

Women's Center News

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Students, Staff Comment on Klan Controversy at UofL

The Women's Center wondered what women at UofL had to say about the ongoing controversy surrounding the discovery of Ku Klux Klan-related materials on campus and efforts by the Klan to speak at UofL. We talked with faculty members Nancy Potter and Tamara Yohannes, and students Alisa Morris and Bethany Wright.

Q. How do you feel about the University's position on allowing the Klan and other hate groups to speak on campus?

Potter: I am deeply concerned to be working in an environment where hate speech is a problem. The presence of the Klan can undermine trust regarding race relations and the intentions of decision-makers. The First Amendment isn't very helpful when it comes to hate speech, and the administration is following standard free speech practice. I hope that this is the first step of many, and not a final position.

Yohannes: I'm disappointed. Students of color feel vulnerable by the very idea that there might be a place for the KKK on campus even under the auspices of a concern for free speech. I believe that the dynamic and extensive resources of the university can find a way to protect the rights of all members of the community to safety.

Morris: This will become an issue of safety. Tempers flared just when the pro-life people came to campus to educate students about their message, so I cannot imagine what sort of response this will produce. I just hope that there were no alternatives that the administration overlooked in attempting to handle the situation.

Wright: The University's handling of the situation has been indifferent at best. Students approached them with strong concerns and a very clear list of demands and the administration seems not to have taken them seriously. This problem is not one of free speech, but one of hatred and terrorism toward disenfranchised people in our country.

Q. How do you think the University is handling this controversy?

Potter: In the midst of a controversy such as this one, people tend to react rather than contemplate values, examine assumptions, and so on. Should we all have been working on these issues before? Yes. Is the University doing enough? Probably not, if "doing enough" means that we just take problems seriously when they become fire-breathing dragons and then ignore them the rest of the time.

Yohannes: I support the efforts of the University to counter hate speech, but I do not feel that the projects being implemented go far enough.

Morris: I feel that the University is trying to do what it feels is best, but at the same time its sense of urgency does not match that of the students. This is why not everyone feels the whole campus is on the same page when it comes to this issue.

Wright: I will give the University credit for handling this controversy better than most racial incidents were handled in the past, but this one is also of greater magnitude. No longer are we talking about individual acts of racial insensitivity and ignorance, but we now have an outside force with a violent past attempting to intimidate our students.

Q. What one thing would you like the community to know about this struggle to resist hate speech while at the same time respecting freedom of speech?

Potter: People doing critical race theory and working in the field of law are examining the First Amendment as it pertains to free speech. Their argument is that the First Amendment can be preserved even while ruling that hate

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Congratulations to...

—Dr. Shirley Willihnganz for being appointed to the permanent position of UofL's executive vice president and university provost by the university's board of trustees.
—the winners of the 2004 Carolyn Krause Maddox Prize in Women's and Gender Studies: Angelique Perez and Gwen Krupinski.

—the winners of the Research Awards for the Study of Women and Global Issues: Mary Kinsey Hicks, Maríe Emilia Rodriguez, and Sharon M. Scott.

—the winners of the 2004 University of Louisville Women's Club Hilda Threlkeld Scholarships: Mary Rollins and Shanté Terry.

—those among the recipients of UofL's 2004 Outstanding Performance Awards: Dhiane Bradley, Danielle Bristow, Beverly Coleman, Diana Dicus, Angela Keene, Carla Meredith, Margaret Pentecost, Allison Ratterman, Emylene Rodenas, Eddie Sue Stemle, Bridget Burke, and Melissa Crain.

—those among the nominees for the 2004 President's Distinguished Faculty Awards: Grace Giesel, Linda Ewald, Cynthia Logsdon, Cathy Bays, Carolyn Mervis, Victoria Molfese, and Michele Pisano.

—those among the nominees for the 2004 President's Exemplary Multicultural Teaching Award: Vicki Hines-Martin, Ellen McIntyre, and Sharon Moore.

—the 2004 recipient of the UofL Trustees Award, Professor Rhonda Buchanan, Classical and Modern Languages and director of the Latin American Studies Program.

Other News...

~~**The Clothesline Project** is proud to announce that new polished pewter pins depicting its logo are now for sale to support the work of The Louisville Clothesline Project, a nonprofit coalition of women that uses artistic expression to support female survivors of abuse. To order a pin, please call Andree Mondor at 895-1967.

