

The Women's Word

WOMEN'S CENTER
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

...For Women's Voices to Be Heard!

Volume 8, Issue 1
February 2009

What's New in the New Year

By Rita Jones, Director

Welcome to the February 2009 issue of *The Women's Word*. We have a new editor, a new look, and a new year, and with this freshness, we look forward to continued growth and empowerment of women across campus. I would like to take a moment to thank Dianna Hank for reviving this newsletter and taking on the endeavor of sharing women's activities across the Lehigh University community with others. In these pages, you will find reflections, requests, reports, and responses, and we encourage you to be a part of these responses. Importantly, if you are a woman who graduated from Lehigh, your words need to be here, too. The Women's Center would like to provide a space for female graduates to continue their participation in the Lehigh community, to learn more about what is happening on campus now, and to provide their perspectives about their experiences at Lehigh.

We are very excited about the upcoming Women's Recognition Reception on March 19. We have a new student group, self-titled W.A.V.E.S., who worked diligently to develop criteria for the awards that will be distributed that afternoon. We welcome interaction from women's groups and individuals across campus to celebrate the great work that women have been and are doing here at Lehigh. The Women's Recognition Reception is dedicated to honoring women who work to better the world for not only themselves but also the women of their community and the world. Qualities often attributed to these women include passion, creativity, motivation, inspiration, courage, leadership skills, and self-awareness. These women are not committed to the "Superwoman" or "having it all" stereotypes, but they are committed to understanding and seeking out what makes them whole. They are committed to advocating and creating opportunities for women to be able to learn about themselves and seek their own happiness. Though not selfish or arrogant, these women also understand the importance of taking care of themselves. Because positive changes to women's lives cannot occur in isolation, W.A.V.E.S. recognizes the role men play as allies, and, as a result, we also welcome nominations for Male Allies. In addition to a large list of guests, each person who makes a nomination and each person nominated will be invited to the reception, where we will have light food and beverages available in a celebratory atmosphere. Please do not hesitate to contact the Women's Center if you have any questions about the Reception.

Not surprisingly, among the *Vagina Monologues*, the Reception, and Break the Silence Training, the Women's Center is a busy place, but we always have time for chatting with new and old faces, talking about ideas, needs, and advocacy, and hearing about successes. Contact us by stopping in, emailing, friending us on Facebook, or calling us. We look forward to hearing from you!

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Info about *Feminisms*
Nikki Giovanni's Visit to Lehigh
Women's Leadership Conference
Vagina Monologues!

Know a special person who has made a difference in your life and/or inspired the lives of others? It's time to stand up & recognize!

Women's Recognition Reception - Nominations Now OPEN!

To nominate a female student, faculty, or staff member (or "Male Ally") who makes a difference to the lives of women every day, simply by being her/himself visit:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uTyIC9ccbMq557TGUzCJ7w3d3d>

Awards Reception to be held on Thu, March 19, 2009:
4:30--6:30 pm, UC:
Asa Packer Dining Room

Meet the Staff

Rita Jones, Ph.D.
Director

Michelle Issadore, M.Ed.
Assistant Director

Noël K. Panebianco
Office Coordinator

Alisha Gonzales '09—Body Empowerment Alliance Co-Coordinator
Andrea Espinoza '11 – Founder of *Libra de Feminae*
Christine Tucker—Graduate Student, *Origyns* Editor
Dianna Hank '10 – *Women's Word* Editor, *Origyns* Co-Editor
Elisa Pennetti '10 – Body Empowerment Alliance Co-Coordinator
Heather Mushock '10 – Staff member
Kateland Aller '09 – Staff member
Kristina Fennelly—Graduate Volunteer
Nicole Perry '09 – Break The Silence Member
Shelly Harris '09—Break The Silence Member, Intern, *Vagina Monologues* Co-Coordinator
Tara Stephenson—Volunteer

