

Center for WOMEN'S STUDIES

New Faculty Join Women's Studies

Meet the WSU Center for Women's Studies' new faculty members who joined the department in January:



Dr. Chinyere Okafor, poet, playwright and short story writer, is associate professor of Women's Studies. She has taught at the University of Southern Maine, Portland,

ME; Montgomery College, Rockville, MD; University of Swaziland, Swaziland; University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria; and University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

A specialist in gender and cultural studies, Okafor has taught literature, theater, culture and women's studies. She is vice president of the Association of African Women Scholars; board member for the Museum of African Tribal Arts; and board member with the Global Learning Center.

Dr. Okafor's impressive achievements include: 1998 Rockefeller Fellowship for Residency as a Writer in the Rockefeller Center in Bellagio (Italy); two Rockefeller Humanist-in-Residence Fellowships in 1991 (at Cornell University and Hunter College) for research in the poetics and politics of African festival drama from a gender perspective; Outstanding Finalist Award in the Bertram's Literature of Africa Awards organized in South Africa in 1996; a special recognition by the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) in 1994 for proficiency in the three genres of literature; and three ANA awards for drama, poetry, and prose respectively.

Her published creative works include

He Wants To Marry Me Again and other Stories, *The Lion and The Iroko* (a play), *From Earth's Bed Chamber* (a collection of poems), *Campus Palavar and Other Plays*. Her essays can be found in publications such as *Okike*, *Literary Review*, *Research in African Lit*, *World Literature Today* and *Commonwealth*. Some have been translated to French and Italian.

At WSU, Dr. Okafor teaches "American Women in Popular Culture," "Women in Africa" and "Women Writers."



Dr. Doris Chang is assistant professor of Women's Studies. She received her Ph.D. degree from the Department of History at the Ohio State University in 2002. Her areas

of specialties include East Asian history and the history of women's movements in Asia and the United States.

Dr. Chang's PhD dissertation was entitled "Daughters of Formosa: Feminist Discourses and Women's Movements in Taiwan, 1920-2002." In addition, she has done extensive research on the sexual liberation ideology in contemporary Taiwan and the New Feminism of Ms. Hsiu-lien Annette Lu, vice president of Taiwan.

The WSU courses that Dr. Chang teach include "Women in World Religions," "Women in Society: Social Issues" and "Asian Women in Modern History, Culture, and Society." She is also coordinator of the annual Women's History Month, a public program sponsored by the Center for Women's Studies at WSU.

Discovering Kansas

by Dr. Chinyere Okafor

Some well-meaning friends and associates advised me against coming to "plain" Kansas. Since my arrival, I have been explaining the place. Finally, I wrote a poem for them, and for all of us.

WIDE COUNTRY

Wide country that stretches my eyes
to the domain of memory,
Where landscape of imagination is
watered by contemplation.
You salute my body with heft
winds,
You assault me with crowds of
wind,
That wrestle my path as I jog by the
lakes of Rock Road.

Wide country that washes eyes with
waves of acclimatization.
Rain, hail, sun and all that fight for
space and wrestle irritation.
You caress my body with waves,
That soar to abode of memory.
Wide country, you are the one that
defies poetic imagination.

My dears, you need to see the
place,
To imagine its essence, and drink
the cup of wide country,
Kansas, wide part of the body of
Mother Earth that is soothed by her
breath.

FALL
2003



The Center for Women's Studies at Wichita State University serves a dual purpose: it offers the major and minor in women's studies through an abundance of courses and acts as a campus and community resource/research center for scholarship concerning women. The curriculum provides a balanced and comprehensive view of the history of women and their contributions to present day society. Unique in Kansas, the Center for Women's Studies at Wichita State is one of the longest-standing, degree-granting, autonomous women's studies centers in the country. The Women's Studies Community Council and its Advisory Board was created in 1990 to support the Center's efforts in the classroom and in the community.

