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Women in the Curriculum and Women's Studies Program

The University of Maine 2001 - 2002

WIC News: 2000 grant recipients

Each year WIC offers a number of grants to faculty members interested in revising or expanding existing courses in order to create a more gender-balanced classroom experience. In 2000, seven faculty members received summer grants. Among those profiled in this newsletter are Ben Friedlander, who researched the "culture of sensibility;" Naomi Jacobs, who developed a syllabus for the undergraduate feminist theory course; and Nathan Stormer, who revised a course to include more women in the rhetorical tradition. For information on WIC grants, please call Ann Schonberger at 581-1229, stop by the WIC office, 101 Fernald Hall, to pick up guidelines, or visit the website at www.umaine.edu/wic.



Karen Horton

Weaving and Mechanical Engineering



"Everything we use is an engineered product; it's almost like the air we breathe," says Karen Horton, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering Technology. Whether we are fully conscious of it or not, almost every object we encounter in today's world has been produced by varying degrees of engineering technology: the cars we drive,

the roads we drive on, the books we read, our morning bowl of cereal, and the clothes we wear. It is this last category that has most intrigued Horton lately. It was the 1998 class book, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *A Midwife's Tale*, that first inspired her interest in the process of textile fabrication.

"It was clear from the book," she says, "that the traditionally feminine process of weaving was a source of income for families with daughters." That inspiration prompted Horton

to begin thinking about the recovery of textile production as an entry point for all students, but especially girls and women, to explore the application of technology in our lives.

In the summer of 2000, Horton undertook a feasibility study to explore the possibility of developing a weave room in the School of Engineering Technology in order to tap into students' interests in what they use everyday - fabric. With the assistance of a WIC reading grant, she was able to investigate the viability of and potential support for the project. The response, both on and off campus, has been inspiring. "At all points I have received support and encouragement to develop this program," she says. "It's been very positive."

Horton hopes to eventually locate funding for a working weave room in the School of Engineering Technology. It would contain a number of table-top looms for hands-on activities, floor looms for more advanced projects, operational power looms of different eras to demonstrate how human power has been replaced with machine power, and computer-controlled industrial looms. The weave room would serve not only as a teaching tool, but also as a connection to other departments such as History, Art, and Women's Studies. Additional partners might include textile manufacturers like Guilford of Maine and individual weavers throughout the state. Horton also anticipates that the weave room would provide outreach to high school mathematics and science programs, and opportunities for seminars, tours, or other special events.

The level of support for this project can be attributed to the disciplinary recognition of a shift in attitudes about women and minorities in engineering and concern about retaining and recruiting engineering

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students overall. Nationwide the trend seems to be that as university enrollment goes up in general, the relative percent of those enrolling in engineering is going down. "Part of the problem," says Horton, "is that we're not using students' interests in specific products to attract them."

Mechanical engineering technology education currently focuses on industrial processes associated with metal-working and fabrication of metal parts. As critical to our daily lives as these things are, not everyone finds cars and large machinery fascinating. Clothing and fabrics, on the other hand, are something we all use and can identify with. A project like the weave room can help to connect the engineering theory to everyday items and experience. "Weaving is a process with a product that can appeal to anyone, because all of us use woven products in our lives everyday," says Horton. "That is why I see it as being a potential appeal to young women – to be able to see that industrial processes are used to produce something that they're familiar with."

There have been significant shifts in the overall interest level in recruiting and retaining women in math, science, and engineering. When leaders like the president of the National Academy of Engineers "start saying that we need to improve our own perception of what engineering is and extend those opportunities to women and minorities, people start

repeating that like a mantra," says Horton, "whether or not the root causes or actual relief measures have truly been identified." The support for the weave room project represents this climate shift in mechanical engineering technology overall. It reflects the openness to conceive of and teach the field in new ways. "People are at least gaining awareness that maybe the problem is not that there's something wrong with these girls because they just don't get this," says Horton, "but that maybe there's a systemic problem with the way we are approaching our profession, the way we think about the profession ourselves, and even the way in which we identify who is a likely candidate for carrying out the profession."

