"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."
Letter from the Director of the WGRAC
By Laura R. Lockwood

Education cannot be equitable sans equitable treatment of all campus members. Likewise, a nation beset with a level of “more than 190,000 (hate crime) incidents per year” (Department of Justice study, 2005) cannot claim an equitable playing field. Hate crimes increased 8% in 2006, according to the FBI, with large spikes in crimes based on religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and mental disabilities. The DOJ study states “84% of hate crimes were violent (including sexual assault); 56% of the victims identified race as the primary factor; ethnicity—29%; religion—18.9%; sexual orientation—18%.” Acts of violence, discrimination, bias and hatred- on campus, and off - are reminders that as a community of caring individuals we cannot be lax in the struggle for justice and equity.

**FACT:** Trinity: Survey results (Spring, 2007): 56% of female senior and junior respondents, & 27% of male respondents, reported they had been victims of sexual assault or sexual harassment during their college years.

**FACT:** Trinity: Fall, ’07 semester: 11 reports have been filed since July, 2007, almost triple the number filed by this time last year. We attribute this rise to an increase in reporting, not in assaults. But, it does point to the prevalence of sexual violence on campus, and a campus and national culture which perpetuates it.

**FACT:** USA: Since tens of thousands rallied against racism in Jena, La., 9/20/07, the number of incidents involving the hanging of a noose (a potent symbol of lynching) are between 50 and 60 (5 incidents in CT), while only 12 or so similar incidents were reported in the last decade. (New York Times, “The Geography of Hate,” 11/25/07)

**FACT:** USA: Pregnancy discrimination is up: complaints filed with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission have risen “nearly 19% to a record 4,901 last year, from 3,966 in 1997. EEOC pregnancy discrimination lawsuits have increased about threefold from 6 or fewer per year in the early to late 1990’s, to 16 or more per year since 2001.” (www.msnbc.com)

These statistics bring to mind the insidious backlash endured by women’s and civil rights groups throughout the last two centuries. Laws and policies obviously are not enough. Whether you identify as an activist or feminist—or not—you are a member of the Trinity—and world—community. We all share the responsibility of active participation in creating a just and equitable campus, and society. Where to start? Bystander behavior. Take a stand – intervene. Don’t ignore or encourage a wrongful act, slur, or joke. Question the song’s lyrics, the music video’s messages. We may reside in the ‘Trinity bubble’, but we are part of the world family. Trinity has changed positively, but more is possible! It’s up to us. 🗞️
Phenomenal Woman: Sarah Raskin
Interview by Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch

How did you decide to go into the field of neuroscience?

So, I started college [at John Hopkins University in 1980] not knowing what I really liked biology and I decided to be a biochemistry major. One of my really close friends was a psychology major and he said I had to take this course; that course was identical to what we give in Brain and Behavior and it was called Physiological Psychology. It was the most fun course I had ever taken.

After that course, [David Olton, the professor of Physiological Psychology] was designing a new major; there was no such thing as a neuroscience major and he called it Behavioral Biology. He was trying to figure out what it was going to look like, and he asked a couple of us if we were interested. And so five of us decided to do this major that had never been done before, which is essentially what the Trinity neuroscience major is. I did research in his lab on the hippocampus and memory in rats, and when it got to be my senior year, I really wanted to go to graduate school, but I want[ed] to work with humans. [I asked David Olton] and he said that was neuropsychology, and I would] need to take a course with either Alfonso Carra-mazzeo or Jason Brandt in the psychology department. So I took both neuropsychology and some linguistics courses with Alfonso. [Alfonso] hired me for the summer after graduation to work in his lab with some stroke victims with aphasia.

There were only three [neuropsychology graduate schools] in North America [at the time]: Texas, Queens College and one in Canada, but I ended up deciding to go to the one in Queens and I did my Ph.D. in neuropsychology.

When you were in school, were there also a good number of women studying sciences too?

No.

Did you face any difficulties studying science?

Well, first of all, I went to an undergraduate school that was 3 to 1 [men to women]; so in science, it was down even more because many of the women went into the humanities and social sciences. I didn’t think about it at the time, because I wasn’t aware of these issues so much. John Hopkins offered one women’s studies course at the time; they wouldn’t allow them to create a women’s studies major because they didn’t feel it was a real field of study. [That] taught me to think about things a little differently.

