# WOMEN'S STUDIES

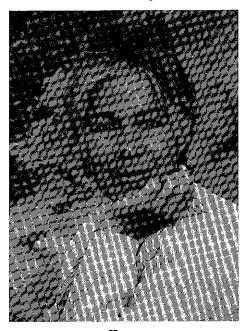
News from Women's Studies at The University of South Carolina

Spring 1992

## **Conference Draws USC and Community**

Women and the Global Environment: Perspectives from Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences, the USC Women's Studies Fifth Annual System-Wide Conference, drew more than 150 USC system faculty and students as well as representatives from other colleges, universities and the community to learn more about the linkages between women's and environmental issues. In addition to the three keynote addresses, 12 concurrent sessions provided opportunities for participants to hear from more than 40 cross-disciplinary presenters.

Patricia Hynes, director of the Institute on Women and Technology and professor of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, delivered the luncheon keynote address entitled "Women and the Global Environment: Analysis and Activism." Hynes described how Ellen Swallow, Lois Gibbs, and Rachel Carson catalyzed the American environmental movement, pointing out that, initially, it is usually women who have brought forward ecological issues from the grass-roots because they are the ones who



Hynes

have often been the first to see how the environment is fundamentally linked to their own health, and that of their families and communities. She contrasted a philosophical stance of stewardship that respects the interdependency of natural systems with anti-environment, exploitative practices based on a competitive philosophy of control. Hynes cited ways in which the medicalization and commercialization of women's bodies can be correlated with exploitation of the environment, and called for protection of women and the environment from being used, controlled and harmed by others.

Hynesis the author of *The Recurring Silent Spring* (Pergamon, 1989), *Reconstructing Babylon:* Women and Technology (Earthscan and Indiana University, 1990) and EarthRight: Every Citizen's Guide (Prima/St. Martin's, 1990). She is an environmental engineer who served as section chief in the Hazardous Waste Division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and

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## **Endowment Supports Scholarship**

# Abney Fellow To Study Leader in Corrections



Morton

Dr. Joann B. Morton, associate professor of criminal justice on the Columbia campus, has been selected to receive the fourth Josephine Abney Faculty Fellowship to study the life and career of Martha E. Wheeler, pioneer in American corrections, and the primary role model for

women entering the field in the 1970s and 1980s.

The summer stipend of \$3,750 will enable Morton to collect primary documentation on Wheeler as the pilot module of a historical archive on women leaders in American correc-

tions. This material will be housed in the University of South Carolina Thomas Cooper Library's special collections section. Much of the primary documentation on women in correctional leadership roles has been lost, Morton tells us. She wishes to find and preserve information on Wheeler before it is irretrievable. Her work will provide a record of a very significant woman in American corrections as well as a resource for others studying the background and career of successful women leaders. Her work will serve as a pilot for similar collections on women in corrections, and enable the University of South Carolina to become a key repository for archives on women leaders in corrections. Her proposal was judged as having the greatest potential for advancing the field of women's studies within a disci-

Morton received her doctor of public administration from the University of Georgia in 1980 and has been associate professor at USC Columbia since 1988. She is principal investigator for a \$50,000 project from the National Institute of Corrections on elderly offenders. Prior to coming to USC, Morton was director of the special projects division of the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Among her presentations are seven related to women employed in corrections. Selected publications include "Change, Challenge and Choices: Women's Role in Modern Corrections," and "Women Offenders: Fiction and Fact."

A charter member of the South Carolina Correctional Association, Morton also chairs their women's task force. She serves as chair of the Resolutions and Policy Advisory Committee to the American Correctional Association, and board member of the National Association for Women in Criminal Justice. In 1985, she became one of only eight women in the nation to receive the E. R. Cass Correctional Achieve-

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ment Award, the highest award given by the American Correctional Association. She also received the South Carolina Corrections Association's Distinguished Service Award in that year.

# Carlisle Award For Work On Aviators' Journals



Bell

Dr. Elizabeth S. Bell, professor of English at USC Aiken, was selected to receive the second Carol Jones Carlisle Award in Women's Studies, a \$500 research assistance grantshe will apply toward her continuing work on early aviators' accounts of flying. She will use the

accounts to study the mythology that evolved because the aviators were women, and to study their place in aviation. Her focus is on the autobiographies and journals of women whose booklength accounts of their experiences in aviation were published between 1920 and 1940.

