their first organizing meeting on Tuesday, January 30. The group was formed with Women's Studies support. SE will meet every other Tuesday at 4 p.m. in 901 Cathedral of Learning. A rotating facilitator will take responsibility for picking an article for discussion. For more information call 412-624-6485.

**FAREWELL RECEPTION for DIRECTOR KATHLEEN BLEE**

Friday, April 6, 2001

A reception will be held in 1201 Cathedral of Learning from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.,

to bid farewell to Kathy who is returning to the faculty in Sociology.

Please come and express your appreciation.
$55 GRANTS, AWARDS, ETC. $55

STUDENT RESEARCH FUND

Awards from $25 to $1,000 are available on a competition basis for graduate and undergraduate students registered at the University of Pittsburgh demonstrating a need for funds in order to conduct research on issues related to women and gender. The number and amount of awards vary each year depending on donations to the Program. Funds may be used for travel expenses, secretarial costs, research materials, or other direct costs related to research. Grant awards are subject to available funds. Strong priority will be given to those who have not received Women’s Studies funding in the past and to students officially enrolled in a Women’s Studies Certificate Program who have made significant progress toward their certificate requirements. PROPOSALS DUE FEBRUARY 1, MAY 1, OCTOBER 1.

ANNUAL STUDENT PRIZE COMPETITION

The Women’s Studies Program announces the 21st annual prize competition for the best student research on women or gender issues and concerns. The purpose of the competition is to provide recognition for excellent student scholarship in the field of women and gender studies, open to all students at the University of Pittsburgh. Prizes up to $500 will be awarded for the best graduate and undergraduate papers. PAPERS DUE MAY 31, 2001.

WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

The Women’s Association of the University of Pittsburgh is offering a scholarship up to $2,500 for the 2001-2002 academic year. The recipient must be a full-time undergraduate student who has returned to the University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh campus) to complete a degree after an interruption of not less than three years. Students must be in good academic standing and show financial need. APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 20, 2001.

Submit application: a one-page paper stating degree sought, financial situation, family responsibilities, and professional goals; and your transcript to: Ms Deborah Pike Chair, Women’s Association Award Selection Committee, 39 Henley Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15221.

2001 PROGRESS IN EQUITY AWARD

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) Legal Advocacy Fund is accepting applications for its 2001 Progress in Equity Award. The AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund provides funding and a support system for women challenging sex discrimination in higher education. The Progress in Equity Award is given annually to a college or university program that promotes equity for women on campus and includes a stipend of up to $10,000 for the continuation of the program. For an application or more information, please visit their website at www.aauw.org, e-mail law@aauw.org, or call 202/785-7719. The application deadline is March 15, 2001.

EARN MONEY AND GAIN RESEARCH SKILLS

by Maureen Porter, Asst. Professor, School of Education

I am looking for students who are interested in helping to collect and analyze data on: 1) scrapbooking and women’s views of themselves as family story-keepers and 2) women’s leadership, particularly among teachers who aspire to become principals or superintendents. Students who have experience doing ethnographic fieldwork, conducting interviews, and/or using NUD*IST software are especially encouraged to apply. Students with skills in German are also particularly welcome. Some financial support is available for these positions! Please call 618-7041, mporter@pitt.edu.

WOMEN’S STUDIES CERTIFICATE RECEPTION

Undergraduate PRESENTATIONS

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Noon to 4:00 p.m.
William Pitt Union
Dining Room A

Refreshments
Everyone Welcome
The Women's Studies Internship Program at Pitt began over a quarter century ago with just a small number of internship sites. Now, we have over sixty established internship sites where we can direct our students to fulfill the experiential component of their Women's Studies Certificate. We have enjoyed and maintained mutual ties of support with our older internship sites such as Miryam's, the Women's Center and Shelter, the Thomas Merton Center, and the Squirrel Hill chapter of NOW. As our program grows, we continue to approach and be approached by new organizations and agencies that have offered a more diverse and even broader choice of internship sites to our students. POWER (PA Organization for Women in Early Recovery), the Corporate Collection provides transition skills for unemployed women who are moving into the workplace, Borelli-Edwards Gallery, and the Girls Coalition of Western Pennsylvania (issues advocacy and leadership training) are only a few of the new organizations we have added to our internship roster over the last five years. Organizations with deep roots in Pittsburgh such as the YWCA are continually creating new programs that attract our students such as the Y's recently formed Center for Race Relations and Anti Racism Training Program. Most recently, some of our alum are joining our internship sites as employees: Naomi Greenberg is Resident Counselor at Miryam's; Karen Derzic is employed as Planned Parenthood's Intern Coordinator; and Janet Syphn is Deputy Director of Legal Resources for Women.