Continued on Page 7

Women and Philosophy: A Personal Perspective
By Ayesha Abdullah

There are relatively few female philosophers to speak of. Historically, this is a realm where only men tread. Moreover, many of the famous female philosophers are often first mentioned in regard to a relationship with a fellow male philosopher, one undoubtedly more famous than she. This fact represents the heart of what is problematic within the discipline of philosophy: even when equality is preached, women are still underrepresented and viewed differently. It seems some things are allowed to be overlooked. Little by little, an unfounded fundamental difference between men and women is cultivated. Even when the differences that have been traditionally established to oppress women are attempted to be redesigned and understood differently, many problems remain.

For example, I have noticed in many of my classes (in all of which women are quite underrepresented) certain issues tend to be

Continued on Page 8
Myth: Title IX forces schools to cut men’s sports.

Fact: Title IX in no way requires schools to cut men’s sports. Some schools have decided on their own to eliminate certain men’s sports, like gymnastics and wrestling, rather than controlling overly large football and basketball budgets, which consume a whopping 72% of the average Division I-A school’s total men’s athletic operating budget. A recent GAO study found that 72% of schools that added teams from 1992-1993 to 1999-2000 did so without discontinuing any teams.

Fact: Spending on men’s sports continues to increase and dominate spending on women’s sports. In Division I, in 2000, for every dollar being spent on women’s sports, almost two dollars are being spent on men’s sports.

Source: National Women’s Law Center, 2002

Phenomenal Woman: Alice Gromisch

Interview by Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch

1972 was an extraordinary year for women: on June 23, Congress passed Title IX, and President Nixon signed it into law on July 1. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Before Title IX, women were restricted in education and sports, and discrimination was ubiquitous. Women who wanted to pursue advanced degrees were forced to deal with colleges and professional schools which limited female attendance; restricted financial aid if they were married, pregnant, or parents; and demanded higher test scores than male applicants. For a woman applying for a doctoral degree, she’d often have to explain during the interview how she would combine her career with a family (can you imagine a male applicant being asked the same question?). Even in teaching, a female dominated career, elementary and secondary school female teachers were asked to quit if they got married or were pregnant.

Despite the legal discrimination rampant before Title IX, women persevered and entered the ‘man’s world,’ showing women are equally as capable. For over three decades, my grandmother Alice Gromisch worked as an educator, started a clinic for children with learning difficulties, and earned numerous degrees, all while managing a family.

What was your first teaching job?

My first position was teaching fourth grade in Rhode Island where [my husband] was stationed [in the Navy]. I had a minimum of forty students in my class with no aide. It was great, and the students learned to work independently in small groups.

Afterwards, you were involved in a lot of volunteer work with education, on top of your job.

In the mid sixties when [my son and daughter] were twelve and ten, I accepted an offer to help start a clinic for children who had learning problems. The clinic was in East Harlem. It turned out to be one of the most rewarding experiences I ever had. A few years later, I was given the opportunity to start a program in an independent school on Long Island. At this point, I had completed my Masters. For the first two years, I spent two afternoons in

“Even in teaching, a female dominated career, elementary and secondary school female teachers were asked to quit if they got married or were pregnant.”

Continued on Page 8
Destroying the Market
By Cristina Conti

As a young woman at Trinity College, where masculine culture is prevalent, I have witnessed the inner workings of feminist Luce Irigaray's concept of "the market." Many college boys, insecure and eager to enhance their portfolio of conquests, see women as objects; they judge and rate them by their physical appearance. The most successful boys are considered the most desirable and become the idols of others who yearn to follow in their example. Naive to their ulterior motives, and socialized into believing the myth that women get their value from men, many Trinity girls give into the manipulation. When the boy moves on to his next victim, she feels hurt and worthless, and is left more vulnerable to another male predator. Thus, the ancient global cycle continues, establishing behavioral norms as well as implementing a system that circulates and exploits women.

After spending a little over a month at Trinity, I decided that I must act like a boy to reverse this exchange so that I would not get my feelings hurt or conform to the tenets of a clearly sexist system. My fellow frustrated friends, who all had similar disappointing encounters with the opposite sex, were encouraged by my catchy motto, "Hit it, then quit it" and "No feelings, only faces." I would have no expectations, would solely act on superficial impulse but not feel guilty in refusing to give into a boy's wishes. As another feminist, Helene Cisoux, warns us, "...nothing is more dangerous than obligation" (282). Many girls feel that they must concede to a boy's sexual desires to reciprocate for a boy's "generosity," and end up performing deeds that do not feel right, out of obligation. I would change roles and play by the rules to beat the system.

After a weekend of testing this masculine nonchalant attitude of immediate gratification, I realized that if I felt so attracted to a boy that I wanted to kiss him, I would want to be more than just "a random hook up"; I would wait, so that when it did happen, it would be special. My weekend proved that meaningless flings are just that—meaningless and unfulfilling. Why would I want to essentially degrade myself by turning into an emotionless block while emulating behavior that is immature, unrewarding, and potentially hurtful for an artificial high?