WOMEN'S STUDIES FACULTY ACTIVITIES

Dr. Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg, chair, associate professor and graduate coordinator of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) program, In November Dr. Liera-Schwichtenberg presented a paper, titled "The Power of the Visible: Latina Representation," at the National Communication Association in New Orleans. In March, she gave an invited paper titled "Latina Power and the Brown Virgin" during the annual meeting of the American GI Forum in Wichita.

She was a member of the University Program Review Committee, and served on the Geraldine Hammond Committee. Her summer was devoted to working with the faculty on the department's assessment document for the Kansas Board of Regents. She will be on sabbatical during spring semester 2004.

Dr. Doris Chang, assistant professor, contributed an article about the Taiwanese women's movement in the post-martial law era to an edited book titled "Engendering the Taiwan Miracle." Currently, she is writing an article about Taiwanese feminist discourse in the Japanese colonial era.

Dr. Deborah Gordon, associate professor, spent the summer redeveloping her course "Gender, Race, and Knowledge" through a global learning grant from WSU and traveling to the West Bank in the Palestinian Territories, where she consulted with faculty at Al-Quds Open University, the Arab world's largest open and distance-learning university. Her students will videoconference with English language students at Al-Quds this semester, and with Women's Studies students at Birzeit University in spring 2004.

While in the Middle East, Dr. Gordon met with Palestinians in the Ministry of Education and with the Palestinian Cultural Channel, a local television station that broadcasts from Ramallah. She conducted a workshop for faculty at Al-Quds on com-

binning internet technology and student-centered teaching strategies. The media center of Al-Quds Open U. videotaped the workshop for distribution to academic centers throughout the Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. In

June, she published a report from Ramallah in the *Wichita Eagle*. In December, Dr. Gordon will return to the West Bank to complete work for her course redevelopment grant.

This fall, Dr. Gordon conducted learning exercises on the Middle East conflict for the Council of University Women,

the United Nations Club and Epsilon Sigma Alpha, a philanthropic sorority. In November, she presents a paper, "Women's Studies and Global Learning: Productive Tensions," at WSU's Global Learning and Internet2 Conference.

Dr. Gordon serves on the Liberal Arts and Sciences College Council and its Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee, and will act as the department's interim chair in spring 2004.

Dr. Carol Wolfe Konek, professor, is currently on long-term medical disability, but continues to write and meet with her reading group at Watermark Books. She sends regards to her many friends, colleagues and supporters.

Dr. Chinyere Okafor, associate professor, designed a new Women's Studies course, "Women In Africa," that aims to make students multiculturally competent by presenting views of African women from different African cultural voices. She coordinated the June 3 presentation on African women's struggle for identity by Dr. Chioma Opara of Rivers State University of Technology, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. During Dr. Opara's visit, they continued their work on "Writing African Matri."

Dr. Okafor presented "Transgressions: Stories of an African Woman In America" in October at the Southern California Writers Conference held in Los Angeles.



WSU LAS Dean Bill Bischoff and Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg (right) celebrate Carol Wolfe Konek's (center) humanitarian award from Wichita's National Council for Community and Justice.

From the Director

by Dr. Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg

The past year has been jam-packed with many stimulating moments.

We celebrated the arrival of two new faculty members, Chinyere Okafor and Doris Chang. Both have added an international dimension to the Women's Studies curriculum that was already primed for the shift by Deborah Gordon's class on women in the Middle East and my class on Latinas in culture and society.

Chinyere Okafor brings her knowledge of women in Africa and the Caribbean, and Doris Chang contributes a world religion perspective. Both new hires have excelled as scholars and teachers, contributing much to their specialty areas and to the general education curriculum.

The spring 2003 term began with our first presentation of the Wing Walker Award to Ivonne Goldstein, and just a few weeks ago, we honored Carol Beier's appointment to the Kansas Supreme Court (see story on back page).

In March, our own Carol Konek received an A. Price Woodward Jr. Humanitarian Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice. Carol was recognized for her contributions in advancing understanding and respect among Wichitans, a well-deserved honor for a lifetime committed to peace and social justice.

