

# UAH Women's Studies

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The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Fall, 2007

## Holly Near Coming to UAH

For those who have been involved in the women's movement, the name of Holly Near is symbolic of the type of music and activism that inspired and encouraged us. Now Holly Near is coming to UAH. On Wednesday, November 14, at



Photograph by Donna A. Korones

7:30 p.m. in Chan Auditorium, she will present "Change of Heart: The Art of Activism—A talk with song." In this public lecture, Near will tell stories and sing songs a cappella that illustrate social change, woven with her amazing voice that has moved us for 40 years. Near's visit is part of a two-day Women's Studies celebration, "Change of Heart: Art, Music, and Activism."

After early work in film, television, and Broadway, Near began writing and performing music that addressed social conditions in the world. Near has traveled from the fields of central California singing in support of The United Farm Workers to El Salvador, where she sang for peace amidst war and conflict. Her songs were sung clandestinely in Latin American prisons and sung boldly by Irish and English women joined together to protest war.

Near was probably the first woman artist to start an Indy record company. In 1972, she founded Redwood Records, which became a major force in alternative music for nearly 20 years.

Amidst her work for peace and human rights, Near remains a consummate singer, entertainer, writer, and

educator. She has released more than 20 recordings and has appeared as a guest on many others. Near recently re-released much of her early material as well as new works on her own label, Calico Tracks Music. She is the author of an autobiography, *Fire in the Rain: Singer in the Storm*, and a children's book, *The Great Peace March*. Near has received many awards for her work for social change. Most recently, she was one of 1,000 PeaceWomen nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005. Near's integrity has earned her a reputation as one of the most powerful and articulate political artists of our time.

*The Women's Studies Program is seeking additional funding for this event. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation please fill out the form on the back page and designate your gift for the Holly Near event.*

## Fundraiser to Feature Food, Art, Friends & Holly

The Women's Studies Program will hold a Fundraiser Wine Tasting and Silent Art Auction, November 14, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., at Wild Flour Bistro, 501 Jordan Lane. Support Women's Studies while sampling wine by Black Slip Wines, Inc., and hors d'oeuvres by Wild Flour Bistro. The UAH Art Club will coordinate the art auction, featuring a selection of original art by local artists. Enjoy wine, food, art, and friends as we welcome Holly Near to Huntsville.

Tickets are \$20 (with a reduced ticket of \$10 for those on limited budgets) for a fun prelude to a wonderful evening with Holly Near. Proceeds from the door benefit the UAH Women's Studies Program; so help us be able to bring more programs to our community by purchasing tickets. Tickets to the fundraiser are available at the door, but we encourage advance purchase by calling Women's Studies at (256) 824-6210.

## Woody Blue to Show Peace Flags

Artist Woody Blue will present a two-day exhibit, November 13-14, in the gallery of UAH's Engineering Building. She will also give a talk on her work as a flag-maker, or vexillographer, on November 13 at 4 p.m. in room 108 of the Engineering Building.



Blue has participated in radical peace politics and social justice causes for over 20 years and has toured various regions of the U.S., putting on workshops involving nonviolence, creativity, and women's process. In 2002, Blue began making flags out of recycled and discarded material. Now 900 flags later, she has again taken to the road, waving her flag art. For information, contact Women's Studies at 824-6210. This event is free and open to the public.

## POWER to Hold Arts Festival

The Women's Studies Student Organization, POWER (People Organized for Women's Equality and Rights) will present an arts and music festival at UAH on November 13, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., at the University Center outdoor stage. The festival includes local and student artists and musicians and is one of a full year of planned activities.

POWER promotes awareness of oppression through student activities and community service, integrates the contributions of all members, and is open to all UAH students. The officers include President Sarah Ragan, Vice President Heather Harwell, Treasurer Rebecca Purcell, and Secretary Tiffany Schlosser, with faculty sponsor Dr. Angela Balla. For information, email [ragans@uah.edu](mailto:ragans@uah.edu). This event is free and open to the public.

