

# Women's Center Newsletter

Volume II Issue 2

Spring 2001

## COEDUCATION ANNOUNCED AT TRINITY: REFLECTIONS ON OUR TRANSITION TO TODAY

In 1969, the first female students entered Trinity College. However, the school's transition into a co-educational environment took a great deal of time and adjustment on the part of students and faculty alike. Three alumni that were on-campus during that tumultuous time recently reflected on the challenges faced by the women when they first arrived at Trinity.

**Judy Dworin '70, Professor of Theater & Dance, Trinity College**

Judy Dworin recounted her experience as one of the first female students to attend Trinity. An undergraduate at Smith College, Dworin came to Trinity in 1969 via the Twelve-College Exchange Program. Dworin says that her decision to come to Trin-

continued on page four

## THE TRINITY COLLEGE CHILD CARE CENTER: A COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Most students are accustomed to seeing small children toddling around campus on walks or even being pushed in strollers. Most students presume that these children belong to faculty and attend an on-campus daycare. To a degree, they are correct. The Trinity College Child Care Center, located in the basement of the Life Sciences Center, has been operating since 1985. It is, by all accounts, a remarkable center.

The idea was conceived in 1984 through a collaboration of faculty, staff and interested parties who wanted to have a childcare opportunity on campus.

Diane Zannoni, President of the Board and one of the founders of the center, com-

mented, "We wanted it to be economically, racially and ethnically diverse. That is part of our charter."

Gail McArthur, the Executive Director, echoes this sentiment, "We have a strong commitment to a diverse environment - racially, economically, Trinity vs the community."

And indeed it is just this. About 42% of the students are children of faculty; the rest live in the neighborhood or have parents who work on campus. Many people are unaware that the facility is open to more than simply Trinity employees. Although the center is on Trinity's campus - the Trustees gave the space and permission - it is a private non-profit organization.

continued on page three

## Letter From the Director 2001 Legislation System: What is it Doing for Us?

Are you aware that the 2001 Legislative Session opened on January 3? There are a number of issues facing women which will be addressed during this session. Legislators are dealing with a number of bills to fund while trying to heed the spending cap. Some of the more noteworthy issues the legislators will face are:

### Pay Equity/Living Wage:

There are efforts to correct pay inequities due to gender, race, and national origin and raise wages in traditionally female employment such as child care and home health occupations

**Welfare Reform:** There are efforts to increase the availability of education and job training options for individuals receiving state assistance.

**Lesbian/Gay Civil Rights:** There are efforts to promote the legal recognition of same-sex couples.

If you are interested in learning more or taking action on these issues and other issues important to women contact CWEALF (Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund), at 247-6090.

~Laura Lockwood

# safe zone

Just as there is no way to visibly identify gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (g/l/b/t) persons, there is no easy method of identifying supportive or hostile persons to g/l/b/t issues. The Safe Zone project is an effort to identify a

group of people who are informed and supportive of g/l/b/t persons and issues. The project began at Trinity during the Spring 2000 semester. Since then, about ninety members of the Trinity College community have completed a training session to become a Safe Zone member.

The most important role of Safe Zone members is visibility. Safe Zone members are expected to display a sticker as evidence of their support in a place visible to others. Safe Zone members are there to provide support, information, and referrals to individuals who approach them, and are also expected to respect an individual's privacy and maintain confidentiality.

One of the main goals of the program is to reduce homophobia and discrimination of g/l/b/t persons both within the Trinity College Community and in greater society. It is hoped that as more and more people are trained and openly supportive of g/l/b/t persons and issues, that homophobia and discrimination will cease to be tolerated and that acceptance and understanding of diversity will become the norm. The Safe Zone project hopes to promote individuals accepting each other for who they are regardless of gender and sexuality.

