

UAH Women's Studies

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The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Spring, 2006

Novelist Dorothy Allison to Speak at UAH in April

Award-winning novelist Dorothy Allison will speak at UAH's Chan Auditorium on Friday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. She will give a lecture and a reading from one of her works, and will be available following the event to sign books. Proclaimed "one of the finest writers of her generation" by the *Boston Globe* and "simply stunning" by the *New York Times Book Review*, Dorothy Allison is the author of critically acclaimed works of fiction, autobiography, short story, essay, and poetry.

Best known for her semi-autobiographical novel *Bastard Out of Carolina* (which was made into a 1996 movie starring Jennifer Jason Leigh and Lyle Lovett), Dorothy Allison is a major voice in contemporary literature about the South. She grew up dirt poor in the South, and she writes about it with deep perception and humor. As one journalist put it, "Dorothy Allison writes straight from the gut, the brain, and the heart" (AP). *Bastard out of Carolina*, Allison's first novel, was one of five finalists for the 1992 National Book Award and won both the Ferro Grumley and Bay Area Book Reviewers Awards for fiction.

Allison's second novel, *Cavedweller* (1998), was a *New York Times* Best seller, won the 1998 Lambda Literary Award for fiction, and was a finalist for the Lillian Smith Prize. It was adapted for the stage by Kate Ryna (performed off Broadway in 2003), and has been made into a 2004 feature film starring Kyra Sedgwick, Aidan Quinn, and



Dorothy Allison will speak at UAH on Friday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. in Chan Auditorium.

Kevin Bacon. Her latest book, *She Who*, is forthcoming from Riverhead (an imprint of Penguin/Putnam).

Allison is also the author of several small press works, including, *Skin: Talking About Sex, Class and Literature* (1995), *Trash* (1989, 2002), a collection of short stories, and *The Women Who Hate Me* (1983, 1990), a collection of poetry. "Compassion," a new short story from *Trash*, appeared in *Best*

American Short Stories: 2003 and was selected for *Best of the South: 2003*. (*Trash* is now published by Penguin/Putnam.)

In 1998, Allison founded The Independent Spirit Award, a prize given each year to an individual whose work with small presses and independent bookstores has helped to sustain that enterprise. Charis Books & More in Atlanta, the closest feminist bookseller to Huntsville, will sell Allison's books at the book signing that will follow Allison's Friday night lecture.

Dorothy Allison's lecture is a free event sponsored by the UAH Women's Studies program, with financial support from the UAH Humanities Center, the Huntsville Literary Association, Sigma Tau Delta, and POWER. For more information, call (256) 824-6210.

The Women's Studies Program is seeking additional funds to help meet the expenses of bringing this major author to Huntsville. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation for this purpose please fill out the Friends of Women's Studies form on the back page and designate your gift for the Dorothy Allison event.

Local Actors to Stage Play Based on Allison's Life

Three local actors—Molly Pettis Reid, Freda Grant, and Bette Yeager—will perform Reid's dramatic adaptation of Dorothy Allison's memoir, *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure*, on Saturday, April 22, at 7:30 p.m., in UAH's Chan Auditorium. Allison, who speaks at UAH on April 21, plans to stay an extra day to attend the play.

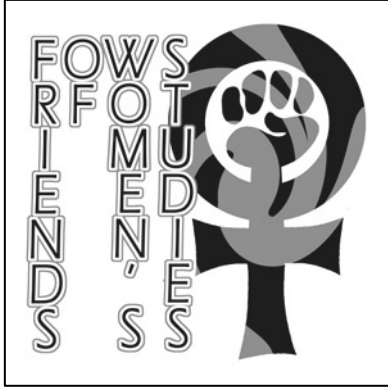
Molly Pettis Reid (a UAH graduate) performed in the 2002 production of *Two or Three Things* and in *Taking Liberties*, our celebration of women in the arts. Freda Grant (a UAH graduate) directed the 2004 college V-Day production of *The Vagina Monologues* at UAH and was in the 2002 production of *Two or Three Things*. Bette Yeager has done several one-woman shows for Women's Studies, starting with her own adaptation of Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, followed by Willy Russell's *Shirley Valentine*, and then Yeager's own *Women Great of Heart*.