This event was followed by Women's History Month, planned with great precision by Deborah Gordon, who nominated Dr. Suad Joseph to be WSU's latest Lyceum Distinguished Scholar and coordinated the event with the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. An international scholar, Dr. Joseph presented two public lectures, several seminar discussions and interacted with faculty and students. The university and community were enriched by Dr. Joseph's visit.

We co-sponsored with the Global Learning Center a June 3 talk titled "Bellowing in Silence: African Women and the Struggle for Identity" by Chioma Opara, PhD. Dr. Opara was visiting from Rivers State University of Technology in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. She is a research associate of Dr. Chinyere Okafor.

As we look to the future, we see increased work in the area of global learning, and technological possibilities for international classes. We see extending ourselves to communities of color previously untapped. We see more alliances with like-minded colleagues in other departments. We see ourselves inscribed in the heart of the campus, and important to the university.

Best of all, we see a department that has been re-born in a different and beautiful incarnation. This is not to deny the past, but to learn from it, build from it and blossom anew.



COURSE OFFERINGS

Spring 2004

classes begin January 20

Assertion Training for Women

Jan. 31-Feb. 7 8:30-4:30 Sat

WS 150C 1 cr hr
MT Cupp-Criss

Examines barriers that exist to assertive behavior and teaches women to develop assertion skills. Considers today's social changes and how these create a need for women to be assertive in their lives.

Women's Sexuality

Apr. 3-10 8:30-4:30 Sat

WS 180C 1 cr hr
JL Ayres

Presents in-depth information on women's sexuality from physiological, psychological and socio-cultural perspectives.

American Woman in Popular Culture

9:30-10:45 TTh
2:00-4:40 T
Jan. 25-Mar. 21 1:00-5:00 Sun

WS 190G 3 cr hrs
CG Okafor
CG Okafor
HL Parmenter

Examines how women of various races, classes and ethnicities are represented in a wide variety of popular media. Encourages critical analysis of why and how these popular representations are politically and socially significant in shaping society's perceptions of "the American woman."

Women in Society: Social Issues

9:30-10:20 MWF
10:30-11:20 MWF

WS 287Q 3 cr hrs
D Chang
D Chang

Considers women's efforts to claim their identity through the examination of historical, legal and social perspectives. Considers recent laws relating to women; contemporary issues such as rape, day care and working women; and theories of social change.

The American Male

9:30-10:20 MWF

WS 316 3 cr hrs
RR Matson

Examines the male role in America from various sociological perspectives. Cross-listed as Sociology 316

Human Sexuality

8:00-9:15 TTH

WS 340 3 cr hrs
EM Barrett

Provides a forum for information and discussion on topics relating to physical, psycho-social and cultural components of human sexuality. Cross-listed as Sociology 340

Women & Dependencies

Mar. 7-May 9 1:00-5:00 Sun

WS 345 3 cr hrs
SA Endsley

Provides information about women's dependencies and their relationship to constructions of gender. Examines theories of treatment and recovery in relation to feminist theory and women's roles in co-dependency.

Women & Disordered Eating

Feb. 21-28 8:30-4:30 Sat

WS 380A 1 cr hr
SA Endsley

Analyzes the range of explanations for disordered eating patterns in the U.S. Examines societal influences, cultural and racial issues, poverty, heterosexism and violence in women's lives. Studies coping mechanism many women develop for their survival.

Girl Culture & Feminism

10:30-11:20 MWF

WS 380K 3 cr hrs
HL Parmenter

Investigates the influence of popular culture in the process of self-definition in girls and young women, including positive and negative impact of fashion, music, television, film and print media.

Women & World Religions

12:30-1:45 MW

WS 380M 3 cr hrs
D Chang

Examines past and present roles and statuses of women in various religious traditions of the world, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. Considers the portrayal of women's roles in various religious and philosophical texts and the redefinition of women's roles in the modern age within the contexts of these belief systems. Cross-listed as Religion 380A

Women in Society: Cultural Images

9:30-10:45 TTh
11:00-12:15 TTh

WS 387Q 3 cr hrs
RW Khurshid
RW Khurshid

Analyzes the roots of ideas about women in society and women's responses to those ideas as they have attempted to define themselves. Explores images of women in literature, art, myth, philosophy, religion, psychology, education, politics and other cultures.