Anyone interested in learning more about the program or participating in a training session to become a Safe Zone member should contact Laura Lockwood at the Women's Center (x 2408)

~ Sara Getman

## The following is a list of Safe Zone Members:

Mary Thomas	Karla Spurlock-	Giuliana Palma	Joseph Crivelli	Diane Martell
Ron Thomas	Evans	Douglas Johnson	Jennifer Beineke	Frank Kirkpatrick
Jessica Spector	Diana Evans	Diane Schell	Beth Miller	Danielle Marquis
Carol Correa	Barbara Chapman	Helen Canzenella	Kathleen Adams	Christina Lundy
Paula Russo	Elizabeth Burns	Joshua Rosenthal	Donna Willson	Melissa Baker
Valeriano Ramos	Leslie Valentine	Margaret Grasso	Wendy Burr	Jeanette Bonner
Ann Reuman	Anna King	Beth Novak	Martha Risser	Jonathan Amory
Jane Nadel-Klein	Eileen Lauzier	Ann Crawford	Dario DelPuppo	Kimberly Stevens
John Rose	Gina Breseman	Margo Perkins	Kathleen Groff	Rebecca Mayer
Hugh Ogden	Ronald Minas	David Winer	Margaret Foster	Jessica Rawls
Brian Killian	Ramon Rosario	Patricia McKenna	Christine Corrigan	Brooke Peltzman
Patricia Connolly	Charles Morris	Saskia Hintz	Jeanette Gomez	Rebecca Thibau
Jerry Watts	Martin Torres	David Tatem	Janet Bauer	Jonathan Prosnit
Nihal Delanerolle	Albert Murphy	John Dlugosz	Debbie Cook	Evan Dobelle
Joseph Barber	Deborah Rington	Laura Robinson	Megan	Irene Papoulis
Martha Burke	David Knight	David Howery	Fitzsimmons	Anna Matos
Jon Small	Lynett Mathews	Sharon	Julie Graves	Linda Campenella
Robin Sheppard	Juan Melendez	Herzberger	Brian Kelly	Joseph Reynolds
Sarah Raskin	Ricardo Ramirez	Michael West	James Hughes	Ben Johnson
Christopher Card	Robert Devito	Joan Hedrick	Larry Dow	Gregory Taylor
Kiera Tierney	Danae Stoane	Kathleen Archer	Brandt Schweitzer	Randy Lee
Andres Comer	James Latzel	Michael Niemann	Laura Reiter	Carmen Santos

# THE TRINITY CHILD CARE CENTER

It is entirely self-supporting.

The Child Care Center serves children ages six weeks to fifth grade. The older children attend an after school program. Starting this June, though, the K-5 levels will be discontinued. There has been an increasing decline in enrollment in this area, because more full-day Kindergarten programs have been established in schools.

Some of the only criticism to be heard about the center, in fact, stems from the lack of available extra funding. McArthur noted, "One of the biggest problems is recruiting staff as pay is low, and there is more money working in school environments." Staffing is very important, especially in the six weeks to five-year-old program, because there needs to be such a high caregiver to children ratio.

The Center continues to give excellent service. Looking to the future, Zannoni said, "I think that it's very hard for working parents when they don't have high quality childcare, especially for their infants and toddlers – and we're hoping we can provide more of that, because it's really not a choice for most parents; they have to work."

The Center is also an excellent resource for students. Not only are work-study jobs available, but the Center also accepts student volunteers. The Center is also available for students pursuing research projects or in education classes.

Following are two interviews with faculty members, one of whom has a child at the center and one who uses another facil-

ity.

**Patricia Thornton, Political Science Professor**

*What is your opinion of the Child Care Center?*

I have visited the Child Care Center on campus on numerous occasions, and thought that the staff was capable and friendly.

*Why do you use an off-campus facility instead of the Child Care Center?*

I put my son's name on the list when I accepted my position here at Trinity in 1998. At that time the staff told me that there were no slots available for a child of his age, economic and racial background (since at that time I was told that they carefully structure each class to maximize diversity on a variety of scales). This was actually a significant hardship for me, because I was relocating just before the semester began, and I was in the uncomfortable position of having to find both housing and childcare arrangements for two children from out of town. In the end, I did hear back two years later that there was a slot available for my son, but as he was nearly ready for kindergarten by then and the logistics of moving him to the campus Center were not convenient for me, I decided not to move him. Their enrollment policies may have changed in the interim, but at that time, I was told that no preference was given to the children of Trinity employees.

