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Commission for Women

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From the Chair...Wylene Vrba

On behalf of the Commission for Women, I wish to thank you for participating in our review of the status of women at UTK. Your attendance at the various informal group activities that were scheduled over the past couple of years and your response to the "Gender and the Workplace" survey were critical to identifying specific areas requiring attention.

The Commission is preparing responses and recommendations to the issues identified during this review. Results of the University wide administration survey will be incorporated where appropriate. The resulting report will be given to Chancellor Snyder early in 1994.

My personal observation is that the status of women and the opportunities for them have improved significantly during my 23 years at UTK. However, much remains to be done toward equalizing this very diverse and rich environment.

Your specific comments and observations are welcome by the Commission for Women. You may contact me at 974-4561 if you wish to discuss any issue of importance to UTK women.

Englewood, Tennessee: A Textile Mill Town and Representative to the Tennessee Overhill Experience

The Tennessee Overhill Experience is a program designed to promote tourism and economic development in three counties located in Southeastern Tennessee: McMinn, Monroe, and Polk. A significant number of visitors is nothing new to this region: for decades a large number of travelers have come to explore the Cherokee National Forest and surrounding rivers and valleys. The Tennessee Overhill Experience is, however, a heritage tourism program. A main goal of the project is to preserve and promote cultural and historic resources, which would encourage more and longer visitation and expand the economic base of the region. In addition, the project plans to serve as an educational tool, by the means of interpreting historic sites in a creative and exciting way as well as telling the story of the Tennessee Overhill area and this part of Southern
Appalachian Culture.
A self guided tour/exhibit is being designed to illustrate the history of the working class folk in this area. Several towns, such as Coker Creek, a former gold camp, and Reliance, with its turn of the century buildings on the banks of the Hiwassee river, were chosen to represent the various industries, histories, and lifestyles of the Tennessee Overhill Region.

Englewood, another town incorporated in the Overhill area evolved because of textile manufacturing. Textile manufacturing was the one Appalachian industry which employed large numbers of women in "public work" and "paid work" outside their homes. A new book entitled "Then and Now: The Women of Englewood’s Textile Mills" traces the growth, development and decline of the textile industry at Englewood. This is a significant contribution to Women’s Studies. It is one of the few studies which documents women’s place in history as relates to their contributions to the growth of industry. The book includes oral excerpts describing the personal sacrifices these women made in order for their families and town to survive.

The creation of the book required specialists in several disciplines and volunteers from Englewood. Dr. Benita J. Howell and Betty Duggan of the UTK department of Anthropology served as Tennessee Humanities consultants. Carol J. Evans, also with the UTK Anthropology department, served as a humanities consultant and senior editor of the book. Dr. Sam Yates, director of Ewing Gallery at UTK, was the design consultant and Cary Staples of UTK’s Art and Architecture department designed the cover. The creation of a museum in Englewood that represents the role of women in its textile history and narrates "her story" is presently underway.

Dr. Osborne visits Japan

Dr. Martha Lee Osborne traveled to Japan this past summer. The trip was sponsored by Dean Minkell’s Language and Culture program. She visited Tokyo, Muroran (Knoxville’s sister city), and Naga-Machi (Oak Ridge’s sister city). While in Naga-Machi, Dr. Osborne and other members of the program participated in ceremony dedicating a peace bell to symbolize international friendship. The bell had inscription of the dates of Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki as a reminder of the importance of international friendship.

Osborne also toured the Tokyo Women’s center and was able to discuss with women involved in the center the status of Japanese women. She reported that while Japanese society is somewhat more responsive to non-traditional female roles (14 women gained lower house seats in the last national election), the traditional patriarchal system is still everpresent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invitations for Nominations for Chair, Women’s Studies Program
Nominations are invited for the position of Chairperson of the Women's Studies Program in the College of Liberal Arts. This is a one-quarter time administrative position provided for through released time from the individual's department.

The Women's Studies Program offers both an undergraduate academic major and minor and offers limited opportunities for graduate work as well. The Program also seeks to stimulate research on women and functions as an advocate for the inclusion of women and women's issues in the University's curriculum.

The Women's Studies Program Chair provides leadership for the Women's Studies Committee and other program participants. Primary duties of the Program Chair include managing the Office of Women's Studies, overseeing their budget, scheduling Women's Studies courses, developing programs for Women's Studies faculty and students, conducting Committee meetings, preparing annual reports and in general representing the interests of the Program to the College of Liberal Arts. The Chair's term of office is five years, renewable upon review.

The successful candidate will be full-time, tenured or tenure track member of the Liberal Arts faculty who has demonstrated significant support for Women's Studies through teaching or research. Nominations should be made to Associate Dean Lorayne Lester, 226 Ayres Hall, and should include verification of the nominee's willingness to serve plus a copy of the nominee's resume.

Practitioner Research on Teaching Awards Program

From a limited pool of resources the Learning Resource Center will make grants of $300-600 to faculty to encourage research and/or innovation in teaching at UTK. The funds may be used to secure materials, assistance, or computer time, etc., for projects that explore new ways of teaching or engage in study of present practice.

Proposals should be submitted by December 1, 1993 or March 1, 1994, to the Professional Development Committee of the Teaching Council, and sent to the Chair, Professor Jan Allen, 418 Jessie Harris Building. On those dates the Committee will review and make a judgement about funding of the proposals submitted.

Those receiving support from this program are asked to submit a brief final report on the project to the Professional Development Committee and the Learning Research Center upon completion of the project.

Proposals should be brief, no more than a page or two, and should include the following:
(1) A brief description of the project you propose to undertake and how you plan to disseminate what you learn.
(2) The amount requested with description of how it will be used to support this project.
(3) Starting date for the project.
(4) Date final report will be submitted.

If you have any questions about this program to support practitioner research in teaching, please contact W.
Lee Humphreys at the Learning Research Center (974-2459).

Women's Studies Courses Offered Spring Semester

220 Women in Society
230 Marriage and Family: Roles and Relationships
332 Women in American Literature
360 Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective
284 Philosophy of Feminism
400 Women Writers from Developing Countries
425 Women's Health
434 Psychology of Gender
466 Rhetoric of Women's Rights

Visiting Lecturer

Mary Daly, Foremost Feminist Philosopher and Professor of Philosophy at Boston University, will discuss her book "Outercourse"-Beadazzling Voyage of Feminism. The lecture will take place on March 8th, 7:30pm in the University center auditorium.

New Group Formed

An undergraduate organization of Women's Studies majors and minors has been formed. The group plans to meet to discuss issues related to women's studies, books, poetry readings, exhibits of works of female artists, and other related issues. Anyone interested can contact Amy Frazier at the Women's Studies Building, 2402 Lake Avenue or reach her by phone at 974-2409.

Special thanks to Martha Lee Osborne, Carol Jo Evans, and Katherine Jernigan for their time and contributions to NETWORKER.