"I see the WIC grant as doing two things," says Horton. "First, it involves the engineering community in the Women in the Curriculum project because I serve as some kind of connection between the two. Secondly, part of my job as an engineering educator and 100% teaching faculty is public service and professional responsibility to disseminate ideas and to share ideas about teaching. So the WIC grant gives me the opportunity to do that in a recognized and well understood forum, and it acts as a springboard to other possible funded activities."

New WIC Videos

The following is a partial list of WIC's new videos. For a complete video catalog with more extensive descriptions, call the WIC office at 581-1228, contact Christine Halsted on FirstClass, or see them on our website.

Butterfly: Explores how Julia "Butterfly" Hill's 2-year stay in a thousand-year-old redwood tree galvanized an already intense dispute over the fate of Northern California's old-growth forests. (2000, 80 min.)

He Said, She Said: Deborah Tannen presents her contributions to the understanding of gender, language, and communication. This program was produced for curricular use in communication, linguistics, psychology, sociology, and other social sciences. (2001, 50 min.)

Illusions: A black and white film written and directed by Julie Dash. Set during World War II, it depicts the mistreatment of a black woman who sings the voice-over for a Hollywood movie featuring only whites. (1982, 34 min.)

Journey Into Hope: Multi-cultural Perspectives on Domestic Violence: Seven women and six men speak from their hearts and show the relationship between domestic violence, racism, and homophobia and how these issues affect individual lives. (2000, 40 min.)

Treyf: A film by Cynthia Madansky and Slisa Lebow that documents their life experiences as lesbians and delves into questions of religion, Zionism, and family from a Jewish perspective. (1998, 54 min.)

Voices of Power: African-American Women: Alice Walker, bell hooks, and Ohio State faculty members Martha Wharton and Valerie Lee examine the emergence of African-American women as popular and powerful voices of social conscience. (2000, 29 min.)

Women and Islam: Leila Ahmed, professor of Women's Studies at Amherst, argues the case for revision of the widely-held views in the Islamic world about the role of women. (2001, 30 min.)

New WIC Periodicals

Bitch: Feminist Response to Pop Culture: A magazine devoted to commentary on our media-driven world.

Feminist Theory: An interdisciplinary journal devoted to critical analysis and debate within feminist theory.

Harrington Lesbian Fiction Quarterly: An international journal focusing on lesbian writing and artwork.


Indigenous Woman: A magazine representing women from all indigenous cultures throughout the world.

Journal of the History of Sexuality: An interdisciplinary journal on the history of sexuality in all its expressions.

Meridians: A peer-reviewed journal by and about women of color in the U.S. and international contexts.

Women in the Rhetorical Tradition

For over 2000 years rhetorical theory has been a virtually impenetrable, privileged, white-male fortress. For centuries most women were forbidden even to speak in public let alone have anything they said studied for its theoretical relevance. While women *have* made strides in the 19th and 20th centuries as speakers within the public sphere, the study of the theoretical implications of women rhetoricians and their speeches has failed to keep pace with the changing times. That may have been the state of affairs when Nathan Stormer, Assistant Professor of Communication, entered the field, but he is hoping to change it – even if it is just one class at a time.

A black and white portrait of Nathan Stormer, a man with dark, curly hair, glasses, and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a plaid shirt. The portrait is framed by a thick black border.

With the assistance of a WIC curriculum grant Stormer undertook what most would recognize as a large and daunting task – increasing the presence of women in the study of the rhetorical tradition. The course Stormer sought to revise was COM 201: Communication Studies I. Taught every spring, it serves as an introductory survey of rhetorical theory from classical times to the present and is a required course for every Communication major and minor. Making curriculum changes to such a foundational course is quite a challenge to the academic status quo. With founding fathers like Aristotle and Plato, rhetoric is one of the oldest known disciplines; as such it has been particularly resistant to change. “Next to philosophy, rhetoric is as Eurocentric and androcentric as it comes,” says Stormer. “It’s a very dear and male exclusive canon, and unlike the canon of literature it has remained much harder to revise.” Further complicating matters is that, traditionally, rhetoric has also held a lofty position within academia. “Up through the Renaissance, rhetoric was the last thing you were taught. It was considered the most important subject because if you couldn’t express yourself, then your knowledge was worthless.” As such a bastion of education, it is not surprising that rhetorical theory has remained so firmly entrenched in Eurocentric and androcentric traditions.

