

Letters

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Strategic Actions: Women, Power, and Gender Norms

An Interview with Holly McCammon and Cecelia Tichi

The 2004/2005 Fellows Program at the Warren Center, “Strategic Actions: Women, Power, and Gender Norms,” brings to the forefront a diverse set of issues currently confronting contemporary culture, both within academia and outside its disciplinary boundaries. Since the 1980s, scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, and other disciplines has raised the question of women’s agency in social, political, and cultural change. The critical identification of women implementing a “strategic agency” has challenged the ways that gender is viewed in a variety of contexts, including human rights, subversive narrative, and social movements. This year’s Fellows Program seeks to explore the ways in which women have wielded their strategic agency as a means to further women’s interests and to reconstruct gender norms. The program will examine women’s strategic actions on personal, local, national, and global levels—traversing racial, regional, ethnic, and class divides. Of particular interest is women’s strategic agency in activism, in the law, in politics, in religious institutions, in the family, in the arts, in the workplace, and in the public dialogues surrounding gender issues. The Fellows in this year’s program reflect the interdisciplinary possibilities when looking at how women, rather than being

near-passive entities, have always been strategic actors seeking to redefine gendered relations of power that grant women greater rights and privileges. Participating faculty come from art history, classical studies, English, political science, sociology, theology, and women’s studies. The program’s co-directors are Holly McCammon, Professor of Sociology, and Cecelia Tichi, William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of English. In a recent interview in the conference room of the Vaughn Home, Professors McCammon and Tichi discussed



Holly McCammon and Cecelia Tichi

the upcoming program’s implications for continued scholarly inquiry into women’s strategic agency and how that scholarship may affect contemporary views of gender relations in the broader cultural arena.

LETTERS: This year’s program comes from a faculty group that met in 2002/2003 to discuss

women’s political and cultural strategies. Can you say more about this group, the backgrounds of its members, and the types of political and cultural strategies the group identified as being deployed by women?

MCCAMMON: Cecelia, Ronnie Steinberg, Brooke Ackerly, Karen Campbell, and I met probably six or eight times over the past year and began to see that we had overlapping interests concerning women’s agency and women’s activism. In that particular group, we were probably most concerned with what women had done collectively, as they worked in groups to try to change the world around them, both politically and culturally. I think each of these people brought fascinating and unique insights into the collective interest we shared.

Karen Campbell’s work concerns women’s attempts to enter the medical and legal professions, particularly in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. She has done quite a bit of work recently on women who have tried to enter medical schools and the medical profession across the United States. Her work is quantitative, and she is reaching some very interesting conclusions. It was not so much the actions of

male physicians in the ways that they licensed new doctors or in the ways that they ran medical schools that stymied women’s efforts to enter the medical profession. Karen is finding that it was the general cultural atmosphere that these women were being raised and socialized in that taught them that they shouldn’t aspire to be doctors. Where the broader culture, particularly in the southern United States, more vehemently told women not to seek out a professional degree or a professional career, women were least likely to become professionals. Her quantitative evidence from across the U.S. backs that up. Interestingly, though, where turn-of-the-century feminists challenged that traditional culture, more women were able to enter the profession.

Brooke Ackerly is working in a fascinating area. She studies human rights and human rights activism globally. She has attended United Nations’ conferences and regional human rights meetings, interviewing activists to learn how

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Tichi: Women in the sinking middle class and in low-wage work are more oppressed than ever.

women as agents have worked within these human rights organizations to further not only human rights but women's rights as well. She looks particularly at this question in third world settings where women face some of the greatest barriers to equality, probably most dramatically in the area of family law. Brooke is in the process of developing a theoretical model to make sense of how women's rights in this context of global human rights can expand, especially when gender norms vary so much across cultures.

Ronnie Steinberg has a long history of studying wage inequality between women and men. She has been, in some ways, an academic leader in her involvement with the living wage movement and in charting out the inequalities that women in Tennessee, in particular, face. She brings to our group a detailed sense of the law, especially as it relates to the workplace and the marketplace more generally, and of how the law has developed over time. She knows how women can and have worked within the confines of existing laws to gain greater economic equality, but also how women have used legal institutions and processes to make women's presence more equal in the workplace and the marketplace.

TICHI: I definitely agree that the group benefited from participation of women in different disciplines—anthropology, sociology, political science, and literature—and I think there is some sense that the gains of women are inarguably present, legitimated, and able to be documented, but in some jeopardy. We see a backlash of women being profiled for their—I don't want to say “drop out”—but withdrawal from the career track, certainly. While at the same time, women in the sinking middle class and in low-wage work are more oppressed

than ever, working two and three jobs at an inhuman number of hours. Although I don't want to elide the differences between women at the low and high ends of the wage-earning spectrum, I think you could look at women in the low-wage category and the high-wage career track and proba-



Cecelia Tichi

bly find that the number of hours worked and the stress level and the blood pressure readings are quite comparable. So I think the group has coalesced around the notion that—lest these gains from the last thirty to thirty-five years be rolled back, to use a sort of Pentagonian term, by the default of those most highly-educated in the professions and in the business world—it's time to start talking. For fear that those at the other end be just forgotten or taken for granted—those with three jobs at \$7.25 an hour. This is their reality now, so we need to gather formally and bring to the table, from our various disciplines, ways in which we might think about women and power and social structures and social change. So that's what we're going to do.

LETTERS: Each of you has a research focus that involves analyzing women's strategies. Can you say more about how your diverse research interests have brought you to this particular project and

how you see your own discipline contributing to the current discourse on women's strategic agency?

TICHI: Well, it's interesting. Initially, Holly and I thought we might be far apart in, for example, our approaches to the program. She, coming from sociology with all of its methodologies and keyword vocabulary, and I from literary study, with an interest still, to some extent, in form—poetry, prose, narrative—and in representation in the way that literary people think about it. I think we were unclear how literary theory and the theories that undergird sociology would in any way be complementary. Yet when we sat down and began to discuss what we each felt would be the strengths that we would bring to our project, we found a remarkable convergence. We were interested in the same issues and receptive to one another's ideas. For instance, Holly was interested in a reference from Hayden White's book, *The Content of the Form*, which I've used in my own work, and which makes an argument for the necessity of truth claims. White says that if historians, and by extension we must include sociologists and literary people, cannot make a truth claim, then certain kinds of narrative have no reason to exist. Of course, he's speaking from his own discipline of history. But Holly found that very useful because she's seeing that sociology is under pressure to validate its claims for factual veracity. I think we realize that each of us can speak across our discipline to the other and, we hope, enrich the other. So I think we're going to talk across our disciplines and come out with new resources—all of us.

