

# studies

news from women's studies at the university of south carolina

## Women's Studies Hires First Joint Appointment



This August, Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina joins Women's Studies and the Department of Health Promotion and Education in the School of Public Health. Parra-Medina holds a Master of Public Health in Health Promotion from San Diego State University and a Ph.D. in public health/epidemiology from the University of California San Diego/San Diego State University. Her work has focused on Hispanic adolescent and women's health, particularly on diabetes, cancer prevention, and adolescent self-esteem. Her dissertation is entitled "An Evaluation of the Mediating Effects of Socio-Cultural Environment on Risk Factors for Type II Diabetes in Older Hispanic Women."

Currently she is a co-investigator at the Center for Behavioral and

Community Health at the San Diego State University Foundation, and has published articles in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Works-in-progress include articles on parent-adolescent communication and adolescent self-esteem in the Mexican-American migrant population, acculturation and social support networks in Mexican-American migrant adolescents, and predictors of cervical cancer screening in Hispanic women.

Parra-Medina has considerable experience in teaching health promotion communication theory and design at the graduate level and community health education at the undergraduate level. She will teach WOST 113, Women and Their Bodies in Health and Disease, and will develop new women's health courses at the upper-division undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Parra-Medina is looking forward to her move to South Carolina. When asked about joining our faculty, she said, "I think that being the first joint appointment gives me access to wonderful opportunities in the fields of women's studies and health promotion. This position allows me to blend nicely my interest and background with underserved minority populations."

We welcome her to the program.

## WOST to Observe 25th Anniversary

Our silver anniversary! From our beginnings almost twenty-five years ago, when a few faculty from various departments taught women's studies courses as a voluntary overload to their regular duties, Women's Studies at the University of South Carolina has grown into today's program with its well-established curriculum, graduate program, and 48 affiliated faculty. One has only to look at the contents of this newsletter to see evidence of the program's vitality.

Plans are underway to observe our twenty-fifth anniversary throughout the coming academic year, so watch for announcements of upcoming activities. Among the projects already being developed are a reception for our new home in the renovated Flinn Hall, a new endowment campaign, and an initiative to establish a women's studies organization for the state of South Carolina. A display for the USC Visitor Center is also in the works, and we are arranging for some exciting speakers during the year.

This year promises to be a busy and exciting one for Women's Studies. Look for forthcoming publicity about specific events. Then join us as we honor the past and build toward even greater accomplishments in the future.



## Davis to Deliver 1998 Freeman Lecture



Dr. Adrienne Davis

The 1998 Adrenee Glover Freeman Lecture in African-American Women's Studies will be presented by Dr. Adrienne Davis on

Thursday, October 15, in Gambrell 153, at 7 p.m. Her talk, "Loving Against the Law: Race and Miscegenation in the Old South and Today," is based on her article "The Private Law of Race and Sex: An Antebellum Perspective," currently in press with *The Stanford Law Review*.

Dr. Davis, an associate professor of law at American University in Washington, D.C., earned a JD from Yale University in 1991 and currently teaches courses on contracts, property, and critical race theory. Chair of the law and humanities section of the Association of American Law Schools, Davis specializes in antebellum legal history, race and legal theory, and law and literature. Her scholarship deals both with race, gender, and sexuality in the antebellum period and with the construc-

tion of racial categories and their legal implications. Drawing on legal, literary, and historical sources, Dr. Davis argues that race in America is neither a scientific nor a "natural" classification. Her publications include "Identity Notes Part One: Playing the Light" and "The Legacy of Doubt: The Treatment of Race and Sex in the Thomas-Hill Hearings." She is an active lecturer on slavery as well as on feminist and race jurisprudence.

The Freeman lecture fund was established in 1993 to honor Columbia attorney and social activist Adrenee Glover Freeman. Contributions to the fund may be made to the USC Educational Foundation in care of USC Women's Studies, Flinn Hall, Columbia, SC 29208.

