Women's Profiles

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WOMEN'S PROFILES

by

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B.A. December 1983, Sonoma State University
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A Creative Project Submitted to the
Faculty of Old Dominion University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

HUMANITIES

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 1993

Approved by:

Anita Clair Fellman
ABSTRACT

WOMEN’S PROFILES

Robyn Lynn Cochran
Old Dominion University, 1993
Director: Anita Clair Fellman

This creative project chronicles the development of an innovative short-format public radio series called Women’s Profiles. I include a range of pertinent materials, including a record of my public radio internship, a grant proposal, and a public radio script. Using a feminist approach, I create a prototype for a radio show in which women subjects/narrators, in a non-hierarchical interview process, share their life experiences in conversation with one (or more) women interviewers. By incorporating myself as a subject in this document, with work journals and narrative, I give readers an opportunity to appreciate the effort and process involved in combining a media project with an academic scholarship project. Themes which predominate in this creative project documentation are: the importance of voice, subjectivity, process, and relationships in women’s lives, work, and scholarship.
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Dedications

In memory of my friend Vianne Webb, who would have been there if she could have. . . .
To Mary Margaret Kemish, who bought her plane ticket in advance!
Acknowledgements

Many, many thanks to the following family and friends who gave love, encouragement, advice, technical support, and time when I needed it: Anita Clair Fellman, Jessica, Billy and Bill Cochran, Lee Ellen Knight, Louise Kemish, Mary Young, Betty Luse, and Jill Carroll.
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CREATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project was to bring together my scholarship in the humanities with my work interests in production by creating a prototype for a short format radio series, focusing on women, for public radio in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Having explored the subjects of gender, race and class in a broad range of disciplines, including literature, sociology, history, psychology, and women's studies, I set out to accomplish the task of bringing narratives with women's experiences "at the center" to a radio medium. My process of creating this radio show, titled Women's Profiles, began with an internship in public affairs at WHRO/WHRV FM Radio in Norfolk, Virginia. During my two year (1991-1993) commitment as an intern, I established important relationships and gained the necessary skills to assist on the production of an hour-long documentary entitled "Getting Ready To Learn" (air date: November 16, 1992). In that intern/student capacity (with the support of the management of WHRV Radio) I pursued an idea--Women's Profiles--which eventually became a creative project designed to fulfill the requirements for a master's degree in the humanities.

The appendix which follows supplies a record of my creative project. The first section, "The Process," includes work journal entries, work documents, notes from National Public Radio's "Writing News for Radio Course" and the documentary script. These documents now comprise the background of Women's Profiles. In the
second section of the appendix, "Prototype For Women’s Profiles," I define the parameters of this short-format (10 minute) radio show. The documents included in this section are a grant proposal, a sample script and a letter which was submitted to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, requesting that they review the grant. Within the body of the grant proposal, I offer methodology informed by feminist scholarship to support a program which: 1) places women at the center of narratives; 2) uses a non-hierarchical, relational interview process where women interviewees are subject/narrators and women interviewers are facilitators; and 3) establishes a partnership of women activists and scholars outside of WHRV to support and assist the production efforts. The sample script, profiling a Native American woman who owns a party pony business, is one example of the type of show I/we envision in the series Women’s Profiles.

After providing the background, the context and the potential for Women’s Profiles, I complete this appendix with section three, "Speaking and Listening," which shows the impact this creative project has had on my life. I detail two events, my participation in an academic conference and my inclusion in a local newspaper article, in which I spoke about Women’s Profiles. The focus of this final section expands on the discussion, begun in the first section, of the need for more women’s narratives in today’s patriarchal society. Additionally, the inclusion of my voice as subject/narrator illustrates one way that we can begin to amend this imbalance.

I share the belief of feminist scholars that there now exists not only an urgent need for humanity to acknowledge the experiences and wisdoms of women, but also
a special need for women to share their experiences with each other. Women's Profiles, as a prototype, offers one direct way of addressing those needs; as a viable public radio production, Women's Profiles could promote greater understanding of socio/historical influences on individuals and challenge the traditional views of gender roles.
WOMEN'S PROFILES

APPENDIX
THE PROCESS
Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back," that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject—the liberated voice.

(From Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black, by bell hooks)
THE CREATIVE PROJECT PROCESS AS BACKGROUND

The material that follows represents the process of getting to Women's Profiles. As scholar, writer, mother, and (now) radio producer I am proclaiming my experience that the birth of a creative project has a beginning stage, a middle stage and a crowning moment, before setting in motion a "piece of work" which, inevitably, takes on a life of its own. The beginning point of Women's Profiles occurred several months into my internship at WHRO/WHRV radio in Norfolk, Virginia.

I pursued an internship in radio production with two goals: 1) to gain practical skills in an area of interest, thereby gaining access to the paid work force; and 2) to translate internship hours and accomplishments into graduate course credits in the humanities. In the process of meeting those goals, I pursued yet another: 3) to bring my passion for and scholarship in the field of women's studies together with my work interests (and newly acquired skills). What began as a one semester internship blossomed into a one and a half year commitment at WHRO, a completed radio documentary, a prototype for a radio series as a graduate creative project, and a commitment from WHRO public radio to begin production on Women's Profiles.

I begin this documentation of my creative project with the beginning of my internship at WHRO, as evidenced by work documents and excerpts from my work journal. My intentions are threefold: to honor the process of any creation; to put myself at the center of the creation; and to highlight the context, primarily the
relationships, that continue to influence the dynamics of the project.

It was in a large community, working together with many people, that the seeds for Women's Profiles were sown. That will be reflected in this beginning section. Additionally, the contextual background of my circumstances also reflect the process of establishing relationships of trust, respect and caring, a necessary first step in this creative project, and one which has been incorporated into the structure of Women's Profiles. The middle point in the creation of Women's Profiles is now; it involves the organizing, the nurturing, the anxiety and the work of "laying a foundation" (my mother's comment). This work will be reflected in the second section of this notebook, with documentation which focuses on the components of Women's Profiles, the radio series prototype. The crowning of this creative project is still months away; in fact, until I get there, I won't know just which moment(s) that will be (committee acceptance, graduation, or getting grant money from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities). But, I am getting ahead of myself; the focus of this section is the process.
EXCERPTS FROM MY WORK JOURNAL

**Wednesday, 6th November, 1991 (9:30-12:30)**

First day of internship. Work hours will be semi-regular, M-W-F, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Walked in today to find Vianne Webb and Betty Luse (my supervisor) running late, and the symphony meeting/preview, given by new conductor JoAnn Falletta, happening. I helped symphony folks set up, then helped Betty hand out WHRO parking passes in the parking lot. Also began some sorting and filing. The time was too short, but fun.

**Friday, November 8th (9:30-12:30)**

Billy's trip to the zoo with class was cancelled which I was glad about; helped me to relax about working. Began more filing work. Cleaned out old news copy--arranged by month, put in folders to store for a year (FCC regs). There are whole corners of two rooms, Betty's and, now, Carole Taylor's, with old papers and tape which have to be dealt with--part of my new project.

**Monday, November 11th (2 p.m.-10:30 p.m.)**

Government Holiday. Had a flat tire on the way in to WHRO.

Accompanied Betty Luse and Isabelle Shannon to Williamsburg to tape an interview for "Options in Education" with Nel Noddings. Left WHRO with equipment; Betty to play engineer and producer, Isabelle was hostess/star and myself as assistant. Nel Noddings was visiting the education department at William and Mary, invited as a guest for their yearly lecture and reception. Betty also taped talk given in the Dodge Room of PHI BETA KAPPA Hall in the evening.