MCCAMMON: Let me start with the first part of the question, which I hope will help answer the second part: how I think sociology can help us. My own research over the last number of years has been to study the suffrage movement in the United States, particularly in the state suffrage movements. I started out trying to understand what allowed women in particular states, mostly west-

ern states but also New York and Michigan, to achieve voting rights before the nineteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920. After the collection of much historical data, which, along with help from my collaborators, we turned into a quantitative data set and ran analyses, it became apparent that one of the best predictors of why these women were successful in winning voting rights had a great deal to do with the strategies and arguments they used in their activism, but, importantly, what also mattered was the context, in particular the gendered context, in which they were operating. A term I used for this was a “gendered opportunity” for success. Women in states with greater gendered opportunities were more likely to win voting rights. By gendered opportunities I meant that in some areas women had already made inroads into predominantly male spheres of activity, like the professions and the public or political sphere. I explored the degree to which women had formed their own organizations and had gone into the polity to agitate for other types of reform, not necessarily women's rights but changes in laws concerning families or children. And where women had made these inroads into the professions and into the public sphere more generally, they were more likely to win voting rights. My conclusion was that women's activism is crucial, but the context in which women are active has important ramifications for how successful they will be ultimately. And I think that's something sociology can help us think about as we spend the next year talking about women's agency. Sociologists who study social movements have expended quite a bit of effort trying to make sense of the larger context that activists, including women activists, work within. What they have found is that political structures matter: the dynamics of party politics in a state or a country, the kinds of access that people have to politics, how democratically organized the broader context is. I must point out, though, that I'm concerned that existing sociological work in

McCammon: My own focus is concentrated on women's collective attempts to change cultural norms or the laws or institutions of a society.

this area has paid too much attention to the political context and not enough to the larger cultural context that I found facilitated women's suffrage success. As gender relations changed, in large part due to women's attempts to change them, the snowball got rolling and women could expand their political power as well by getting the vote. So I do believe that sociology has a lot to offer in terms of understanding how women can succeed in changing laws, and society more broadly, but I think that there's more that sociology can do. As sociologists, we can broaden our understanding and not look just at the political context but the broader cultural context as well, in this case at gender relations.

TICHI: This is interesting, because it brings up something I wanted to ask Holly. I came upon this phrase in a book by the medical anthropologist and physician Paul Farmer. He calls anthropology, sociology, and history the "contextualizing disciplines." He didn't explain it, and I've since asked a couple of historians if this was a term they'd ever used, and they said that they'd never heard it before. If we think of contextualization as a disclosure of culture and society in its particularities, in its specificities, in its dynamic, in its class relations, and, over time, all of its elicitations of these things, I'm wondering whether literary study is not, or shouldn't also be, a contextualizing discipline. I'd like to think we could sign on to that term and that it might be a useful term for us to discuss.

MCCAMMON: Well, you know, that term is very interesting. As I was talking, I was thinking about how I wasn't addressing all the sociological work in social movements that focuses on individuals and groups of individuals as agents and how they can shape the context. It's always this trade-off between structure and agency—context and agency—in sociology and, I'm sure, other disciplines as well. But I think sociologists do try to pay attention to both. That's why I started by saying that what the suffragists did

really mattered. And, in fact, we have substantial evidence that the kinds of arguments they used mattered greatly in terms of winning voting rights, and I suspect that it still matters greatly for women who are actively seeking changes in other domains, be it in religious institutions, in the family, or even in performance art. For instance, Vivien Fryd, who will be one of the Fellows this year, is studying a performance artist who has worked as part of the anti-rape movement and whose work tries to help us more fully understand how terrible a crime rape is.

So although I can't speak for the anthropologists and others in the social sciences and humanities, I would agree with Cecelia that sociology is very much a contextualizing discipline. We've got some terrific historians in the field who have paid close attention to the broad historical context in which some of these groups have been actively seeking changes to try to make men and women more equal. But I also think that sociologists pay substantial attention to individuals as agents—to individuals who consciously think about how to structure their organizations to bring about social changes. They think about how to structure these organizations to be most effective; they think about how to argue their case in terms of using rhetoric that will be most strategic. In fact, there's an interesting line of research that is developing among social movement scholars in sociology that explores the kinds of "frames" or arguments that activists have used and how those arguments need to resonate with the broader culture. They're finding that, at the same time, these arguments need to be oppositional so that they will push people to think differently about rape or about women's political rights, for instance. And there is truly a connection be-

tween what the activists argue as agents and the context in which they make their arguments.

One of the things that is evident, given the interests of the Fellows for the coming year, is that we'll pay a lot of attention to how individuals—acting either alone or with others, in private realms or public realms—have worked and strategized to try to make women's lives better, fairer, and more equal. And we'll concern ourselves with the broader environments in which these actions take place.

LETTERS: In your proposal, you mention several texts as focal points that could provide a common ground for a productive interdisciplinary discussion, including authors Ann Boylan, Johnnetta Cole, Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Sara Evans, Susan Harris, Evelyn Fox Keller, Christopher Manfredi, Caroline Merchant, and Uma Narayan. Can you talk



Holly McCammon

about why you chose these particular authors and what you hope their work will do in terms of promoting further critical inquiry?

MCCAMMON: Well, there are a lot of additional texts that we could have put on this list. We chose these not necessarily because they are the very best—there are so many good works out there—but because we were trying to convey the idea that we hope a diverse set of interests can be ad-

dressed in this Fellows Program. Because my own focus is so concentrated on women's collective attempts to change cultural norms or the laws or institutions of a society, I wanted to convey that not only are we interested in women's collective actions but also in women's individual actions, the sometimes very personal and private actions that women engage in to try to alter the ways in which men and women interact. Barbara Tsakirgis will be joining us next year, and her research considers households in ancient Greece. She's done extensive archaeological work exploring how these households were organized, and her work demonstrates that women controlled households in some rather interesting ways. Apparently, in the everyday lives of more well-to-do Greeks who had sizable houses, for much of the time the men were away from the home and the women had quite a bit of control in the day-to-day running of the household. But Barbara has preliminary findings to suggest that even when the men returned and they came to dominate more of the space in these houses, the women retained some form of female space. So even in the private sphere, within families, among individual women, they were finding ways of exerting themselves—of being agents within the domestic realm.

We also wanted to send the message that while we all may be middle-class white women, and that in itself is troubling, we are very concerned about the roles of African American women and the actions that African American women have engaged in historically to win greater equality for themselves relative to African American men but also relative to whites in U.S. history, for instance. We're very interested—and I'm thinking in terms of U.S. history again—in what Hispanic women have done to make their worlds better and their situations more equitable. Benita Roth, who is an Associate Professor at Binghamton University, will be the Visiting Fellow this year, and she has recently published a book entitled, *Separate Roads to Feminism*:

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Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave. Her insights on women's strategic actions will give the group a broader perspective. Another of the messages we hoped to convey with this list of books is that we don't want to focus just on the United States. As you can see, my bias goes that way, but Uma Narayan's book, *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism*, helps us to think about how feminism and the actions of women in developing nations may be very different from that of women who have been active in more developed societies. On the other hand, though, there may be interesting overlap in what these women from different parts of the world have done.