While the public is generally aware of Amelia Earhart and Beryl Markham, Bell proposes to examine "the collective version of those early days in a newly-born industry" by a larger group of aviators that has been virtually ignored. Among those aviators she is studying are Gertrude Bacon, Louise Thaden (the first person to hold records for speed, altitude, and endurance in the same year), and Ruth Nichols women whose courage and expertise contributed heavily to build the early aviation industry. They wrote of their own experiences and roles, Bell says, "but also communicated personal meanings beyond the experiential in their flying; they wrote, at least in part, to change the society that underestimated women's capabilities and value." At a time when society was "still questioning the wisdom of even 'giving' them the vote," Bell says, these pioneer women accomplished excellence in a highly dangerous, highly technical profession.

In Bell's preliminary research at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., she found that many of the texts written by women aviators were absent from the otherwise carefully archived, readily available texts written by men aviators of the period. While these women were well-known at the time of their considerable exploits, they have been "dropped from the public consciousness and their written accounts - those which survive - have been relegated to forgotten shelves." Bell points out that few people know that Anne Lindbergh, a licensed pilot, was co-pilot and navigator for all the commercial air-route-mapping flights popularly credited solely to Charles. Through Lindbergh's and others' diaries and official autobiographies, Bell has learned that these women entered a field "not

only unconventional for women but also in some places actively hostile."

Bell received her Ph. D. from the University of Louisville, Ky., and has been on the faculty of the Aiken campus since 1979. She has published two books, Words That Must Somehow Be Said: Selected Essays of Kay Boyle (North Point Press, 1985), and Kay Boyle: A Study of the Short Fiction (Twayne Publishers, forthcoming). Her 17 published articles and more than 17 presentations include "The Women Flyers: From Aviatrix to Astronaut." Bell has been distinguished with a number of prestigious awards: she received the 1988 Martha Kime Piper S.C. Woman Administrator Award; the 1986-87

USCA Distinguished Research Award; the 1985-86 USCA Teacher of the Year Award; the 1985-86 USC System AMOCO Distinguished Teacher of the Year; and numberous Aiken Partnership Foundation Travel Awards.

The Carol Jones Carlisle Award in Women's Studies was created by friends, colleagues, family, and students of the English Professor Emerita, beginning in 1989. Dr. Carlisle taught at USC for nearly 40 years, and is active internationally as an important Shakespeare scholar. She is the noted author of a biography about Helen Faucit, the great Shakespearean actress of the 19th century. Dr. Carlisle was also one of the first women faculty at USC.

#### **Community** (from page 1)

Chief of Environmental Management of the Massachusetts Port Authority. For her work in EPA's Superfund program, she won the 1985 Environmental Service Award of the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions. In 1987 she won a German Marshall Fund Environmental Fellowship to do a comparative study of lead contamination and environmental policy in Western Europe and the United States. A longtime activist, she founded Bread and Roses, a feminist restaurant and center of culture in Cambridge, Mass., in 1974. In 1980 she designed and co-built a passive solar, superinsulated house which served as a model for builders in the Connecticut Valley. Recently, she developed an aquifer protection plan for her town of Montague, Mass.



Raymond

The closing keynote address was delivered by Dr. Janice Raymond, professor of Women's Studies and Medical Ethics at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Entitled "Medical Ethics and Women's Studies," Raymond's address focused on reproductive technologies, and the unpublicized risks and odds of in vitro fertilization, fertility drugs, and surrogacy. She cautioned the audience to re-examine society's priorities in placing women's reproductive capacities above their health and well-being. She warned of the dangers inherent in the medicalization of women's roles in reproduction, of their gaining more value through their wombs, or sexual appeal (breast implants) than through their lived experiences. She also drew attention to the use of Third World women in developing and marketing new technologies.