Feminisms...in Practice

By Kristina Fennelly



Based in the English department, *Feminisms* is an organization comprised of graduate students, faculty, and staff members in the Lehigh community. The group grew out of Professor Alex Doty's graduate *Feminist Film Theory* course. Several female students found the class such a stimulating and meaningful experience that they decided to carry the discussions beyond the classroom. These women founded a feminist enclave, and the group soon evolved to include readings of scholarly feminist texts. In 2005, we began receiving university funding, which allowed us to purchase books and increase our membership. In addition to engaging in film viewings and readings, *Feminisms* hosts an annual bake sale to raise money for women's cancer

research. The group also participates in Lehigh community events like "Take Back the Night" as a way of putting feminist theory into practice. Our goals include enlarging our membership to include women and men in the Lehigh student body; maintaining and expanding our community outreach through collaborative efforts with the Lehigh Women's Center, the Humanities Center, and other local organizations; and strengthening our intellectual dialogues.

As our name *Feminisms*, suggests, we believe there are multiple types of feminist practices and ways of thinking; we do not espouse a singular, exclusive definition of what constitutes feminism. We are aware that everyone has a specific situatedness—stemming from issues of race, class, sexuality, and gender—within contemporary culture that informs their feminist ideologies. Our activism is as varied as the systems of feminist belief within the group. Activism plays a central role in our group, both collectively and individually; we see activism as the external realization of the feminist theories we read and discuss within our group and in our individual studies. At the core of our group is the idea that *Feminisms* brings together women and men in a communal web, based on relationships between members and connections with non-university affiliated organizations (i.e., Turning Point).

Feminisms is currently organized around a steering committee structure, which primarily serves the clerical needs of the group and functions as the eyes and ears of the organization. Current members of the steering committee include: Christy Wenger, Emily Shreve, Colleen Martell, Rebecca Lynn, and Abby Aldrich (all graduate students in the English Department). Group events are arranged by activities committees. These committees can include events like: readings, film screenings, bake sales, silent auctions, and off-campus activism. Each committee organizes itself as members see fit. The following events have been tentatively scheduled for the spring semester. On Monday, February 2, *Feminisms* hosted a film screening on a topic related to genocide in preparation for Paul Rusesabagina's visit to campus. Paul Rusesabagina (born June 15, 1954) is a Rwandan who has been internationally honoured for saving 1,268 civilians during the Rwandan Genocide. His story was the basis of the Academy Award nominated film *Hotel Rwanda* (2004). On Friday, February 20, *Feminisms* will host a discussion of readings on genocide and/or female violence in preparation for his visit, as well. His visit will take place on Tuesday, February 24 and is hosted by the English Department. On Friday, March 20, *Feminisms* plans to hold a Silent Auction Fund-raiser in the Humanities Center at 4p.m. A specific charity or cause will be voted on, and all proceeds will be donated accord-

"We believe there are multiple types of feminist practices and ways of thinking; we do not espouse a singular, exclusive definition of what constitutes feminism"

"Feminisms brings together women and men in a communal web, based on relationships between members"

ingly. If you have any items that you would like to donate for the auction, please contact a member of the steering committee. On Friday, April 3, we will view the film *Teeth*, followed by a discussion. More details regarding time and place to follow shortly. If you are interested in joining *Feminisms*, or learning more about the group and its upcoming events, please email us at feminisms@lehigh.edu. You may also wish to contact one of the steering committee members or speak to Kristina Fennelly (krf2@lehigh.edu) in the Women's Center.

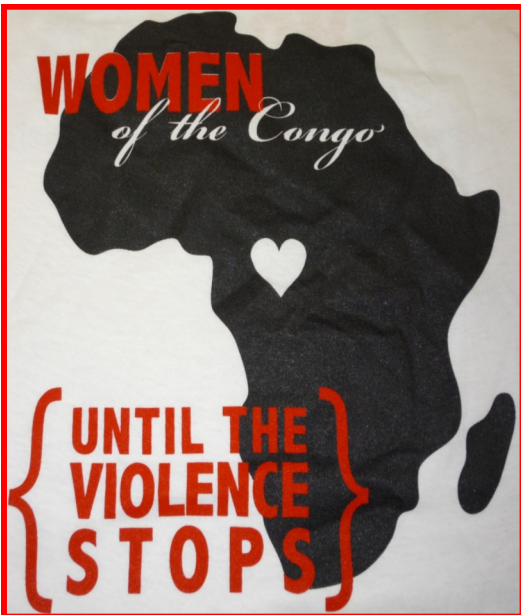
The Vagina Monologues are Back!

by Shelly Harris

{VDAY}
2009

"The Vagina Monologues" is a benefit performance that is put on at universities all over the country and in cities and towns all over the world. The play was written by playwright Eve Ensler, based on over 300 interviews with women of all ages, races, classes, sexual orientations, etc. These interviews cover topics from periods and orgasms to sexual assault and rape. This is the 11th year that the show has been performed as a benefit production, and the 8th year that Lehigh has been a part of the movement.