Although we do not need to take up man's role on "the market" we can still act like men in other respects. We must speak out in class and encourage other women to "break out of the snare of silence" (Cisoux 262) that we are pressured into. We should not mimic man's arrogance and attitude of privilege, just his ability to use his voice unapologetically. Also, we must not deny our feelings; emotions are part of being human. We should just be more careful with whom we trust them. But occasionally "a random hook up" can be fun for some of us.

Instead of being coerced by the system into exhibiting misogynistic behavior out of competition for male attention, as women we must come together and realize that we hold the power. If we respect ourselves and each other, boys will be forced to respect us as well.

The Benefits of Using Oral Techniques
By Amanda Kenton

Ok, don’t get too excited just yet! I’m not talking about those oral techniques, but the benefits of verbally discussing your sexual desires can be just as satisfying! Picture this: you are with the right person at the perfect location. It is getting near the end of your date and you think you want to take things one step further or maybe a few steps further, so what do you do? ASK! Believe it or not a simple statement such as “Can I kiss you?” can be extremely sexy. By verbally expressing what your desires are you give your partner a chance to know exactly what they are getting themselves into and consent to your sexual invitation. You might be thinking to yourself that this sounds corny or will kill the mood. In actuality, verbally consenting to sexual activity can be really sexy and can, in most cases “seal the deal” because you took the time to respect the person before going any further with your sexual advances. This makes the situation more comfortable for both parties involved.

Talk, talk, and more talk! Working it out verbally is a turn on and is the best way to avoid ambiguous situations, which could lead to sexual assault. By using fun and seductive language, consent can be sexy. It can be extremely sexy when you verbally express to your partner what your sexual desires are, because in all honesty guessing games are not fun. Let me demonstrate for you: “Do you want to have sex?” “Can I kiss you here?” “Would you be OK with me giving you oral pleasure?” “I want to be sure you are OK with me touching you here?” Do you like it when I touch you here?” “Can I take your shirt off?” “Do you like sex toys? Do you want to play with them now?” “Let me know if you want me to stop and I will.”

Often times as a society we still remain somewhat uncomfortable talking about sex. I am here to say let’s change that! The definition of consent that I would like to encourage people to abide is an active, voluntary, enthusiastic, sexy, creative, straight forward, sober and informed agreement. This definition allows people to be open and honest about sex, while simultaneously being very sexy because you can put your own creative spin on consent. By verbally expressing your sexual desires you will encounter much less sexual miscommunication or “grey areas.” If you have a feeling that someone might not really be as into the act as you are, it is a good idea to go with your instincts and ask them.

See, we have no reason not to talk about sex and definitely have no reason for not asking. Seek consent and ask with respect. This is the ultimate sign of romance. If you use this oral technique this weekend, you will be more than amazed. If you are creative talking about sex can easily become an exciting thing. It creates open and honest conversations and makes for healthier, safer, and sexier relationships and interactions.

Voice Raised In Power Program (11/8/07):
- Introduction & Welcome by Becky Loeb, Violence Prevention Coordinator for the WGRAC
- Performances by the Shondaa Steppers, Trinitones, Quirks, and Wesley Wynne
- Readings by Brittany Price, Chris Gromisch and Beth Gromisch

Congratulations to everyone who performed, and a special shout out to Becky, who did a wonderful job coordinating the event!

Sexual Assault Crisis Services and the Women and Gender Resource Action Center host a support group for survivors of violence on Wednesday nights at 6:15 pm in the WGRAC lounge. For more information, contact Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu.

If you are interested in becoming a sexual assault counselor, the New Britain YWCA and the Sexual Assault Crisis Services has 40 hr training classes. Afterwards, counselors will be expected to volunteer on the crisis hotline for the Hartford and/or New Britain area. Once certified, counselors can also be Sexual Assault Response Team members for the Trinity campus. For more information on SART and training programs, contact Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu.
I started to notice things like the chemistry professor always made baseball analogies or car analogies, and I started getting use to not understanding these analogies. I did have one professor that would put up pictures of women's bodies and men's bodies, and talk about naked women's bodies and how horrible they are from an evolutionary perspective. He really acted like he was talking to a group full of guys friends.

[When] I interviewed at Texas, the head of the graduate program said "you're the first woman we ever considered accepting to this program. If you come, you'll be required [to say that] you won't get married and drop out before finishing your Ph.D.",. I thought he was kidding, but the graduate student who was showing me around said no, he [wasn't]. This was shocking: I was part of the culture that said women can do anything. I had never heard a sexist joke until I went to college.