## Brownbag Pedagogy Series Continues

"Teaching for Social Justice," a brownbag series on pedagogy that began in the spring of 1987, continued to engage faculty throughout the 1997-98 academic year. In addition to discussing the general issue of designing interdisciplinary curricula, the group began to develop a team-taught interdisciplinary course. Margit Resch, from Germanic, Slavic, and Oriental Languages and Literatures, is spearheading this effort.

This year's sessions included:

- Annette Appell (Law School) and Lynn Weber (Women's Studies), "Teaching About Affirmative Action."

- Carol McGinnis Kay (English), "Designing a Just Evaluation: An Exchange on Test Making."

- Margit Resch (Germanic, Slavic, and Oriental Languages and Literatures), "Teaching Techniques and Classroom Strategies."

The series will continue through the fall semester. Sessions will be held in Gambrell Hall, room 429:

- Wednesday, September 23, noon-1 p.m.
- Thursday, October 8, 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 28, noon-1 p.m.
- Thursday, November 19, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Topics and facilitators will be announced in advance. If you have an idea for a topic or would be interested in facilitating a discussion, please call Lynn Weber at 803-777-4007.

## Bachelor's Degree in Women's Studies Forthcoming

The Women's Studies program has submitted a letter of intent to the Commission on Higher Education to establish a Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies. Currently, students can major in Women's Studies by pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies through the Colleges of Liberal Arts or Applied Professional Sciences. Increased enrollments and interest at the undergraduate level, however, have led to establishing a Women's Studies major.

The undergraduate committee has been busy this year drafting the letter of intent, crosslisting current courses with WOST designators, and gathering information on B.A. requirements at other institutions. The committee will draft the requirements for the proposed B.A. in the early fall of this year and will submit a full proposal to the commission. The new degree should be available in the fall of 1999.

# Director's Comments

## Celebrating 25 Years of Women's Studies at USC: What's In a Name?

Lynn Weber, Women's Studies director



When I tell people across the country, and even here in South Carolina, that Women's Studies is celebrating its twenty-fifth year, the first response is usually a look of amazement followed by "Really?" The word speaks volumes. Yes, the University of South Carolina was among the first universities in the country to offer a women's studies course—in 1973, a course originally proposed by four graduate students. From its beginnings as a single course, Women's Studies at USC has rapidly grown to become a program that:

- offers 23 sections of undergraduate courses and 14 graduate courses, a minor, a graduate certificate, and soon a new major.
- offers a well-respected and attended research lecture series and numerous other events featuring prominent national speakers.
- coordinates as many as 60 events during Women's History Month.
- offers faculty development programs in interdisciplinary research and instruction.
- is staffed by three core faculty, 48 formal faculty affiliates, and two staff members.
- will hire up to seven new faculty joint appointments in the next three years.
- recently moved to Flinn Hall, a visible, centrally located, newly renovated building.

During our twenty-five years, thousands of students have learned to examine their world through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. Faculty and students have contributed to generating knowledge that takes into account the tremendous impact that gender inequality has on the structuring of our society and our world—from the media to employment, from violence to love, from literature to science. Emerging from an activist tradition, women's studies seeks knowledge not for its own sake but to promote the cause of social justice, to produce a more humane and inclusive world, and to broaden our vision of what is possible.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of women's studies is that it is constantly changing. Just as our USC program today looks very little like the program that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, so women's studies at most universities has changed dramatically. Women's studies is now a leader on most campuses in producing new scholarship on gender and women, in forging links across disciplines and administrative barriers, in constructing innovative teaching methods that are inclusive and that improve learning for all students, and in promoting equity in campus operations—from hiring to promotions, from admissions to awards. The program here at USC is actively doing all of these things.

