From the Director

Although Mother Nature made for a rocky start to the beginning of the academic year, I hope you have settled into the fall routine and that your semester is progressing smoothly. I am excited to be the newly appointed Director of Women’s Studies as my teaching and research interests include various gender-related issues. I teach courses that are Women’s Studies eligible and have taught a course on the Psychology of Women and Gender. In addition, my research explores ways in which gender is important for understanding the development and significance of peer relationships and peer influence in childhood and adolescence. Again, I am thrilled to take on this new role and eager to share my interest in gender studies with the Wilkes community.

This year the Women’s Studies Department has many excited events scheduled. First, October is Women’s Studies Awareness month. Several of the Women’s Studies Minor (WSM) eligible courses will be visited by one of the Women’s Studies Interns who will discuss the benefits of the program and answer any questions students. In addition, in celebration of National Love Your Body Day we will have a table with information on and screenings for Eating Disorders in the SUB from 11am-1pm on October 20th. That evening we will hold a screening followed by refreshments and a discussion of the documentary, “Cover Girl Culture.” On November 3rd we will hold a screening of the documentary “Miss Representation.” This thought provoking film highlights ways in which the media promotes images of women as passive and overly sexual and demonizes women who try to stand up for important issues and take on positions of power. And in December we will have a study break to help students get through their finals.

We are excited to announce that the theme of this spring’s Women’s Studies Conference is “Women Across the Globe.” The conference will be held on April 16th and 17th. We are planning a number of exciting talks and activities, and hope that you will consider presenting at the conference.

And we have a Facebook page! Please “like” our group, “Wilkes University Women’s and Gender Studies Department”.

If you have news you would like to share with us – please contact me @ jennifer.thomas@wilkes.edu.
Meet the Interns!

Hi Everyone! My name is Nicole Pollock, and I am one of the Women’s Studies Interns for Fall 2011. I am a senior Psychology major with Sociology and Women’s Studies minors. I am also the Community Service Chair of Psychology Club, Vice-President of Psi Chi, and a Co-Editor of Psychles.

After taking Women’s Studies courses and completing an Independent Study on Child Exploitation I realized just how much gender is connected to cultural, social, and political constructs. I am excited to continue to learn more about Women’s Studies as well as share what I have learned and promote Women’s Studies awareness on campus.

I wish everyone a great start to the fall semester and look forward to seeing you at upcoming Women’s Studies events! If you would like to talk about ideas for events or just more information about Women’s Studies in general, please feel free to email me at anytime at nicole.pollock@wilkes.edu.

My name is Julia Cikota and I am a Women’s Studies Intern for the Fall 2011 Semester. I am a Sophomore, pursuing a degree in Psychology with minors in English and Women’s Studies. I love being a member of the Wilkes Community! Besides my work for Women’s Studies, I work as a psychology tutor and volunteer as an Upward Bound Community Fellow.

I am delighted to get more involved on campus by serving the Women’s Studies program as an intern. The causes taken up by the Women’s Studies program are very important to me, not only because I am a woman, but also because I was raised by a single mother. Thus, I feel extraordinarily connected to the struggles women face in today’s society. I truly hope to raise awareness for this wonderful program! Please feel free to contact me at julia.cikota@wilkes.edu with any questions, comments, or ideas you might have. I look forward to hearing from you!
Too Pretty to do Homework?! 

Just in time for the new school year, JC Penny began selling a t-shirt targeted at girls between the ages of seven and twelve that said “I’m too pretty to do homework, so my brother has to do it for me” (see image). Thankfully, outraged parents protested and JC Penny removed the shirt from their stores and apologized for their lack of insight. How is it that in the year 2011 we are continuing to expose young girls and boys to messages that clearly state that to be “female” means to value appearance over intelligence? 

Froggy 101 invited listeners to call in and comment on what they thought of the t-shirt and JC Penny taking it off of the shelf. Many listeners said, “It’s just a t-shirt,” and didn’t understand why people couldn’t “take a joke.” Unfortunately, the subtle ways in which sexist messages negatively influence our behavior are not a laughing matter. For example, gender-schema theory explains how we come to internalize and display gender-related behaviors. According to the theory, from an early age, we are unconsciously motivated to internalize the roles society sets forth for our sex. These stereotypes have been shown to influence our memory, the activities we engage in, and the behaviors we display. So, when a little girl reads this shirt and/or wears it, she may unconsciously reinforce stereotypes she and others hold about what it means to be female. The t-shirt also sends a message to boys that girls should be valued for their looks over their intelligence.