## Third Wave Feminism Conference Generates Student Enthusiasm

Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, authors of *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and the Future*, visited UAH to give a public lecture in conjunction with the Third Wave Feminism Mini-Conference last spring. Baumgardner and Richards also attended an Activism Voice Out session presented by UAH



*Amy Richards (left); Jennifer Baumgardner (right)*

students and community members, highlighting the feminist grassroots activities in Huntsville. Other conference events included oral interpretation of historical oratory and a public wall blog where students discussed why they consider themselves feminists. The conference generated significant enthusiasm on campus and in the community.

The Women's Studies Program would like to thank the organizations and individuals who supported the event, including the UAH Humanities Center, the Office of Student Affairs, the Departments of Communication Arts and Sociology, and Sigma Tau Delta. Students and staff who organized and worked event activities include Susannah Torres, Satin Scott, Jana Seikel, Kristen Ruccio, Leslie Tignor, Jennifer Lutrick, Mandy Shamblin, Nora Hickman, Shannon Garrett, Alexis Owens, David Harwell (and crew), Mario Burton, Kesia Hammonds, Ariadna Krawchuk, Jenny Stalnaker, Ruthie McQuiston, and Lori Rounsavall.

## Huntsville Woman's Club Awards Scholarship to Amanda Shamblin

The Huntsville Woman's Club presented its \$1,000 memorial scholarship to UAH student Amanda Shamblin at an awards banquet in May. Shamblin is a communication arts major with a minor in women's studies. She is also the student assistant in the Women's Studies Resource Center in Morton Hall room 254 and an active member of the Huntsville branch of the American Association for University Women (AAUW).



## UAH Harris Scholarship Awarded to Tiffany Schlosser

The Women's Studies Program awarded the 2007 Kathryn L. Harris scholarship to Tiffany Schlosser, a sociology major with a minor in women's studies. The scholarship is awarded based on a combination of academic merit, community and/or school involvement, with additional consideration given to students with demonstrated financial need. Schlosser is an active member and officer in POWER and the Student Sociology Association.



## Women's Studies Honors Lauren Hayes as Outstanding Minor

The Women's Studies Program honored UAH student Lauren Hayes for outstanding undergraduate achievement at UAH's honors day in April. Hayes, a psychology major with a minor in women's studies, is also a member of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in psychology. She helped to conduct research for the National Children's Advocacy Center on people's willingness to pay for services targeted at preventing physical and sexual abuse of children.

## Women's Community Quilt Won by High-School Student Laura Albyn

"Mothering and Fertility," the community art quilt featured at the *Nurturing Women* 2006 group exhibition, was won by high-school student Laura Albyn in a women's studies fundraising drawing. The Women's Studies Program would like to thank all artists who contributed to the quilt, including Kelly O'Toole, Jessica Lund, Monique Given, Laura H., Rachel O. Lackey, Rhiannon Bacon, Jennifer Mosier, Kimberly R. Hart and group, Karen Falkowski, Jennifer Beth Landis, Kathryn Jill Johnson, Suzi Noble, Roxie Veasey, Yuri Jo Craig, and quilters Daphne Maia Isabella Tigger Noble, Danny Bacon, and Sue Bacon.



*Jennifer Landis (left), Laura Albyn (right)*



*Clockwise from top-left: Dixie Derby Girls talk with Amy; a full house at the Voice Out; Amy and Jennifer talk with Assistant Professor of Art, Jill Johnson; Amy at the Voice Out; Jennifer signing her book for student Jennie Stalnaker.*

## Francille Rusan Wilson to Speak on History of Black History Movement

Dr. Francille Rusan Wilson will present the keynote lecture for the UAH History Forum, entitled "Carter G. Woodson's Great Cause: The History of the Black History Movement." The public lecture will be on Tuesday, October 23, at 7:30 p.m., in McDonnell Douglas Auditorium. Also on October 23, Wilson will give a guest lecture in Dr. Nancy Finley's Women's Studies class, entitled "'The Double Task': Race and Gender Barriers for Black Women Workers." On October 24, Wilson will give guest lectures on "The Segregated Scholars: Black Social Scientists" and "Black Intellectuals in the New South" in Dr. Lee Williams' upper-level history classes.



Wilson, a specialist in African-American and Women's History, is Associate Professor of African-American Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Visiting Professor at the University of Southern California. A Distinguished Lecturer for the Organization of American Historians, Wilson is an intellectual and labor historian whose current research examines the intersections between black labor movements, black social scientists, and black women's history during the Jim Crow era. She is the author of *The Segregated Scholars: Black Social Scientists and the Creation of Black Labor Studies, 1890-1950*.