One of the attractive features of our Internship Program is the flexibility we offer to our students. Many students wish to declare an internship in their field of interest or in an organization that is related to their major. For example, Liz Pearson, a senior writing and Women's Studies major, is fulfilling her internship requirement at Handwoven on Carson, which has been in operation since 1990 when Laura Handley (1977) asked to work one summer with the National Women's Student Coalition, part of the United States Student Association. Through this experience, Laura helped to organize women students nationwide through the National Young Women's Day of Action and then helped the SWSC create fact sheets on issues affecting and of interest to college-age women, such as welfare, reproductive rights, affirmative action, and sexual assault. We, in turn, gained a new internship site. Thanks to supportive faculty and staff in the Women's Studies Program, we have been able to accommodate all the needs and requests of our students who are searching for an internship experience that meets their academic interests and personal needs. If you haven't done so already, stop by our office and personalize your internship book.

Retreat Weekend: A Hidden Treasure for Women

For 25 years women have been gathering for Discovery Weekends in beautiful, lushly landscaped settings near Pittsburgh and far from everyday issues. The weekend-long retreats offer full schedule of educational, fitness training, meditation, and religious services as well as time for relaxation and rejuvenation. Massage and facial treatments are also available as are outdoor activities. The weekend program costs $150, which covers lodge room, meals, and materials. The lodge is nestled in the heart of the Allegheny Mountains. The weekend is March 2-4. For more information call 412/345-3567 or to register call 1-800-312-2500.

Women Need Healthy Lifestyles Prior to Menopause to Avoid Heart Disease

Lewis Kuller, Chair of Epidemiology at Pitt, reported at a meeting of the American Heart Association, "Women cannot afford to wait until middle age to begin a healthy lifestyle. They need to control poor diet, lack of exercise, obesity, and high blood pressure while they are still young." After a five-year study, significant differences were discovered in those women who showed high risk factor levels in developing coronary calcium. No smoking, regular exercise—at least 30 minutes five times a week—and a high fruit and vegetable, low fat diet are some of the easiest and most effective steps to take to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

Great News from the Library

We have purchased three books of interest to Women's Studies: Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Biographical Dictionary of Women in Science, and Encyclopedic Dictionary of Feminist Theories. Also, the library is purchasing the complete file of a new database in Women's Studies. The title is "North American Women's Letters and Diaries, Colonial to 1950" and contains till-test letters and diaries, in addition to previously unpublished manuscripts and biographical notes, etc. The database contains many unique features, including a wide array of access points you can search by. You can find out about the author's religion, sexual orientation, age at marriage, occupation, number of marriages, education level, ethnicity, age at first childbirth, etc., and all of the various other biographical aspects are searchable. You can search the whole database to find out how many of the women suffered from specific illnesses or chronic diseases. This database can be used in all kinds of research from literary to sociological and almost everything in between. The most amazing thing is that Kuller had to confess to us and we were delighted that we are getting this through the generosity of the NSF Director. It is currently available in the library and you can take a look at the title with a visit. This is truly a library of unparalled and valuable resource.
Having spent a year and a half in Russia, my perspectives and insights on women’s roles and characteristics in Russia and the U.S. have been blurred and rewritten several times. I had a clearer idea of what it meant to be a woman in Russia before I came to Russia. I certainly had a better idea of what it meant to be a woman in the U.S.

After finding out that I would be going to Russia for my Peace Corps service, I had about two months to prepare. I tried to read as much as I could and talk to former visitors and immigrants about everything, including women’s roles in Russia. I was told that the gender roles in Russia were similar to the gender roles in the United States in the 1950s—that Russia women were fond of cosmetics, that I should not wear bright colors, and that if a woman crossed her legs in public it was suggestive. Of course, all of this advice was misleading and, in many cases, completely wrong. Since arriving here, my views on women’s roles and issues have changed along with my own conceptions of myself as a woman. I have been frustrated, insulted, bitter, and flattered at times, all in one day.

Women’s roles in Russia are greatly affected by the Soviet Revolution in 1917. In the initial aftermath, it became possible for families to claim land. Families divided and sons and women began to hold some power. Within the Soviet Regime different social attitudes to women’s and men’s roles were encouraged. Women’s status was raised, and women were given the right to work outside the home and to participate in political and economic life. Women were able to get a higher education and to enter professions that had previously been reserved for men. They continued to be responsible for household chores. Most women would have only one child because of inadequate living space and the financial pressure to stay in the labor force. The main form of birth control was abortion. It was not uncommon for women to have up to 12 abortions before menopause.