Stores like JC Penny need to make more responsible choices about the products they market to children and to their parents. Why can’t we see more t-shirts for girls with messages like, “Future President of the United States?”

- Nicole Pollock

Have an opinion to share about this shirt? Email nicole.pollock@wilkes.edu to share your thoughts!
Top 5 Reasons to Become a Women’s Studies Minor

5. **Flexibility** – Interested in English? Psychology? Political Science? Business? Sociology? The Women’s Studies minor easily fits into these and a variety of other majors. And many of your required classes are Women’s Studies Minor (WSM) eligible. You do not have to go out of your way to add this minor!

4. **Faculty** – The faculty involved in the Women’s Studies program are some of the best on campus! They are dedicated to their respective fields of study, to students, and to the Women’s Studies program. Think we’re biased? There’s only one way to find out!

3. **Students** – The students who minor in Women’s Studies are compassionate, intelligent, and socially concerned. They are leaders on campus and in the community. Become a Women’s Studies minor, and you will have no problem finding friends with similar interests to yours.

2. ** Marketable** – When it comes time to apply for graduate school or for a job, the Women’s Studies minor helps you stand above the rest! Expertise in Women’s Studies can be useful in a variety of occupations, including – but certainly not limited to – law, medicine, social work, teaching, counseling, government service, business, and research.

1. **Interesting** – The topics discussed in WSM classes and in Women’s Studies 101 are interesting and thought-provoking. Through these classes, you will learn new things, as well as delve deeper into topics in which you’re already interested. Women’s Studies is a complex and ever-changing topic, so everyone can find something in which he or she is interested!

   - *Julia Cikota*

   **So…WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?**

   **Become a Women’s Studies Minor today!**

For more information contact Dr. Jennifer Thomas, Director of Women’s Studies, jennifer.thomas@wilkes.edu
Looking for a way to combine your interest in Women's Studies with giving back to the community? Consider volunteering to help survivors of domestic violence gain skills to find a job!

This summer, a group of Wilkes students began conducting writing workshops at the Domestic Violence Service Center (DVSC) in downtown Wilkes-Barre, which is a nonprofit organization that offers a multitude of free and confidential services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. The workshops take place about twice per month and focus on helping the DVSC's clients to acquire and/or strengthen basic computer and writing skills that pertain to job acquisition and personal wellbeing. Students generally work one-on-one with the clients in the DVSC's Bridge Housing program, which is a transitional housing program designed to help survivors of domestic violence regain their independence. We have already experienced incredible successes with the project -- after one workshop on her resume, a client secured a job in the education field. Soon after, she moved out of transitional housing and into her own apartment. She is now attending graduate school and has expressed intentions to take her abuser to custody court. Her story demonstrates the impact that only one hour of volunteering can have.

Writing consultants, English majors/minors, Education majors/minors, and students from the social sciences department are invited to participate. Education majors/minors, particularly, are encouraged to consider volunteering for childcare, as the DVSC is currently understaffed and is serving as a home to at least twenty young children. Childcare is needed most during the workshops, but students are welcome to volunteer at any time. Participation is voluntary and will not be paid. Also, students who participate are not required to attend every session. In order to participate, students must obtain a child abuse clearance and a criminal background check. Students are also required to attend a mandatory one-hour orientation session at the DVSC to familiarize themselves with the DVSC's mission and confidentiality protocol.

The workshops typically take place about twice per month, on Monday and Thursday evenings from 5-6pm. Upcoming dates include:

- Thursday, October 27th, from 5pm-6pm.
- Thursday, November 10th, from 5pm-6pm.
- Monday, November 14th, from 5pm-6pm.

Interested? Want more information? Contact Erin Robinson at erin.robinson@wilkes.edu

“Be the change you wish to see in the world”
- Mahatma Gandhi
Love Your Body Day is a national campaign started by the NOW Foundation (National Organization for Women) to promote healthy body image. It encourages women and girls to love their body the way it is and reject the unrealistic way the media portrays females. According to the NOW Foundation, billions of dollars are spent every year on ads that show underweight, scantily clad women. Furthermore, being bombarded with these unrealistic images of women has many negative implications. For example, they cause unhealthy eating habits in young girls and distorted expectations of what women should look like for young boys and men. Additionally, about 80% of women in the United States are dissatisfied with their appearance, according to the NOW Foundation.