Sequence of events:

- 4:30 Isabelle Shannon and Nell Noddings
- 5:00 Set up for Lecture
- 5:30 Dinner
- 7:30 Taped Noddings' lecture
- 9:00 Reception, then to WHRO

Learned so much:

1) How to set up mikes and recorder for interview and lecture.
2) Keeping time on the interview.
3) Quality of interview--Isabelle's conversation with Nell was...
Monday, November 11th (continued)
flawless. I would have liked a little more of a profile, personality, but show
is only a half hour.

4) Nell Noddings was great and her forte is feminism and
philosophy combined with education--radical views in line with
Carol Gilligan and incorporating an ethic of caring into the
classroom.

5) It is so easy to get personal with Betty, and I would really like
to maintain some professional distance by limiting my personal
stories. It is a challenge for me to have a nice balance.

Wednesday, November 13th (9:30-12:30)

Finished some filing. Beginning the first form of Public Affairs general info
filing system!

Friday, November 15th (9:30-
Came in having considered the idea of Billy napping at school, but decided
not to. Got in to work and Betty asked if I could stay to greet Russian
coming for "Thinking Out Loud" show with Don Smith. She (Betty) had to
go to ODU to tape. (Called Billy's school and arranged for him to stay late
and nap.) I continued to do filing and answer phones.

Last minute Don Smith had someone call to say that he would not be in and
Bill Jones would be handling the interview instead. Everything worked out;
Mr. Appatof, our Russian guest, and Mr. Jones arrived. I spoke with Mr.
Appotof for a while about my studies. He asked me if I was a "feminist" to
which I replied I was. He said "they" made him nervous and asked if they all
hated men. I said that that might be a myth. He relaxed when I said I was
married and even had a son!

Betty arrived after Bill Jones had completed his interview and left. I played
"producer," essentially, by sitting in on the interview with Herman Wood, the
engineer. It was smooth and fascinating.

Billy apparently did well--slept. Bill had taken over his blanket and sleeping
bag.

Monday, November 18th (9:30-12:30)
Filing.
Wednesday, November 20th (9:30-12:30)
Filing. Betty is moving her office and we are trying to file and arrange in preparation.

Friday, November 22nd (9:30-12:30)
Brainstorming with Betty about spring show on Diggs Park. Taking home numbers to call Norfolk school personnel to get background info.

Monday, November 25th (9:30-12:30)
Filing. Interesting stuff in Chronicle of Higher Education.

Wednesday, November 27th (9:30-6:30)
Filed All Day. Amazing amount of papers. Both Betty and I worked all day to file two or three stacks of personnel memos, public affairs, SECA, NPR, VA, Associations, etc. Betty’s (old) office is the "corner point" (center) of activity!

Sunday, December 1st, 1991
Pooh Party 12-5 p.m. Lots of fun.

Monday, December 2nd
Sat in on a public affairs spot; interview about Pearl Harbor 50th Anniversary. Vianne asked me to produce a four to five minute tape of something I have done. She doesn’t want me to "file my life away."

Wednesday, December 4th
Billy and I sick.

Friday, December 6th
Betty sick. Did some appointment making for Betty and a little arranging in her new office. Left early.

Monday, December 9th
More office arranging. Set up appointment for next Monday to meet with principal of Early Education Center to get background info on the Center for upcoming special. Put my files in our new public affairs file cabinet.
Wednesday, December 11th (9:30-12:30)
A little of this and a little of that; mostly more filing.

Friday, December 13th
A.M. off--Betty and Vianne at a function.
P.M. 6:30-11:30 worked at T.V. fundraiser on phones.
Different from Radio (fundraisers) where everyone is together in the same room. T.V. people slipped off to a separate break room. A definite kind of hierarchy. Interesting to watch them ad-lib their cues, work together, set direction, etc.

Monday, December 16th
10 a.m. did an interview with Cheryl Bunch, principal of Berkley/Campostella Early Childhood Education Center. Betty wants to do an education special about this project so I gathered information for her.

Wednesday, December 18th
Typed interview all a.m. 3:30 WHRO party.

Monday, January 6th, 1992
1) Made a production room form for Lisa (Murray).
2) Wrote quick note to Vianne with copy of my interview report with Cheryl Bunch.
3) Yesterday I made a tape of potential intro and show idea for Vianne. I am opting not to turn it in right now. No, Vianne wanted it, so I gave it to her.

Wednesday, January 8th (9:30-12:30)
Symphony Review. Meeting about three part Berkley/Campostella tape: administration and origination; a day in the life; involvement of all--education, social services, community, etc.

Friday, January 10th
Sat in with Betty on an interview between Don Smith and Dr. Nawab about Haiti. Great conversation for an hour or so after interview with everyone. Sat with Betty as she produced beginning of the show. Attempted to call Cheryl Bunch for interview date. Called Kay Zentz to set date for listening to her show and talk about a women's (music) show.
Monday, January 13th
Betty off and so I spent the a.m. at ODU paying tuition, talking with Dr. Greene in Humanities about school full-time, etc. Attempted calling Cheryl Bunch again at Berkley/Campostella. She was out sick.

Wednesday, January 15th (9:30-12:30 p.m.)
Filing.

Friday, January 17th (9:30-12:30)
Got appointment to tape at Berkley/Campostella. Filing.

Monday, January 20th (10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.)
Wrote a couple of consent forms for documentary work. Helped collate a document for management on what radio has accomplished in the last couple of years.

Wednesday, January 22nd (9:30-12)

Friday, January 24th
Met Betty in Chesapeake for a media assessment briefing with other public affairs personnel from other T.V. and radio stations. (This was an all-day briefing on current issues in the city of Chesapeake, with various city officials speaking. This is an event which happens several times a year focusing on different localities in Hampton Roads.)

1) Dr. Nancy Welch (Health Department)--Highlights:
   *50-75% of patients are part of working families.
   *Middle-class using services because uninsured.
   *Number of Chesapeake residents in poverty increased by 56% over the last 6 years.
   *Aids cases are up in the heterosexual community, especially for young people (20+).

2) Peter Fay (Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce)--Highlights:
   *Number one problem in Hampton Roads is transportation--there are
Friday, January 24th (continued)
   no funds to address the needs.
   *Other critical issues, are the need for more schools, regional prison
   facilities and water.

3) Representative from Tidewater Regional Transportation
   *Also addressed funding troubles.

Monday, January 27th (9:30-12:30)
   Filing, talking.

Wednesday, January 29th (9:30-12:30)
   Went into production room and taped a session between Betty and I to
   brainstorm on Berkley/Campostella taping.

Friday, January 31st (9:30-12:30)
   Options in Education taping with educator at William and Mary, Dr. James
   Strong, regarding homeless children and their education needs.

Monday, February 3rd, 1992
   Jess sick, stayed home.

Wednesday, February 5th (9-2 p.m.)
   Met Betty at WHRO. Took company car and went to Berkley/Campostella
   on the first trip to familiarize us with campus, teachers, providers. Taped
   ECC Pledge, visited two class rooms, nurses’ office, social service
   representative, cafeteria, parent center. "Meet and greet" getting contacts.
   Left about 1 p.m.

Monday, February 10th (9:30-12:30)
   At Berkley/Campostella. Taped another ECC Pledge, sat in and taped a
   dental program. Taped in the nursery. Talked with Officer Samms about
   taping with him next week.

Wednesday, February 12th (9:30-12:30)
   At Berkley/Campostella. Taped interview with Dr. Lockamy. Taped
   interview with the school nurse.
Friday, February 14th (9:30-12:30)
At WHRO, talking, summarizing, catching up.

Monday, February 17th (11 a.m.-12 p.m.)
Worked only an hour today. Spent time typing notes.

Wednesday, February 19th (9:30-1:30)
Betty had the Symphony League this a.m. so I went solo to Berkley/Campostella to tape Mr. Hadley, the social service worker who has a room in the school to meet with clients, and members of the community. Taping was long, about an hour, but with very good responses. Also taped in the playground with Ms. Bridgers’ class.