In order to make the revisions necessary to include more women's voices, Stormer found he had to redefine certain categories and attempt to reconceptualize who is a rhetorician, what is rhetoric, and what counts as rhetorical theory. "Part of what happens in the historiography of rhetorical theory is that masculinity ends up being a latent definition," says Stormer. "Rhetoric is traditionally defined in terms of the activities of men, so we're talking about privileged, elite people who've been educated and get to sit around and write about what rhetoric means in an abstract and philosophical sense." Historically, women have been largely denied access

to the training and activities in which they could make contributions, so this redefinition is imperative when inclusive revisions are sought.

Fortunately the field as a whole has begun to recognize the lack of women's voices and has made attempts to include them in the rhetorical tradition. "If you go back through the last 15 years, there are maybe a dozen books now," says Stormer. "Most of them are anthologies, but a few of them are singular works that have started to make the argument for different ways to include women in the study of rhetoric and the contributions they have made." Even with the increase in disciplinary interest and the efforts made to put more women's voices into the anthologies traditionally used, there has not been a concerted effort to address the problem. "Recent efforts have resulted in little addenda here or there," says Stormer, "but the textbooks are still overwhelmingly male-representative." In order to overcome this roadblock, Stormer decided to move from using a published anthology as the primary text to devising his own reading packet and making it available on electronic reserve at Fogler Library.

Prior to the curriculum revision Stormer took a chronological approach to rhetorical theory and was only able to include Christine de Pizan's Treasure of the City of Ladies, Sarah Grimke's "Letters on the Equality of the Sexes," and H  l  ne Cixous' "The Laugh of the Medusa." After the revision, he changed to a more topical syllabus and was able to add Page DuBois, Aspasia, Hannah Arendt, Madeleine de Scudery, Susanne Langer, Julia Kristeva, and Judith Butler to that list. When he teaches COM 201 again in the spring of 2002 he hopes to add Nancy Fraser and Gertrude Buck. With those revisions Stormer will have achieved an almost even split of male and female voices in the history of rhetoric – something that, to his knowledge, no one has yet achieved in the United States.

“I was able to make the curriculum revisions in a way that didn’t make me compromise too much of what I consider to be basic themes and things that need to be addressed,” says Stormer. “The inclusion of so many more women has made it much easier to highlight the gendered nature of rhetorical traditions and to cover in more detail certain aspects of gender that were only mentioned once or twice before. This inclusivity has greatly enhanced the overall content of the course.”



Coming Soon!

The 3rd Annual Production of "The Vagina Monologues"

Feb. 14, 15 & 16 7:30 p.m. Minsky Recital Hall
Call 581-1296 for more information

Ben Friedlander
The Culture of Sensibility

In the long history of literary criticism, calling something “sentimental” has traditionally been enough to dismiss it from scholarly discussion. Derived from the “culture of sensibility” and the poetry and prose that arose out of this movement during the 18th and 19th centuries, sentimental literature involves a literary style in which affect is privileged over control. It espouses a theory of the



emotions and a critique of patriarchy grounded in gender-coded experiences of the body. As the first intellectual movement of the modern period in which women played a substantial (if not dominant) role as both authors and readers, much of the literature was repressed or discarded by critics until the feminist movement of the 1970s.

With the help of a WIC reading grant, Benjamin Friedlander, Assistant Professor of English, recently undertook an exploration of the “culture of sensibility” that encompassed a review of some of the more recent literary criticism in this area as well as some older studies which have influenced this newer scholarship, and a brief selection of some of those original texts. Friedlander began this project by focusing on writing by women in the 18th and 19th centuries, but it soon spread in numerous directions. “I began with something very specific,” he says, “but I really unearthed a whole discourse that spreads far beyond just the women writers of this period.”