Raymond is the author of RU486: Misconcevtions, Myths and Morals (Cambridge, MA.: Institute on Women and Technology, MIT, 1991), The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Femininism (editor with Drochen Leidholdt, New York: Pergamon Press, 1990), and A Passion for Friends: A Philosophy of Female Affection (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986). Among many other honors, fellowships, and grants, she was co-recipient of a 1988 grant from the Skaggs Foundation to fund an international journal, Issues in Reproductive and Genetic Engineering: International Feminist Perspectives (Pergamon Press). She was one of the founders of the Boston Theological Institute's Women's Studies Program and Coalition in 1970.

Dr. Judith James, associate professor of English at USC Columbia opened the conference with the Josephine Abney Faculty Research Award Lecture, based on her 1991 Fellowship in Women's Studies at USC. Her address, entitled "Carson McCullers, Lillian Smith and the Politics of Broadway," shared the results of her research on the two writers. She focused on the conversions of their best-selling books to Broadway plays against the odds of the patriarchal politics of New York theater, and the dramatically different results for each.

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Dr. Sue V. Rosser, Director of Women's Studies

Dr. Katherine Wyly Mille, Editor Assistant Director of Women's Studies in Charge of Development

> Women's Studies 1710 College Street Columbia, SC 29208 Telephone (803) 777-4007

## **Students Recognized with Women's Studies Awards**

#### Weaver Receives Childs Award



Weaver

Margaret-Ann (Marti)
Weaver, an interdisciplinary studies major with 18 hours in women's studies, was selected by Women's Studies faculty to receive the fifth annual Arney Robinson Childs Memorial Award of \$250. The award recognizes exemplary scholarship, to women's studies

special contributions to women's studies classes, and critical leadership on campus and in the community.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Weaver is also a past president and current Southeastern regional representative for Golden Key National Honor Society. Weaver combined academic achievement with distinguished leadership and community service, recognized by her membership in Omicron Delta Kappa and Mortar Board National Honor Society. She completed her bachelor's degree cum laude in December and has entered graduate school at USC in Education to obtain a master's degree to which she will add a certificate in public health. She is preparing to be a community educator, focusing particularly on sex education for adults and children.

An important part of Weaver's community service and leadership revolves around the Rape Crisis Center. A survivor of rape "long before there was anyone there for victims," Weaver volunteered in 1984 to become a victims' advocate at the Center, making herself available to rape victims night and day. She has remained active with the Rape Crisis Center ever since, and joined their Board of Directors last July.

Weaver says her women's studies courses really changed her perspectives on the status of women in society. Having lived in a non-traditional family where her parents did not adopt a sex-based division of labor, Weaver had not realized the full force of gender-role stereotyping until she left home. She and her husband have since raised two children, a daughter who is a psychiatric nurse and a son who is a student at Oberlin College. Her faculty praised Weaver for bringing important experiences and insights to her women's studies classes, and for acting on her convictions.

The Childs Memorial Award is in memory of former USC Dean of Women Arney Robinson Childs. Childs served as an advocate for women for more than 20 years (1935-58) during the time USC made the transition from a nearly allmale institution to one which not only admitted women, but eventually offered them campus housing and admission to any course they chose. Dr. Childs received her master's degree (1925) and honorary doctorate (1960) from USC. Before coming to USC as dean, Childs was one

of the first women principals in South Carolina. In addition to her many roles as public servant and civic leader, Childs was also an accomplished documentary editor and indexer, with many works published by USC Press. Her portrait hangs in Sims Residence Hall.

#### Jerby Receives Thompson Award



Jerby

On Awards Day in April, Women's Studies presented the fourth annual \$100 Emily Thompson Memorial Award in Women's Health to Brian L. Jerby, a senior in the School of Medicine. A faculty committee selected Jerby's paper on "Obesity and Prognostic Indicators

in Breast Cancer" for dealing with a critical area in women's health and for being particularly well-written and documented.