Two or Three Things is a fundraiser for UAH Women's Studies. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students (with ID). For information or to order tickets, call (256) 824-6210.



Pictured top to bottom: Molly Pettis Reid, Freda Grant, Bette Yeager.

WS Students POWER Up



Support Women's Studies by purchasing a Friends of Women's Studies t-shirt.

The UAH Women's Studies student club, now called POWER (People Organized for Women's Equality and Rights), is planning a range of activities and fundraisers for the semester. They would love your support.

Activities include a self-defense workshop in February and support of Huntsville V-Day Events in the community in February and March in conjunction with "The Vagina Monologues" on

March 4 and 5 at The Flying Monkey Arts Center on Seminole Drive (see story page 4).

To raise funds POWER will be selling pizza, drinks and baked goods in UAH's Morton Hall at lunch time the first Wednesday of each month. POWER is also selling t-shirts in support of Friends of Women's Studies. They are \$15 and can be purchased in the Department of Sociology from Erin Reid or by contacting UAHPOWERWS@yahoo.com.

If you are interested in participating in these events or receiving additional information, contact Stephanie Feltmeyer at UAHPOWERWS@yahoo.com.

Women's Studies Students and Faculty Create Media Training Seminar for Teens

UAH students Ruthie McQuiston (Communication Arts) and Lori Rounsavall (Sociology), both Women's Studies minors, worked closely with Dr. Julie Ferris, Assistant Professor of Communication Arts, to continue an independent study project in feminist activism this fall. Their instructional campaign, a training seminar to teach teens about media literacy and how to "read" messages in culture, has developed into a classroom activity in public schools and a community lecture.

The group has solicited participation in local junior-high and high-school classrooms and forged a connection with Cindi Branham, UAH's Senior Development Officer for Corporate and Foundation Relations. With Ms. Branham's help, the group has not only connected with potential audiences like the local chapters of Girls, Inc., but has also located potential grants and awards the project can use to fund its growth and development for future women's studies students. Branham also invited the women to attend the December luncheon meeting of Huntsville's Women's Economic Development Council where the group announced their program and networked with the community.

For more information on the campaign, please contact Dr. Julie Ferris at (256) 824-2304 or ferrisj@email.uah.edu.

Women's Studies Essay Contest Offers Cash Prizes to UAH Students

The Women's Studies Program offers cash prizes for winners of the Sixth Annual Kathryn L. Harris Women's Studies Paper Competition, a contest that awards essays that have been written for a graduate or undergraduate course at UAH and that deal substantially with women or women's issues. First prize is \$100, second prize \$50, and third prize \$25. The three award winners will be honored at the Liberal Arts Honors Day celebration on April 11.

Essays should be submitted to Dr. Sheri Shuck-Hall in the UAH History Department in Roberts Hall (room 407 or 409) by Wednesday, March 1.

Submission rules:

- All essays must have been written for a UAH course (and must not have been previously submitted to the contest).
- Any field of study is eligible, as long as women's issues are substantially addressed. Essays should be no more than 15 pages, typed or word processed. All references must be cited appropriately.
- Essays must include a cover page listing the title of the paper, the author's name, and the name of the course and professor originally assigning the work.
- The author's name should not appear on any page of the essay except the cover page.

Criteria for assessment:

- Persuasiveness and clarity of argument
- Awareness of audience
- Efficiency of organization
- Effectiveness and appropriateness of language
- Proficiency in grammar, punctuation, and spelling

For questions please contact Dr. Shuck-Hall, (256) 824-2570, or go to <http://www.uah.edu/womensstudies/events.html>.