This event is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the UAH Department of History, the UAH Women's Studies Program, the UAH Office of Multicultural Affairs, UAH Continuing Education, the Bankhead Foundation, and the UAH Humanities Center. For more information, call 824-6310.

## Archaeology Talks to Feature Ancient Women

Maia Langley, Director of PortAnta archaeological site in Portugal and ABD at Universidade de Lisboa, will deliver a public talk entitled "Placing Roman Women: Life, Luxury, and Longevity at an Iberian Villa" on Wednesday, September 26, at 7:30 p.m. in UAH's Chan Auditorium. Whereas previous scholarship on the Roman Empire focuses on noble metropolitan women, her work on the Torre de Palma site enhances historical understanding of the lives of rural and working class women on the fringes of the Roman empire.

Dr. Jean Turfa, of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of archaeology and anthropology, will give a public lecture entitled "Desperate Etruscan Housewives" on Monday, November 5, at 7:30 p.m. in Chan Auditorium. She will also give an Honors Forum lecture on "Love and Death in Etruscan Urns" on Tuesday, November 6, at 11:10 a.m. in Frank Franz Hall, Multi-Purpose Room. Both lectures draw attention to experiences of women and the history of everyday life in the Etruscan period.

The lectures are free and open to the public and are sponsored by the North Alabama Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America, with support from the UAH Humanities Center and the UAH Women's Studies Program. For more information, contact Dr. Lillian Joyce at (256) 824-6114.

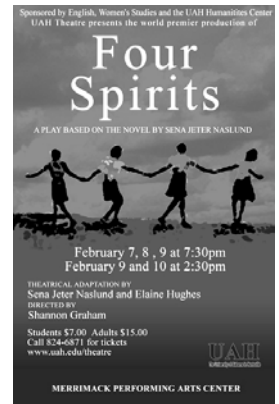
## Auditions for "Four Spirits" in October, Performance in Spring

In Birmingham in the fall of 1963, the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church was bombed on a Sunday morning, killing four little girls, the "four spirits" that inspired Sena Jeter Naslund's novel *Four Spirits*. UAH Theatre is producing the theatrical adaptation of that novel for its world premiere February 7-10, at the new Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center, 3320 Triana Blvd. Naslund will be UAH's Eminent Scholar in Humanities during spring 2008, teaching fiction writing (EH 410/510)

and will be consulting with director Shannon Graham on the production. The play focuses on the lives of two women, a white civil rights activist and a black single mother and college student. Both volunteer to teach summer school in the summer of 1963 and are involved in the events surrounding the church bombing.

Auditions will begin in October at UAH, and Graham encourages anyone interested in the subject matter to try out. There are parts for men and women aged 7 to 101.

The production of "Four Spirits" is co-sponsored by UAH Theatre, the UAH Humanities Center, the UAH Women's Studies Program, the Huntsville Literary Association, and by other organizations to be announced. For further information, see [theatre.uah.edu](http://theatre.uah.edu).



## Harris Paper Contest Awards Academic and Creative Writing

The Women's Studies Program will sponsor the eighth annual Kathryn L. Harris Women's Studies Paper Competition, which awards prizes for essays written for a graduate or undergraduate course at UAH that deal substantially with women or women's issues. This year, the competition will



Left to Right: Veronica Ferreira, Gloria Powell, Ruth Johnson.

award in two categories—academic and creative—expanding the range of submissions accepted. Each category will offer a first prize of \$100 and a second prize of \$50. The winners will be honored at Liberal Arts Honors Day, April 8.

Last year's winners were, first, Ruth Johnson, "Give a Little, Take a Little: Sovereignty in Relationships in *The Weddyng of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnelle*," second, Veronica Ferreira, "The Causes of the Decline of Midwifery in Europe and the United States," and third, Gloria Powell, "If You Could Hear Me: A Collection of Monologues." Essays may be submitted to Erin Reid in the Department of Sociology (344 Morton Hall) by March 3. For more information, contact Dr. Molly Johnson at (256) 824-2566 or Dr. Angela Balla at (256) 824-2378 or visit the contest website at [http://www.uah.edu/womensstudies/essay\\_college.htm](http://www.uah.edu/womensstudies/essay_college.htm).