When I was in graduate school, I was the only woman in my class who was working for her Ph.D. There were a couple of other women who were auditing in hopes of getting into the Ph.D. program. But CUNY had a lot of women on their faculty and the guys were really supportive. I noticed I was the only women, but I can't say I noticed any other hardships.

*What were your thoughts when former Harvard president Lawrence H. Summers said women were not as capable as men in the fields of science and math?*

We had a panel on campus [co-sponsored by WGRAC] after that happened that I was on. People look for answers that confirm the hypothesis they already have. I had never considered there was anything women couldn’t do; I grew up directly across the street for the NIH (National Institute of Health), so half my friends' moms were scientists! Maybe if I'd come from a place where I felt I was struggling for it, maybe I would have had more of an emotional reaction.

I think the problem with those assumptions, whether they are about sex, which is what that particular problem was, or about race, like we just had a Nobel Prize winner laureate make a comment that people of certain races can't do things, there's just no evidence for. It's about trying to define things in a way that doesn't make sense, given the data. If you look at the data on men and women's brains, there is more variability within women and within men then there is between men and women. So it's nothing to do with what women can and can't do.

Obviously there are many cultural and environmental issues about why women chose to go into a profession. So, to presume there are less women scientists [because] women tried and failed is a huge leap from that piece of data. Did women try and fail? Or did women do other things because the world of science runs counter to other things they believe in? If that's true, then we need to change science—we need to make science something that is more attractive. If it's true that women are trying and failing, we have to figure out in what way are they failing and what does that mean; it's a long way from their brains can’t deal with science and math.

*This year marks the 35th anniversary of Title IX. Because of this landmark legislation, we have witnessed a large increase in women earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in science and medicine. During your tenure at Trinity, have you noticed a similar trend?*

Our neuroscience program has huge numbers of women, but that's even compared to other schools like us. I think it's something to the fact that we've had women program directors for a long time here, and I think that role modeling makes a big difference. But in general, biology is becoming a very female dominated science across the country, and medicine is becoming female dominated [as well]. I think it's a combination of doors opening for women and also medicine becoming less lucrative, so the subset of men who were doing [it] to be high achievers and high money makers are dropping out, and maybe that subset of women are too, but more people are coming in for other reasons. But the biomedical sciences and medical science are definitely [seeing] lots more women joining. Those who are interested in neuroscience are those who can think broadly, make connections, and think about the world in a bigger way.

*Would you consider yourself a feminist?*

Absolutely! Without hesitation, of course! My mother would roll over in her grave if I said anything else. In fact, I was wearing my t-shirt that says “this is what a feminist looks like” and my daughter ask[ed] what a feminist [was]. I said a feminist believes a woman can do anything, and she said “of course!” In my generation, no one would have hesitated [to use the word feminist].
Women and Philosophy: A Personal Perspective  Continued from Page 3

glossed over. Many of these issues, of course, concern the misogynistic undertones which are quite prevalent within many philosophical texts. Very seldom does anyone point them out or raise possible discussions about them. Many historical male philosophers actually preach a certain conception of equality, while actually continuing to view women and certain ethnicities as lesser beings. Thus, there has been a certain hypocritical influence, passed on from generation to generation, regarding equality.

Though much has changed, few male philosophers (and in my specific experience, male students) will notice or think to critique the inherent inequalities within philosophy. It is thus, quite often, left up to feminist scholars and female students. But why must such fundamental issues be taken up by feminist philosophers, when every other general criticism is taken up by traditional philosophers? Why can’t these philosophers analyze women’s issues? It is precisely because, traditionally, philosophy has not seen women’s issues as relevant. The implication is that philosophy might as well be called misogynist philosophy, for it can quite often be a fraternity lacking concern for feminist thought.

I can’t help but wonder how this problem can be changed. In a certain way, western philosophy has remained nearly unchanged over the past 400 years. I wholeheartedly believe if more women joined this discipline, philosophy as an institution would be changed for the better. With more women present and heard, typically disregarded or glossed over issues would take shape and acquire a voice. With this, men would be more inclined to see the issues that not only affect women but affect us all. Once a problem is recognized, it can be overcome.

Philosophy can no longer be considered a male discipline. Women’s voices should no longer be a new phenomenon, but a regular one. Furthermore, the discipline should not have to be sectored into feminist thought and regular thought. It is my opinion that when such distinctions are made two polar opposites are often perpetuated. Of course there are many opinions and solutions regarding this issue, and I am not advocating opposition toward the institution as is. Yet, there is always room for improvement, the discipline welcomes all, and is open for change. To do so, however, change must come from an equal ground, and not only from traditional perspectives.