Jerby's study involved reviewing patient charts to examine the relationship of body mass index to breast cancer stage, size of the primary tumor, number of involved lymph nodes, and

estrogen and progesterone receptor status in 98 patients. The patients selected had histologically confirmed Stage I, II, and III breast carcinoma. Jerby used an obesity indicator defined by a nationwide anthropometric study. Within these parameters, Jerby found obesity to be associated significantly with estrogen receptor positive tumors in postmenopausal women. This index of obesity, however, was not significantly related to stage at diagnosis. size of the primary tumor, axillary lymph node status, or progesterone receptor status, although a trend was observed among the progesterone receptor positive tumors. Jerby's study supports the need for a standardized obesity index before further investigations of the role of obesity in breast cancer risk and prognosis can be clarified.

The Emily Thompson Award is used to encourage research that will advance the status of women's health. It is given in memory of Emily Thompson, a former student at USC who completed her master's degree in public health with a focus on women's health. Thompson often voiced her devotion to the goal of improving our knowledge and service in that field. She died four years ago while working at the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

## Women's Studies Research Series

This series focuses attention on the research on women being done by USC faculty in their respective fields:

## Language through Feminist Theories

Katherine W. Mille, assistant director of women's studies and a linguist, discussed the many overlapping schools of feminist thought and how each contributes to an understanding of the construction of gender through language. Liberal feminist thinking, for example, might focus on women's gaining voice within an already constructed discourse arena. As the first step in addressing inequities, the liberal approach involves assertiveness training, teaching awareness of the disempowerment that comes with certain discourse styles (hedging, tag questions, rising intonation, effusive style). This approach does not challenge the model which allows men's stereotypical style to be valued over women's. The prescribed use of inclusive language attempts to correct gender-based inequities by bringing women into our referential system on a parallel and equal basis with men. The liberal approach can only work, however, when women are not only included referentially but also in person.

Psychoanalytic feminist theory focuses on the psychosexual development of infants and children. This theory suggests how early experience with exclusively female caregivers might influence the development of distinct social

modes of interaction among boys and girls, with the individualistic, competitive model becoming the preferred model in adult male speech, and cooperative, relational speech becoming the preferred model in adult female speech. She cited studies that indicate, however, that neither mode is gender-exclusive, and linguists must pay attention to race and class in such generalizations.

Mille also reviewed radical and lesbian separatist feminist theories for their explanations of patriarchal dualisms in language by which binary polarity establishes female as negative, and forever the "Other." These schools urge a radical re-appropriation and transvaluation of language to express women's own experiences and to create an alternative, woman-centered world that is healthy for women. Mille linked Marxist/socialist feminist theories with studies showing the locus of power in discourse, and male control of mixed-sex conversation such that interruptions, topic-raising, streams of discourse, and the duration of particular conversations are generally controlled by men. while men's own initiatives are generally supported by the conversational work of women.

Mille linked African-American feminist theory, and by extension, multicultural feminist theory, with her own work on Gullah creole to suggest the role race, gender, and class ideologies may affect the way we understand language variation.

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#### Women in South Carolina **Through Time: Quincentennial Ouestions**

A panel of USC faculty worked collaboratively throughout the past year with project director Katherine Mille to draw together evidence from their respective fields on women in South Carolina, and to question their status throughout the last 500 years. Miriam Freeman, assistant professor of social work, Thavolia Glymph, assistant professor of history, Joan Meznar, assistant professor of history, Marcia Synnott, associate professor of history, and Gail Wagner, assistant professor of anthropology, wove a tableau of South Carolina women of different ethnic groups. Comparing and contrasting the groups over time revealed the effect that 15th century European hierarchical beliefs of gender, race, and class continue to have on women throughout the state.

Against this dominance model imported from Europe, Wagner described Native peoples' matrilineal society, where women controlled agriculture, played an important role in domesticating crops, and could also hold privileged roles as religious and political authorities. She described the ruler of the Colfitachequi (who occupied most of South Carolina): a woman, who welcomed and was then abducted by De Soto's men, later to escape and return to her people.