## Kathryn L. Harris, 1919-2007, Friend of Women's Studies

Since 1999, UAH Women's Studies has offered the Kathryn L. Harris endowed scholarship to a Women's Studies minor. This scholarship is based on a combination of academic merit, community and/or school involvement, with additional consideration given to students with demonstrated financial need. The first scholarship winner was RaDonna Ridner. Other winners are Tiffany Schlosser, Mari Hinckley, Emily Johnson, and Rachel Sellnow. Earlier this year, Kathryn L. Harris died at the age of 86. We thought it fitting to remember her life here.

Kathryn L. Harris worked at the University of Kansas for 35 years, but never completed a college degree. Rather, she learned to appreciate how wonderful students are and to understand how many need a little financial help to stay in school. Having worked with both undergraduate and graduate students for over three decades, she knew how many expenses there are that tuition just does not cover. She grew up during the Great Depression, and her family moved constantly because, as she put it, "It was cheaper to move than to pay rent."

Although she herself could never afford to attend college, Kathryn worked a second job to put her daughter through college. She also helped support her granddaughter through her undergraduate and graduate degrees. Through her job at the University of Kansas, she helped many students by giving them jobs, assisting them in buying cars, and doing whatever she could to lend a hand when they needed it.

"You always knew if you needed a place to stay, Kathryn would take you in," said her nephew Karl. "And you didn't have to be family. You could be a total stranger. And the most amazing thing is that not once did anyone ever take advantage of her."

During her life, Kathryn Harris touched many lives with kindness and generosity. After her death, her family and friends collected a long list of her good deeds, such as funding an operation for a sick infant whose family who could not afford to pay for the treatment, helping needy families with costs for schooling and car repair, and giving presents.

She wanted no lingering and sad thoughts after her passing. According to her wishes, there was no funeral. In her memory, Kathryn would most of all want you to pet a dog and do a kind deed each day.

The UAH Women's Studies Program honors Kathryn Harris and other women like her on whose shoulders the present generation of women students stands.



*Kathryn L. Harris,  
Christmas 2006  
(top), and in the  
1940s (bottom).*

## Huntsville Feminist Chorus News and Upcoming Plans

The Huntsville Feminist Chorus has been a regular part of Women's Studies Program events since 1996. We wanted to share some news about recent events.

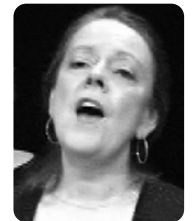
### *Chorus Director Steps Down*

Angela Lucas, who directed the Chorus from 2002 to 2007, retired this year. Angela stepped in at a critical moment in Chorus history, when co-founder and director Sherry Mercieca died suddenly in 2001. Thanks to Angela, and to the tireless efforts of co-founder and then business manager Justine Shrider, the Chorus survived and flourished. Angela directed over 20 concerts. Herself one of the original members of the Chorus, Angela sang second soprano and drummed at most concerts before taking on the director's role. She will be sorely missed!



### *Janet Underwood, 1953 to 2007*

Janet Underwood, another original member of the Chorus, died on August 1, from injuries suffered when she was struck by a vehicle in a cross walk outside Huntsville Hospital, where she worked as a nurse practitioner. She is survived by husband Chris Underwood, daughter Sarah Underwood, and members of the Chorus, who mourn her loss.



Janet's was one of the most distinctive and versatile voices of the Chorus. She could sing any part and often moved between first alto and second soprano (jokingly called "trans-sectional"). Anyone standing next to Janet could be sure of staying on key...and of singing Janet's part. The Chorus has performed several of her original compositions, including "Shadow of Eve," "Mothers of Our Country," an arrangement of "This Little Light," and most notably, "Sisters We." Janet sang in the quartet Sisters We, with three other members of the Chorus: Jill Fletcher, Susan Clark (Janet's sister), and Angela Lucas. The quartet performed at Chorus concerts and at local venues. They had just finished recording a 13-song CD.

### *Chorus Plans*

Under the leadership of a steering committee, the Chorus will perform its first concert of the season, Womanspirit Rising, in Cullman on September 29. Chorus members are enthusiastic about continuing Sherry Mercieca's intent: raising the vibration of the planet through songs of empowerment and joy. For information, go to [www.uah.edu/womensstudies/chorus](http://www.uah.edu/womensstudies/chorus).

