

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

---

Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Special Collections

---

9-19-2002

## Leading Scholars to Gather for "Girls will be Girls" Conference on Oct. 5 [2002]

Joe Carr

*University of Maine*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social\\_justice](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social_justice)



Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Gender Equity in Education Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

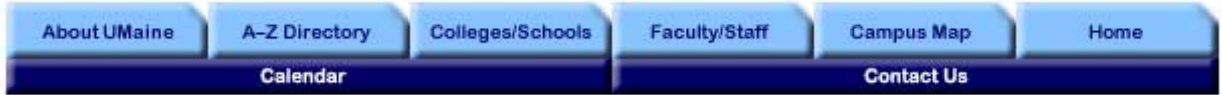
---

### Repository Citation

Carr, Joe, "Leading Scholars to Gather for "Girls will be Girls" Conference on Oct. 5 [2002]" (2002). *Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*. 286.

[https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social\\_justice/286](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social_justice/286)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).



## University of Maine News

### Leading Scholars to Gather for "Girls Will Be Girls" Conference on Oct. 5

Sept. 19, 2002

**Media contact: Joe Carr at (207) 581-3571**

ORONO – Six of the nation’s leading scholars on girls’ psychological development, health and education will gather at the University of Maine for a conference, “Girls Will Be Girls? Aggression, Sexuality and Body Image,” on Saturday, Oct. 5 from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Maine Center for the Arts.

Educators, social workers, parents, nurses, counselors, health care workers, service providers and girls will benefit from the conference, which will address issues such as aggression, sexuality, dressing provocatively, bullying, living dangerously and fighting.

“Recently, there has been a lot of hype about girls’ issues such as bullying and aggression,” says Sharon Barker, director of UMaine’s Women’s Resource Center. “It tends to be descriptive and to oversimplify the problems, and it doesn’t examine the systemic role society is playing in perpetuating these behaviors. The conference will help us gain a deeper understanding of the problems and how we can solve them.”

The registration fee for the conference is \$35 and \$8 for students. Registration forms are available at [www.wrc.umaine.edu](http://www.wrc.umaine.edu) or by calling the Women’s Resource Center at 581-1508. Those who cannot afford the conference fee may contact the Women’s Resource Center for information about scholarship assistance.

The conference is sponsored by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Educational Foundation, Hardy Girls Healthy Women, the Maine Women’s Health Campaign, the American College of Nurse-Midwives and Women’s Week. The founding sponsors of Women’s Week are Eastern Maine Healthcare, the Bangor-Brewer YWCA and WLBZ-TV; a supporting sponsor is the *Bangor Daily News*.

The conference is taking place during Women’s Week, which is scheduled for Oct. 1-8. Women’s Week consists of events such as lectures, a health fair, a road race, conferences and a show by comedian Lily Tomlin on Friday, Oct. 4 at 8 p.m. at the Maine Center for the Arts.

The conference is part of the Women’s Resource Center’s ongoing Girlfighting Project. The project brought Lyn Mikel Brown, an associate professor of women’s studies education and human development at Colby College, to UMaine as a 2000-2001 scholar-in-residence. Brown, whose scholar-in-residence appointment was funded by the AAUW Educational Foundation, is among the conference presenters.

While at UMaine, Brown completed research for her forthcoming book, “Girlfighting: Betrayal, Teasing and Rejection Among Girls.” She is the author of “Raising Their Voices:

The Politics of Girls Anger,” and co-authored “Meeting at the Crossroads: Women’s Psychology and Girls’ Development,” with Carol Gilligan. She is co-creator of Hardy Girls Healthy Women, a nonprofit whose mission is to empower girls and women in central Maine.

“The objective of the Girlfighting Project has been to support and advance innovative and effective gender equity policies and programs by providing girls, adults, policy makers and practitioners with accessible information about how gender stereotypes and unequal power relations strain or damage girls’ relationships with each other. At the conference, scholars will share their research with each other and the people of Maine, inviting all of us to participate in the conversation about these issues,” Barker says.