Our growth also brings new chal-

lenges, and anniversaries provide good opportunities to reflect on the past as a way of intelligently planning for the future. One issue to consider is our identity and the label we attach to it. There is a great debate in women's studies these days about changing the name of women's studies. Some programs have changed their names to "gender studies" or "race and gender studies," others have become divisions in "interdisciplinary studies" programs, but most remain "women's studies." There are several good reasons to think about a change, reasons that reflect where the scholarship and activism have taken us to this point:

- Women's studies is not only *about* women. In fact, a major insight of the scholarship on women and gender is that gender is a system of relationships of dominance and subordination. We cannot understand women's lives without examining them in the context of men's lives. Equally important, we cannot understand men's lives without examining their place in relation to women. Furthermore, one of the fastest growing areas of women's studies scholarship is the study of girls—not adult women, but children and adolescents.
- Women's studies is no longer only *by* women. Men scholars have made significant contributions to our knowledge about systems of gender inequality and their impact on men and women, about the meaning of masculinity, and about women and girls' lives. Men can and do use a gender lens, develop a feminist perspective, and actively work for gender justice.
- Women's studies is no longer about gender alone. Systems of gender inequality are intricately interconnected with other systems of inequality such as race, class, sexuality, and nation. Women's

See "Director's Comments" on page 4



# The 1998-99 Women's Studies Research Series

The 1998-99 Women's Studies Research Series will showcase new faculty and research in the humanities, social sciences, and public health. The presentations will be held at 3:30 p.m. in Gambrell 250 and will be followed by a reception in Gambrell 428.

The series begins on September 23 with Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina, a new joint-hire in Women's Studies and Public Health. Her research interests center on Hispanic adolescent and women's health, particularly on diabetes, cancer prevention, and adolescent self-esteem. Her talk on January 27, "Does Acculturation to Western Society Increase Risk of Diabetes in Hispanic Women," focuses on her recent work in that area.

The October 21 lecture features Pamela Barnett, a new joint hire in the English department and African-American Studies program. Her talk is entitled "Why Is Rape a Feminist Issue?" Barnett's research and teaching interests include 20th century American literature, African-American literature, and gender and race studies.

On November 19, Tom Brown, who is beginning his second year with the Department of History and Southern Studies, will share work

from his book *Dorothea Dix, New England Reformer*. His talk, "Dorothea Dix's Civil War," discusses how her controversial experience as superintendent of women nurses for the Union Army reflected her gendered political ideology.

The spring semester begins with a lecture by Maria Mabrey, from the Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese. Her talk, "Women in the Resistance: Politics and War in Republican Spain (1931-1939)," will be held on January 27.

The lecture on March 24 features Dr. Dianne Johnson, Department of English, sharing her research on children's literature. Dr. Johnson has recently published two new children's books, *Quinne Blue* and *Come Sunday*. Her talk, "Working in Children's Literature as Scholar and Writer," focuses on her experiences writing children's books.

Our final presentation of the year on Thursday, April 22, features research by our graduate students. Three papers will be selected from those nominated by faculty. Titles and presenters will be announced in February.

Please note these dates on your calendars and join us for an exciting series.

## Director's Comments from page 3

Studies now focuses on those intersections—the ways that gender meanings vary across these other key dimensions of inequality. Gender cannot be understood in isolation from these other systems.

In short, women's studies is no longer an accurate description of who we are or what we do. But in spite of the inaccuracies in the title "women's studies," there are also good reasons to keep it. The most important reason is so that women and gender inequality don't become ignored or lost in the name of an unrealized equity. Gross inequities between women and men continue in all aspects of life, including in the academy. Because we have made such progress, some have called for shifting our emphasis to studies of men (Carol Gilligan is the most recent to initiate studies of men and boys). But while feminist studies of men and boys are clearly needed, the vast majority of scholarship produced in every field is still by and about men, so too the funding of research—the organization Women and Philanthropy estimates that less than 10 percent of all projects funded by philanthropic organizations are focused on women and girls. Students—mostly women—still flock to women's studies courses because women continue to be left out of most of their education and these students want desperately to learn how to make sense of the gender inequities they live every day.