*What are the benefits to this facility versus the one on campus?*

The campus Center has a daily 8-hour limit on the time a child can be at the Center, and my schedule as a professor (including teaching, research and

administrative responsibilities) sometimes makes it impossible for me to observe that limit. I also was looking for a flexible arrangement that would have my son at the Center on the days that I am teaching, but they were unwilling to give my son the part-time schedule I needed for my Trinity schedule. The facility I now use does not have that limit, and was able to enroll my child within a few weeks and was much more flexible with respect to scheduling.

*Have you ever used the one on-campus?*

Yes, my school-age daughter used the kindergarten program during snow days and school vacations, but since my current center offers that program as well, I no longer use the campus Center for her, either.

*Are there any problems with the Center?*

Not that I am aware of.

*Do you think any changes need to be made?*

Not if the families the Center is able to serve are satisfied.

*What are the benefits of having the Center on-campus?*

I have heard that some Trinity students have used the Center for study and research projects; and for those employees whose children have been able to be accommodated, the center is of course useful. I also enjoy occasionally seeing the children and their teachers on their walks around campus.

*What do you think is best about the Center?*

I did once sit in on a class and was impressed with the teacher. She was a very gifted instructor.

**Sarah Raskin (who does use**  
continued on page five



# ALUMS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES ABOUT TRINITY'S FIRST COEDUCATIONAL YEARS

ity was largely influenced by the presence of dance instructor Clive Thompson, a former soloist with the Alvin Ailey Dance Company who had just been hired as a visiting lecturer in dance. At the time she arrived on campus, the school (as well as the nation) was in the midst of tremendous social and political upheaval, factors which enticed Dworin to petition to stay at Trinity after having completed her exchange program. Like many other students, Dworin enjoyed the sense of adventure and change fostered by the growing social consciousness on campus, though she notes that women still had a long way to go in terms of being accepted within all realms of the college.

Although she remembers her time at Trinity as the best year of her college experience, Dworin nevertheless felt that the college was entirely unprepared for co-education. For instance, the dance department was largely founded in order to accommodate female students, yet Dworin says it took a long time for many students and faculty to fully realize what dance meant as a discipline. She also remembers some professors being at a loss as to how to regard this new female presence on campus.

"There was a sense of us being an oddity, yet at the same time being ignored," remarks Dworin.

The nature of this situation led her to become fast friends with the few other women on-campus, as well as several international students. In both cases,

says Dworin, there was a sense of being from somewhere else which led them to develop a certain solidarity.

Dworin received her diploma from Trinity in 1970 as part of the first graduating class that included women. Before that particular commencement ceremony, a large number of students had decided to not wear the traditional cap-and-gown and instead donate the money that would normally be used for that attire to anti-war causes. Dworin recalls being called into the college president's office with her four fellow female graduates, and having President Lockwood ask them specifically to wear the traditional gowns because they would be the first women to receive degrees from the college, so it was a matter of historical significance. In the end, two chose to wear them and two didn't (Dworin herself opted for a miniskirt).

Shortly after graduating, Dworin went on to teach dance here, an experience she regards as being much more challenging than being a student. At the time, there were very few female faculty members on-campus, and Dworin says it took a longer time to build a solidarity among the women faculty than it did the female students. Also, because she was so young when she started teaching and because dance was such a small department, Dworin spent a long time struggling to gain recognition for her discipline. Overall, she says it took many years for Trinity to feel like a co-ed institution, a

situation she acknowledges was probably also true for other colleges as well.

## **James Hanley '72, Projectionist and Consultant, Cinestudio**

James Hanley '72 was an undergraduate at Trinity when the college made its landmark decision to accept women. Along with Peter McMorris '73, he was one of the primary founders of Cinestudio, where he still works as a projectionist and consultant. Over the past thirty years, Hanley has witnessed several changes in the campus environment, and he retains vivid memories of the time when female students first arrived 'neath the elms.