Women & the Law

7:05-9:45 T N

WS 533 3 cr hrs
M Harp

Examines women's relationship to the legal system through court opinions and legal materials in specific areas: equal protection, equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, the family, reproductive rights and sexual violence. Cross-listed as Criminal Justice 381

Psychology of Women

12:30-1:45 MW

WS 534 3 cr hrs
SJ Hargrave

Examines various psychological assumptions, research and theories of the roles, behaviors and potential of women in contemporary society. Cross-listed as Psychology 534 PREREQUISITES

Women, Children & Poverty

7:05-9:45 T N

WS 541 3 cr hrs
LF Glenmaye

Studies the problem of poverty among U.S. women and children and public policy responses. Cross-listed as Social Work 541 PREREQUISITES

Directed Readings

1-3 cr hrs Arranged

WS 570/870
staff

Designed for students who wish to pursue special readings or research projects not covered in regularly scheduled coursework. Instructor's consent required prior to enrollment.

Women & Aging

Jan. 20 4:00 & Arranged

WS 580T 3 cr hrs
MC Corrigan

Introduces issues in aging that are unique to women. Discusses research methods appropriate for studying aging women and their life experiences. Cross-listed as Gerontology 515

Women & the Middle East

4:30-6:50 W N

WS 580U 3 cr hrs
DA Gordon

Examines issues about women in the Middle East and America surrounding 9/11 and the U.S war on terror. Explores the reality of Arab and Muslim women's lives abroad. Considers media images of Muslim women in the West and the Middle East.

Theories of Feminism

1:00-3:40 Th

WS 587 3 cr hrs
CG Okafor

Studies the ideological perspectives underlying a variety of feminist cultural critiques and visions for social change. Discusses the contributions of women's studies to various academic disciplines.

Receptions Honor Two Notable Wichita Women

A stellar event, held February 18 honored star volunteer Ivonne Goldstein with the presentation of the Wing Walker Award. Ivonne was recognized for her years of public service to

local organizations, such as the YWCA, Wichita Art Museum, Botanica, Music Theatre, Inter-Faith Ministries and many others. She is a member of the Center for Women's Studies Advisory Board, and has been a key fundraiser for many Women's Studies initiatives.

Two hundred people gathered to celebrate Ivonne's latest achievement, including her proud family and a number of past Wing Walker honorees. Bonnie Bing Honeyman emceed the program. Event



Ivonne Goldstein, left, is pictured with Dr. Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg.

co-chair Sheryl Wohlford and department chair Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg made the introductions, and Lisa Callahan produced a PowerPoint presentation about Ivonne's busy life as a professional volunteer. WSU President and

Mrs. Beggs and Jill Docking presented Ivonne with her Wing Walker sculpture designed by local artist Babs Mellor.

Women's Studies inherited the Wing Walker event and award from the disbanded Forum for Executive Women. Seven other Wichita women have received the award.

The Wichita Women Attorneys Association with the Center for Women's Studies honored Carol Beier's appointment to the

Kansas Supreme Court by Governor Kathleen Sebelius during a reception September 29. Toasting Carol's appointment were WSU President and Mrs. Beggs, Women's Studies board members and many women attorneys.

Ramona Liera-Schwichtenberg thanked Carol for her commitment to Women's Studies, especially her years as an Advisory Board member, her work on the Plaza of Heroines and her service as a teacher of the Women and the Law class.

Gaye Tibbets, primary organizer of the event, introduced Jane Deterding who sang a song spoofing Supreme Court Justices—a show-stopping performance.

Carol Beier has done much to advance the cause of women in the legal profession. She continues to be a model for us all.

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Honor the special women in your life in the Plaza of Heroines at Wichita State University. Call 978-7161 to request information.