It was also important, I think, that the list suggest how much different disciplines have to offer each other. Melissa Snarr, who is a new assistant professor in the Divinity School, will be a part of our group this year. She studies women leaders in faith-based organizations and how they have worked with mostly male union organizers in efforts to gain living wages in a number of U.S. cities. Melissa's background is in religion and social and political ethics, and her focus on gender and social change will nicely complement the interests of the fellows group.

TICHI: Certainly, this is an array of titles meant to suggest a range across the racial divide. When the word "race" comes up, let's face it: it means Caucasians in relation to African Americans, even if the African Americans are, let's say, three-quarters Latino or Asian. The Tiger Woods example is useful here. So when you say race, customarily what is thought or is referred to is African Americanness in some relation to white skin. I think these texts, then, are meant to send a certain signal of intention. Ethnic and racial diversification is intended, and, of course, studies that examine the extent to which women in different subject positions are and have been at certain times able to exert power. I prefer the word "power"

to "agency." I think it's time for that word to come back. We've talked about that, and Holly has said we must not lose agency. Now partly, I think, "Lose it!" I think it's time to get rid of that term, even while I feel that the word has had its heuristic uses and it has enabled a lot of work that might not otherwise have been done. It has allowed us to claim a word unencumbered by the patriarchal associations of power. But as we are going to spend a year discussing how women in groups and individually in different ways—through writing, speaking, founding and supporting political movements, all of it—can exert pressure for social change, we are talking about how it can be done. To do this, the word I would like to see us embrace is power. Of course, it is the case that once these chairs around this table are occupied by some high-powered women—each with a certain knowledge base and bibliography in the frontal lobes—these texts might be supplanted by others quite early in the game. We'll have to sort this out—it'll be interesting.

MCCAMMON: The word "power" is very useful. It certainly encourages us to think about the bases of women's power and thus how they can be effective agents of social change. And this is something I'm sure we will wrestle with this year. I think sometimes in feminist scholarship we concentrate heavily on patriarchal institutions and cultural concepts and how they operate to oppress women and prevent them from achieving their fullest potential. Of course, these are important things to concentrate on. But I think it's just as important for scholars to think about how women have worked to change those institutions and those cultural concepts and how women have empowered themselves in doing so. Women have certainly gained a great deal of authority in institutional and cultural arenas. So, I agree, it's important to consider women's power. I like the word "agent" as well, though, because it orients us to women's ac-

tions and the ways in which women as agents have dismantled patriarchy. Of course, they haven't done so entirely; we're still dealing with patriarchy in this society and in many other societies, but women have made great strides.

LETTERS: In your proposal, you suggest that an aim of this program is for the group to explore the "origins and natures of the feminist and other ideologies that motivate both women's collective and individual actions" as well as to consider "the consequences of women's efforts." Can you say more about what is at stake in identifying origins and consequences? What can we learn from this?

MCCAMMON: In the United States, there is a long history of women's activism. We can think back to Abigail Adams writing to her husband as he was founding the new country and asking him to "remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors," as she put it. She wrote that women needed greater equality and greater rights, and she even threatened that women might "foment a rebellion" if there wasn't some action that would give them greater rights. The early women's movement begins with Seneca Falls, the famous gathering of women and men in 1848 in New York. It continues on with the suffrage movement. The second wave of feminism occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, and it unfortunately did not succeed in winning an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We can look back to this history to see how women have come together and to understand some of the circumstances that have compelled them to come together to work to change the patterns of gendered behavior in this society. As we look back on that history, we can distill examples of the kinds of circumstances—political, cultural, changes in women's situations—that allowed them to begin taking steps. We can, in effect, use U.S. history or the histories of women's actions in other countries as data, to begin to understand the precip-

itating circumstances that cause women to want to take steps—again, either collectively or individually—to change the world around them. And I think in many ways, identifying those circumstances can also help us predict the likelihood of action in the future.

TICHI: I'd like to give an example from something that I'm going to be pursuing this year. I've just started working on it and need to find out more about it, but there was a textile mill strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1912. The strikers included women workers from many different ethnic groups, because by this time the New England women living rural lives on the farms were long gone. The Irish had, in a sense, mostly come and gone too, and Central and Eastern European women were the ones working in the textile mills. Their terms of wage labor were worsening. The hourly rate cut; the hours lengthened; child care being just a horrific problem—and remember, there's no birth control—so, in 1912, when there was one more cut, one more lessening of the hourly wage, everybody had had enough, and they walked out. The brilliance of the organizers, including women organizers, was to have a spokesperson for each ethnic group. The Poles had a Polish-speaking leader to help with moral support, to help find child care, and to help procure food—suddenly, there are no wages at all, of course. And, similarly, the Lithuanians and the Slovaks and all down the line. This was so well orchestrated, and soon the different groups agreed to send their children away for protection. They were afraid. The army had massed, and Harvard boys had come up from Cambridge with their hunting rifles and affixed bayonets to them, so that they could uphold the class position to which they were born. Soon the public press accounts became uneasy about this exodus of the children; it didn't seem right. Then the mill owners, in league with the politicians, blocked or attempted to block any more chil-

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dren from leaving. Meanwhile, these owners were fully armed and ready to march. Well, that was too much for the middle-class public, and the level of objection and protest was such that the mill owners’ reputations were at stake. Tolerance was one thing—everyone needed cotton cloth—but these upstanding captains of industry in the textile business stood to be the villains in the public eye. So they backed down. They increased wages, they provided better child care arrangements, and they lessened the number of hours. That strike stood as a success. So we could say that women got together across lines of very different ethnicities to work together for a common goal. They achieved their goal, and the idea of collective bargaining was strengthened. The International Workers of the World—the Wobblies—seemed strengthened, fortified. Well, it seems that this far into the story, it’s a great story. The women win! What the mill owners learned that would be put into practice one year later in Paterson, New Jersey, in the silk industry, is that what you’ve got to do is preempt the ethnic enclaves’ unity with each other. You’ve got to divide them against each other. The strike failed, resulting in misery, abysmal pay, terrible hours, and demoralization. I don’t know enough about the history of the labor movement to say whether Lawrence could be recovered somewhere else. The conventional wisdom is that Lawrence then proves to be an aberration, and that the strategy at Paterson is much more what’s likely to happen—remember, psychology is a new field and it is being used in industrial contexts here. So, if we look at it in that way, we have to say there is an unforeseen outcome and we have to look at what precedents seemed to be set that also contained the seeds for their own dissolution. That is one I can call up from my own work, although it’s in the early stages. And that’s another strength of our Fellows: we have people at varying stages of their research, and we think that’s good.