Several women joined Cinestudio during its early days, lured by both the great cinema on hand and the social activism that many of its members were involved in. Hanley describes these female volunteers as being "real self-starters" with a lot of practical skills. Many of them soon became managers and coordinators.

However, outside of the theater these women had a much harder time adjusting to on-campus life. Hanley remembers a lot of the campus behaving in a hostile manner towards female students. At the time Trinity became co-ed, very few women's bathrooms existed, and consequently many men's rooms had to be converted into facilities that female students could use. As a hostile gesture, Hanley recalls some of his male peers trying to intimidate the women by con-

tinuing to use their bathroom facilities.

Looking back on the decision to make the school into a co-educational environment, Hanley sees it as being a real watershed in terms of Trinity changing. The decision came right on the brink of the feminist movement, an important moment in terms of women changing politically. Hanley recollects some of his female friends taking offense at being called "co-eds," a term they found to be rather demeaning and subsequently fought against.

However, any breakthroughs they made took time to really go into effect. As women entered the college campus in 1969, what Hanley calls a "boys club atmosphere" remained pervasive. On a campus dominated by male fraternities and male professors, women found it very difficult to be taken seriously as students. Many of the professors felt uncomfortable suddenly having a female presence in their classes, and often addressed this situation by making jokes about the women being there, a practice that Hanley found rather tiresome.

As a younger, more politically active group of students came in, the campus began to improve in terms of how its women were treated, but Hanley remembers it taking a long while to change the male-oriented structure of the college.

**Mary Salter '73, Executive Producer, Saltmill Productions (New York, NY)**

Mary Salter '73 was a member of the first official graduation class of females at Trinity College. Whereas Judy Dworin only spent a year here after transfer-

ring from Smith, Salter entered the college as a freshman in the fall of 1969. She had applied to (and been accepted) to women's colleges such as Vassar, but had decided that she wanted to spend her college years in a co-educational environment. Upon arriving on campus, however, Salter was amazed at how male-oriented the college seemed. She remembers a lot of the men disappearing on weekends for roadtrips and says that Trinity was not a hospitable place from the beginning. All in all, Salter describes her first year or so at the college as being "pretty miserable."

Most of Salter's male classmates had attended all-boys boarding schools, and retained a very dismissive attitude toward women.

"Guys didn't want to hear too much about us... or more to the point, they didn't want to hear from us," Salter remarked.

In her freshman seminar, which consisted of roughly ten students, she recalls the male students as being "so ready to dismiss our ideas." Her male seminar professor reassured her that it would get better, but that progress took a while to go into effect.

Salter remembers her first year at Trinity as the first time she ever felt specifically resentful towards men.

"Most of them made absolutely no gestures of engagement toward us," said Salter.

As more women entered the school, the situation improved for women at Trinity, but getting through the first couple of years was nevertheless a tough experience.

~Beth Gilligan

## THE TRINITY CHILD CARE CENTER

**the Center)**

*What is your opinion of the Child Care Center?*

I absolutely love it. It is a wonderful Center, a great asset to the community, and an incredible gift to the campus.

*How do you make use of the Child Care Center?*

My four year-old son has been going there since he was 6 weeks old. My daughter has been there since she was four months old.

*Are there any problems with the Center?*

I think the biggest problem is with the space. It is very cramped and uncomfortable and not at all attractive. The children receive almost no natural light and they must cross a busy roadway to get to the playground. The problem is, of course, no funding to create a new space.

*Do you think any changes need to be made?*

Of course, there are always changes that could be suggested. Most of them require funds, however. I would like the staff to receive higher wages so that there is less turnover, but they are already one of the highest paid centers. It is a problem with childcare, not with this Center in particular. I would also like the Center to be able to be more flexible in terms of how slots are used but that requires more staffing and more funds to pay them. In fact, my biggest problems with the Center are negative changes that have been made recently and those

continued on page eight

# What's the Media Doing to my Body?

The March 23<sup>rd</sup> issue of *People* magazine hailed "The Return of the Curve." Touting such actresses as Catherine Zeta-Jones and Sandra Bullock, author Michelle Tauber praises people for bucking the Hollywood trend and gaining 10 pounds. What this article overlooks in its generous praise is that most of the women who claimed to have gained weight still

look ridiculously thin.