Meznar told how Spanish women, constrained by patriarchal values, used their experience at Santa Elena to gain upward mobility, increasing their own social rank by taking on Native and African women asservants. Women's presence in the colonial outpost was a stabilizing influence which helped Spain hold claim to the area for as long as it did. She told how the women overwhelmed the governor of Santa Elena and carried him to the ships to avoid certain annihilation at the hands of the attacking Indians.

the ideal "lady" in vogue in Europe, French Huguenot and English women helped clear the land and move the early English colony from mere subsistence to a robust economy. Women's work raising families and building community substantiated the colonial powers' claims to land. The Europeans brought with them their culture's view of womanhood as supporting but not challenging men, Synnott said. The evolving model for "the ideal woman," which included being a virtuous, devoted mother who was protected within her home from the corruption of politics, was prescribed particularly for white women, though many resisted it. Certain women pioneered in careers that made them firsts: Elizabeth Timothy of Charleston is considered the first American woman to publish a newspaper; Eliza Lucas Pinckney, pioneer agronomist, developed the cash crop of indigo; and Henrietta Dering Johnston became the first pastel artist in colonial America.

Glymph provided a poignant look at the experiences of the African women abducted from Africa to become human cargo to the new frontier. Africans endured the additional transition from Spanish rule to the chattel slavery of the English, where they were officially regarded as being no different than other farm animals. The women were used as breeders, sexual slaves, as well as domestic and field labor. Yet, Glymph showed us, the women succeeded at creating a viable culture for their people despite their horrendous suffering, they defied their oppressors in many ways, and went on after emanicipation to do important race work, founding churches, colleges, hospitals and orphanages. Mamie Garvin Fields, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright, Dr. Matilda Evans, Cecelia Dial Saxon, the Rev. Sarah Smith, Septima Poinsette Clark, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Modjeska Monteith Simkins are but a few of these heroic women.

## To Our Friends:

The USC Women's Studies Endowment has grown by more than \$30,000 since this time. We are gearing up for other important uses

Women's Studies is raising important issues in research, teaching, and service at the University of South Carolina. Through your projects—The Carlisle Research Award, the to the USC Educational Foundation. Childs and Thompson student awards, the Harriott H. Faucette Fund making possible individual projects and student support, our collaboration to bring important outside lecturers to Carolina, the Preventive Medicine Or Call: Fund in Women's Studies—all are the result (803) 777-4007 for more information.

of your desire to see Women's Studies make a difference in higher education.

last year, bringing the total to more than of the Endowment you helped create. Please help us by continuing your support so that Women's Studies can continue to build momentum to meet the enormous challenge before us.

efforts, we are now able to award the Abney Send a check for either the Women's Studies Fellowship on an annual basis, instead of Endowmentorthe Preventive Medicine Fund alternating years. Our special Endowment in Women's Studies (help it grow!), made out

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Synnott described how, despite the model of Freeman brought us up to date with demographic facts concerning South Carolina's majority population — women. While earning the majority of college degrees in the state, and while making up almost half of South Carolina's paid labor force, women are still paid less money and are thus poorer than men. She described government and other power structures, concluding that South Carolina is still a patriarchy, with "rule by the fathers." She cited that 86 percent of legislators are men, as just one example. She reported on the income hierarchy in South Carolina (not counting unemployed persons) which shows white men at the top, African American men second from the top, followed by white women, and African American women on the bottom. Freeman provided information which revealed a gender, race, and class hierarchy affecting women's health and education as well. Women, she concluded, after 500 years, have a lesser status than men in terms of power, public decisionmaking, and financial resources. White women fare better than women of color. The promises of the New World were clearly not meant for

#### Women in Change: South Africa as a Case Study

Rejoice NgCongo, the first Black South African woman school principal, was invited to speak in the Women's Studies Research Series while she was at USC Columbia, participating in the USCsponsored leadership development program for Black South African educators. NgCongo spoke about the roles of women in the change taking place in South Africa. There, she said, Black women are often peasants, socialized to aspire to marriage and be subservient to men. Survival is their main priority since many fathers and husbands must work away from home as migratory laborers. Gender issues tend to be relegated to the background. Black women have been very active in the resistance movement against apartheid. However, achieving political power for themselves as well as for Black men has not yet become an integrated issue, as NgCongo says it should. She cites the challenge women face, putting women's liberation handin-hand with race liberation: "un-victimizing" themselves by becoming involved in gender issues through education; liberating themselves from imprisoning beliefs; networking with each other; and socializing children differently about their roles.