Friday, February 21st (9:30-12:30)
Took tape player to Berkley/Campostella to tape a parent program with Jennifer Boone’s class. The Cultural Enrichment Program was going on, with a film from the Chrysler Museum (on local black artists) being shown.

Monday, February 24th (9:30-12:30)
Went to Berkley/Campostella to do taping with Jennifer Boone and, possibly a parent participant. We couldn’t get the tape recorder to pick up beyond minimal sound. Went back to the office to meet with Herman Wood who instructed us on a switch (has to do with sound level) which we had not been aware of previously.

Wednesday, February 26th (10:00-2:30 p.m.)
Went by myself with tape equipment to get an interview with Officer Samms—the PACE representative who began involvement in Berkley/Campostella (BCC) to help role model a positive image for police and adult black males. Coincidentally, there was a presentation in the library by Mr. and Mrs. Suliaman, which I recorded. They were showing the kids dress and money from Africa. Taped session with Officer Samms alone and in the class reading a story.

Friday, February 28th (9:30-12:30)
Went into the office. Ended up going out to breakfast with Betty to recap our interviews thus far and see what is still needed. Betty is no longer certain she wants to finish by May and was feeling me out for my commitment beyond
Friday, February 28th (continued)
May. Vianne clued me in on a wonderful Ellen Goodman editorial about the current state and future of feminism. Relaxing a.m., but found myself wanting to do more work.

Monday, March 2nd, 1992 (9:30-11:30)
Taped (at BCC) with Betty. Interview with Keenan Hayes, black male assistant in Mrs. Bridgers' class. Made appointments for Wednesday to tape with Mrs. Bridgers. Made appointment with Mrs. Bunch to tape next Wednesday at 10a.m.

Wednesday, March 4th (9:30-2:30)
Came to Berkley/Campostella solo. Taped interview with Mrs. Bridgers, also taped a story in the resource room with baby chick noises in the background (in an incubator).

Friday, March 6th
Betty and I met with Chris Dickon for a strategy session about the goals of our program. Some insights on focusing, interviewing, producing. . .see notes.

Monday, March 9th
Went into work and "caught up" with notes, organizing my notebook and starting a poster board for visuals.

Wednesday, March 11
Interview with Mrs. Bunch.

Friday, March 13
Luncheon and taping at Norfolk's Beth El Temple. Rabbi Gary P. Zola speaking.

Monday, March 16th (9:30-12:30)
At WHRO to listen to tapes and catalogue. Completed one tape in two hours. Chris Dickon stopped in and told me I was writing too much.
Wednesday, March 18th (9:30-12:30)
Went to BBC with Jenny Garver from Thalia (Lynn Baptist Pre-school/Day Care) to let her sit in on a class to learn about the curriculum and overall school model. I pre-interviewed Inez Wise, a parent, for Friday taping.

Friday, March 20th (9:30-2 p.m.)
Taped interview with Ms. Pruden and Ms. Williams (nurses), Inez Wise, parent, and Jennifer Boone, Parent Tech.

Monday, March 23rd
Off.

Wednesday, March 25th (9:30-12:30)
Catch up. Tape Cataloguing.

Friday, March 27th
Lisa (Murray) gave me the name of a book she thought I would like: Grandmothers of The Light, a book of Native American Indian creation myths. Typing tape log.

*No Journal entries for March 30-April 10th.*

Wednesday, April 15th, 1992
7:30 a.m. Education Breakfast (WHRO) discussing Education Goals 2000.
   1) Every American will be literate.
   2) High School graduates up to 90%.
   3) All students comparable in basic subjects.
   4) American students lead world in science and math.
   5) All children will start school ready to learn.
   6) Every school environment conducive to learning.

Friday, April 17th
Billy sick.
Monday, April 20th
Kids' Easter Break.

Wednesday, April 22nd (12-6 p.m.)
Lunch/BCC notes/Radio Fundraiser

Wednesday, April 29th
9:30 a.m. Radio Fundraiser and BCC Planning.

Friday, May 1st (10a.m.-12:30)
Came in hoping to work with Betty on my typed transcript notes, but it was chaotic with the fundraiser, and with Betty's concern for Vianne. I did do some preliminary notes on my own, but it is difficult with just my energy to see or hear the show with tapes as we have them.

Monday, May 4th
Usually this week is one of my favorites of the year, and this is my 35th year. . .time for celebration. But as I try to redefine my very existence, life is hard and I'm not feeling very "up." Betty is not in and I'm not sure how to proceed on my own with BCC.

Wednesday, May 6th
Sat with Betty for several hours working BCC notes--how do you structure, etc. Worked on categories, worked on point of documentary (Ed. 2000 goals), started to go over typed transcripts.

Friday, May 8th
Came in to find out Vianne was finally admitted to the hospital having found a "mass" in her pancreas. Worked at the planning of BCC documentary with Betty for several hours. Restructured the format, thinking now of one hour and two separate shows: community and family; kids and parents.

Monday, May 11th (10:00-12:30)
Came in to find out that Vianne had gone into surgery, and Betty was headed to the hospital to sit and wait with her children. Betty was very concerned that Vianne was going into surgery thinking she would not come out. . .alive.
Monday, May 11th (continued)
While Betty and I were talking, Vianne's daughter Valerie called, crying, and requesting Betty's presence and support.

Betty left and I tied up loose ends for her over the phone with people. It is hard to concentrate, scary.

Wednesday, May 13th (10:00-2:30)
I had called Betty yesterday, and knew that Vianne's surgery had not gone well. I was updated today: pancreatic cancer. Vianne had been told only this morning that it was an untreatable cancer, not able to be removed, only managed with pain medication.

Again I am struggling to concentrate. Betty stayed for a while, then left to go to the hospital. I typed notes on our meetings and started typing subcategories of taped dialogue, such as "male role models." I kept wondering what Vianne was thinking. What does one think about after the doctors leave your bedside, having left their news.

Friday, May 15th
Off to the zoo with Jess.

Monday, May 18th (9:45-12:30)
I talked with Betty on the phone last night and she asked me to handle Isabelle's taping for the "Options" program. So, I helped set up water, made sure Herman was ready (to record), gave introductions, and sat in to time and listen and be Betty. I do love this part of the job, the interviews, the exchange of ideas between people engaging in the daily process of their work; sharing what they know, what they have read, how they would like things to be.

Thursday, May 21st
Sat in on WHRO workshop with Betty, entitled "Signaling Value" with Dick McPhearson. Showed (recently produced) corporate video.

Monday, June 1st, 1992 (9:30-12:30)
Worked at home scripting BCC.
Wednesday, June 3rd
   Worked at home scripting BCC.

Friday, June 5th (9:30-2:30)
   At work. Xeroxing, meeting with Doug Thiele.

Monday, June 8th (9:30-2:30)
   Worked with Betty in a.m. on scripting opening of BCC tape, and then by
   myself in the afternoon.

Wednesday, June 10th (9:30-12:30)
   Worked on scripting.

Friday, June 12th
   Off. With Jess, mom and daughter shopping.

June 15th-19th
   Kids in North Carolina with Bill. Worked all week scripting BCC. Taped at
   BCC on the 17th.

(*In June I visited with Vianne at her condo. It was Vianne's
   birthday, and Betty and I went to decorate her condo early, while she
   was at a doctor's appointment. Vianne never did return to work after
   her operation. I saw her twice between the time of her diagnosis and
   her death; her birthday party was the first visit. She was in good
   spirits that night, but very tired. She ate some of the delicious meal
   Betty had cooked and then opened many presents--we had brought
   gifts from work. Phyllis was also there that night, and George, Jim
   had stopped in earlier, and Betty's Mom, Vera. I was leaving for
   California the following week, for a month-long visit with my Mom.
   Before I left I remember making Vianne promise that she wouldn't
   "leave" before I returned. She looked so vibrant that night, at least in
   comparison to how she looked several months later.)
August 29th, 1992
Back from California and Atlantic Beach, North Carolina. I have met with Betty twice now, scripting on BCC. This latest meeting (six hours) was also spent with Doug Thiele. Very productive; great suggestions.