Historically, the sentimental literature that arose out of this period has been denigrated, repressed, and pushed aside. “Even today, when you say something is lousy writing, you say it’s sentimental,” says Friedlander. “One of the reasons it became a slur was because, as a genre, sentimental poetry and prose is primarily associated with women, thus being unmanly, inconsequential, and nonintellectual.” This centrality of women’s experience to the “culture of sensibility” has long coloured the movement’s reception.

However, since the rise of an explicitly feminist literary criticism in the 1970s, texts long considered to be “off the table” for scholarly discussion have found their way back into the dialogue and are finally receiving adequate treatment from scholars. These newer critiques are having a profound effect not just on the sentimental literature they focus on, but also on everything that has been written since. “I think the scholars of the late 1970s who were reading this material couldn’t have perceived the effects

that their research would have,” says Friedlander. “It’s much more far-reaching than what began as the recovery of specific texts that had been unfairly written off. It has led to the opportunity for a re-imagining of what constitutes literary works of art in the first place.”

Friedlander found that “the conceptual categories we previously had for understanding all of the work done at this time have been altered.” Even when looking at the work of men during this period, he discovered that the ways of evaluating particular works had moved away from traditional criteria like language towards a focus on philosophical problems of emotion and feeling. “There seems to be a rereading of the entire period on the basis of these philosophical problems,” says Friedlander. “As a consequence, a whole new sense of what it means to be modern, one that makes much more space for a holistic view of heart and mind, seems to be evolving. What we think of as being a gendered kind of writing (sentimentality) is not necessarily gendered – men did it as much as women did it.”

This reading project has had a profound effect on the American literature survey course that Friedlander teaches. “This has definitely changed the way I look at not just the writing of this period, but all the writing that came after as a consequence,” says Friedlander. Literature from the 18th and 19th centuries commands a third to a half of the course, and this re-imagining of the relationship of heart and mind affects much of how he presents it. Friedlander even teaches the literature of two major canonical figures – Jonathan Edwards and Ben Franklin – differently as a result of this reading project. “What it has brought home to me is how impossible it is, finally, to isolate women’s writing as a subgroup phenomenon – it’s just not possible” says Friedlander. “So anything that has happened historically with women’s writing has had an aftershock effect on everyone’s writing and on the way we view everyone’s writing. The traditional categories have crumbled.”



Women’s Studies at UMaine turns 30!

The first Women’s Studies course was offered at our campus in Spring 1972. Titled “Women: A Search for New Values,” it was offered through the special seminar program of the College of Arts and Sciences nearly every semester through Spring 1980. It ended when feminist energies were redirected toward departmental courses and the newly established Women in the Curriculum Program.

Naomi Jacobs *Teaching Feminist Theory*

Born from interdisciplinarity and infused by an explosion of perspectives in the last 10 years, contemporary feminist theory is so rife with complications, contradictions, and intricacies that even the most well read feminist can struggle to fully understand all the current theoretical perspectives.

Naomi Jacobs, Professor of English, regularly teaches courses in women's literature and is up-to-date in feminist *literary* theory, but when the Women's Studies Program asked her to teach WST 410, the feminist theory course



required of all WST majors and minors, for the Fall 2000 semester, she knew she had some preparation to do. "I had read little of the current feminist rethinkings of the overall traditions of feminist theory," she stated. "There has been such a fascinating explosion in the last decade or so, and I really hadn't kept up with it outside my own projects."

The monumental task of reviewing the extensive literature on feminist theory can be evidenced by Jacobs' preliminary bibliography, which listed over 30 books as candidates for texts for the course. The curriculum development grant she received from WIC enabled Jacobs to spend the amount of time necessary to read through these texts to develop a quality syllabus, as well as to expand her own understanding of feminist theory. "I wanted to be able to teach the course competently," she says, "but I also realized what a wonderful learning project it would be for me as well." The annotated bibliography developed as part of the funded project is available from the WIC/WST Program in 101 Fernald Hall (581-1228).

That learning experience did not stop once the preparation was done; throughout the semester Jacobs continued to wrestle with the complexity of feminist theory. "I found it very frustrating not to be able to give each theoretical position all the attention it deserved," she says, "and tried to remind myself that rather than beating ourselves about the head for not knowing all theories intimately, we just need to go wherever feels like home within the possibilities that are available."