### **Women's Studies Program**

The University of Alabama in Huntsville  
344 Morton Hall

Huntsville, Alabama 35899

Phone: (256) 824-6210

Fax: (256) 824-2387

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

Dr. Nancy Finley, Director

Erin Reid, Newsletter Editor

### Angela Balla

Most people I meet beyond academe, if they know anything about early modern England, know that Shakespeare lived during that time. They may also recognize the names of John Donne, Oliver Cromwell, and William Penn, or have read portions of the King James Bible and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. They may even recall the Gunpowder Plot, religious persecution, voyages to the New World, the development of the scientific method, the English revolution, plague outbreaks, or the Great Fire of London. What is less known, and what I like to share, is how early moderns responded to the tremendous upheaval generated by these events. Their attempts to comprehend a world made strange and to address sectarian conflict bear on our own efforts to do justice on a national and international scale.



Faced with widespread social, religious, political, and intellectual change, many in early modern England succumbed to doubt. How could one *know* which was the true religion, the proper form of governance, the accurate account of natural phenomena, or the best society, especially when one's neighbors often came to radically divergent conclusions? My research examines how seventeenth-century religious poets sought to alleviate the anguish many believers suffered as they struggled to determine their own and others' standing before God. In my book project, I investigate the role these poets played in the rise of toleration as a practice before toleration is theorized as an idea in

the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Having finished an article on religious violence and toleration in Milton's dramatic poem *Samson Agonistes*, I am currently working on another involving Donne's use of sixteenth-century property law in his sacred verse to assess whether he belongs to God.

Teaching early modern literature excites me because it presents special challenges. Whether I teach Shakespeare or Milton, seventeenth-century poetry or prose, often the language and literary forms are unfamiliar to students, regardless of their level. So I try to cultivate a different kind of reading process than they may use for novels or modern verse. By attending to form and not just content, students get a richer, more dynamic awareness of how language creates meaning.

I want students to see early modern literature and especially poetry as aesthetic objects inviting smart, sensuous engagement, rather than as mysterious objects that alienate. While I want students to become aware of the cultural import of early modern literature, I also and especially want them to feel confident enough to read it for fun.

*Angela Balla is Assistant Professor of English at UAH. She teaches upper-division courses on Milton, seventeenth-century poetry, and Shakespeare, lower-division courses on medieval to early modern literature, and first-year composition. Her Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar, "Toleration in an Age of Persecution: Europe, 1500-1700," is scheduled for Spring 2009. In addition to her teaching, she co-coordinates the Kathryn L. Harris Women's Studies Paper Competition (with Dr. Molly Johnson in History), and serves as the faculty advisor to the women's studies student organization, POWER (People Organized for Women's Equality and Rights). Beyond her academic pursuits, she loves vigorous exercise, foreign film, and that incredible hit when she gets too much wasabi at once.*

## Women's Studies Course Offerings

### Spring 2008

ARH 309-01	Contemporary Art and Issues	MW	12:45-2:05	Stewart
ARH 309-02	Contemporary Art and Issues	TR	9:35-10:55	Stewart
EH 391	Victorian Prose and Poetry	TR	2:20-3:40	Early
PHL 202-01	Honors: Introduction to Ethics	MWF	9:10-10:05	Martine
PHL 202-02	Introduction to Ethics	MW	12:45-2:05	Wilkerson
PHL 202-03	Introduction to Ethics	TR	11:10-12:30	Staff
PHL 202-04	Introduction to Ethics	TR	3:55-5:15	Staff
PY 375	Social Psychology	MWF	10:20-11:15	Carpenter
SOC 200	Introduction to Anthropology	TR	11:10-12:30	Sitaraman
SOC 306	Sociology of Gender	W	5:30-8:20	Finley
SOC 375	Social Psychology	MWF	10:20-11:15	Carpenter

**For more information, visit <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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute to Holly Near Fund for Fall 2007 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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*Gifts are entirely tax-deductible. Make your check payable to UAH Women's Studies.*

Mail to: UAH Women's Studies, 344 Morton Hall, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899



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