I don't know what we'll decide to do with our name, but the twenty-fifth year is a good time to take stock. We're clearly committed to expanding our vision and working with others. Our move to Flinn Hall with African American Studies and the Honors Program, working with Southern Studies and Latin American Studies on projects this year, hiring new faculty with the English department and the School of Medicine, and emphasizing intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality in all that we do are examples of our progress.

I hope you will join us throughout the year in rethinking our past and planning our future. Yes, we're really twenty-five years old, and we'll become even stronger in the next twenty-five years, even if under a new name and in a new place.

## Graduate Program News

The Women's Studies Program graduated four certificate students in the 1997-98 academic year, bringing to 39 the number who have completed the program since it began in 1992. Graduating in December of 1997 was Reina Pennington; in May 1998, Denise Comer and Carol Bennett; in August 1998, Siobhan Groitl.

Program enrollment has held steady in the past few years. We continue to receive applications and inquiries at a constant rate. Four new students have been admitted for fall 1998.

## Women's Studies Conference—1998 In Review, Visions of 1999

The Eleventh Annual Women's Studies Conference will be remembered for many things—the stimulating paper sessions, the community panel, the practical workshops, the exciting keynote lecture, and the hilarious theatrical wrap-up.

In addition to our paper sessions, we offered four workshops—two on pedagogy and two on research. "Diversity in the Classroom: Gender, Race, Class, and Sexuality" and "Teaching Social Science Through Fiction" offered techniques and strategies for the classroom. "Getting Grants: Tips and Resources" and "Publish—Don't Perish" offered panels of experienced researchers and gave practical tips and advice.

We continued our popular community panel, bringing professionals from the community in to talk with conference participants. Panelists included Dr. Flora Brooks Boyd, director, South Caro-

lina Department of Juvenile Justice; the Honorable Molly Spearman, South Carolina House of Representatives; and Ms. Marie-Louise Ramsdale, founder, City Year Columbia. A lively exchange ensued on opportunities for social activism.

A highlight of the conference was our keynote lecture by Dr. Lani Guinier, professor of law at Harvard University. An audience of over 500 heard her address, "Reframing the Affirmative Action Debate." She reframed the question of affirmative action to focus on the skills, talents, and abilities that college and professional school graduates need if they are to be productive workers today and in the years ahead. She also identified the ways that current admission tests and procedures are inadequate for the task of assessing success in these areas and pointed the way to more inclusive and effective methods of select-

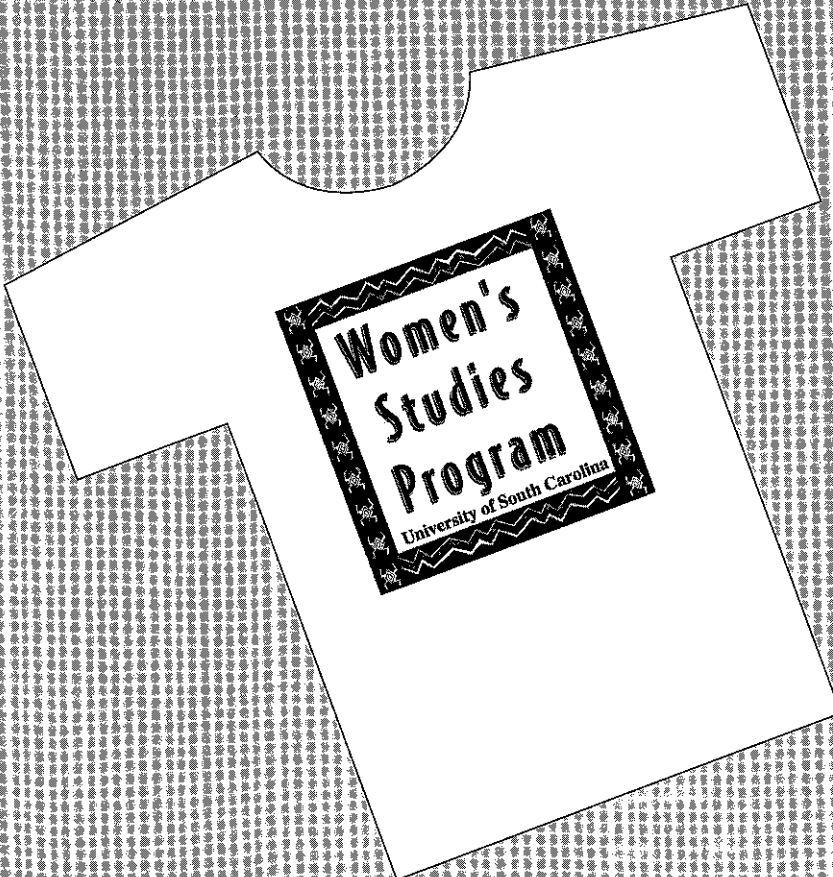
ing and educating students. Women's Studies has copies of the lecture on tape. If you wish to borrow it, call 777-4007.