## **Corporations Add Support**

IBM of Columbia recently became a major donor to the Women's Studies Endowment, joining T & S Brass & Bronze Works, Inc. of Travelers' Rest, and Blue Cross-Blue Shield of South Carolina, each of which has renewed substantial contributions this year. Theirs and other business support from South Carolina has been vital in providing momentum to the Women's Studies Endowment campaign.

## **Outside Speakers Visit USC**

#### Gender as Seriality: Thinking About Women as a **Social Collective**

Philosopher Iris Young visited USC to discuss her extension of Sartre's thinking about the nature of seriality. Young suggested that gender might well be an example of such a construct. She drew on the analogy of a line of individuals forming at a bus stop, different one from another, perhaps unknown to each other, having no other necessary connections in the past or the future, save that of waiting for the same bus in the present. That a line forms, that a serial of people forms a social collective (bus patrons) is dictated by societal structures. The fact that a bus is needed or used is dictated by certain behaviors and constraints that have developed in a community, without which, the group of bus patrons would never have formed. We only see the transient serial (one lined up behind the other) become a group when they face a similar fate and must act collectively or separately, as when the bus is late and they begin to complain together and discuss their alternatives.

Young argues that the above scenario may describe how individuals become defined as women, by virtue of their response to societal structures that cause them to serialize with other individuals constrained in the same way. By recognizing that societal structures force individuals to take certain routes, we might understand that "women" may not be a fixed group, but rather individuals whose paths at points in time converge in a serial, as their needs and desires change.

Young teaches in the graduate school of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. Her lecture was sponsored by the USC Department of Philosophy and Women's Studies.

#### **Quincentennial Series:**

As part of the Women's Studies project entitled "Women in South Carolina Through Time: Quincentennial Questions," funded in part by the South Carolina Humanities Council, the following three outside scholars were brought to address USC audiences and the public both on campus and at the YWCA of the Midlands.

#### **African American Women**

Deborah White, associate professor at Rutgers University, spoke on two topics, "Black Women's History as Nectarine" and "The Cost of Club Work." In the first, White illustrated two approaches to Black women's history. The initial approach reveals the disproportionate suffering African women endured in slavery, where not only their physical labor was exploited, but also their sexuality, and their capacity to reproduce more slaves. White drew from historical records to show that African women were expected to labor alongside the men on plantations, all the while managing their pregnancies, childbearing, childcare, and domestic duties (such as sewing and mending clothes for other slaves, preparing meals, etc.). Some were forced to submit to their white masters' sexual demands. Escape, White explained, was rarely thinkable for the women, since it would necessarily involve their infants and children, and be too risky. This approach focuses on the thorough victimization of African American women in the past.

But White challenged this model with examples of those who rose to achieve heroically for themselves and their people. A second model, she said, was needed to describe achievement against the odds. She described those women who managed to buy their freedom and then spent their lives and means buying the freedom of other slaves. She discussed Harriet Tubman's underground railroad and other examples of courage and heroism, to argue that "victim" does not describe these women.

White suggested that perhaps a model is called for that, like the nectarine, is more than the sum of its parts. Racism and sexism do not add up to Black Women's History, White said. These two elements alone do not account for Black women's courage and achievement against total oppression. One has to recognize Black Women's History as a unique, dynamic response to both racism and sexism, together with what the women themselves bring to the equation. Black Women's History is unique, White argues, and thus has unique explanatory power in human history.

"The Cost of Club Work": White also spoke on the Black women's club movement of the late 19th and early 20th century. She demonstrated how different meanings derived from the Black and the White women's club movements. Both engaged in similar projects for community improvement: establishing orphanages, libraries, settlement houses, hospitals, streetlights, parks, and encouraging reading, and music appreciation. But the National Association of Club Women which grew out of a federation of women's clubs formed by Black middle-class women, expressly confronted both sexism and racism. Black women worked through their clubs to challenge any male advantage over them, believing that they had always been equal to men, and that, in some ways, women were better suited to be social reformers because men were too belligerent and aggressive. White women's clubs, by contrast, often failed to challenge the patriarchy. As part of their race work, Black club women at the same time called upon Black men to defend their honor against whites' continued maligning of Black womanhood and morality, and worked to emphasize their own moral purity. White says that although it contributed to race progress and nation-building, the Black women's club movement also created gender tensions in the Black community. As a result, African American activists put a premium on unity in the Black community, which made fighting sexism secondary to fighting racism.