September 14th, 1992
Saturday (two days ago) I spent from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. with Betty and Doug sorting through BCC script. Finished the script, but now need some serious studio time. Talked to Betty about Vianne, who is now bed-ridden and near death. Doug and Betty and I got into a great metaphysical discussion. (What will Vianne meet on the other side?) Anyway, I arranged a visit with Vianne on Monday, today.

With my stomach doing flip flops I drove to Newport News to sit with Vianne for a while. Only Bryant, her son, and George, her friend, were there. George didn’t seem like he wanted me to be there. Bryant was very sweet. He prepared me for the Vianne I was to see.

She was propped with several pillows and her eyes were open, waiting for me. George was sitting by one side of her bed, so I went to the other side and climbed on to sit right next to her. I gave her gifts: Jess’ picture, and the rose quartz necklace which I put in her hand, which I, then, held. I didn’t know what to say—what not to say. I think I was too chatty. I’m not sure, now, what the order of conversation was. She looked at me intently as if she wanted to say so much. It was clear from her limited attempts, that talking, getting the words she intended out, was nearly impossible.

She looked so old; a 50(plus) year old woman in a rapidly aging body. It seemed to me that she felt so sad about dying. (Is anyone ever happy?) At one point I thought I was upsetting her, but then I remembered a quote about tears being the ultimate cleansing. I just kept holding her hand. She was conscious and with me for about five minutes—Bryant had said that that would be her limit. We had said what we each wanted to say, I hope: that we loved each other and would miss each other. When she seemed comfortable and quiet I left.

I was crying as I came down the stairs and mumbled something to Bryant about that not being as hard as I imagined. We talked for a while about ourselves, funeral arrangements and stories about Vianne, or what our memories are of things she had told us. While George looked wiped-out, defensive and very sad, Bryant looked, or seemed, resigned, pragmatic and caring. I enjoyed and needed our post-visit chatter.
September 14th, 1992 (continued)
A couple of things struck me. One was how much I care about Vianne and had wanted her to be around, very selfishly, for me; to educate and mentor me. Another was recognition that communication happens without conversation. But, we had better be saying what we are meaning and feeling along the way because at the end we just may not have the ability—physical ability—to say anything.

Saturday Tape/Edit Sessions for BCC (Doug, Betty and me):
September 26th -- 1-5 p.m.

October 3rd -- 1-5 p.m.

October 10th -- Went in a.m. to find Betty on the phone. Vianne had died an hour earlier, at about noon. Stayed with Betty for about an hour, then left.

October 17th -- 1-5 p.m.

October 24th -- 1-5 p.m.

October 31st, Halloween -- 1-5 p.m.

November 7th -- 11 a.m. -- 3 p.m.

November 14th -- Last Tape/Edit session. Finished!

November 16th -- "Getting Ready to Learn" Aired.

October 26th, 1992
Brainstorming meeting with Betty about women's program.

October 27th, 1992
First meeting with Anita Clair Fellman and Julie Dodd to form alliance for women's show.

December 8th, 1992
Started NPR Radio Course. Spending full day in at work, then staying in afternoon to hear the course.
December 17th, 1992

Heading north to Minnesota... Updates on work at WHRV, as well as my creative project:

These past four weeks I had gone in to work once a week to talk about women's project in a.m.s, and to listen to NPR writing course in the afternoon. On the Women's Profiles show: we have a rough outline of the proposal; have secured a relationship with both Women’s Studies and the Women's Center (ODU, Anita and Julie); and have obtained a copy of the latest humanities grant proposal.

Looking back at BCC:
It was the day BCC aired that I found out about Dick's cancer diagnosis, thus making the decision to come to St. Paul. Betty received a few calls wanting BCC's phone number to research their own projects. Inez called Betty very excited and impressed with how she sounded (this is what Margot Adler referred to as her goal for making sure she has approached her interviewee with respect; namely, that the person will call, happy, asking how it was we covered so many of her points). We received little to no criticism, except reflecting amongst ourselves. My thesis committee has listened and enjoyed... I guess. I need to finish BCC script over the holidays, as well as begin to write for the Humanities grant.

Reflecting on Vianne's absence:
It was at one of our Saturday a.m. production sessions that I found out about Vianne's death. We (Doug and I) walked in and Betty had just gotten a call from Valerie (Vianne's daughter) saying that less than an hour ago Vianne had peacefully stopped breathing. Within a few minutes of my being there (maybe two or three minutes, literally) Taylor announced over WHRO radio Vianne's death followed by a pre-taped message from John Morrison. It all seemed a little surreal, too planned, yet beautiful and appropriate. Betty was teary, especially trying to repeat the news--"Vianne died about an hour ago"--over the phone to several important, need-to-know type persons. Betty is really amazing! She can see all the important pieces in a situation with
uncanny objectivity. Doug and I stayed with her for about an hour. It was only when I got in the car that I allowed my own tears and said my final good bye.

Tuesday a.m. was the funeral service at the very large Christ of St. Luke in Norfolk. I didn’t expect to be so saddened by the whole affair. John (Morrison) spoke, as did Vianne’s son, Bryant. John ended with a beautiful poem I’d like to have a copy of...it had to do with loving and being loved and a rainbow in the window—I really cried through that. There weren’t many in the audience that were without tears. Many friends seemed devastated—as did Vianne’s daughter and granddaughters. Walking out of the church was lonely, no one to cry with. I had to rush to a meeting. It was a beautiful sunny, clear, blue day, unusually warm. Vianne would have said something like: "Isn’t it a glorious day? Let’s all take the afternoon off and go shopping."

About two weeks or so later, Betty, Dwight Davis and T.V. Producer David Ferraro put together a 30 minute T.V. tribute to Vianne which I watched at home (while trying to occupy Billy to keep him quiet). Everyone should have a video of people whom they have loved and lost. I learned a lot about Vianne. Her daughter and son gave anecdotes, there were pictures from babyhood, and a complete profile of Vianne’s radio history with clips of her from the T.V. show, "Our Place Our Time." It took a few seconds to be "okay" with—then enthralled by—her live appearance. The show aired again, a week or two later, and I watched it again. Watching that tape helped in my own grieving; it gave a perspective to a life hard and well lived—especially to me, who had barely begun to know her.

Her children have since packed up her things and turned over her condo. Betty and Dwight packed up Vianne’s office a couple of weeks ago. The next major event will be the "coming aboard" of her replacement.
January 7th, 1993

Desperately trying to get organized and caught up before the new semester begins. I have spent my one week break--not including the week before Christmas in Minnesota and the week after in North Carolina visiting in-laws--retyping the BCC script, and other work from the previous semester.

Still to do:
1) Grant Writing
2) Finish and review book by Penny Rosenwasser for Oral History class.
3) File system set up with calendars.

I have felt more relaxed this week than I have for such a long time. I expect that will end as I succumb to stress beginning with class and work next week!

*Confirmation hearings being aired on WHRV.
*Story hour (with Jess’ class) this a.m., starting with Africa.
*Randy’s Christmas presents arrived.
*Wendy’s delivery is close.
**"Mom’s Group" tomorrow at my house for the first time in, at least, a year.
*Julie and Jen over last night for cake--interesting, complex lives.