So, come out and join us on October 20 to celebrate your body the way it is! Stop by our Love Your Body Day table in the Student Center from 11-1, and join us for a screening of the movie “Cover Girl Culture” as a way to become educated about how the media effects society’s perception of what is beautiful and what is not. The screening will take place in the Miller Room (2nd floor of the Student Center) at 6 PM. Refreshments will be provided.

We look forward to seeing you all there!

- Nicole Pollock
“You can’t be what you can’t see.” That’s a thought-provoking statement, isn’t it? It’s just what actress-turned-director Jennifer Siebel Newsom had in mind when filming Miss Representation. This documentary explores the media’s portrayal of women and the effect of that portrayal on society. For example, only 16% of films feature female protagonists! Additionally, most fictional women we see represented in the media are passive and overly sexual. That’s clearly not the way women really are, but – because of these misrepresentations – females often feel pressured to behave or dress in ways that counter their true character.

It’s not just fictional women in movies that are misrepresented. Real women are feeling it, too. Consider media criticism of women versus media criticism of men. Males are never condemned for their outfit choice or hairstyle. More importantly, a woman can be called aggressive for saying the same exact thing as a man…but he’s lauded, and called confident. What’s with this double standard? All it takes is a closer look to see how the media really is controlling our lives. Want more information? Miss Representation is full of interesting facts and interviews that will inform you on the truths of these threats to our personal integrity as women. Come check it out on Thursday, November 3, from 6-8 in the Student Center ballroom! Refreshments will be provided.

- Julia Cikota
Wondering what classes to take next semester? 
Interested in studying gender roles? 
Then SOC 214 is for you!

For centuries in American culture, men and women have been subjected to gender roles. Men are tough and provide for their families, while women are delicate and need to stay home to raise their children. Have you ever stopped to wonder why these roles are in place? Perhaps there is some genetic predisposition or an evolutionary reason that led people to behave this way. Perhaps these roles are merely societal. After all, they seem to be constantly changing, and some even appear to be disappearing. Furthermore, how do these roles influence our everyday lives? SOC 214: Sex Roles, taught by Dr. Tuttle, will examine these and other aspects of the gender roles that have shaped the way we live.

So what will you do in a class about sex roles? Students in SOC 214 will discover how behavior is influenced by both gender and society. The course will narrow in on specific gender-related topics, like paid labor, education, religion, and sports. For example, students in SOC 214 might discuss Family Leave Policies or students might find themselves learning about the legal issues concerning domestic violence. Overall, SOC 214 will discuss how gender roles have changed over time, as well as project how they might look in the future. This class should be full of opportunities for discussion!

If you’re looking for an interesting and provocative class to round out your spring semester, you should consider SOC 214. This class will be sure to get your brain moving as you find out more and more about the gender issues facing us today. Certainly, you will come out of SOC 214 armed with lots of new information, and maybe even a new perspective on gender roles!

--Julia Cikota
## Looking for a Spring WS Course?

**Wilkes University**  
**Women’s Studies Eligible Courses**  
**Spring 2012**

### Anthropology
- ANT 101: Introduction to Anthropology
- ANT 102: Cultural Anthropology

### Business
- BA 312: Marketing
- BA 322: Advertising
- BA 398: International Business Experience

### Education
- ED 220: Teaching Cultural/Linguistic Diversity

### English
- ENG 101: Composition
- ENG 120: Reading American Experience
- ENG 376: Modern American Poetry
- ENG 397/497: Charlotte Bronte and her Contemporaries

### History
- HST 101: Historical Foundations of the Modern World

### Political Science
- PS 141: Introduction to International Politics
- PS 233: Law and Society
- PS 332: Civil Rights and Liberties

### Psychology
- PSY 242: Personality

### Sociology
- SOC 212: Human Sexuality
- SOC 214: Sex Roles
- SOC 298: Women in Crime

### Women’s Studies
- WS 101: Introduction to Women’s Studies
The Wilkes Department of Women’s Studies is pleased to announce the 2012 Women’s Studies Conference:

**Women Across the Globe**

Date: April 16-17, 2011

Want to participate in this year’s conference?

Session types include: Paper or poster sessions, panel discussions, video screening, and performance art.

For more information or to submit a proposal relevant to this year’s theme or other gender-related issues contact Dr. Jennifer Thomas at jennifer.thomas@wilkes.edu