Women's Studies Program

The University of Alabama in Huntsville

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<http://www.uah.edu/colleges/liberal/womensstudies/>

Dr. Nancy Finley, Director
Erin Reid, Newsletter Editor

Core Ensemble to Perform Music Theatre Piece *Ain't I a Woman!*



Above, Core Ensemble; Left, Elizabeth Mikel.



The Core Ensemble—Tahirah Whittington, cello, Hugh Hinton, piano, and Michael Parola, percussion, with actress Elizabeth Mikel—will perform the music theatre work *Ain't I a Woman!* at UAH's Roberts Recital Hall on Saturday, February 25, at 7:30

p.m. The work is the latest in a series of multi-cultural and feminist pieces produced by the ensemble over the past seven years.

Ain't I a Woman! celebrates the life and times of four powerful African American women: renowned novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston, ex-slave and fiery abolitionist Sojourner Truth, exuberant folk artist Clementine Hunter, and fervent civil rights worker Fannie Lou Hamer. The musical score is drawn from the heartfelt spirituals and blues of the Deep South, the urban vitality of the Jazz Age, and contemporary concert music by African Americans.

The Core Ensemble tours nationally and internationally, and receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, the Palm Beach County Cultural Council, the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the Virgil Thomson Foundation and the C. Michael Paul and Josephine Bay Paul Foundation. The Core Ensemble was the 2000 recipient of the Edward McDermott Award for Excellence in the Arts awarded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Actress Liz Mikel was trained in dance from the age of six at the Dallas Black Dance Theater and studied under the illustrious Curtis King, founder and Director of The Black Academy of Arts and Letters. She was a company member of Vivid Theatre Ensemble and is co-founder of Universal Connections, a storytelling troupe. Mikel has done films, commercials, and voice-overs and recently appeared in her 13th season of the Dallas Theater Center's production of *A Christmas Carol*. In early 2004 she toured in France and Switzerland in the music theatre piece *Blind Lemon*. The show was also presented in the summer of 2004 at Central Park SummerStage in New York City. Mikel was the 1998 winner of the Leon Rabin Award for best lead actress in a musical, The Dallas Theater Critics Forum Award in 1997 and 2004, and was a 2002 recipient of the Black Independent Film Distributor's *Sankofa* Award for her dedication to the arts in the African-American community.

This UAH event is sponsored by the Humanities Center, the College of Engineering, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Student Affairs, the Women's Studies Program, and Dr. Fran Johnson. Admission is free. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of the College of Engineering, (256) 824-6474, or see <http://www.core-ensemble.cc>.

Sociologist Pepper Schwartz to Speak on "Politics of Desire"



Pepper Schwartz will speak at UAH on Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m., Roberts Recital Hall.

Nationally recognized sociologist Pepper Schwartz will deliver a lecture on "The Politics of Desire" on Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m., in UAH's Roberts Recital Hall. Dr. Schwartz's lecture will examine the historical context of sexual mores in American society. The talk will explore how Americans have historically considered what is acceptable or unacceptable sexual behavior and how these ideas have also been tied to the politics of the time.

The lecture is part of the Distinguished Speaker Series at UAH and is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the Faculty Senate, the Department of Sociology, and the Women's Studies Program. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call (256) 824-6190.

Huntsville Feminist Chorus to Perform Spring Concert

The Huntsville Feminist Chorus will perform its 11th annual Spring Concert during Women's History Month on Saturday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m., in UAH's Roberts Recital Hall. This a cappella group features drumming accompanying songs that empower women. Admission is free.

The concert is sponsored by the UAH Women's Studies Program. For more information, call (256) 824-6210.



The Huntsville Feminist Chorus performed its annual Solstice Concert at the Von Braun Center Playhouse in December 2005.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring 2006

Friday, February 17, 11:30 a.m.