Our wrap-up session was inspirational and witty—a perfect end to a wonderful event. Dewey Scott-Wiley and Elena Martinez-Vidal of the Trustus Theatre Players performed "The Kathy and Mo Show," a feminist comedy routine, for a delighted audience.

### Angela Davis to Speak:

Plans are underway for next year's conference, which will be held February 25 and 26. The theme of the 1999 conference will be "Women's Studies on the Move: Envisioning the Future." Our keynote speaker, Angela Davis, will lecture at 5:30 on February 25 in the Law School Auditorium.

**Mark your calendars now and be sure to join us on February 25 and 26, 1999.**



## Show Your Support!

Now you can support Women's Studies in a highly visible way by purchasing and wearing a Women's Studies program t-shirt. The shirts are white with a garnet and black design and come in medium, large, and x-large. Cost is \$12 each. Proceeds go to the Women's Studies Endowment. The shirts can be purchased at the Women's Studies office or ordered by mail. Make your check payable to and send to: Women's Studies Program, Flinn Hall, Columbia, SC 29208.

# Undergraduate Curriculum Expands

In preparation for the new B.A. in Women's Studies and in response to the demand for women's studies courses, we have expanded the undergraduate curriculum by offering new courses and large sections of some introductory courses. In addition to our three introductory courses, we now offer the following WOST-designated courses, which are crosslisted with various academic disciplines:

- WOST 210: The Human Life Cycle in Different Cultures
- WOST 300: Sociology of Sex Roles
- WOST 301: Psychology of Marriage
- WOST 305: Sociology of the Family
- WOST 306: Social Welfare Services for Women and Minorities
- WOST 310: Psychology of Women
- WOST 311: Minorities, Women, and the Mass Media
- WOST 351: The Family in Cross-Cultural Perspective

- WOST 352: Politics of Sex Roles
- WOST 355: Gender, Culture, & Behavior
- WOST 437: Women Writers
- WOST 464: History of American Women
- WOST 454: Women and the Law

Additionally, plans are underway to create several new undergraduate courses, including courses on race, class, gender, and sexuality; on undergraduate theory; and on masculinity.

This fall we are offering a large, team-taught section of WOST 112 that will feature faculty experts from a variety of disciplines. A topical team-taught interdisciplinary course is being discussed as part of our pedagogy series. Plans are also being discussed to offer WOST 111: Women in Western Culture and WOST 112: Women in Society through distance education. WOST 113: Women and Their Bodies in Health and Disease is currently available through distance education.

## Call For Papers—WOST 1999 Conference

### "Women's Studies on the Move: Envisioning the Future"

February 25-26, 1999

We invite you to submit abstracts (300 word maximum) for paper presentations relevant to the conference theme. Fifteen minutes will be allotted for individual papers. Deadline for proposals is December 19, 1998. Please submit to the Women's Studies Program, Flinn Hall, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.