(*While there is more to this journal, having to do with my recent work on Women’s Profiles from January 1993 to present, I end here, with my BCC work finished and "life" moving right along).
INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL FOR Robyn Cochran

November 19th, 1991

TO: WHRO/WHRV
Vianne Webb, Vice President, Station Manager
Betty Luse, Public Affairs, Producer

I am pleased and excited to be joining the WHRO/WHRV FM Radio staff as a student intern under the mentorship of Ms. Betty Luse. I have spoken to Dr. Doug Greene, director of the Humanities Department at ODU, who is one of the advisors in my coursework toward obtaining a Women's Studies/Humanities Master. He assured me that I will be able to use my work experience at WHOR/WHRV toward a three unit tutorial course. The following are the hours and time span I am available to work:

Hours: (Minimum of 9 hours per week)
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:30-12:30
plus additional time spent on special projects, or other work as it presents itself;


With the understanding that it may be possible for WHRO/WHRV to provide some contribution toward the tuition I will incur for graduate (internship) units, the current cost of tuition is as follows: $148.00 per hour x 3 hours = $444.00. If it is feasible for WHRO to provide monetary assistance over and above internship credit, that money will also be applied to ongoing education costs (i.e. tuition for night courses and day care).

While any financial help will be greatly appreciated, my practical experience alone, working in public radio under Ms. Luse's direction, will be invaluable in helping me to identify and pursue future goals. I hope to be able to be of help to Ms. Luse in public affairs, as well as in producing programs for WHRO. Whatever I am able to achieve will then be incorporated in some form (a paper, a tape, etc.) and accompanied by a letter from Ms. Luse and Ms. Webb to be given to Dr. Greene as evidence of my newly gleaned talents and knowledge.

In my first two weeks of working at WHRO/WHRV with Ms. Luse, I have done a number of things: as diverse as passing out parking permits to symphony fans, filing, and answering phones, observing an interview with a renowned education expert for "Options in Education", and even filling in as a station representative for an interview with a Russian expert for the show "Thinking Out Loud". My experience thus far has been exhilarating, challenging and fun, and I am looking forward to much more of the same in the months to come.
Meeting Notes with Betty Luse and Robyn Cochran

1. Set up a meeting with school principal, Cheryl Bunch for Monday, December 16th, at 10am with Robyn Cochran to gather background information about the school and the various agencies, teachers, parents and community people involved in it.

2. Some of the issues that the background fact finding should cover:

   a. list of Advisory Board and any and all key principles involved since inception.

   b. looking for info on: conception process, funding, goals, and ongoing study as pilot project.

   c. want info about the students: student-teacher ratios, numbers of students currently enrolled, how selected, projections of future numbers, where the students come from and their demographics, and what are some of the key issues involved in these student's lives, ie. health, ages, family, welfare services involved, etc.

   d. likewise, what is the involvement of the parents at the school and what are the services targeted at the parents: demographics, ages, health, income, etc.

   e. curriculum that the school uses, focus of specific education

   f. involvement of local universities

   g. involvement of local service agencies

   h. involvement of local community agencies.

3. I have presented to Ms. Bunch in my phone conversation setting up this interview appointment that WHRV is interested in doing an education special about their project, and that I will be conducting initial fact-finding before Betty goes out to tape anything, which probably won't happen before the first of next year. Robyn Cochran
To Vianne Webb  
Regarding Berkley/Campostella Report

Here is a report of my meeting with principal Cheryl Bunch. Betty and I will be sitting down on Wednesday, Jan. 8th, to discuss the form of a potential program. The next steps are to go into the school for a couple of short days to tape some of the happenings, and interview a teacher or two, a Social Worker, Ms. Bunch, the police officer who works with the kids, and any parents available. I would like to see some parent training sessions taped and/or adult ed. classes. After taping at the school we will need to be sure and get some interviews with administrators ie. Dr. Carter, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Lockamy, Assist. Superint., and some of the folks on the Advisory committee, including some neighborhood people.

We are hoping to do much of the taping in January and February, and the editing in March/April, with the program ready to air by May -- when I will be finished with my internship.

Robyn Cochran
Meeting with Betty regarding upcoming Berkley/Campostella taping:
January 29th, 1992

Discussed Program Goals---

1. To show a positive and hopeful side of public education and the projects which are being funded by public schools and federal programs.

2. To incorporate the notion that more than education is needed to get pre-school children school ready.

3. To capture the goals of the program with regard to promoting self-esteem, helping children communicate needs, developing trust, educating parents, etc.

4. To let the program and the participants speak for themselves.

5. To get the atmosphere of the school and the caring and motivated enthusiasm of staff and community people who are involved.

6. To show the total involvement of the community, parents, school and neighborhood which makes Berkley Campostella unique.

Discussed specific goals of the February 5th taping---

1. Rough schedule:
   10am. EEC Pledge taped in the office as all students repeat in their individual classrooms.

   Classroom taping (1 or 2) classes, talking with students teachers, aids, and any special personnel doing lessons.

   Parent groups of Adult Ed and Parent education.

   Pace Officer and any one on one or classroom talk.

   Lunch preparations, lunch at a table with the kids and teachers, ambiance of dining room, description, break down.

2. Possible questions for teachers, kids, TA's, Parents:

   Teachers:

   1. Why did you want to teach here? What have you learned here in this first year? How is that different from your expectations in coming here? How is what you have learned the same as your expectations?

   2. Explain the process you had to go through to be considered for this position, and what kind of competition you were up against.

   3. What is your average day like, your teaching schedule?

   4. What are the needs of your students, and your approaches to meeting those needs?

   5. What is unique about three year olds?

   6. What do you, personally get out of your job? What are its challenges?
Meeting notes with Betty Luse
Page 2

Kids:

1. What is your name? Your age?
2. What are you doing right now? Can you tell me about it?
3. What are your favorite things to do here at school?
4. What would you be doing if you were home right now? What are your favorite things to do at home?
5. Can you show me around your room and tell me about what each part of the room is for and what you do in the different areas of your room?
6. Do you have some friends at school? What are their names?
7. Can you say the EEC pledge for me? What does that mean?

Teacher Aids:

1. What are your special duties here at BC?
2. How is your job different than the teachers job?
3. What do you like about your job? What are its challenges?
4. Tell me about what happens at lunch every day?
5. What was your reasons for wanting to work here, and how did you come to apply and be hired?

Parents:

1. The goal of the parent groups is to sit in and listen, then to tape individual interviews with a couple of participants.
2. Can you tell us about yourself and your involvement with this program? Why are you here?
3. Tell us about your three year old and how these classes have changed or helped your relationship with your children?

PACE Officer:

1. What is your involvement with Berkley Campostella?
2. How many days a week are you here, and what do you do while you are here?
3. What is your experience as a police officer with the Berkley Campostella neighborhood?
4. What do you see as typical responses from these three year olds?
5. What are you seeing with regard to the parents at BC and their relationship to you? How is the relationship changing over time?

3. In terms of some practical issues--

1. Use of several tapes to keep track of different kinds of interviews; ie background from one on one, teachers from administration, etc.
2. Being aware of a respectful approach and stereotypes, being white middle-class women attempting to glean BC's whole picture of race and class.

Women's Profiles
Robyn's Notes

As of the 6th of March, the following interviews have been completed with the participants in the Berkley Campestella:

Background Sounds:
- Dental Program
- Playground with Ms. Bridgers Class
- African culture program -- Mr. Suliaman
- Ms. Mitchell reading The Ugly Duckling with Chick noises
- Parent Program with The Chrysler Museum

Interviews:
- Ms. Johnson -- Nursery
- Mr. Hadley -- Social Services
- Dr. Lockamy -- School Administration
- Officer Sams -- PACE
- Ms. Vanessa Bridgers -- Teacher
- Keenan Hayes -- Teacher Assistant

ECC Pledge:
- Tamara Williams -- Class
- Mr. Johnson's Class

The following are the interviews that we are still hoping to complete:
- Jennifer Boone -- Parent Resource Person
- Parent
- Adult Ed Teacher
- Nurses
- Cafeteria -- Staff, kids eating at tables, Custodian
- Ms. Bunch
- Kids
Meeting with Chris Dickon ----
March 6th, 1992

Betty and I had a breakfast meeting with Chris Dickon discussing some planning strategies and production suggestions. What follows are highlights:

1. Keep in mind our target audiences?
   a. Education audience might want more indepth information on an education project like Berkley/Campostella -- from inception to the actual workings.
   b. A general NPR audience, assuming a fairly knowledgeable listener would look for a story about an important issue (how family and education connect)and want voices involved in the story to tell them briefly what is vital, then give them some hopeful news about how what the BC project might apply to their life.