All of the money raised from the show goes to help end violence against women and girls. This year, 10% of our proceeds will go to the worldwide "spotlight" cause, which is the Women and Girls of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). "Since 1996, sexual violence against women and girls in the Eastern part of the DRC has been used as a weapon of war to torture, humiliate and destroy not only women and girls, but entire families and whole communities. Since the conflict began, hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped." (Vday.org) The problems in the DRC are extremely severe, and the money we raise will go to help build a safe-house/community for the women there. The remaining 90% of our proceeds will be donated to Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley and Break the Silence of Lehigh University. Turning Point is



a shelter for victims of abuse to have refuge from their abusers. They offer a hotline, shelter, and other services to help women that are struggling with domestic abuse. Break the Silence is Lehigh's on-campus group of sexual assault peer educators. These trained students run the 24-hour hotline, and do peer presentations on sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and harassment.

This year, Lehigh University's production of The Vagina Monologues will take place at Packard Auditorium on Friday, February

13 and Saturday, February 14 at 7:00 PM, and Sunday, February 15 at 3:00 PM. Tickets are \$7 for members of the Lehigh Community, \$10 for non-Lehigh community members, and \$20 for "V.L.P's, Vagina Loving Patrons (front 2 rows). For more information about "The Vagina Monologues", tickets, or merchandise, email mih209@lehigh.edu or zsz209@lehigh.edu.



Nikki Giovanni Inspires Lehigh

By Liz Vogtsberger

Nikki Giovanni spoke to an audience of roughly 400 rapt listeners in Baker Auditorium last Wednesday night as part of Lehigh's week-long Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration entitled "Remaining Awake." Giovanni regaled her audience with stories from her long career as a poet, activist, professor, and essayist, periodically pausing her narratives to read a relevant poem.

While Giovanni's talk contained entertaining anecdotes and lighthearted confessions—she claimed President Obama to be "eye candy" and told us of her aspiration to play "Deal or No Deal"—the reason for her presence at Lehigh remained clear. She devoted a large portion of the night to retelling the story of Rosa Parks' historic decision that, in many ways, launched the modern American Civil Rights Movement.

One of the most poignant moments came as Giovanni refuted the oft-told tale that Parks' refused to give up her seat in the "neutral" section of a Montgomery bus because "her feet were tired," Giovanni argued, "No, her heart was tired." Reminding her audience that "You do what you're called to do," Giovanni impressed upon us the immediacy and urgency of King's call to "remain awake" in times of social revolution.