To help counter that frustration when she taught the course again in Fall 2001, Jacobs decided to focus the syllabus on a few key issues that she wanted the students to feel they had a good handle on: an overview of the "waves" of feminism, epistemology, the identity and difference debates, and structures of domination. "What I see this course as doing," she says, "is helping Women's Studies

majors and minors to begin to know what some of those major discussions are and maybe begin to recognize what their own theoretical positions are." Yet focusing on key issues is only one part of teaching a course like feminist theory.

Letting down the authoritative guard of the all-knowing professor is a fundamental tenet of feminist pedagogy and one that Jacobs embraces wholeheartedly. She readily admits to her students that, in the land of feminist theory, knowledge and expertise are a matter of degree. "There are certain areas that I am no longer a tourist in," she says, "but the comparison I use with my classes is of the old maps that had unknown parts listed as 'sea monsters' or 'here lie dragons.' There are some areas of theory that I still feel that wary of." This level of honesty and openness helps to change the classroom from a passive, "lecturing at" format to an active "talking with" atmosphere.

Jacobs also encourages students to lead class discussions and even leaves a piece of the syllabus open so they can decide how they would use the last few weeks of class. By combining this participatory, student-oriented approach with the instructor stepping down from the typical authoritative position, Jacobs de-centers herself in a way that pushes students to take responsibility for their own education. Feminist pedagogical practices such as these strengthen students' personal investment in the issues they are learning about. In such an active learning environment students have the opportunity to flourish in a way that helps them realize the importance of their own voices within the larger debate.

The success of this type of active learning is evident in the students' in-class enthusiasm. "I found that I didn't have to work very hard to get them to participate," Jacobs says. "You know, Women's Studies students are accustomed to being in charge, to a certain extent, of what happens, and they are really a delight to teach." Ultimately Jacobs is striving to demystify theory for her students. By really focusing on a few key issues in feminist theory, placing the students at the center, and letting them take control of certain aspects of the class she is "hoping what they'll learn in this class is not just the process of gathering information and packaging it, but the process of making new knowledge."