Women were expected to take off work to wait in endless lines for services and products that were scarce. The women who experienced these conditions are now known as babushka or grandmother. Babushki are everywhere and influence families and the country. The current life expectancy of men in Russia is 65 years old. Women live to be 70-80, so many families are, in a way, matriarchal. Babushki are fearless and well respected. They continue to carry much of the burden of the modern family. Because of financial concerns, many young mothers must work after giving birth and usually the babushka takes over child care. It is more common to see a young child with his grandmother than his mother. They police not only their families, but their neighborhoods as well. They are always aware of the goings on of their neighbors and buildings and often sit in small groups outside buildings gossiping. They are disapproving of young women and modern fashions. They will often tell you exactly what they think, whether you know you or not. Because of their small petitions, they continue to farm their dacha and can foods and preserves. They are crafty, resourceful, and incredibly strong.

Many old and young women still hold, what I consider to be, old-fashioned views of a woman’s characteristics and roles. Most women, especially young women, are concerned with their appearance. Almost all older women and most younger women dress in nylons and skirts, their hair is perfect, and their makeup is heavy. They insist on cooking and cleaning for the men. In fact, I recently showed a movie that included a scene where two men clear the table and do the dishes while the women talk. When I watched this movie alone I barely noticed this scene at all but when I showed it to my students the entire class laughed and whispered when it occurred. Often a main goal of a young woman is finding a husband. I am 25 years old and unmarried and pretty much unmarketable. Many people can’t imagine that I could be happy. Because I teach at Teacher Training Institute, many of my female students are married and have children or are pregnant. I even have some 20-year-old students who are already divorced. I have many conflicting feelings concerning what I have observed and experienced as a woman in Russia. I could write volumes about so many things. I’ve had students tell me that a stereotypical American woman is an overweight feminist and when I first came to Russia, any boy, a woman, asked me why American women want to be like men. After a shallow look I replied that they don’t want to be like men, they want to be respected like men. That’s it, right? I haven’t been completely unaffected by the pressures I have felt here, since another female volunteer and I had a late night conversation about our increased interest in marriage and children. We began wondering: is it this place or us? I started to wonder if women in the United States do have it better. There are many questions that I will not be able to answer until I return and many more to be asked.
Day of Action for Domestic Partner Benefits in PA

Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition has designated February 14, 2001 as a Day of Action for domestic partner benefits in Pennsylvania. Valentines Day was chosen specifically because it is a day when society pays respect to couples and romantic relationships, and same-sex families deserve the same respect as other families. Domestic partner (DP) benefits is an issue at most, if not all, colleges and universities in Pennsylvania that receive state funds. The publicly-supported schools such as Penn State, Temple, Pitt, etc. have explored having domestic partner health care benefits included in the benefits package offered to the university's employees. Some institutions in Pennsylvania offer or will be offering domestic partner benefits. The two primary objectives of this Day of Action are to educate the public and the university communities about the need for domestic partner benefits, and educate our allies in unions and the private sector about the need for domestic partner benefits.


Thomas Merton Volunteer Center, East End Community Thrift Shop Fire

On December 26 the East End Community Thrift Shop on Penn Avenue in Garfield burned down. The Thrift Shop serves more than 50 churches and synagogues through the East End Cooperative Ministry and about 35 homeless shelters and other organizations in the community, providing emergency vouchers for needed clothing and household goods. Only monetary donations are now being accepted due to the overwhelming contributions. For information on how to make a donation, call 361-3022.

Women's Studies Research Associate (RA)

We are pleased to announce the continuation of our Research Associate Program for the 2001-2002 academic year. This is an UNFUND position.

PURPOSE: The Research Associate Program is intended for scholars interested in research relating to women or gender that do not have a formal full-time affiliation with the University of Pittsburgh. RAs gain a stimulating intellectual environment for pursuing their research and meeting others with similar interests.

DESCRIPTION: Each RA will be selected for up to a two-year term. Preference is given to those working on topics related to research interests of our Program faculty. Two to four RAs will be selected. RAs will be able to use Women's Studies Program academic stationery and have university library and computer privileges. It is also expected that each RA will present a formal colloquium and will become involved in Women's Studies activities. RAs may wish to apply for external grant funding.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:
- A curriculum vitae;
- Copies of recent or significant publications;
- A brief statement of what you would like to do as a RA;
- Names of at least two people who might be contacted for letters of reference.