~~ "We counted all the artworks in the Speed Museum... 93 percent were done by men and 7 percent were done by women." *From UofL's student organization, Feminist League of Organized Resistance (FLOR), reporting on a survey of artworks at the Speed Art Museum as part of the Guerilla Girls' presentation during Women's History Month on the underrepresentation of women artists in museums.*

~~ For those of you who enjoyed the biographies of women that were read by Women's Center staff members at various Women's History Month events, you may be interested to know that they were read from **Kentucky Women: Two Centuries of Indomitable Spirit and Vision**, edited by Eugenia K. Potter. A copy of the book may be purchased by sending an email to Ms. Potter at potter@aye.net or calling the Women's Center at 852-8976.

A Message from Women's Center Director Mary Karen Powers

In December 2003, ninety-six women and men applied for the position of assistant director at the Women's Center. The credentials of this talented pool were reviewed by a search committee composed of Robin Harris, Louis B. Brandeis School of Law Library; Kathy Pendleton, Disability Resource Center; Carol Tully, Kent School of Social Work; and Diana Whitlock, Office of the Vice-Provost for Diversity and Equal Opportunity. Michelle Thompson was their unanimous choice for the position.

Ms. Thompson is a University of Louisville graduate who earned her master's degree in education in 2000 and her undergraduate degree in sociology and Pan-African studies in 1998. She is currently a doctoral student in the College of Education and Human Development with a concentration in higher education administration. Since 2002, Michelle has been a performing arts manager at the Kentucky Center for the Arts, and she has her own business as a wedding planner!

During her interview, Michelle described herself as a person with a "passion for higher education" who has gained extensive experience in program development and budget management through her work at the Kentucky Center. Michelle has a strong network of contacts at UofL and was described by colleagues here as "a very capable person" who is a "creative self-starter." Michelle will be a wonderful addition to the Women's Center staff.

I would like to thank the search committee members for their thoughtful deliberation in bringing this process to a successful conclusion.

On another note, Shannon Hensley, a graduate student pursuing her master's degree in the Kent School of Social Work and completing a year-long internship in the Women's Center, was recently awarded the School's Mary Ann Millet Award for Outstanding Performance in Practicum. She will receive this award at her graduation this spring. I congratulate Shannon on this well-deserved honor.

I also thank all of you whose continued support of the Women's Center makes our work possible.

Notes from the *Third Wave*--Marea Stamper Women's Center Student Coordinator

"Yes, Lucy, There Is a Graduation Ceremony."

"From the time we are born, we are put in a crib, seat-belted into a stroller, strapped into the back seat with childproof locks...Our homes and stores and libraries have locks on the doors. Our schools have riot gates...Our experience of confinement is so much a necessity in our lives that we can scarcely imagine what it means to be free."-William Upski Wimsatt

This is the next to last article I'll write as an undergraduate English major. Yes, Lucy, it's true. Now, standing at the prison gates, I can hardly imagine what it means to be free. This is the obligatory look back at a love/hate romance with the panopticon of "higher learning."

After leaving high school at 16 and renting my own apartment. I'm uncertain to this day which one was frying pan and which one was fire, but I felt absolutely free until I came to UofL at 20, utterly naked of formal education, with GED.

I am supposed to be giving my conversion testimony at the end of indoctrination.

I grant that the fiscal power of formal education is undeniable. But in the spirit of William Upski Wimsatt, I have found myself mentally asking myself, "What did my teachers teach that I couldn't learn or do on my own?"

This is the short list with a wink and admission of its deficiency. In truth, I have learned more than I can tell.

Latin: I couldn't have pulled myself through Latin without the love, patience and tolerant heart of Dr. Carmen Hardin, who made me love this unlovable language the way she loved even unlovable students.

Niels Bohr: Without the plain-speaking approach of Dr. Richard Davit and the honors program, which was brave enough to let him teach holistically, a Luddite like myself wouldn't be able to navigate the balls and waves of Bohr's complementarity principle.

Guadeloupe: The life-changing fieldwork I did there was made possible by the generosity of the aforementioned Honors Program. I couldn't have gotten there any other way, and I couldn't grog the way I did anywhere else.

Thank you for five wonderful years.

Controversy (cont. from p.1)

speech is illegal. I find those arguments compelling, and I hope that we can move in this direction.

Yohannes: However craftily the KKK might have kept itself immune from prosecution as an organization, I believe its history of murder and intimidation qualify it to be considered a criminal organization. I believe that the value of freedom from intimidation and harm overrides the right to free speech in this case.