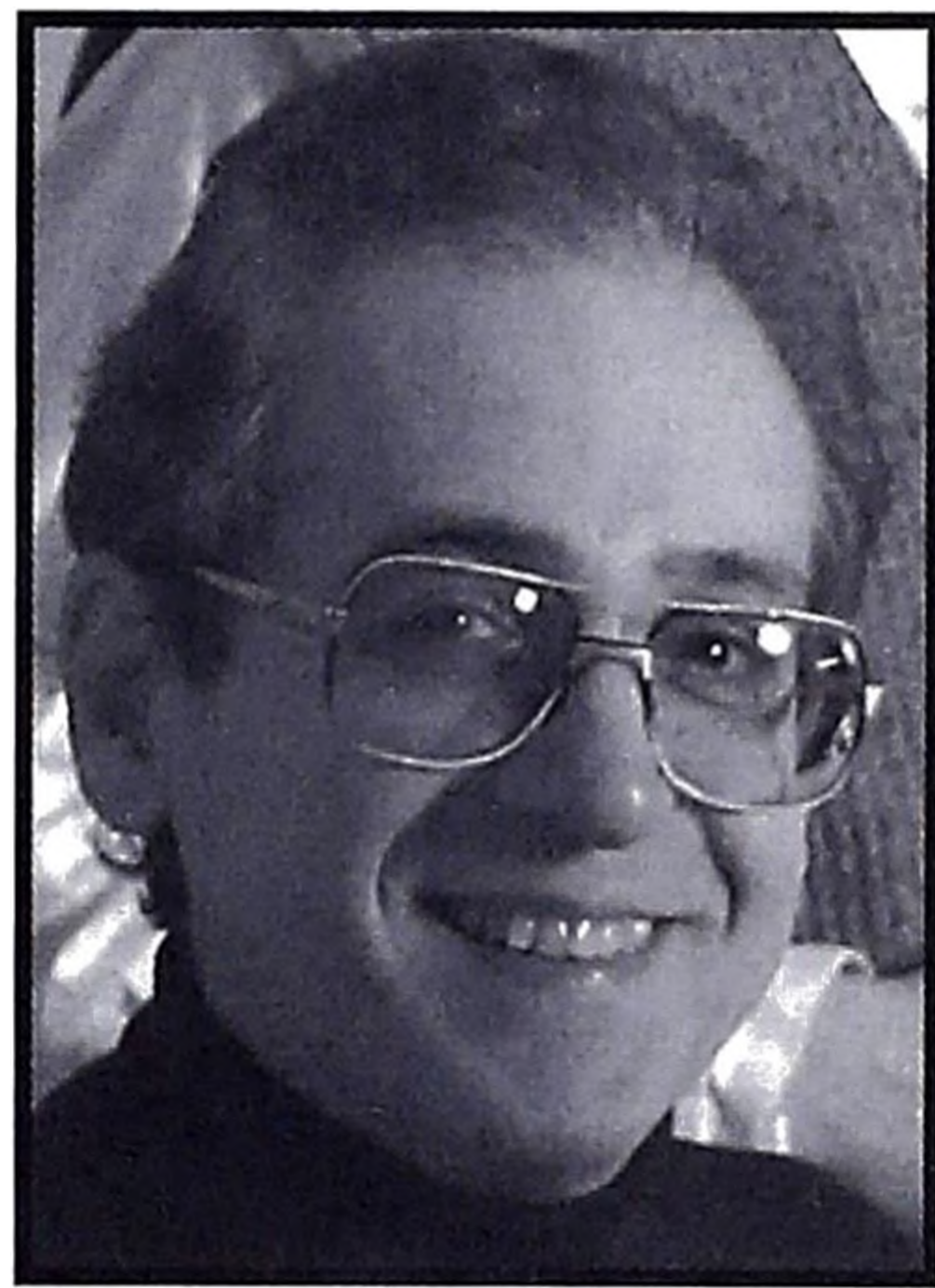
Women's Studies on the Web

Visit us at www.umaine.edu/wic to check out conference, grant, and scholarship information, videos and periodicals, events, handy links, and more!

Also be sure to visit the National Women's Studies Association at www.nwsa.org

Phillip Silver
Alma Rosé - Music in Auschwitz

Phillip Silver, Assistant Professor of Music, has been working for 10 years to document the experiences and the work of European Jewish musicians during the Third Reich. Throughout that time he has been intrigued by the mystique of Alma Rosé. The daughter of Arnold Rosé, the concert master of the Vienna Philharmonic, and the niece of Gustav Mahler, Alma was not only a member of a distinguished musical family, but she was also a talented and uncompromising violinist.



In 1939 she accompanied her father to safety in England, but returned to the Netherlands shortly before the outbreak of WWII. Trapped by the unexpected swiftness of the German assault, Alma Rosé was one of those unfortunate enough to be transported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. When it was discovered she was a musician of high standing, she was rescued from gynecologist Carl Clauberg's infamous experimental Block No. 10 and put in charge of directing the women's orchestra.

For many years, the only English language source of information on Rosé was the book *Playing for Time* by Fania Fénelon, originally published in 1977. In this text Rosé emerges as a self-centered individual so enamored of German culture that she cared little or nothing for others. Fénelon paints an unsympathetic and controversial portrait of Rosé as a person whose loyalties and ethos were more closely in tune with those of the Nazi oppressors than with her fellow prisoners.

Feeling that Fénelon's account "didn't ring true," Silver decided to undertake a thorough examination of this final period in Rosé's life. With the assistance of a WIC reading grant, he was able to arrive at a more balanced portrait of a complex individual. Silver drew upon two books published in 2000, *Inherit the Truth* by Anita Lasker-Wallfisch and *Alma Rosé: Vienna to Auschwitz* by Richard Newman with Karen Kirtley, as well as numerous other resources. He ultimately concluded that Fénelon's *Playing for Time* was a collection of half truths and outright distortions. As Silver said, "whatever the extent of her Germanophile leanings, Rosé did manage to save the lives of dozens of Jewish women who played in the Auschwitz orchestra."