Phenomenal Woman: Alice Gromisch  Continued from Page 4

East Harlem, but I had to give that up because of increased demands at school.

The independent school you worked at in Long Island is a very prestigious K-9 school. What were your responsibilities?

While at the school, I had a staff of tutors to work with students. I did all of the admissions and diagnostic testing. I also started the advisory program in the Upper School as well as a comprehensive sexuality program for the upper grades. During that period, I earned my Professional Diploma. I still hear from some of my students!

Did you face any discrimination while pursuing your degrees and moving up into administrative positions?

As far as discrimination was concerned, I did not experience it. I soon became part of the administrative team and received excellent salaries. I think the greatest challenge I encountered was being a “super woman” e.g. having a full time career, graduate work, being a wife and mom, running a household, maintaining a family social schedule and being [my husband’s] fore deck crew on our boat. Happily, it all seemed to work out, and I loved every bit of it!

Did you ever feel that women were pushed into fields like nursing or primary and secondary education because they are traditionally female careers? Did you see women who wanted to be doctors or educational discriminated against?

My reason for pursuing a career in education was because I love working with children. I personally never felt that I was being discriminated as a woman, nor was I ever aware of other educators who had a problem. [My husband] always had a majority of female pediatricians working on his staff and I know there was absolutely no discrimination because he would not have tolerated it. I do know, however, that [my daughter] experienced some unpleasantness during her residency, but that doesn’t happen anymore, thankfully! I remember her saying that every once in a while a patient whom she was about to examine would say, “I don’t want to see a nurse; I want to see a doctor!” Fortunately, that is in the past: we have male nurses and fabulous female physicians!
Dear Reader:
The Newsletter Editors want to hear any comments or feedback you have about the newsletter and its contents. Please send your letters to:

WOMEN AND GENDER RESOURCE ACTION CENTER STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Director: Laura Lockwood M'95
Director’s Assistant: Cindy Dolores ’08
Violence Prevention Coordinator: Becky Loeb ’10
PHAB (Promoting Healthy Awareness of the Body) Coordinator: Tara Finucane ’08
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WOMEN AND GENDER RESOURCE ACTION CENTER MISSION STATEMENT
“The Women and Gender Resource Action Center is a place of advocacy, support, and welcome for all members of the Trinity and surrounding community. Through educational, social, and cultural programming, it seeks to promote women’s self-determination and empowerment; awareness of gender inequities; understanding among people of different economic classes, cultural backgrounds, religions, and gender identities; and the creation of a campus environment conducive to respectful interaction between women and men.”

Trinity College Women and Gender Resource Action Center
2nd floor, Mather
(860) 297-2408 Fax: (860) 987-6219
Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu
www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/Diversity/Gender/WomensCenter

Check this issue out online!

Some of our WGRAC Warriors! (from left to right): Rosalia Abreu ’11, Becky Loeb ’10, Tanya Bulloch ’08, Sylvia Tjioe ’09, Tara Finucane ’08, and Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch ’09
Upcoming WGRAC Events

- **February 5, PROVOKED**
  
  Based on a true story, *Provoked*, starring Aishwarya Ra, is the story of a battered Punjabi housewife and mother of two in London. Unable to bear the brutality and repeated rapes by her alcoholic husband, she is imprisoned for his murder.

  * Time and place to be announced

- **February 14, VAGINA MONOLOGUES, 7pm, Washington Room, Mather Hall**

  Directors: Keisha John, ’08; Emma Etheridge, ’08

  * $5 with Trinity ID: Fundraiser for the Interval House, a battered women’s shelter...sponsored by WGRAC, Sexual Assault Task Force, SART

- **March 5, ELAINE BROWN, THE STRUGGLE OF JUSTICE THEN AND NOW, 7pm, Washington Room, Mather Hall**

  Elaine Brown, former head of the Black Panther Party, is returning to Trinity College in honor of Black and Women’s History Months

  Sponsors: WGRAC, Office of Multicultural Affairs, TCBWO/Imani

WGRAC On-going meetings...

- Victims and Survivors of Violence Support Group: contact Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu, for the Spring Semester day/time/place

- Sexual Assault Task Force: contact Becky Loeb (Rebecca.Loeb@trincoll.edu) for meeting day/time/place

- Promoting Healthy Awareness of the Body (PHAB): contact Tara.Finucane@trincoll.edu, for meeting day/time/place

Happy Holidays!

Peace,

WGRAC