Morris: Without opinion--no matter how radical--we would not be a democracy like we are supposed to be and our freedoms would mean nothing. When we do not like what one group has to say but have little choice when it comes to censoring them, we can exercise our same freedom of speech to show them just how unpopular their message is. No one ever said we have to take anything lying down. Just as the Klan has taken the initiative to come to the university and ask to be heard, we as concerned campus residents can stand up and be heard as well.

Wright: It is important to note that the driving force against hate speech on this campus has been virtually the entire student body. Freedom of speech is imperative, especially in a place that considers itself an institution of higher learning. But speech that incites hate and espouses blatant lies does not belong in our society or on our college campuses.

Please add my name to your mailing list!

Name _____

UofL Dept. (or) Address: _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Mail: to: Women's Center, University of Louisville,
Louisville, KY 40292. (Please add me to your
email list:)

Feedback: Comments on Women's History Month

Professor Andree Mondor invited students in her Women's Health Issues class to attend a Women's History Month event and write a short review. Here are excerpts from what they wrote. We wish to thank Professor Mondor for her willingness to share her students' responses.—Editor

Film, *Carlotta Joaquina*: "Carlotta Joaquina was quite an adventurous and nontraditional lady. She lived her life the way that she wanted to and was not accustomed to knowing restraint." Elizabeth A. White

Film, *Juana la Loca (Mad Love)* (Spain 2001): "Historically, Juana and her contributions have been overlooked. Her story is a classic example of what happens when a woman stands up for herself and has a mind of her own." Patricia Boroomand

Film, *Real Women Have Curves*: "This movie is delightful. It shows the true strength of this coming-of-age woman. Many issues are tackled, such as racial inequality and social problems for her family. This story empowers you to follow your dreams and never to give up, even during hard times." Andrea Hughes "It gave me hope about my goals for college, my career, and life in general. Ana was so brave for going against what her family wanted and doing what she thought was best for her instead. I also liked this movie because it focused a lot on how society is obsessed with being thin. This movie showed bigger women looking and feeling beautiful." Brandi Thomas

Women Offering Wisdom: "During my sophomore year of high school, I became a 'W.O.W. Girl.' W.O.W. stands for Women Offering Wisdom. The major purpose of the program is to provide young girls and women with the information they need to live a healthy life. This month, the four of us were invited back for a 'Day of Remembering and Celebration for Women.' It was an emotional, yet refreshing, time for us college girls. It was awesome to see the work that these new faces were doing and their warm hearts and high spirits." Amy Simmons

Performance, *Cheap Sunglasses*: "*Cheap Sunglasses* is a play about teens and adults dealing with domestic violence. The performance follows the lives of seven characters and how they are affected by domestic violence. If more people view drama such as *Cheap Sunglasses*, they may be able to read the warning signs." Dianna Wilcox "The question and answer session was a very dif-

ferent way to end a play, but a very good way to get some discussions going about violence and how we should deal with it." Nicole Patterson

Lecture, *Connected Threads: Fiber Art* by Mary Craik: "Mary Craik, who is now in retirement, finds great joy making quilts and wall hangings. My favorite was on a black background and had an outline of a woman wearing a necklace with a peace sign charm on it." Jennifer Ramsey "I have to admit that I wasn't exactly sure what to expect, but in the end it was worth it. Mary Craik created her first quilt when she was thirteen years old in 1937. Her next quilt wasn't created until fifty years later." Tessa Morrow "My first reaction to her pieces of work was, in my opinion, 'somewhat bland.' Yet after looking at them I realized that this is a woman's achievement and this is what woman's month is all about, recognizing positive things women are doing." Olivia Netzler

Guerilla Girls Performance: "I enjoyed several things about the performance. My favorite thing was the hypocritical quotes. The quotes made you feel you wanted to be part of the movement." Mary Lynch

Lecture, *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Looking Back on the Brown Decision*: "The panel of women briefly talked of their situations dealing with the *Brown* decision back in the mid 1950's. I am glad that they all came out and told the stories of their troubled school years. It is good to see that the *Brown* decision was a good decision for everyone. I would hate to be segregated from all of my friends and family black or white." Tenika Hawkins

Film, *Warrior Marks*: "Alice Walker narrated the film because she was inspired to inform people about the practice of female genital mutilation after studying the subject while writing her recent novel. Walker's commentary and statistics are blended with interviews with women from Senegal, Mali, and other countries. The film ends with interviews of young women saying that their parents have left the decision up to them, or their parents will not make them go through with this." Sarah Weaver
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"Thursdays in Black":

"I chose to participate in the *Thursdays in Black* event on March 25. I asked several women in my family to participate. They wore black on this day and wore the sticker saying, "Ask me why I'm wearing black." I asked my mother to participate to see how people would react at a workplace. I asked my 16-year old cousin to participate. She is a victim of rape. She goes to a high school with a dress code, so we spoke with the principal and he willingly allowed her to wear black over her uniform.