LETTERS: How has women’s strategic agency reconstructed gender norms? Where do you see continued spaces of activism on this front and in what context?

MCCAMMON: It’s fascinating that in a period of time in which we’re reading daily headlines about the war in Iraq and the Bush administration’s activities leading up to and then fighting that war, one of the people with whom George Bush works closely is Condoleezza Rice. We’re seeing an African American woman in a position of great political power, and that’s exciting. Although I don’t personally agree with the politics of the current administration, as a feminist I find it rewarding to see a woman at those high levels. And this is a trend, because increasingly more women are in elected political offices and in appointed offices in government. The trends are there—they’re documentable. Also, as we’re fighting this war, we’re seeing pictures of female soldiers in the pages of our newspapers, and that too is a trend—women have made inroads into all of these areas. When I pick up the sports page, I look at the pictures and more and more, even on the front page of the sports section, I see women in those pictures. And that’s another trend. Thanks to Title IX, we’re seeing greater equality of women in sports. In the mid-nineteenth century in the U.S., it was unusual to see a woman speaking in public. Often, some of these public speeches would take place in churches but there were some ministers who would not sponsor events if women were included. Today, things have changed. Women are obviously in public and they hold power in public. They have made great strides.

TICHI: I want to cite Mother Jones (Mary Harris Jones), who not only went out to the coal fields to rally the miners, but she also tried to rouse public interest for civic-based, that is, for citizenly pressure, for changes in child labor. To do it, she gathered children who had worked in oppressive conditions—some of them maimed—and she led a

children’s march. They marched by day; they camped by night. She was utterly brilliant in calling media attention to the whereabouts of the march, what the issues were, what had happened to poor little Ned’s leg—this sort of thing—and the newspaper reporters were right there all along. The march was widely publicized, and this was all a part of the initiative to get child labor laws through Congress. If we now look ahead to a public demonstration like the World Trade Organization meeting of 1999—the so-called “Battle of Seattle”—it gets represented as a violent protest. Well, the violence was mostly police violence, not the activists’. And these same demonstrations have taken place at trade association meetings one after another since Seattle. In Washington, in Cancun, in Prague, in Quebec City. And they were all ready for them in Sea Island—they got \$25 million to stop activists from coming. And the activists are now saying that that kind of demonstration—marching, chanting, carrying signs—has run its course. So, what now? Well, there will be a group at the Republican National Convention in New York called Axis of Eves. They’re buying underwear with political slogans imprinted on it. They plan to wear bodysuits and to flash their behinds—and maybe their fronts—accordingly. And you can go online and buy Axis of Eve apparel and be ready. Now I think it’s worth asking here, what did Mother Jones want? What sort of public relations effort was she up to with those children? And then take that question through the suffragists to come up to this day, too, and ask what form does a women’s activist public statement take? And on what basis can it be an agent for change? And these questions are open. I have no particular answer, but I would look back to Mother Jones and the persona she created. It was late in life that she sort of dispensed with Mary Harris. Her husband and children had died in Memphis, and she went to Chicago. She was working in a sewing room and

noticed the income disparity between the women she worked with and the clients. She found it so inexplicable—the disparity was so great—that she began to go to union meetings. And then she adopts this persona of Mother Jones—she will be the Mother, the unassailable figure. Well, what about self-fashioning in various feminist personas? That one, the Mother, is very traditional. What about these Eves? How can we think about them? So I think it’s a very interesting kind of issue to take up—that’s just one example.

LETTERS: Finally, as women in academia, how do you envision your own strategic agency within the academy? Where are the opportunities for academics to bridge the gap between theory and practice with regard to furthering women’s rights?

TICHI: That’s an excellent question, and it’s a tough question. Let me say this as an example. I’m working collaboratively with Amy Lang, who’s at Syracuse now—she was at Emory for a number of years and before that at MIT. We’ve been friends and colleagues for many years. And in recent years we have found ourselves increasingly distressed about the deterioration of material conditions in the U.S. Just read the newspaper. The middle class is squeezed by those way at the top—the pirates of the New Gilded Age. Those lower on the food chain are struggling more than ever. So we finally decided we needed to do something. We met last fall and realized that a turning point, we think, for literary studies—since we’re both in American literature, we have to confine it to that—is the Seattle ’99 WTO meeting. Affinity groups gathered there from all over—from Latin America, some from South Asia—where those terrible free-trade-zone sweatshops can be found. Environmentalists came; union chapters came; student groups came; and, of course, the anti-sweatshop contingent; and people concerned about the world’s water. They gathered to make a public statement of citizenly resistance to corporate globalization,

economic injustice, environmental degradation, and a kind of global militarization—all of these enmeshed. We decided to gather a good number of American literature scholars/teachers and ask them to think through the lens of Seattle; to write, each one, a fairly short essay on a text they're very familiar with, to do it in accordance with their own theoretical positioning, but to do what they do through that lens of material conditions degraded. And we drafted about fifteen pages that we could send to everybody. And now we're extending that introduction.

I would point out this about the university. That we have failed as faculty to take sufficient notice of the ways in which corporate globalization is mirroring itself on our own campuses. Increasingly, post-secondary institutions, from community colleges to premier universities, are outsourcing their services. Bookstores—that has been going on for a long time—and food services, too. (Not everywhere, but a lot of places.) The plus of this is that sometimes a contractor can come in and do it better than you can do it. For example, Follett taking over Vanderbilt's bookstore was a positive thing. Follett has made an investment—the store is much better, more pleasant, everything. I talked with the Follett store manager at Vanderbilt, Suzanne Holder, to ask her what the working conditions are for those employees. They have a health care plan, they have sick days, they have vacation—but I happen to know, also, that the Follett CEO is on the Board of Trust at Notre Dame, and they were one of the first universities to look seriously at the sweatshop conditions of their university insignia wear and to try to do something about it. They were a leader. And Vanderbilt is also a leader in this; it is a member of the Fair Labor Association and the Worker's Rights Consortium.

But I am speaking more broadly here. Particularly when the outsourcing extends beyond one or two services. What happens when a groundskeeper turns into a day laborer, or when a former employee of the university who was entitled to and received health care benefits, insurance, a retirement plan of some kind, maybe even a plan for that person's children, is no longer a uni-

versity employee and, if he wants the same kind of work, he must become a day laborer for some landscaping service that gets a contract with the university? And this kind of thing is going on—there's a study undertaken at George Washington University that shows this has happened. It's estimated that at this time over half the colleges and universities in the United States are outsourcing to some degree, and the trend is expected to increase exponentially.