For example, *Baywatch* star Gena Lee Nolin's weight is reported at 129 pounds standing at 5'9". This is ten pounds heavier than when she was on *Baywatch*. Charlize Theron claims to be "much more comfortable" at a hefty size 8; this when the average American woman is a size 14.

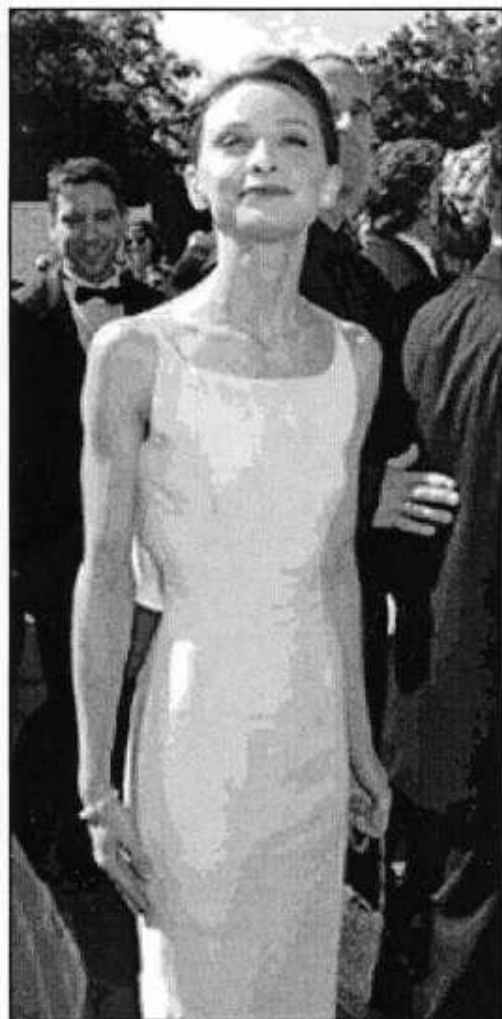
Obviously the struggle with weight and its representation in the media is not coming to a close any time soon. Even with the trend toward models like Giselle, who has enough curves to mask protruding hip bones and ribs, the young girl coming of age still has an unnaturally thin goal on which to focus her aspirations.

Whether or not you have personally dealt with a diagnosed eating disorder, it is likely that you know someone that has. It is even more probable that you yourself experience some symptoms of borderline eating disorders – over-zealous exercise, frequent conscious calorie counting/cutting, missing/skip-

ping meals to influence your weight. Surely our Hollywood role models could sympathize.

Charlize Theron, in order to lose weight for her role in *Sweet November*, shed 16 pounds by following this regime: "Don't eat any starches, don't have any dinner, don't have anything after 5, no alcohol, plus a lot of yoga, a lot of running." How does she intend to gain this weight back? "I'm having a home-cooked English breakfast," she gleefully proclaimed. "The steak and the eggs and the potatoes and the pancakes!" Does this sound like healthy eating?

Let me briefly share a personal note. I was a dancer. Throughout middle and high school, I lusted over a spot in the prestigious local ballet school. I was rejected – permanently – at the age of 11 because I was "too heavy." I managed to throw myself into the world of modern dance, but I was acutely aware that I didn't have a "dancer's body." All it took was a severe case of the flu in ninth grade that caused me to lose 8 easy pounds. Six months later I found myself crying hysterically on the way to a



Calista Flockhart at the 1998 Emmys. This dress sparked ongoing controversy about eating disorders and weight issues in Hollywood.



treatment center, a lithe 97 pounds at 5'6".

In keeping with the adage "An apple a day," I had managed to dwindle my eating down to nothing. More than 6 years later, I can't say that I've learned to live with food yet. My weight has yo-yo'd up to 160, down to 110. I've mastered the art of eating in secret, bingeing and purging, merely purging. I long for the day when I can go to a restaurant, open a menu, and order and eat without thought of what it will do to my hips or concern about spiraling out of control.