Review of Women's Leadership Institute

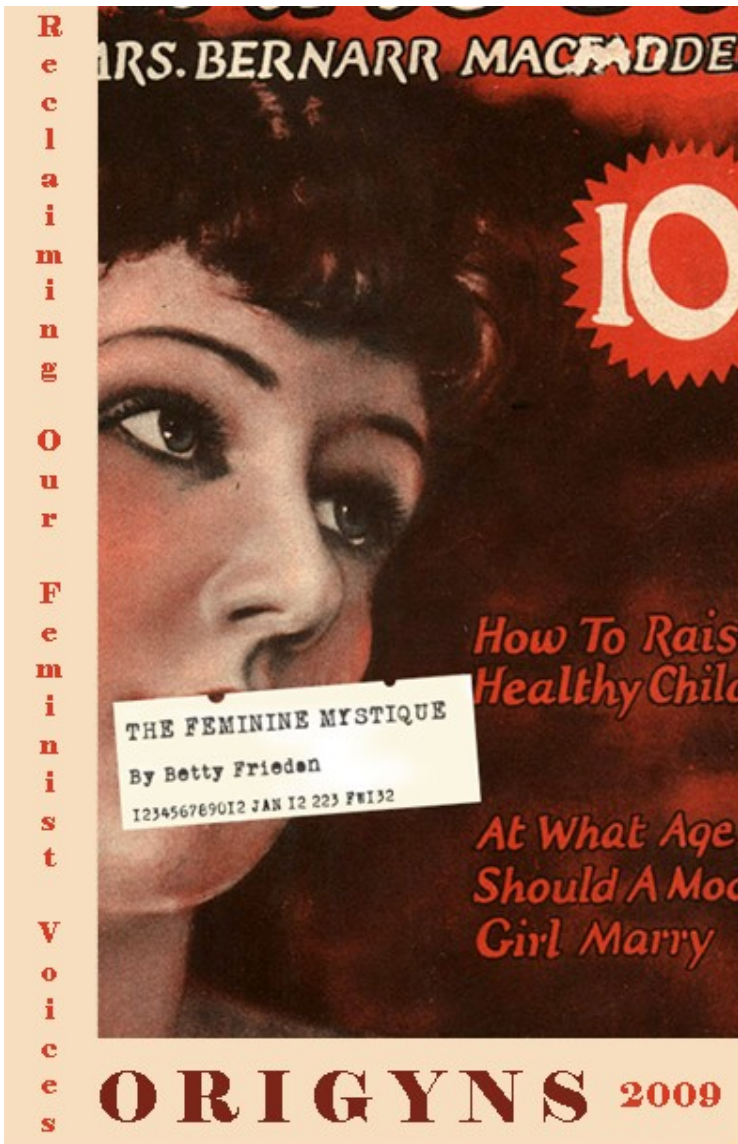
By Michelle Issadore, Assistant Director

The third annual Women's Leadership Institute was held December 7-9, 2008 in Amelia Island, Florida. It was co-sponsored by several professional associations within higher education. As leadership is one of the Women's Centers four themes (along with research, advocacy, and outreach), it was a perfect opportunity to learn more about highlighting and developing women's leadership at Lehigh. We had sessions on everything from strengths assessment, to work-life balance, to mentoring.

One of the sessions I found most useful was on the power of negotiation and learning to ask. Sara Laschever, co-author of the books *Women Don't Ask: The High Cost of Avoiding Negotiation* and *Ask for It: How Women Can Use the Power of Negotiation to Get What They Really Want*, spoke about young women thinking the wage gap doesn't affect them when in reality the situation is worse for them than for older women. As many Lehigh students prepare to graduate, this misinformation could have very real consequences. It was also interesting to discuss how women's aggressiveness is viewed negatively not just by men, but also by other women. I hope we can address these attitudes at Lehigh in the future.

We also heard from the Executive Director of the Association of College Unions International, Marsha Herman-Betsen. Her session focused on the differences in communication based on gender. Her points resonated about who gets heard, who gets credit, and the male-orientated nature of traditional leadership traits. As we work on programming and resources on women's leadership at Lehigh, these differences will be important to understand and keep in mind.

All in all, I am glad to have had the opportunity to attend such a conference. I'm also looking forward to working with the Office of Student Leadership Development to bring women's leadership on campus the attention it deserves!



Origyns

The Women's Center's
Literary Magazine

Origyns is a publication for the voices of feminists – undergraduates, graduate students, alumnae, faculty, staff, and professors emeriti.

Stop by the Women's
Center after Monday,
March 16th to pick up your
copy!

Illustration (this year's cover) by Emily Becker

Upcoming Events:

Theatre

WINTERTIME by Charles Mee

A modern farcical look at the divine insanity of love! Jonathan brings girlfriend Ariel to his parents' cottage with big plans for a romance. But when Mom and Dad arrive—separately, and with their respective lovers in tow—his plans are quickly eclipsed by a hilariously twisted family feud. Romance gives way to accusation and jealousy as this snow-bound gathering loses control in a weekend of slamming doors, tears, laughs, and insights into how to manage the craziness of love. Directed by Kashi Johnson.