2. Chris suggested that we go through our taped material and notetake to have a concise log of not only who is being taped, but what the interviewee is talking about at different counted points, to the end.

3. In reviewing our taped material, as in the interviewing still to be done, Chris said that he would "listen for the first line." He would look to the other interviews and background sounds to string the story together from that first line itself.

4. The three basic components to an "NPR" story:
   a. Actuality -- What people have to say about your subject;
   b. Source -- Creating an environment (a very visual one) to put the listener in the place of the story;
   c. Voice -- The script which ties everything together.

5. After explaining our project to Chris and some of the important issues which it encompasses, his suggestion was to get to one theme of importance by continuing to ask the questions -- Where is the story and What are we trying to do or say to our audience?

6. In terms of our methods, we discussed interview techniques. While we have been setting up two mikes together on one stand, generally placed in front of the interviewee (using a stereo mode), Chris stated that he generally moves a mike from his question to the interviewee response. He likes to be engaged and show the person he is talking to that he is engaged. He also assures the person he is talking to that he will not use any portion of the tape they are uncomfortable about.
7. Looking at our interviews we have completed, Chris suggested that we attempt to speak to more parents, especially Fathers. He also suggested that we get some background sound outside of the school to place the school in the community (possibly the street noise of traffic going across the Berkley Campostella Bridge).

Both Betty and I felt that our meeting was very productive and helped us to focus on what theme/s we are seeing as we connect with many of the individuals who are a part of Berkley/Campostella. One of the themes very apparent is the community based model of a school to not only teach pre-schoolers, but to educate and address the issues of the adults/parents as well. Betty believes strongly that this model could be applied to any neighborhood in any community, utilizing public spaces (like school buildings) to help with day care, parenting classes, enrichment programs, adult education -- whatever each community defines as its needs. Another theme that comes from this community approach is "breaking down the barriers" which have been set up from many systems (social services, schools, etc) outside the families in this community, but also from the expectations and attitudes the individuals have who make up the families of Berkley Campostella. What follows from "breaking down the barriers" is "empowering" both children and adults with caring, education, support, services, and lots of positive strokes which help to build self-esteem. "Caring" is a very large component of Berkley Campostella, and it is obvious the moment one walks through the front doors. From the curriculum, High Scope, to the kinds of people who work there, from the parent volunteers, from the Social Service Worker, the Health Care staff, the PACE officer who began to extend his job to the pre-school age, to the Principal, Ms. Bunch, the city's school officials, to the children themselves, CARING, and being CARED about is a given. And what is also apparent, though the project is still new, is that lives are being changed. The stories which we hope to include will have the successes of parents and children who came to the school with certain limitations and have been helped by the school to move through those "barriers" to see new directions into the future.

While we have more interviews to do, we are going to also begin to listen to our tapes and to catalogue them in the way Chris suggested. We have been on the premises of the school now (two mornings a week) for about a month, and we expect that in the next couple of weeks we should be finished with the bulk of our interviews. Chris has agreed to help us in the editing process of our work, which we told him we would "take him up on". He reminded us of the importance of a fresh listener, who can put themself in the place of that NPR listener and look for all of the components of a compelling story.
TO: Antioch College, Women's Studies Abroad Program  
FROM: Betty R. Luse, WHRO/WHRV-FM Public Affairs  
DATE: March 11, 1992  
RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR ROBYN COCHRAN

It is my pleasure to recommend Robyn Cochran for your Women's Studies Abroad Program for 1992.

For the last several months, Robyn has worked with WHRO/WHRV-FM as a Public Affairs Intern, a "project" she is pursuing as part of her Master's Degree program at Old Dominion University.

The majority of her work with us is involved with the production of a radio documentary about an innovative early childhood education center here in Norfolk. The focus of this center is the single parent family—it is set in a neighborhood with a large number of lower income, single parent families, headed by women (as most single families are).

Because of Robyn's particular abilities and interests, as well as her sensitivities, she is playing a major role in the production of this program. In fact, she is the co-producer, along with me, of the documentary. This is a rare position for an intern in any broadcast project.

Her skills as a researcher, writer, interviewer, and novice radio engineer are all part of the requirements of this project and she performs all with equal ease, talent, perception and sensitivity.

She is a committed and concerned woman; a thoughtful and thinking work partner whose work is always thorough and well thought out. Humor and an open mind are also part of her outstanding attributes.

As a mother, wife and working woman, she will bring much to your program and will gain much from it, judging from the outline of the 1991 program. It looks fascinating and I wish I could go!

In sum, Robyn Cochran is, in my estimation, a perfect candidate for the Women's Studies Abroad program—she's an excellent scholar, a committed feminist, a fine writer and researcher with a very open and curious mind, a sensitive and caring woman with a genuine concern for others, and, she's fun to be around too! What more could any program ask for?

As you can tell, I am most happy to recommend Robyn Cochran to your program. Indeed, it is the program which will be richer for her presence.
From Meetings with Betty on May 6th, and May 8th--

1.) Focus of our documentary is now shaping up to be the Education 2000 Goal, 
(defined by the Governor's Education Ass.) of Children being ready to learn 
by the time they enter Elementary school.

2.) The point of tension, or the question we are asking throughout the program 
is What does being ready to learn mean, or encompass, and how is BCC going 
about getting their three year olds ready to learn.

3.) We are hoping to open the show with a tape of Pres. Bush (possibly in the 
Rose Garden) putting forth the Education goals about a year ago. Possibly 
expanded on by information provided by the Governor's Education Ass.

4.) We will then go into our focus of BCC, where it is, why it is in Berkley 
Campostella -- the environment which makes it necessary.

5.) Then we will first be taking the community and family into consideration 
at BCC and looking at how this project has taken the definition of getting 
ready to learn to mean meeting needs within the community and the families 
as well as providing resources for pre-school students themselves.

A.) Again what is the make-up of this community in terms of issues, i.e. 
high single head of household as women, drop-out rate in later 
grades, higher crime, and beyond to some issues which have to 
do with less tangible issues like the community members not 
looking out for each other, as they use to do, etc.

B.) Bringing services for the community into a school setting so they 
are more readily accessible, and so that they involve the community 
members, i.e. police (PACE), health, and Social Services)

C.) Breaking barriers down between fam/comm and fam/school, etc.

6.) The next part of the documentary (the second half) will focus on the school 
itself, the kids and the Parents as intergenerational learning takes place.

A.) Who three year olds are, what is the program here at BCC for them, 
(the environment, what makes it unique and getting them ready to learn)
1. security -- daily schedule, same people
2. self-esteem -- curriculum, teachers caring, reinforcing racial pride
3. social -- classroom, teachers, male role models, cafe
4. pre-reading/verbal (high scope curriculum)

B.) Who are the teachers who are getting these children ready to learn
1. Early childhood skills
2. Team players
3. Commitment to the school, its goals and the children
4. Involvement with family, home visits, parents in classroom
5. Openness to learn themselves, empathetic
6. What it takes to administer the program (Ms. Bunch)

C.) The parent component with involvement in the classroom and in the Parent 
Center
1. Parental involvement is essential to school, and to children's 
education . . . effecting the parent's self-esteem affects the 
childrens.
2. Inez and Jennifer Boone

Women's Profiles
3. Offering parents services at the school, and through the school providing them with opportunities for self-improvement or to help address problems in their lives -- social services, health police, child prevention, etc.