If you're tenured, you're in a parallel universe with contract faculty who, again, have been hired in a mirroring of corporate practice. Corporations lay off tremendous numbers of people—then some of those same people get hired back on a contingency basis where they get no benefits at all. This is sort of fee-for-service. Well, here it is happening in higher education, too. And what have we done about it? I think we have not, as faculty, taken in the big picture—that we're in organizations that claim not to be corporations but are behaving just the way corporations are behaving. And what's to be done about it? No one has an answer right now, except to say conditions need to be more equitable. I am currently working with Ronnie Steinberg on a petition that would curtail the amount of food served at university receptions—so much of it goes uneaten and wasted. We'd like to see the savings from cutting out this waste passed on to the lowest-paid workers on campus, those making less than \$8.50 an hour. This is one positive way we see to begin to effect change.

And from the classroom, at least, I know that what I must do now is help students to see issues in canonical texts, as well as in what I'll call popular texts—we still make that distinction—that haven't been raised in the high-theory era and were not raised in the formalist era that preceded it. My case in point is *Moby Dick*, which in the post-World War II formalist era we saw as democracy somehow defeating the authoritarian. Ishmael lives. He's the democratic man—he deserves to live and represents the triumph of democracy. Okay, then we go into the era of theory and we get an interest in ethnic identities. Who are the others? Who are the subal-

terns? Who are the imperialists? And that's very interesting—all of this is good work. But now, it seems to me when we are in an era in which corporate globalization degrades working conditions, we need to notice in our desk copies all those passages that we more or less skimmed or thumbed across to get to the ethnically interesting moment or the big democratic epiphany. What are those pages? They're all about unsafe working conditions. And Melville goes on and on and on about the need, as he puts it, for common safety's sake, for all the sailors to do their part in those boats. A knuckle half-inch to the right or left gets caught in the line panning out from the harpooned whale, and it will dismember the crewman and it might drag the whole boatload of them to their deaths. I tell you, all across this country, if you went into offices and looked at the desk copies, those pages are virgin white. The underlinings are not there. I think we have got to get back to those texts we've been teaching forever and re-underline. Because the way we shape the consciousness of our own students is the way a civic outlook will proceed once they go into adult life. As faculty in the humanities, we have assumed a middle-class stability in our students, even in the face of the erosion of that stability, even as we see our graduate students struggle to get reasonable jobs. We can't do that anymore. I think we've got to start teaching the material conditions in the texts that are so familiar. Let me give you a final example. It's Alan Ginsberg's "Supermarket in California." Of course, he imagines seeing Walt Whitman in the veggies aisle, right? And it's charming and funny and great, and, in gay and lesbian literature, Whitman is the avatar of the gay poet, so it's the authorization. But there's also a line in that poem that says, "Who cut the pork chops? What price bananas?" If we take those questions seriously, as Ginsberg takes them seriously, we have to ask what are the material conditions that make this supermarket in California possible? Who's doing the butchering? The more we take those questions seriously, the more our students will.

MCCAMMON: Well, I certainly agree with everything Cecelia has so eloquently stated.

One of the things that academics can do is use this wonderful opportunity we have to speak to students about these issues—in the classroom or when we meet with them outside of class. I know in my classes, I like to talk to students about the history of institutions in the United States that have discriminated against women, against working women, against working poor women, against black women, against Latina women. And I like to teach them about what women have done to make those institutions and the rules associated with them fairer. And that's a powerful message we can send. A teacher, a professor, can go into the classroom and provide students with the chance to understand the history of women and women's activism and how much that activism has changed things. There's a wonderful book by Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*, where she writes about the second wave of feminism and the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s. She draws the contrasts between the time after that movement and what it was like for women in the 1950s, when their lives were fairly constrained to the household and to raising children. Now, these are wonderful vocations—I'm a mother and I love raising my children—but women had few choices beyond that. The world looks very different today, and being able to talk with students about how women have reshaped gender relations in some fundamental ways is a great opportunity. Another thing that a female academic can do is simply be a role model for younger women. Younger women can see that becoming a professor at a university is something they might aspire to. It's wonderful work—I feel very lucky to be a professor, studying the things that I'm interested in and teaching younger people about those things. But, as Cecelia pointed out and I agree, we have an obligation to make sure that we understand how forces of globalization, patriarchy, racism, ethnocentrism, and classism can damage lives. We can help our students understand these forces and hopefully want to work to make the world a more humane place.

2004/2005 Warren Center Fellows

Strategic Actions: Women, Power, and Gender Norms

BROOKE A. ACKERLY, assistant professor of political science, is interested in cross-cultural human rights theory, feminist international relations theory, and feminist activism. She is the author of *Political Theory and Feminist Social Criticism* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), as well as numerous articles on feminist and activist issues, including "Women's Human Rights Activists as Cross-Cultural Theorists" (*International Journal of Feminist Politics*, 2001). She is currently co-editing (with Maria Stern and Jacqui True) a volume entitled "Feminist Methodologies for International Relations." Ackerly has received fellowships and awards from the Center for International Studies at the University of Southern California, the Huntington Library, the American Association of University Women, and the MacArthur Consortium on Democracy and Popular Empowerment. Her current research focuses on the intersections between human rights and democratic rights theories and feminism.

KAREN E. CAMPBELL is an associate professor of sociology whose research interests include gender and gender inequality, work and occupations, network analysis of social networks, and social stratification and mobility. Campbell has received numerous research grants and awards, including a National Science Foundation grant for her and Holly McCammon's research on "How Women Won the Vote: The Political Successes of the State Suffrage Movements, 1866-1920." Her publications include *Working in Restructured Workplaces: Challenges and New Directions for the Sociology of Work* (co-edited with Daniel B. Cornfield and Holly J. McCammon, Sage Publications, 2001). She has published several articles on issues ranging from job mobility, gender inequality in the workplace, and the women's suffrage movement, including "Allies on the Road to Victory': Coalition Formation between the Suffragists and the Women's Christian Temperance

Union" (with Holly J. McCammon, *Mobilization*, 2002). Her current research focuses on women in the medical and legal professions in the United States in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

VIVIEN GREEN FRYD, professor of art history, is the author of *Art and the Crisis of Marriage: Georgia O'Keeffe and Edward Hopper* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), for which she received research grants from the Society for the Preservation of American Modernists and Vanderbilt University. She is also the author of *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815-1860* (Yale University Press, 1992; paperback Ohio University Press, 2000), as well as numerous articles and book chapters, including "Modern Emblematic Portraits: The Interplay of Word and Image" (in *Words and Pictures: An Inevitable Knowledge*, ed. Ellen Spolksy, Bucknell University Press, 2004). Fryd's current work-in-progress focuses on how art represents and interacts with the issue of sexual violence, particularly with respect to the anti-rape movement. It is titled "Sexual Violence and Rape in American Art and Culture."