AAUW Educational Foundation
Fundraiser Luncheon
Carrabba's Italian Restaurant
Speaker: Judge Sue Bell Cobb

Saturday, February 25, 7 p.m.

Ain't I a Woman!, Core Ensemble
Roberts Recital Hall, UAH

Wednesday, March 1

Deadline for Harris Women's Studies
Paper Competition
Roberts Hall, room 407 or 409, UAH

Thursday, March 2, 7 p.m.

Dr. Pepper Schwartz Lecture
Roberts Recital Hall, UAH

**Saturday, March 4, 8 p.m. and
Sunday, March 5, 2:30 p.m.**

The Vagina Monologues
Flying Monkey Arts Center

Saturday, March 11, 7:30 p.m.

Huntsville Feminist Chorus
spring concert
Roberts Recital Hall, UAH

Friday, April 21, 7:30 p.m.

Dorothy Allison Lecture and Reading
Chan Auditorium, UAH

Saturday, April 22, 7:30 p.m.

Two or Three Things I Know for Sure
Chan Auditorium, UAH

For more information, see event details in this newsletter or contact the UAH Women's Studies Program at (256) 824-6210.

Community News

V-Day Events Benefit Community



Local organizers have joined together to produce Eve Ensler's internationally celebrated play, *The Vagina Monologues*, and to provide V-Day activities in the community. The play will be on Saturday, March 4, at 8 p.m., and

on Sunday, March 5, at 2:30 p.m., in the Flying Monkey Arts Center, and will benefit the Community Free Clinic of Huntsville and the international V-Day organization, www.vday.org.

V-Day is a global movement to stop violence against women and girls and a catalyst that promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money, and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations. V-Day generates broader attention for the fight to stop violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation, and sexual slavery.

The Flying Monkey is at Lowe Mill on Seminole Drive, off Governor's Drive, and is accessible to people with disabilities. Tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$8 for students and can be purchased at the door or by contacting Gena Wilhite at gena_wilhite@yahoo.com or 256-503-4906.

Two free seminars are also being planned. A self-defense course for women will be held on Friday, March 10, at 6 p.m., at Alexander's Martial Arts on Jordan Lane in Huntsville. This event can accommodate 40 participants and is on a first come first served basis. A health seminar, "Healing the Mind and Body: The Mind/Spirit/ Body Connection," will be held on March 14 at 6:30 p.m. at Five Points Chiropractic & Wellness on Pratt Avenue. The seminar explores the connection between physical ailments and our spiritual/mental well-being. The host, Dr. Dave McCann, relocated to Huntsville from St. Louis, Mo., in 1997. Dr. McCann is certified in applied kinesiology. With his background in engineering, he is qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of conditions and clearly communicate patient needs and treatment options. Space is limited, and attendance is on a first-come, first-served basis. To make a reservation for these events, contact Gena Wilhite at gena_wilhite@yahoo.com or call (256) 503-4906.

AAUW Luncheon to Raise Educational Funds for Women

On Friday, February 17, at 11:30 a.m., the American Association of University Women (AAUW) will hold its annual fundraiser supporting the AAUW Educational Foundation at Carrabba's Italian Restaurant on Memorial Parkway in Huntsville. The Educational Foundation provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change. Judge Sue Bell Cobb will be the guest speaker for this event. She presides on the Alabama Criminal Court of Appeals and is also a candidate for Chief Justice of Alabama's Supreme Court. Judge Cobb has spent the last 25 years heralding the importance of child advocacy, wildlife conservation, cancer victims, and the election of non-partisan judges. The luncheon is open to the public. Tickets are \$20. Please contact Ruth Jurenko at (256) 883-2373 for reservations by Monday, February 13.

Meet the Faculty

Kate Leonard Practices Excellence in Environmental Engineering



Dr. Kate Leonard teaches environmental engineering at UAH.