7.) Then offering a total sum of BCC as a project meeting the goal of Education 2000 by defining the getting kids ready to learn to mean a combined effort within a pre-school community setting, and recognizing that Education success of children occurs when their is community, family, and state, and local agency/system support. By returning to community based services, reaching children at early ages and nurturing their intelligence, their self-esteem, and providing them with a safe space, health care, by recognizing the needs of parents for the same kinds of services, with child care, preventative health services, self-esteem programs, and education, then involving teachers and community providers in the process as not being on the "other side", or adversaries and barriers, but extended family and support -- by duplicating a project like BCC in every not only "at risk" area, but preschool, elementary and secondary level in every neighborhood (with its own needs) we have not only children ready to learn, but a society ready to learn, AND ONE that cares about learning.

Next immediate Project goals

1. Taping at BCC to include ECC pledge, background noises with school bus and interview with Mr. Misell regarding a specific involvement with a family.

2. Cataloging tape interviews by subjects previously layed out.

3. Day workshop on Tape Editing

4. Writing script and editing


36 Women's Profiles
TO: Robyn Cochran
Doug Thiele

FROM: Betty Luse

DATE: August 19, 1992

RE: B/CC SCHEDULE

I know we seem to be behind schedule on the project, but if we are, it's only a small delay.

This is the schedule for production I'd like to propose:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri. Aug. 28</td>
<td>Robyn/Betty complete script-finalize(can we work all day?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Aug. 29</td>
<td>1 - 5 pm—production—Betty, Robyn, Doug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Sept. 5</td>
<td>1 - 5 pm—production—all three of us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Sept. 12</td>
<td>1 - 5 pm—production—all three of us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Sept. 19</td>
<td>1 - 5 pm—production—all three of us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may not need all of that time, or we may need more, but I'm estimating that this will be just about right.

Please let me know ASAP if you can confirm this schedule—we'll make the necessary adjustments.

Doug, I haven't forgotten that I still owe you some money "on account". It will soon be "in the mail".

These dates were extended into November.
We worked all Saturdays.
(except the day Vianne died, one day Betty missed, one day I missed)

Aired Nov. 16.
BERKLEY/CAMPOSTELLA EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION CENTER

"GETTING READY TO LEARN"

A PRODUCTION OF WHRO/WHRV PUBLIC RADIO
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

AIRED NOVEMBER 16, 1992

"OPTIONS IN EDUCATION SERIES"

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: BETTY LUSE
ASSISTANT PRODUCER: ROBYN COCHRAN
SCRIPT AND TAPE EDITOR: DOUG THIELE
NARRATOR: DOUG THIELE
NARRATOR: Eager and excited, these children, like children in every community across the nation, are arriving ready for school. But are they ready to learn?

PRESIDENT BUSH: Until now, we've treated education like a manufacturing process assuming that if the gauges seemed right, if we had good pay scales, the right pupil-teacher ratios, good students would just pop out of our schools. It's time to turn things around. We made a good beginning by setting the nation's sights on six ambitious national education goals and setting for our target the year 2000.

NARRATOR: The first goal of President Bush and the governors' Education 2000 panel is that all children will start school ready to learn. While a far reaching and commendable goal, it is difficult to define, let alone attain.

Interpretations of what children need to be ready to learn vary widely. Most experts at least agree that children need to be healthy, well fed and secure in their living conditions. Poverty, changing values of the traditional family, child abuse, lack of self-esteem, a failing education system have all been cited for putting children at risk in our society--at risk of not receiving a good education, at risk of perpetuating the same conditions which they endure.

Many argue that to truly begin to address the needs of children we must begin earlier than established programs like Head Start and focus on the families of these children as well as their communities.
In Norfolk Virginia, in the predominantly black inner-city neighborhoods of Berkeley and Campostella, there is one model school which has begun to meet the needs of its community and its families. The Berkeley/Campostella Early Childhood Education Center, known as BCC, is also meeting the goals of Education 2000. Principal Cheryl Bunch, a native of the area, talks about why this center was located in her neighborhood:

It's basically a very low socio-economic area. Many of the families are headed by mothers. There's a lot of single household here. In looking at some of the schools that are located in this area, the children who attend the schools such as St. Helena and, at that time Tucker and Diggs Park, were not scoring high on academic, or standardized tests. In looking at some of the high school or junior high school students, they were dropping out of school.

Statistically speaking, the community of Berkeley/Campostella, with around 9,000 residents, is one where over half of the households are headed by single women; where close to half of the families are employed in the labor force, yet the median household income is just a little over $13,000; and only one in three residents graduated from high school. In 1989, with those realities as a backdrop, the city of Norfolk appointed an advisory committee made up of educators, representatives from various city social services, and members of the community to create an Early Childhood Center.

The Center's goal is to get kids ready to learn. With city, state and federal funds, the advisory committee oversaw the remodelling of Diggs Park elementary school, hand-picked the principal and
NARRATOR: teachers, and in the fall of 1991, opened its doors to 175 preschoolers, mostly three-year-olds. What makes BCC unique is that it is not just a school for three or four year olds, but a full range service center for the entire community.

Dr. Thomas Lockamy, Assistant Superintendent for Norfolk's elementary schools, explains:

DR. LOCKAMY: Basically, of course, we have the academic component, which is the key for the children. A key component that I think is most important is the adult education component, and the intergenerational learning that does occur between the parent and the child. We provide a nursery for the children who are under the age of three while the parents are involved in the--in their own education. We also provide a before and after school day care program for all of the students who are in the center, as well as those parent's children who are in the adult education classes as well.

NARRATOR: At BCC children and parents attend classes five days a week. Any adult in the surrounding community can also take advantage of the Center's literacy program or Basic Ed classes which prepare them to get the equivalent of a high school diploma by taking the GED exam. There is a Parent Center staffed by parents whose job it is to encourage family participation in the school. They attend programs or on-going classes on a range of topics from improving self-esteem to cultural pride, to nutrition and health. There are other services as well. Parents, children, school administrators and teachers have access to regular mental health counselling. There is a pre-kindergarten intervention program dealing with, among other things, suspected child abuse.
NARRATOR: All of these programs assist the family by removing social and economic barriers which confront residents of the Berkeley/Campostella neighborhood.

INEZ WISE: I know a lot of people think that being on welfare, as they call it, okay, and having four children, being a black young mother, single parent--a lot of people ask: well, you have four children, why did you have these four children and you knew that you would have to get on the system. And I just want everybody to know, I didn’t have my children to receive more money from the system.

NARRATOR: Inez Wise is tall and thin. Her brown hair short and straight. She has a youthful appearance and a friendly smile. She is shy and thoughtful. Inez is sensitive to, and at the same time critical of the portrayal of her as a stereotypical poor, black, single mother.

INEZ WISE: The way the system works is once you go out and you find a job and your working, they cut you off of things, you know. They cut you off your medical benefits, and then having a lot of part-time jobs, even some full-time jobs, with no medical benefits is hard when you do have these children. So, sometimes, the system...it works for you. And a lot of us sometimes that’s the only way we can make it.

NARRATOR: Inez and many other adult students at BCC are supported in their educational pursuits by Norfolk Social Services which occupies a class room/office in the center, making its resources more readily accessible to the community. The presence of Social Service employees like Joseph
Hadley represents a novel approach to helping families.

We are in the process of trying to return to a neighborhood social work concept where there is a social worker, or an eligibility worker, assigned directly to each community so that the people in the community can get to know the social worker, the eligibility worker—they can know their worker and therefore that allows for them a closer relationship.

This is a pilot program. They have allowed the social services to come here in conjunction with the pilot program so that I am available to the client so that they are able to come in here and get their needs satisfied in their local community. This is something that's unique. We have ABE here--Adult Basic Education. We have the GED preparation course here. And I have access to other funds and other services that might be needed for our clients here in this community.