HOLLY J. McCAMMON, professor of sociology, is Jacque Voegeli Fellow and co-director of the Fellows Program. McCammon's research interests include social movements, political sociology, historical/comparative sociology, quantitative methodology, and the sociology of work. She is the editor of several books, including *Labor Revitalization: Global Perspectives and New Initiatives* (co-editor with Daniel B. Cornfield, JAI Press, 2003), as well as the author of numerous articles, including "Out of the Parlors and Into the Streets': The Changing Tactical Repertoire of the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movements" (*Social Forces*, 2003). She has received grants and awards from organizations as diverse as the National Science Foundation (with Melinda D. Kane, 1999-2000;

with Karen E. Campbell, 1996-1998), the Carrie Chapman Catt Center at Iowa State University, the American Sociological Association, and the U.S. Department of Labor. McCammon's current research focuses on the women's suffrage movements in the United States.

BENITA ROTH, associate professor of sociology and women's studies at State University of New York, Binghamton, was awarded the William S. Vaughn Visiting Fellowship for the 2004/2005 Warren Center Fellows Program. Roth's research interests include the sociology of gender, the sociology of race and ethnicity, and the sociology of social protest. She is the author of *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black Chicana and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), as well as numerous articles on feminism and activism, including "Second Wave Black Feminism in the American Diaspora: News from New Scholarship" (*Agenda*, 2003) and "Thinking About Challenges/Limits for Feminist Activism in Extra-feminist Settings" (*Social Movement Studies*, 2004). Roth is also active in the community; she has volunteered for numerous organizations, including "Rude and Bold Women," a feminist community visual/performance art exhibit from 2001-2003. While at the Warren Center, Roth will continue research on her work-in-progress, "Harbingers of Feminist Possibility: Links between American Feminists and Third World Nationalist Women in the Second Wave." This project explores the connections between second-wave American feminists from differing racial/ethnic communities and Third World nationalist women who were involved in the anti-colonial struggle in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in terms of the impact nationalist women's models of gender activism had on feminists in the U.S.

CAREY MELISSA SNARR, assistant professor of ethics and society in the School of Divinity, is the author of several articles, including

"The Problem with Community Service" (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 5/15/2003) and "The University of Social Justice" (*Sojourners Magazine*, 2003). Snarr is actively involved in community service. She has been a member of LIVE (Living Income for Vanderbilt Employees) since she joined the Vanderbilt community in 2003, and has participated in numerous human rights organizations throughout her career, including the Human Rights Campaign and Common Cause. Snarr's research interests are Christian political thought, Christian theological ethics, social movement theory, and feminist/womanist theology and ethics.

RONNIE J. STEINBERG is a professor of sociology, whose selected publications include "Comparable Worth" (in *Gender Studies: International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Paula England, Pergamon, 2001), *The Politics and Practice of Pay Equity* (co-editor with Deb Figart, Temple University Press, 1999), *Job Training for Women: The Promise and Limits of Public Policies* (co-editor with Sharon Harlan, Temple University Press, 1989), and *Wages and Hours: Labor and Reform in Twentieth-Century America* (Rutgers University Press, 1982). Steinberg's research interests include gender and wage inequality; public policy and politics; work and occupations; and race, class, and gender. She has taken an active role in women's issues both in the community and at Vanderbilt, serving as the Director of the Women's Studies Program from 1997-2003 and serving as Director of the Women's Social Policy and Research Center, Women's Studies Program, since 2001. Recipient of numerous awards, grants, and fellowships, Steinberg was most recently presented with the Mary Jane Werthan Award, given to the person who has contributed most significantly to the advancement of women at Vanderbilt, in 2003. Steinberg's current research focuses on gender inequalities in the workplace, particularly in wage inequality.

CECELIA TICHI, William R. Keenan, Jr. Professor of English, is the Spence and Rebecca Webb Wilson Fellow and the co-director of the 2004/2005 Fellows Program. Tichi is the author of *Exposés and Excess: Muckraking in America 1900/2000* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), *Embodiment of a Nation: Human Form in American Spaces* (Harvard University Press, 2001), and *High Lonesome: The American Culture of Country Music* (University of North Carolina Press, 1994), as well as numerous other scholarly books, articles, critical editions, and works of fiction. Tichi has garnered several awards and grants for her scholarship and for her contributions to women's advancement, including the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Mentor Award in 1996. Tichi's current research projects focus on current issues of globalization and feminism, and on women and labor in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in the United States.

BARBARA TSAKIRGIS is associate professor of classics and art history and director of undergraduate studies, Department of Classical Studies. An expert in Greek and Roman

archaeology, her research interests focus on classical archaeology, art, and architecture. Her most recent publications include *Morgantina Studies, Vol. 6: The Domestic Architecture of Morgantina in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Princeton University Press, forthcoming), "Living and Working on the Margins of the Athenian Agora: A Case Study of Three Athenian Workshop Houses" (in *Households on the Margins*, Penn State Press, forthcoming), and "A (New) Chimney Pot from the Athenian Agora" (*Hesperia*, 2001). She has received numerous grants and awards, including the Kress Agora Publication Grant (2001/2002) and a grant from the Solow Art and Architecture Foundation (2000). She is actively involved in the community, including serving as a member on the Board of the Nashville Parthenon Patrons. Tsakirgis's current research focuses on the gendered dynamics of ancient households in Greece. Her works in progress are titled "The Athenian Agora: The Greek Domestic Architecture, 700 to 86 B.C." and "The Athenian Agora: The Domestic Architecture of the Roman Period, 86 B.C. to A.D. 700."

2005/2006 Warren Center Fellowships

"Pre-modern Others: Race and Sexuality"

The 2005/2006 Fellows Program at the Warren Center, "Pre-modern Others: Race and Sexuality," will be co-directed by Vanderbilt University faculty members Leah Marcus (English) and Holly Tucker (French). The year-long seminar will bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines to consider issues relating to race and sexuality from the classical period through 1700.

While there has been broad interdisciplinary scholarship in modern constructions of race and sexuality, the problems and possibilities of imposing more recent theories on earlier periods are only beginning to be addressed. How (if at all) can we talk about racial and sexual identities in pre-1700 cultures? To what extent are Eurocentric models challenged by non-Western evidence and theory? What are the particular interdisciplinary advantages of considering pre-modern race and sexualities together?

The Warren Center will sponsor a Visiting Fellow with expertise in the area of study, in addition to selected Vanderbilt faculty members. Information regarding the internal and external applications processes can be obtained from the Warren Center.

Joe Klein to Present Harry C. Howard Jr. Lecture

Noted journalist and author Joe Klein will present this year's Harry Howard Jr. Lecture on Tuesday, October 26th in Wilson Hall 103 at 4:10 p.m. His lecture is entitled "All the Kings Men

and *Primary Colors: The Relationship Between Political Fiction and Political Factors in Election Year 2004.*"

Klein is a senior writer at *Time* magazine and a regular contributor to *Paula Zahn Now* on CNN. His weekly column in *Time*, "In the Arena," covers national and international affairs. Klein has also been the Washington correspondent for *The New Yorker* and a columnist for *Newsweek*. He won a National Headliner Award for his *Newsweek* column, "Public Lives." He has served as consultant for CBS News, a Washington bureau chief for *Rolling Stone*, and a political columnist for *New York*, where he won a Washington Monthly Journalism Award for a cover story on race. His articles have appeared in *The*

New Republic, *The New York Times*, *Life*, and the *Washington Post*.