Lasker-Wallfisch's account was particularly revealing. "She honestly admits to hating Rosé at the time, but years of reflection brought about a more sympathetic opinion," says Silver. "She recognized that the strict treatment accorded to

the members of the orchestra by Rosé and her relentless insistence upon high musical standards was not motivated by any sadistic streak but by the awareness that this was the only way to ensure survival."

Throughout his research, Silver came to appreciate the radical transformation one's perspective can undergo when encountering a new reality, especially one as horrific as "life" in Auschwitz. "I tried to put myself into that situation," Silver said, "surrounded by the crematorium smokestacks and expending an incredible amount of energy trying to create artistic perfection in order to save lives and survive the horror that was Auschwitz." In his final grant report Silver says that the project has "illuminated a singular brand of heroism, the human urge to obtain the highest cultural and civilized standards in the midst of an ethical vacuum surrounded by moral depravity."

The research derived from this project has been integrated into two courses, a spring semester honors tutorial on the music of Theresienstadt (a concentration camp in Czechoslovakia), and a summer course entitled *Entartete Musik* (music suppressed by the Nazis). When asked how the students responded to the new information on Rosé, Silver replied that most of them knew of her only through the film based on Fénelon's book, *Playing for Time* starring Vanessa Redgrave, and they greatly enjoyed the new perspective. "The 180 degree shift that happens when you somehow shed a different light on reality is critical," says Silver, "especially when it concerns women's history." Silver also recently presented his research last fall at the Women in the Curriculum Lunch Series, and in the Spring 2002 semester he will give a guest lecture in HTY 411, a course on the Holocaust taught by Alex Grab, Professor of History.

The library shared by the Women in the Curriculum and Women's Studies Program and the Women's Resource Center in 101 Fernald has numerous books about women's experiences in the Holocaust. Particularly notable is *Women in the Holocaust* (1998), an intriguing collection of historical articles edited by Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman.



**The WIC/WRC Library
is going on the Internet!**

We have recently been awarded a \$6,300 grant to assist in converting our card catalog into an on-line format and link it to the Maine Info Net and URSUS. Thanks to the help of Marilyn Lutz, Richard Hollinger, and Nancy Lewis, the index of WIC/WRC library holdings will soon be accessible from all over the world!

Steve Evans
Feminist Avant-Garde Poetry

"Cutting edge" is how the general public refers to cultural products that are ahead of their time. In academic and artistic circles, these phenomena are more often referred to as "avant-garde." It is work that is largely read and respected by other artists and is in advance of its possible readership. "Avant-garde, by definition, is ahead of its market," says Steve Evans, Assistant Professor of English.



"Writers *create* the readership rather than *tapping into* a readership. They're so radical that it takes a long time for them to get incorporated into the mainstream."

With the assistance of a WIC research grant, Evans guest-edited a special issue of *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* entitled "After Patriarchal Poetry: Feminism and the Contemporary Avant-Garde." The primary goal

of the issue was to provide analyses of original feminist texts and a bibliographic record that could provide a springboard for other scholars and teachers working in an area with few concrete resources. "The intention was to very consciously put some names on people's maps," says Evans, "but it was also to illustrate how a lot of the theorizing of women's relationship to language has been talked about too abstractly for a long time."

Historically, feminist avant-garde poetry has been grounded in a very conservative and somewhat outdated set of reference points, where the discussion of radical feminist poetics lacked a concrete textual equivalent. "Theoretically, previous scholars working in this area would sound very radical, then they'd turn to a poem that was actually composed in very conventional terms," says Evans. Ultimately he was interested in taking a theoretically sophisticated readership, like the one *Differences* is made for, and giving them some of the actual radical feminist texts that scholars have been describing for a long time.

The issue also looked at the intersections of second wave feminism and the work that emerged during the first stage of contemporary feminist avant-garde poetry (1970 to 1989). Radical feminist poets like Rosmarie Waldrop and Hannah Weiner were writing at the same time as the second wave began to flourish, and yet what the feminist movement wanted from poetry at the time was not what they were willing to provide. "[Second wave feminists] wanted a poetry of experiences and of plainspeak that could be equally communicated in large, performative, politicized contexts," says Evans. "It was an environment that tended

not to be a very sympathetic context for work that tested the boundaries of the genre and that approached language less as a means for communication and more as a problem for exploration." That discord makes the issues of contemporary feminist avant-garde poetry incredibly complex but also a productive space in which to work out the intricacies of women's relationship to language.