Dr. Kate Leonard has been a member of the Women Studies PAC and the Women's Studies Interest Group for more than 12 years. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at UAH. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee in 1983 with a BSCE and an MSCE in 1985 with a major in water resources.

She received her Ph.D. in engineering from UAH in 1990.

At UAH Leonard is involved in teaching environmental engineering courses and performing funded research in water and wastewater treatment. While at UAH, she has taught courses in water quality control, hazardous waste treatment, environmental design, environmental impact analysis, and the "prelude to civil engineering" course required of all freshmen entering the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. She has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, numerous conference proceedings, and book chapters. She is invited to many national and international conferences to present her research findings. Dr. Leonard obtains funding for, and manages a summer engineering program for female and minority students in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department.

Dr. Leonard is a registered professional engineer in the State of Alabama and acts as a consultant on projects for the City of Huntsville, Madison County, and private clients. In addition to her support of ASCE, she is also involved in many technical/professional societies including the Society of American Military Engineers (Huntsville Post and UAH student post advisor), Society of Women Engineers (Huntsville Section Charter Member and treasurer), and International Water Association.

In recognition of her service activities, Dr. Leonard has been honored by local technical societies such as SAME (1996 Engineer of the Year), UAH (1996 Outstanding Assistant Professor), SWE (2002 Professional of the Year), and ASCE-Huntsville Branch (2004 CE Professional of the Year).

In addition to her professional and service activities, Kate has a busy personal schedule. Kate and husband, Dr. Joseph Mastermonico, enjoy buying and selling antiques for their historic home in rural Madison County. She has three children: Benjamin is a U.S. Army linguist specialist stationed in Augusta, Georgia; Rebecca is a veterinarian in Huntsville; and Allison is a student at Buckhorn High School, where she plays soccer. They share their small farm with a Scottish terrier, three cats, two horses, and numerous chickens. In her limited free time Kate enjoys traveling, hiking and reading.

Women's Studies Course Offerings

Fall 2006

CM 416	Women Orators	MW	2:20-3:40	Ferris
EH 418	Representative Texts by Women Writers	TR	2:20-3:40	Early
HY 390	Women in Modern Europe	MWF	10:20-11:15	Johnson
PHL 202-01	Intro to Ethics	MWF	11:30-12:25	Martine
PHL 202-02	Intro to Ethics	MW	2:20-3:40	Mackintosh
PHL 202-03	Intro to Ethics	TR	12:45-2:05	Wilkerson
PHL 202-04	Intro to Ethics	TR	5:30-6:50	Staff
PHL 303	Contemporary Philosophy	TR	9:35-10:55	Wilkerson
PY 406/506	Psychology of Women	TR	12:45-2:05	Carpenter
SOC 106	Marriage and Family	TR	11:10-12:30	Finley
SOC 200-01	Intro to Anthropology	MW	12:45-2:05	Sitaraman
SOC 200-02	Intro to Anthropology	MW	3:55-5:15	Sitaraman
SOC 306	Sociology of Gender	W	5:30-8:20	Finley
SOC 315	Cultural Change	T	3:55-6:45	Sitaraman

For more information, visit the Women's Studies Web Page

<http://www.uah.edu/womensstudies>

For possible course time changes, see the official UAH schedule of classes: <http://www.uah.edu/cgi-bin/schedule.pl>

Become a Friend of Women's Studies!

Friends of Women's Studies (FWS) is an organization of people who support the UAH Women's Studies program.

The goals of FWS include

- supporting community involvement in Women's Studies events
- sponsoring cultural activities and events that honor and empower women
- supporting women scholars, artists, and performers
- fostering discussion of issues affecting women's lives

Annual Contribution (October 1 – September 30)

\$10-24 Individual \$25-49 Family \$50-99 Matron \$100-249 Sponsor
 \$250-\$499 Sustaining \$500 Lifetime Contributor \$1000 Benefactor

I would like to contribute to the Travel Scholarship Fund \$ _____

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