As "Anonymous," Klein wrote the best selling novel *Primary Colors* (Warner Books, 1996) which was inspired by the 1992 U.S. presidential race. *The New York Times Book Review* called it "one of the best political novels to appear in the latter half of the twentieth century." Klein's contribution to the field of political fiction was very much influenced by Robert Penn Warren's novel *All the King's Men*. Warren's 1947 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is considered one of the greatest political novels of all time. It is loosely based on the life of Louisiana politician, Governor Huey Long. Klein's lecture will be one of several events the Warren Center is hosting in the 2004/2005 academic year to honor the centennial of Warren's birth. Warren was born April 25, 1905 in Guthrie, Kentucky, and

graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1925.

During the week of the Howard Lecture, the Warren Center and the Sarratt Film Committee are co-sponsoring the showing of the films based on Warren's and Klein's novels. *All the King's Men* will be shown on October 27th, and *Primary Colors* will be shown on October 28th. Please contact the Sarratt Cinema for information regarding times of the showings.

The Harry C. Howard Jr. Lecture Series was established in 1994 through the endowment of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Nash, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. George D. Renfro, all of Asheville, North Carolina. The lectureship honors Harry C. Howard, Jr. (B.A. 1951) and allows the Warren Center to bring an outstanding scholar to Vanderbilt annually to deliver a lecture on a significant topic in the humanities.



Don Quixote: An Anniversary Celebration

The Warren Center will sponsor a conference on November 12 and 13, 2004, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the publication of Miguel de Cervantes's classic work *Don Quixote* (the first

part of which was published in 1605). The book was an immediate success and is considered to have played a major role in the development of the novel. *Don Quixote* tells two interrelated but

very different stories: the story of the misadventures of a man who tries to function as a knight errant when society has moved beyond its chivalric past and the story of the composition of the *Don Quixote* story. Cervantes does not simply write a novel to entertain the reader with an intriguing plot, but he uses the occasion to make the reader think seriously about the act of writing, the act of reading, and the place (and the construction) of history. Edward Friedman, professor of Spanish and comparative literature at Vanderbilt, is the conference organizer. Professor Friedman is a specialist in early modern Spanish literature, and has just completed a term as the president of the Cervantes Society of America.

Three distinguished scholars will give presentations at the conference. Marina Brownlee, professor of Spanish literature at Princeton University, is the author of *The Cultural Labyrinth of Maria de Zayas* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) and other studies of medieval and early modern Spanish literature. Yvonne Jehenson is professor emerita of Spanish and comparative literature at the University of Hartford. She is the author of *Latin-American Women Writers: Class, Race, and Gender* (State University of New York Press, 1995) and is completing a book (with Peter N. Dunn) tentatively titled "The Utopian Nexus in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*." Howard Mancing is professor of Spanish at Purdue University. He has recently published the two-volume *Cervantes Encyclopedia* (Greenwood Press, 2003). His other books include *The Chivalric World of "Don Quijote"* (University of Missouri Press, 1982).

The Warren Center will circulate more detailed information about the conference program during the fall semester.



Don Quixote by Honoré Daumier, (1808–1879)

2004/2005 Warren Center Seminars

Following is a list of seminars and reading groups that will be hosted by the Warren Center in the fall semester. Due to publication deadlines for *Letters*, this list may not be up-to-date; please check with the Warren Center or check our website for a full listing of Warren Center seminars.

American and Southern Studies Friday Lunch Bunch. Faculty with an interest in American and Southern Studies gather monthly to lunch, enjoy each other's company, and discuss work-in-progress by a member of the group or professional issues crucial to the field. Seminar coordinator: Michael Kreyling (English, Interim Director, Program in American and Southern Studies).

Ancient and Medieval Studies Seminar. The purpose of the group is to foster interdisciplinary study of the time periods embraced in its title, which means not only history but language and literature, chiefly, though not exclusively, in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. The main focus will be on faculty and graduate student research. Seminar coordinators: Bill Caferro (history) and Tom McGinn (classical studies).

Circum-Atlantic Studies Group. Now in its fourth year, this group meets monthly and reads and treats works-in-progress authored by participants. Participants' scholarship should be interdisciplinary in nature, focus on at least two of the following regions—Africa, Europe, Latin and Central America, the Caribbean, and North America—and treat some aspect of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, and/or postcolonialism. Seminar coordinators Sean Goudie (English) and Jane Landers (history).

Diversity Reading Group. This group will read current works that address a range of topics dealing with social and cultural diversity. Of special interest will be how to define diversity, and whether to see it as a neutral or already normative concept, and the practical and political issues faced by contemporary pluralist societies. Seminar coordinators: Lynn Clarke (communication studies), Diane Perpich (philosophy), and Brooke Ackerly (political science). Visiting speakers Carole Pateman (political science, UCLA) and Charles Mills (philosophy, University of Illinois, Chicago) will meet with the seminar in February, 2005.

Medicine, Health, and Society. Workshop/Planning Group. This interdisciplinary seminar will meet monthly to discuss common concerns and hear talks by members and visiting speakers. Seminar coordinator: Matthew Ramsey (history).

Traffic in Women: Antiquity to the Present. This seminar will examine the long history of traffic in women including those women captured in conquest, exchanged through marriage, and sold by family members for economic reasons. Seminar coordinators: Sara Eigen (German) and Lynn Ramey (French).

Vanderbilt Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies. This is an interdisciplinary forum for faculty and graduate students with an interest in literature, history, music, art, and culture from 1400-1800. The group meets monthly to discuss ongoing research by a faculty member, a recent publication in the field, or the work of a visiting scholar. Graduate students are particularly encouraged to attend and contribute. Seminar coordinator: Leah Marcus (English).

Artist Ana Flores to Install Exhibit at Monroe Carell Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt

In conjunction with the Warren Center's 2002/2003 Fellows Program theme "Medicine, Health, and Society," artist Ana Flores visited campus to begin preparations for a permanent exhibit to be installed at Vanderbilt's Monroe Carell Children's Hospital. Ana Flores is a sculptor, environmentalist, and community arts advocate who lives in southern Rhode Island and Nova Scotia, Canada. Her work is shown internationally and is in private, corporate, and institutional collections throughout the United States. For twenty years she has been an artist-in-residence in schools, universities, and public institutions. The project at Vanderbilt is cosponsored by the Medical Center's Program in Cultural Enrichment and the Warren Center.