While my personal battle still continues, I had a revelation flying home for Winter Break my freshman year. Having been to

private schools my whole life, the Beautiful People at Trinity were not a surprise. I had always gone to school with girls whose mothers encouraged them to stay slim, watch what they eat, go to the gym. It was a way of life. My revelation came as I was people watching in the airport. "People are fat," I observed. I was so wrapped up in magazines and movies and "social x-rays" I saw at the gym that I had never taken time to observe body shapes in large public places. In the crowd of people at the airport, there were so many people in so many weights and shapes and sizes, I was stunned.

Has this glimpse into reality cured me? Not entirely. I'm still very aware of my body, the un-

realistic shape I want, the unreasonable demands I make on myself. What I have realized though, is that the general population is much less critical about my body than I imagine. I'm not landing on the cover of a magazine; I'm no longer submitting my shape to criticism at the hands of a demanding dance teacher.

That's why I was so outraged when I picked up *People* magazine. These actresses and models are very visible in our society. *People* reports, "Amy Jo Berman, a casting executive for HBO, commends convention-bucking actresses for saying, 'To heck with it — this is how we look,' she is quick to issue a caveat: 'Even with [actresses] being a little heavier, they're still smaller than most of the population.'" What are young, admiring girls supposed to think when they see still-unrealistically thin actresses being praised for gaining weight?

Hollywood can keep its returning curves. I'm no longer striving to be merely 20 pounds underweight instead of 30. All I want now is my life back — healthy body to house a mind that doesn't spend at least half of each day in self-criticism.

~Abigail Thomas



Jennifer Lopez, left, has been dubbed the "Queen of Curves"

# Womyn's Space

Counting every last morsel  
Weighing each little bite  
Never allowing too much in  
For fear her jeans may be tight  
She sits at the table and ponders  
Just what she can consume  
Conscientious about her diet  
Ultimately leads to her doom  
This girl you see at the table  
Obsessed with food and weight  
She's crying out loud for help  
Before it's too late  
So if you see her, please answer  
And let her know you care  
Understand I want to help her  
But how it is not clear.

These two poems were submitted anonymously. They are written from one friend to another.

I see it within you  
Not outside, but in  
I see that you're hurting  
You've gotten so thin  
I can't feel the level  
Of pains you endure  
I only want to help you  
That's what I'm here for  
Please talk to me  
Please open your heart  
Please trust in me  
Please let the healing start  
You have so much  
To offer this world  
To live out your dreams  
Yet reality has blurred  
All that you know  
Is pounds cannot gain  
For this is the lesson  
Enhanced from the pain  
But what's inside you  
Just needs to come out  
Things will get better  
Trust me, no doubt.

## THE TRINITY COLLEGE CHILD CARE CENTER, CONTINUED

have been made because the Center needed to be more fiscally concerned.

*What are the benefits of having the Center on-campus?*

There are so many! It is wonderful for the faculty who use the Center, of course. We can go visit any time we have free time during the day and can commune with our children. I nursed my son and now am nursing my daughter. The teachers call me when she is hungry and I can be there in less than ten minutes. This means I get to continue all the benefits of nursing even with them in childcare. Now that my son is older, I go there three days per week and have lunch with him. We eat together and I get him ready for his nap. This is only possible because he is so close. All the children at the Center benefit, I think, from being on a college campus. They have the whole campus as a sort of outdoor play area. They can take advantage of campus amenities like occasional trips to the Cave or the track. They can feel comfortable on

a college campus and begin to think of college as an obvious option in their lives. The college benefits greatly from having small children walking around campus. I think it adds some reality to the strange adult-only world of academia. Students also work in the Child Care Center for work-study and can take advantage of the center for research projects.

*How does it serve you?*

I love to have my kids close by at a quality center, I love having children on campus.

*What do you think is best about the Center?*

That it is a high quality Center. When my son was born we looked around at four different centers. Even without the convenience of location, this was the best quality center we saw. The workers were obviously well-trained, dedicated and genuinely loved the children and their work. The philosophy of the Center clearly promoted learning and development through appropriate play and activities. It is a very nurturing place.