## Mission Statement

### University of South Carolina Women's Studies Program

Women's Studies at the University of South Carolina promotes understanding of the diverse array of women's experiences through a complete program of teaching, research, and service to the University, the local community, the state, and the nation. Through its research mission, Women's Studies reconceptualizes knowledge, creates new knowledge, and reinterprets existing knowledge through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. Its teaching mission is to share this knowledge with students so that they learn to think critically, to communicate effectively, to solve problems, and to interpret human experience. Emerging from an activist tradition, Women's Studies serves University, local, state, and national communities by acting as a resource and guide for issues related to women and gender. Our research, teaching, and service missions interweave as we create, share, and apply the knowledge, skills, and values that promote the full participation of women in society.

## Call for Applications

**JOSEPHINE ABNEY AND CAROL JONES CARLISLE RESEARCH AWARDS:** Women's Studies is seeking applications for the Josephine Abney Fellowship for Research and the Carol Jones Carlisle Research Award. These awards are designed to encourage cutting-edge, women-centered research that is solidly grounded in women's studies perspectives. We invite proposals that are consistent with the research mission of Women's Studies which is to reconceptualize knowledge, to create new knowledge, and to reinterpret existing knowledge about women and their experiences through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. The research should be interdisciplinary or have interdisciplinary implications and should reflect a commitment to improving the status of women.

- Both awards are open to any full-time, permanent faculty or professional staff member.
- The amount of the Abney award is \$5,000 and of the Carlisle is \$1,000.
- Applications are due January 15, 1999.
- Application forms for both awards are available in the WOST office.

## HARRIOTT HAMPTON FAUCETTE AWARDS:

Women's Studies also seeks applications for the Faucette Award, which is designed to assist Women's Studies graduate certificate students with research and professional development. The award is for a maximum of \$500. Applications must be made in one-page proposal form. The deadline for fall is October 9, 1998; for spring, January 31, 1999.

For additional information about these awards and for application forms call the Women's Studies office at 803-777-4007. Forward applications to Women's Studies Program, University of South Carolina, Flinn Hall, Columbia, SC 29208.



## 1998 Faculty/Staff Research Awards



**Dr. Rita Rhodes**

Dr. Rita Rhodes, College of Social Work, received the 1998 Josephine Abney Research Fellowship for her project "Personal Strategies and Resources in Support of Recovery By Formerly Addicted Women." Dr. Rhodes, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois,

joined the College of Social Work in 1990. She will receive \$5,000 in support of her research.

Dr. Rhodes' project explores the process of recovery for women who have struggled with addiction to alcohol and/or other drugs and who now identify themselves as being in recovery. Focusing on the meaning of recovery for women, the project will ascertain whether recovering women focused solely on abstinence or whether recovery efforts were directed to other areas of their lives as well. Dr. Rhodes said, "The dominant model in addiction recovery focuses on individual pathology and de-emphasizes the context of women's lives. The literature on oppression, empowerment, and resiliency has yet to find a place within the addiction literature. This project advocates for interventions that recognize the debilitating effects of oppression and builds upon the strengths and resilience of women."

Dr. Joanna Casey, Department of Anthropology, received the 1998 Carol Jones Carlisle Research Award. Her project, "Women's Businesses and Economics in Northern Ghana," will examine how Ghana's increasing participation in the global economy is changing the economic situation for women and will result in a video on the production and sale of shea butter. The \$500 award will be used to support the purchase of film and an adapter to upgrade the quality of the video. Dr. Casey has been with the Department of Anthropology since 1995. She received a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 1993.

## Friends of Women's Studies

The following is a listing of friends of Women's Studies who have supported the program's endowment by contributions from January 1997 to May 1998.

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# We Want To Hear From You!

Please share with us your accomplishments, interests, and ideas for future programming. We'd also like your input on speakers and topics of interest to you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments: \_\_\_\_\_

Ideas/Topics of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

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