#### **Native and African American** Women Under Spanish Rule

Jane Landers, assistant professor at the University of Florida, described the newly understood roles African and Native American women played in the Spanish explorations and settlements in South Carolina and Florida. She described how new historical and archaeological evidence reveals the experiences of some of these women who defended their families in war zones on exposed frontiers while the men of their communities were used as surrogate warriors by the Spanish and English colonials. Spanish Florida granted freedom to any Native or African American fugitives from competing colonies. The Spaniards welcomed their abor and military services, instructed them in Catholic doctrine, saw that they married, and employed them, Landers said. A number of fugitive slaves from South Carolina, including women and children, established a free Black community in Fort Mose, Florida.

Also in the Spanish colonies, there is evidence that Native and African American women were able to gain access to courts to pursue their property and inheritance rights. Furthermore, paniards had become so accustomed to Africans and Indians in their communities that miscegenation became common in Florida. Landers suggested that strict racial categorization was less rigid, since any family was likely to have branches that included Spanish, Native, and African American relatives. While racism was not absent, she said, it was more a function of personal connections, wealth, and behavior. This relativism contrasted sharply with the chattel slavery enforced under English law which viewed slaves as chattel, not people, and attempted to make absolute distinctions on the basis of race.

To be sure, Landers said, a hierarchy of race, class, and gender shaped Hispanic settlements. Under Spanish law, a woman was legally 'imbecillus sexus' (along with children, invalids, and delinquents), subject to patriarchal authority. Spanish women, nonetheless, had specific protections of their inheritance and their dowries, had access to courts, and, with their husbands' permission, could enter into legal transactions. The records indicate that Native and African American women vigorously pursued these rights under Spanish rule.

#### Writing A History of Native American Women

Dr. Theda Perdue, professor at the University of Kentucky, drew on her study of Cherokee and other native peoples, to sort little-known fact from well-known myth about the early women of what is now South Carolina. European men's flawed analysis of what little they were able to observe of Native women, provoked by their own beliefs about women and their place in European patriarchies, ultimately

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#### Friends of Women's Studies

The following is a cumulative listing (as of March 15, 1992) of friends of Women's Studies who have supported the Women's Studies Endowment by contributions. Contributors beyond that date will be listed in our next newsletter. \*\*Donors who have renewed their support since October 1991 \*New donors since October 1991

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March is Women's History Month, a time when departments and colleges across USC usually join with Women's Studies to provide a special focus on women. But March is only the tip of the iceberg. This year, 54 different departments, colleges, schools, divisions and programs contributed to present more than 35 different cross-disciplinary events. The growing number of participants and the increasing audiences indicate that Women's History Month is accomplishing its goal of raising awareness as to how much we have yet to study and learn about women. Ultimately, women should become part of what we study and teach all year long.

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NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM, IRMO - FALL II (October 26-December 10, 1992) 399022 WOS E111.451 Women in Western Culture 03 IRMO 00 TTH 5.30-8:00 P Waters										
* See appropriate department listing in master schedule for this information										

#### Speakers (from page 5)

gave rise to flawed and damaging U.S. policies dealing with Native populations.

Perdue explained that Native women were farmers, producing all the agricultural needs of their communities. They honorably defined themselves as women by the work they did. To European male eyes, they seemed by their labor to be slaves, of little value. Because farming was viewed as "women's work," the Europeans discounted it from the value it actually held in Native culture. Instead, they defined Native cultures as nomadic, hunting cultures because of what they observed Native men doing.

Because Native peoples' sexual mores were different than the Europeans', with Native women controlling their own sexuality, engaging in serial marriages, and being uninhibited in their dress, European men concluded that they were immoral and promiscuous. Because Native men displayed no control over the women, Europeans concluded that they had no "civilized" sense of property. Hence,

they could be relocated with little consequence.

These biased beliefs about Native people and Native women, in particular, led to disastrous policies which ignored the centrality of farming and the importance of women's autonomy in Native culture.

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