Feb 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21 @ 8:00 pm; Feb 15 @ 2:00 pm

Speaker - Kate Kendel

Film screening and discussion with documentary's protagonist and project consultant, Kate Kendel. Dramatic events destined Kate Kendel to live with various missionary foster parents in Sierra Leone and Scandinavia as a child. Returning to her biological family at 16 in Sierra Leone, Kate was genitally mutilated against her will. This powerful documentary follows Kate back to her roots, where the circumcisers' secret society, Bundu, is so feared that no government has yet been able to prohibit it. *The Secret Pain* is a strong portrait of the psychological consequences women face after this kind of physical mutilation. According to Amnesty International, 2 million girls are genitally mutilated every year. This documentary aspires to touch and hopefully change opinions worldwide. For more information, contact the Humanities Center 610-758-4649 or humanities@lehigh.edu

Tuesday, February 10, 4:00 PM, Maginnes Hall, Room 102

Speaker - Paul Rusesabagina

Paul Rusesabagina, the Rwandan who has been internationally honored for saving 1,268 civilians during the Rwandan Genocide, will be spending the day at Lehigh on Tuesday, February 24. This date is right at the end of Black Heritage Month. For more information, please contact Taylor Calderone at jtc207@lehigh.edu.

Tue, February 24, 7:00-8:30 PM, Baker Hall, Zoellner Arts Center

Speaker - Joyce Hinnefeld

In Hovering Flight is a novel about mothers, daughters, and art; about illness, death, and burial; about fragile eco-systems and tenacious human relationships— all explored through characters who are inspired by the lives, and particularly the songs, of birds.

Tue, February 17, 4:00 PM, Linderman Library Room 200

Make a Valentine at the Women's Center!

Mon, February 9 - Fri, February 13, Women's Center

Vagina Monologues

V-Day is a global movement to end violence against women and girls that raises funds and awareness through benefit productions of Playwright/Founder Eve Ensler's award-winning play "The Vagina Monologues."

Fri, February 13, 7:00 PM, Sat, February 14, 7:00 PM & Sun, February 15, 3:00 PM, Packard 101

V-Week Events (Feb. 9th—Feb 13th)

"These Hands Won't Hurt" Campaign - Trace your hand and make a commitment to abstain from domestic violence

V-Grams - Write a message to (an) inspiring wom(a)n at Lehigh and we'll send it to for free



New at Deja Brew!

CHERRY BOMB!

Steamed milk, hot
chocolate, cherry
syrup, coffee,
whipped cream
with a
cherry on top!



\$3.75 20 oz. \$2.75 12 oz.

Until Feb. 28, \$1.00 from the sale of
each Cherry Bomb will go to
the beneficiaries of V-Day
"The Vagina Monologues"
@ Lehigh U. Feb. 13-15

**DEJA BREW, 101 W. 4TH ST.
BETHLEHEM**

February 2009

National Black History Month

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 Girls & Women in Sports Day	5	6 Vagina Monologues Fundraiser Talent Show 7 - 10 PM	7 National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
8	9 <i>Start Random Acts of Kindness Week</i>	10 Spectrum Talk: Transgender in the Vagina Monologues Women's Center 12 - 1 PM	11 Congo Teach-in about the war in the DRC 7-8:30 PM Neville 3	12	13 Vagina Monologues 7 PM Packard 101	14 Vagina Monologues 7 PM Packard 101
15 Vagina Monologues 3 PM Packard 101	16 President's Day	17 In Hovering Flight: A Reading & Talk Linderman 200 4:10 PM	18	19 Libra de Feminae Meeting 5:30-7 PM Women's Center	20	21
22	23 "Let's Talk About Sex" 7-9 PM Rauch 184	24 Paul Rusesabagina Visit 7:30 PM Baker Hall, ZAC	25	26		



Women's Center Contact Info:

Mailing Address:
Women's Center
Room C207, University Center
29 Trembley Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015-3064

Hours: M-F, 8:00 AM—5:00 PM
Phone: (610) 758-6484

Email: inwnc@lehigh.edu

Web: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inwnc>

BREAK THE SILENCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE PEER HOTLINE: (610) 974-HOPE (4673)

Available 24/7 during fall and spring semesters
Anonymous and confidential

Assistant Director
610-758-5808

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