SELECTION PROCEDURE: All applicants will be reviewed by the Steering Committee
- Relevance of the proposed project for Women's Studies at Pitt;
- Demonstrated research ability;
- Evidence that the position would be helpful for the career development;
- Ph.D. or equivalent in research experience.

SEND TO: Women's Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh, 901E Cathedral of Learning, Pittsburgh, PA 15260

APPLICATION DEADLINE MAY 15, 2001; notification in late May.

YWCA's Legal Resources for Women: Family Law Clinic by Janet Syphan

Free legal education and reduced rate attorneys for income eligible women seeking divorce, support or custody. Clinics are held on Saturdays and Wednesdays. Call 281-4942 for information or to schedule an appointment. All other legal issues, call the Referral Law Line at 255-1420. Coming soon: Debt Advice Clinic.

Legal Resources is looking for attorney and non-attorney volunteers. They have opportunities for students interested in Women's Studies, Social Work, Law, etc. Internships available. Volunteers call 281-4942.

Best Wishes

The Women's Studies Program wishes our student workers and graduating seniors, K. Danielle Vaughn and Alice Rader, all the best in their future endeavors. We appreciate everything that you've done for the program and we'll miss you!
it holds in tension that people's psychic lives are "structured" by their experiences and simultaneously "fluid," "performative," and "in process." Psychoanalysis is very helpful, also, in articulating emotional and non-rational elements of psychic life and the various power dynamics between people. And, like the idea of collaborative interpretation and knowledge building, at least in the clinical encounter, psychoanalysis is at its best strives for this goal. This is an "ideal" of course, because, as many feminists have rightly pointed out, of the unequal power relations in the clinical encounter and because psychoanalysts are "armed" with expert knowledge, which is made without other stakeholder participation. So, the "ideal" is perhaps more of a sham and a rise than anything else, but still there is a glimmer of possibility for me.

Of course, there are many additional problems with psychoanalysis.

7. Can you elaborate on some of these problems with traditional psychoanalysis?

Just sticking with gender issues, as many feminists have again pointed out, Freud and most post-Freudians are insufficient to feminist issues and are often quite sexist in their discourse and practice. In addition, psychoanalysis as a whole tends to look at social-cultural factors only on the microsocial level of the "family" and doesn't tend to larger macrosocial social matrices. Trying to make that macrosocial stretch has been a large part of my interest in psychoanalysis. Finally, psychoanalysis itself is a social-cultural practice and psychoanalysis as a whole has been fairly unrevealing about that. Psychoanalysts tend to treat the unconscious as a "real," rather than as a useful and constraining articulation which is not necessary or superior to other ways of conceptualizing and producing human subjectivities. Still, as a local contingent articulation, when it is sufficiently complexified and developed along social and political lines, I find psychoanalysis quite useful in thinking about subjectivities in the cosmopolitan world.

8. Can you comment on the interdisciplinarity of the curriculum at the University of Pittsburgh and your interdisciplinary work here?

Pitt has a lot of exciting interdisciplinarity activity right now. For my own part, I have been fortunate to be part of it. Indeed, I owe so much to the genius of three people at Pitt: Nancy Goldstein, Kathy Blew, and Alan Meisel (directors of Cultural Studies, Women's Studies, and Bioethics, respectively). Together they, along with Lisa Parker who is also from Bioethics, had the vision to recognize and encourage my work bridging the different sides of campus. I initially studied clinical work and then studied humanities, Cultural Studies, and Women's Studies without a clue how they would all go together. I was doing the humanities work because I was interested and I had to do it in a certain way. But it was in talking with these three people at Pitt that I was able to see how it all comes together.

In spite of the interest in academia in interdisciplinary work, there is very little cross-disciplinary activity between the sciences and humanities. However, I think this is coming more and more. The sciences have become too big, too instrumental in current "world making," and too tied up with transnational capital to avoid critique from other academic sectors for much longer. More and more, science, like everything else, will be the object of critical inquiry. Nancy Goldstein particularly understood this and she first alerted me to a course in Feminist and Cultural Studies of Technology.

9. How have Women's Studies and Cultural Studies impacted your clinical work?

In my clinical work at Pitt, I'm interested in the interplay of the clinical encounter in the Hill District. The people we see are struggling not only with mental pain and suffering but also the burdens of being subordinated by race, class, gender, and able differences sometimes. When I was interviewed for that book, one of my interviewers asked me what a straight face means to me, and I replied, "I think it means being in the moment and not letting myself be distracted by anything else." That's what I try to do.
My gift for Women's Studies is:
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