Evans' overall decisions about the tone and tenor of the issue held tightly to and lived up to the themes of difference and feminist collaboration. In the planning stages, all the contributors worked collaboratively to compile a bibliography that they all could work from. As editor, Evans also decided very consciously to foreground *young* women, most of whom are in the first or second year of their jobs at institutions, as contributors. "I made an intellectual, political, and feminist decision," says Evans, "as I could have very easily put together this issue on the same subject using only established scholars."

Beyond simply giving an emphasis to young writers, Evans also allowed them some room to transgress the standard academic rubber stamped formats. The essay on Hannah Weiner is a good example; written by Judith Goldman, a graduate student at Columbia, the article is a highly theoretical and challenging read. "At this stage in her career a lot of other journals might have told her to rein it in and tame it down a bit," says Evans. "So what does it mean to actually tell a young scholar not to rein it in, to tell her that she is writing the first significant article on Hannah Weiner's work and that her article can be as long and complex as it needs to be?" Many of the contributors are poets as well as scholars; the interconnection between those two styles of writing changes both their poetry and their scholarship. "They write differently," says Evans, "and rather than abstractly valorizing difference but not permitting things to sound different, I wanted to actually value the way that difference sounds."

The history of *Differences* ties into this for Evans and is a crucial juncture for this special issue. "*Differences* is, to my mind, the moment where feminist theory really said it was going to take the same liberties as the male philosophical tradition has assumed for itself forever," says Evans. "Those theoretical and intellectual freedoms are very similar to the ones that these poets and scholars have taken. They take the same permission to be about everything and to rethink everything that the most radical men have always been thinking."

<p style="text-align: center;">Writing & Design: Kristen Hurd Technical Assistance: Chris Halsted & Sarah T. Bray Editors: Mazie Hough, Associate Director & Ann Schonberger, Director</p>

2001 Grant Recipients

Seven individual faculty members received summer grants totaling \$14,750 from WIC for the summer of 2001. Funded grants included curriculum development and transformation for Women's Studies and departmental courses, research and creative work on women's contributions and gender issues, projects to improve the academic climate for women students, and reading grants.

Elizabeth J. Allan, Assistant Professor of Higher Educational Leadership, "Constructing Women's Status: Policy Discourses of University Women's Commission Reports." A research grant.

Mary H. Bellandese, Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences & Disorders, "Acoustic Correlates Related to Gender Identification of Alaryngeal Speakers." A research grant.

Stephen F. Gilson, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, and **Elizabeth DePoy**, Professor, School of Social Work, "Health Issues of Elder, Rural Women." A reading grant.

Jessica P. Miller, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, "Course Development for Women's Studies 510: Advanced Studies in Feminist Theory." A curriculum grant.

Beth Parks, Extension Professor of UM Cooperative Extension, "Women in Vietnam: An Army Nurse's Perspective." A grant for film production.

James Patton, Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering, "Improving Connections: ECE Women Students and Alumnae." An academic climate grant.

Upcoming Conferences

For additional conference information, consult our website or stop by 101 Fernald.

University of Maine at Fort Kent's 3rd Annual Women's Conference

"Women's Interest:
Wealth, Power, Politics, and Education"
February 23, 2002
FMI: Tamara Mitchell, 207/834-7533

Berkshire Conference on the History of Women

"Local Knowledge <—> Global Knowledge"
June 6-9, 2002
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
www.berksconference.org

National Women's Studies Conference 2002

"Celebrating the 25th Anniversary
of the Founding of NWSA"
June 13-16, 2002
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
www.nwsa.org

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

"The 'Herstory' of Our Future:
Creating Social Change"
August 4-7th, 2002
Kissimmee, Florida
conference@ncadv.org

Maine Women's Studies Conference 2002

"Women and Politics"
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University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME
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