Flores's piece for Vanderbilt is a collaborative project involving participants in the Medical Center's GirlForce Program. Girl-

Force is a health-risk prevention program for adolescent and pre-adolescent girls. It targets the leading causes of chronic disease and premature preventable death in women by promoting exercise, healthy eating habits, smoking abstinence, and positive body image. The program with visiting artist Flores was entitled "Athena: Strength and Beauty" and allowed the participants to explore girls' concepts of beauty, strength, body image, and nature.

On Saturday, March 20th, a group of twenty-five girls, ages nine through thirteen, gathered at Centennial Park from 8:15 a.m. until noon. The morning included an introduction to the Parthenon and the statue of Athena by Classical Studies Professor Barbara Tsakirgis. Susan McDonald, director of GirlForce, led the participants in a sword dance in front of Athena, and talked to the girls about the importance of physical exercise and



Ana Flores and one of the participants are working on a "goddess box."

nutrition. The program also included a discussion led by Ana Flores on the history of goddesses.

The girls then spent the remaining two hours creating "goddess boxes" which are meant to be symbolic metaphors for each participant of their own goddess qualities and strengths. Partici-

pants also made two small personal meditation bundles that represent their dreams and hopes. One bundle from each participant will be a part of the final work of art that Flores is designing and plans to install at the Children's Hospital in the spring of 2005.



Classical Studies Professor Barbara Tsakirgis talks to the participants about the statue of Athena.

“We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution” Eastern Regional Summer Institute for Teachers

Thirty-three teachers representing 18 states gathered at the Warren Center July 8-16, 2004, for an institute designed to help them better instill the basics of the U.S. Constitution in their students. Funded by a \$90,000 grant from the Center for Civic Education, the workshop provided teachers with the content, teaching methods, and assessment strategies

that will help them effectively implement the “We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution” curriculum in their classrooms. The curriculum includes both text and simulated congressional hearings. Vanderbilt University was one of two sites to host the national institutes in 2004.

Mary Catherine Bradshaw directed the institute. Bradshaw, a

Vanderbilt alumnus, teaches American Studies and Advanced Placement Government classes at Hillsboro High School in Nashville, Tennessee, and also holds an appointment as adjunct professor at Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of Education. Sue Chaney Gilmore served as assistant director. Gilmore received her B.A. and her Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University, and is presently teaching European history at Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet High School, also in Nashville, Tennessee.

The conference opened daily with lectures by scholars, each of whom specialize in different areas of the U.S. Constitution. Speakers included: John Lachs (philosophy, Vanderbilt University), Scott Casper (history, University of Nevada, Reno), Sam McSeveney (history, Vanderbilt University), Lisa Bressman (law, Vanderbilt University), Erin Casey (attorney, Covington & Burling, New York), Vikram Amar, (law, University of California’s Hastings

College of the Law) and Stephen Frantzich (political science, U.S. Naval Academy).

After each of the daily lectures, participants separated into small groups led by mentors. (Mentors are teachers who have participated in previous years’ institutes and have undergone special training with the Center for Civic Education.) The teams tackled questions that focused on particular aspects of the Constitution in preparation for a simulated congressional hearing that took place at the end of the conference. At the simulated congressional hearing, each participant had to give a four-minute presentation on a topic related to the Constitution.

At the conference’s closing dinner, a number of teachers commented on the interactive nature of the program. One teacher said, “This program is not a sit and get,” meaning they didn’t spend all day just listening to lectures—they were given opportunities each day to apply what they had learned.



Blaine Betts, Mary Catherine Bradshaw, Seth Swinhart, and Jeff Hudgins

Rethinking Inequalities and Differences in Medicine

Members of the 2002/2003 Fellows Program on “Medicine, Health, and Society” are planning a conference to be held April 29 through May 1, 2005, entitled “Rethinking Inequalities and Differences in Medicine.” The 2002/2003 Fellows Program was co-directed by Matthew Ramsey (history) and Larry Churchill (medical ethics). Members of the group include: Craig Anne Heflinger (human and organizational development), Leonard Hummel (Divinity School), Scott Pearson (surgical oncology), Ruth Rogaski (history), Peggy Thoits (sociology), and Arleen Tuchman (history). Steve Rachman (English and American studies, Michigan State University) was the William S. Vaughn Visiting Fellow.

Over the last decade, two interconnected issues have occupied

a rapidly growing place in social studies of medicine: disparities in health and care, and cultural differences that affect health-related behaviors and patients’ interactions with the health care system. The first is the focus of a new Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities at the National Institutes of Health, created in 2000. The second has become an established part of the curriculum in schools of medicine and nursing, on the principle that in an increasingly diverse society, patients will receive better care from “culturally competent” providers. These topics have proved remarkably fruitful as subjects for research and teaching. Yet the underlying concepts and assumptions have rarely received the crucial reexaminations they deserve.

This conference is intended to bring together scholars from mul-

ti-ple disciplines to share and discuss new approaches to the study of inequalities and differences in medicine. Among the central questions to be addressed are how we define and measure inequalities and whether the differences that shape patient behaviors in various population groups are best understood in cultural, socioeconomic, or other terms.

Keynote speakers will be Vinh-Kim Nguyen (medical anthropology, McGill University) and David Williams (sociology, epidemiology, and African American Studies, University of Michigan). Professor Nguyen’s current research concerns the factors that shape access to anti-retroviral drugs in developing countries, the transnational circulation of these drugs between North and South, and their impact on both local social relations and biolo-

gies. Professor Williams’ main research interests are in the areas of socioeconomic status, the experience of discrimination or racism, and resulting health effects.

In conjunction with the conference, the Warren Center will sponsor an exhibit of paintings commissioned by an American medical missionary, Peter Parker, between 1836 and 1852. The portraits depict Chinese patients afflicted with mature tumors that were later removed by Dr. Parker. The exhibit will be held in Special Collections at the Heard Library and will also include materials from the Vanderbilt Medical Center related to the history of medicine and society.

More detailed information regarding the conference will be announced later in the semester.



2004 Summer Graduate Student Fellows. From left: Lisa Niles, Department of English; Brigitte Kovacevich, Department of Anthropology; Andrea Bradley, Department of English; Shirin Edwin, Department of French and Italian; Kathleen Eamon, Department of Philosophy; Shalyn Claggett, Department of English; Barry Robinson, Department of History. Not pictured: Laura Redruello, Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

THE ROBERT PENN WARREN CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES

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Statement of Purpose

Established under the sponsorship of the College of Arts and Science in 1987 and renamed the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities in 1989 in honor of Robert Penn Warren, Vanderbilt alumnus class of 1925, the Center promotes interdisciplinary research and study in the humanities, social sciences, and when appropriate, natural sciences. Members of the Vanderbilt community representing a wide variety of specializations take

part in the Warren Center's programs, which are designed to intensify and increase interdisciplinary discussion of academic, social, and cultural issues.

Vanderbilt University is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

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