"I also wore black and the stickers provided to me by the PEACC Program. I wanted to see what reaction women of different ages would get in different surroundings. The PEACC Program gave me a few facts, such as that on every Thursday around the world, women wear black as a symbol of strength and courage, representing solidarity with the victims of violence, demanding a world without rape and violence. Another is one out of every six women has been a victim of attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. I thought that sharing those facts with others could also bring more light to the issue.

"We all had similar reactions. Almost everyone we came in contact with asked us why we were wearing black. My cousin was asked the most. Her teachers were very interested. Her classmates seemed interested but didn't ask a lot of questions. She decided to share her story to a few who seemed interested and whom she knew better. One of the girls knew a victim of violence. She said she felt great about what she was doing and it felt good to tell her story with those she felt cared. She was surprised at how many people showed interest.

"My mother who works in an office was asked by everyone she talked to or who could see her sticker. People asked but didn't seem as interested in what she had to say, especially the men. A few people asked questions and said they were going to try and remember to wear black. She said the next Thursday most of them did. I wore black and my sticker to school and the store. Only people I knew asked why I was wearing black. No one at the store asked me any questions. This didn't surprise me too much because I don't think I would just talk to anybody.

"I wanted to do more than was asked of me for this project because since I know a victim the issue is close to my heart. I was
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Women's History Month (cont. from p. 3)

Lecture by Jackson Katz: "I've always felt as if women had to come together to stop gender violence against us such as rape, domestic violence, and sexual harassment as well, on our own. However, as Katz pointed out, every man has some woman in his life that he cares for whether it be his wife, his mother, his sister, or his daughter." *Jennifer Cornell*

Third Annual Women's History Tour: "Marsha Weinstein set off the tour by introducing the tour guide, Dr. Claudia Knott. Our last stop before returning to Spalding University was at 525 West Muhammad Ali Blvd. Ida B. Wells, leader of the African-American women's suffrage movement, spoke at the Armory Building in 1910." *Shirlee Wilhite*

Presentation by Assistant to the President for National Security Condoleezza Rice: "Dr. Rice addressed issues concerning terrorism, global economy, civil rights initiatives, and education throughout the world. She addressed the ability for women to have infinitely more freedom in the post-Taliban government of Afghanistan where the

women can now receive an education and hold jobs to support their families." *Dick Roller*

Presentation by Eleanor Clift: "Her latest book, *Founding Sisters and the Nineteenth Amendment* details the women's movement and the 72-year struggle for women to win the vote. Reform came slowly and with difficult compromise. In today's modern world, women take the vote for granted and young women have the lowest voter turnout. Ms. Clift reminded us the vote was costly—USE IT." *Paula Redmon* "Ms. Clift talked about her experiences during the weekly television talk show with John McLaughlin. She mentioned that in order not to appear as offended during sometimes argumentative situations, she would smile to keep the appearance positive. She explained that women with strong personalities were sometimes conceived as 'difficult.' Men, however, would be pictured as resilient and powerful." *Donna Peabody*

Presentation, Voicing Civil Rights: "There wasn't just one person who stood up and talked the whole time about the major people involved in the civil rights movement. The list of characters were Angelina Grimke, Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt, Marian Anderson, Pauli Murray, Virginia Durr, Rosa Parks, Irene Morgan, Thurgood Marshall, Melba Beals, Diana Nash, and Lyndon Johnson." *Shanen Fuchs.*

Thursdays in Black (cont. from p. 3) impressed by the high school-aged people because they acted the most interested and concerned about the issue. The middle-aged women supported the cause more though by wearing black. I am glad I chose to do this project the way I did. I brought the issue to others and I feel that I did something productive to bring light to the issue. The issue of rape and violence will always be close to my heart. I am now wearing black on Thursdays and have brought the issue to others, who are doing the same." *Emily*

The Women's Center News Editorial Board: Lucy Freibert, Barb King, Kathy Kremer, Kathy Pendleton, and Diana Whitlock. Please send letters, questions, and comments to The Women's Center, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292. Call 502-852-8976 or e-mail womenctr@louisville.edu.