The conference presentations will be in a conversational style, with two sessions in which three scholars talk with each other about their work and invite audience participation.

The Diversity Coalition, a group of girls from the mid-coast area that uses interactive theater to explore girls’ issues, will also present “Girls Voices.” Books recommended by the conference presenters will be available to purchase at the conference.

“Together, we’ll discuss ways to create safe spaces for girls to critique media images and myths, to work toward solidarity with other girls and to live healthier lives,” Barker says.

Barker says that scholars were attracted to the event at UMaine because of the innovative work that is being done with girls on-campus and around the state. Barker cites the growth of grassroots groups such as Girls Talk in Old Town, Aroostook Sisters-In-Sight, Hardy Girls Healthy Women in Waterville, Mainely Girls in Camden, Edge in Auburn and the Gender Project through UMaine Cooperative Extension in York County as examples.

“It really speaks to the high level of work that is going on in Maine that top researchers from around the country are presenting their work here. The programs that we have in the state of Maine are models of influence for others around the country, contributing a wealth of information about different approaches and strategies for dealing with girls’ issues,” Barker says.

A follow-up meeting for service providers will be scheduled after the conference. This will give service providers further support in implementing new practices.

Other scholars who will be participating are:

- Sharon Lamb, a clinical and developmental psychologist and professor of psychology at Saint Michael’s College. She has published widely in the fields of moral development, girls’ development, and abuse and victimization. She is the author of “The Trouble With Blame: Victims, Perpetrators and Responsibility,” and “The Secret Lives of Girls: What Good Girls Really Do.”
- Mary Madden, an assistant research professor at UMaine. Madden’s research examines the ways in which rural Maine girls negotiate their sexuality in relationship to middle class conventions of femininity. She spent 14 years as an educator in sexual education and is co-author of “Promoting Healthy Sexuality: A Curriculum for Classroom Teachers.
- Deborah L. Tolman, a senior research scientist and director of the Gender and Sexuality Project at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College. Her research focuses on female adolescent sexuality and includes the development of the Adolescent Femininity Ideology Scale and a study of female and male adolescent sexual health. She is author of the forthcoming book “Dilemma of Desire.”

- Janie Victoria Ward, an associate professor of education and human services at Simmons College. Her research centers on the developmental issues of African-American adolescents, focusing on identity and moral development. She is also project director for the Alliance on Gender, Culture and School Practice at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she is designing a school-based gender studies project for elementary and middle school teachers and early adolescents. She is author of “The Skin We’re in: Teaching Our Children to be Emotionally Strong, Socially Smart, Spiritually Connected.”
- Catherine Steiner-Adair, a clinical instructor in psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and director of education, prevention and outreach at the Harvard Eating Disorders Center. Her latest work explores how to help girls stay in touch with their real bodies, rather than the unhealthy models shown in fashion magazines, television, advertisements and films. She is featured in two recent educational videos, “The Power of Girls, Inside and Out,” and “Real Strength, Boys Talk About Life.”

The conference schedule is as follows:

- 8-9 a.m. Registration in the Maine Center for the Arts lobby
- 9 a.m. Welcome, Sharon Barker, director of UMaine’s Women’s Resource Center
- 9:15 a.m. “Girls Voices” by the Diversity Coalition
- 10 a.m. Presentation by Lyn Mikel Brown, Deborah Tolman and Janie Ward
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch (may be purchased at food vendors in the Memorial Union), networking, exhibits, discussion and videos
- 12:45-1:15 p.m. Book signing
- 1:15 p.m. Presentation by Mary Madden, Sharon Lamb and Catherine Steiner-Adair
- 3-4:30 p.m. Question and answer sessions with presenters

---

**Resources for:** [Prospective Students](#), [Current Students](#), [Researchers](#), [Visitors & Alumni](#), [Faculty & Staff](#), [Outreach](#), [News & Events](#), [Athletic News](#)

**The University of Maine**, Orono, Maine 04469  
207-581-1110  
A Member of the [University of Maine System](#)