Each of our clients can become self-sufficient if we work with them. I don't believe in pushing people into jobs like the McDonald's jobs and the Burger King jobs. I have nothing against them, except for our clients will not become self-sufficient on Burger King or McDonalds. Therefore they need a skill, they need their GED, they need to be able to go on to maybe a nursing school, or an apprenticeship program or a maritime shipyard program where they can learn a trade, where they can get paid five, six, seven dollars an hour.

Gaining trust and getting clients out of their houses and into the doors of BCC presents challenges for all of those involved. While Mr. Hadley's close proximity to his potential clients
removes one barrier, and his growing familiarity with their neighborhood and their lives removes another, there remain barriers which mothers like Inez must overcome.

JOSEPH HADLEY: A lot has to be dealt with to help improve their self-esteem, to help them believe in themselves that they can accomplish the goals that they set for themselves. Unfortunately, a lot of our clients have stopped dreaming. They have stopped believing that they can be that which they wanted to be.

NARRATOR: Cheryl Bunch, the school's principal, shares her perspective of issues of self-esteem within the community she knows so well.

CHERYL BUNCH: We were growing up in the community and at that time Berkeley--I was not even aware that Berkeley was a part of Norfolk. When we went to--as a child growing up in Berkeley--Berkeley was a separate community. We had everything there: the movies, the furniture stores the grocery stores. So you really didn’t have to leave the area for anything. So when we crossed the bridge, the Berkeley bridge, I would say, or we would say, that we were going to Norfolk, not realizing that Berkeley was a part of Norfolk. And even now I have to catch myself.

But we were also thought of as being the same way that these children are thought of: they are coming from Berkeley. I attended Ruffner Junior High School, and I am quite sure that the teachers--I’ve had that experience--differentiated between the children who lived in Berkeley as opposed to the children who came from Norfolk or from other areas of the city. And that was happening even when I was a child, that we were
CHERYL BUNCH:

somehow--the expectations were that we were not as bright; we were not as good as some of the other children because of the area that we came from.

And one of the biggest handicaps, or barriers, that we had to overcome was due to the fact of just where we lived. Because you live in a certain area you are expected to be a certain way, you are expected to act a certain way. That's not the case. You are talking about reaching out to parents. I think that many of our parents have had very negative experiences with school. They have not experienced success in school. So, consequently when they think of school they don't think of school in a positive light. They think about it when they went to school and some of the things that happened to them.

What I try to do is try to find ways to overcome some of the barriers that may have prevented them from coming into the school program. I think the key word is empowerment. Trying to empower them to take control of their own lives. Consequently, I try to be a positive role model for them: that if I did it, you can do it also, it's possible.

NARRATOR:

For Inez Wise, support and role modeling from those around her at BCC were crucial in her efforts to empower herself. To obtain her GED meant she had to quit her job as a nurse's aid to attend classes at BCC four days a week. Welfare benefits, given out once a month under Aid to Dependent Children, are meager. Making the dollars stretch, living in public housing, being dependent on the system are stresses which Inez lives with reluctantly.
INEZ WISE: I didn't like it because I wasn't--because I was so use to working and making my own money, okay. And then to stop then and have to live from month to month. That's the part that I don't like, is the month to month living. You know, it's the budgeting of a small income. It's hard. And I think about it every day--sometimes I do think about stopping school to go back to work.

NARRATOR: It is clear that educating parents as well as children is key to making what inevitably amounts to long term social and economic changes. Those changes have begun for Inez. During the Center's first year she was the second vice president of the BCC PTA, and an active member of the Parent Center. She has completed her Basic Ed classes, passed her GED exam and started school at the local community college. For at least one single mother helped by the Berkeley/Campostella Center, dreams are returning.

INEZ WISE: I just want my children to have the best of things. I don't want them to want for anything. And I want to bring them up to have things that I didn't have, and things that I couldn't get I want them to have. I want them to be able to look up to me. I mean, to them, all they know is I'm a nurse. They don't understand that I'm just a nursing assistant, which, that's at the bottom, okay. I want them--when they say, I want to be a nurse or--I want them to be able to say: I want to be a doctor, I want to be a lawyer. I don't want them to stop at what I am.

NARRATOR: Every weekday morning at about 8:30 a.m. the school busses arrive. Excited three-year-olds rush through the big double doors of BCC as their school day begins. While highly structured, their
NARRATOR: day is geared to an environment of caring, personal responsibility and having fun while learning. Cheryl (Vanessa) Bridgers, a teacher at BCC:

VANESSA BRIDGERS: You know, I think the key is that learning has to be fun. And if it's no longer fun to the child then I think they lose interest. We show them that you can accomplish all your goals that are required by the state, that are required by the school system, and still make education a very fun process for both parent, teacher and child.

Along with that, I would also say the importance of self awareness; the importance of knowing that you are somebody important, that you count in this world. And that--to me that's my number one goal: self-esteem for the child. And I found that building the children's self esteem kind of leads over into the parent's, and the parent's self-esteem builds. Earlier I was saying that some of the parents are a little bit hesitant. It's because I think they have lower self-esteem, and once they get into the building and they find out that they are competent and they become more confident, then their self-esteem grows.

And if you can work with the parents to get theirs going, then in combination with what we do in school you can't help but have a child that's just, you know: I believe in me because I am somebody important. They are not just words to them, it's something that they live by because they believe in what they do and they feel that they can offer something to society or to the world that they live in.

CHRIS MEISSEL(+class): Okay boys and girls, on the count of three we are going to do the BCC self-esteem pledge. One, two, three: I believe in me, because I am some-
CHRIS MEISSEL (+class): body important. I will achieve and succeed because every day I will do my best to be the best. I can learn, I will learn.

NARRATOR: At around 10 a.m. every morning, the children begin their day with a recitation of the school's pledge, led over the PA system by one of the classes and their teacher. The children's voices reverberate through the hallways and class rooms. Brightly colored art work lines the halls, depicting seasons, holidays, history and black pride. Much of the art is accompanied by the children's own stories which exemplify the importance BCC places on the individual expression of ideas.

Each classroom is color coated. There is the pink room, the aqua room, the yellow room, the lime room, and so on. In each class are a teacher, a teacher's assistant, no more than 15 three- or four-year-olds, and, on any given day, one or more parent volunteers. Step through the doors and Everything takes on a child's proportion. Cheryl (Vanessa) Bridgers teaches in the lavender room.

VANESSA BRIDGERS: This is one place that they come and feel very comfortable because all of a sudden: this is a world that revolves around me, you know, I don't have to fit in--I don't have to meet any rigorous task to fit in, or criteria--this is for me, this is my size; you as an adult have to fit in, I already belong. So, that's great, you know, and I think you see that on the faces of the children and in their behaviors. It's definitely a child-sized place to be, and you know, they love; I love it.

Most of the classrooms will have basic work areas for the children. Everyone else will say play but we call play work here, because our work is play, our play is work. We have a house area, which
VANESSA BRIDGERS: would be the housekeeping area. You have the art area where you might have painting or other art supplies. You have the quiet area where you might have a library—a library of books; you might have quiet games, you might have music. We have a computer station. We have a building station. Some of the classrooms also have a dress up, but that could be included in the house area. And this is something to help build the children’s creativity to help extend their imaginations.

NARRATOR: The class rooms are not the only part of BCC which are child-centered and child-sized: there is a well equipped playground and Cafe Delafont, the Cafe of the Children. Breakfast and lunch are served in the Cafe, which is the all too familiar auditorium/cafeteria now transformed by circus animal curtains, kid-sized round tables and brightly colored chairs. The children sit down "family style," with their teachers, to share meals and conversation. The cafe is a place of learning, as Keenan Hayes, the teaching assistant in the lavender room, explains:

KEENAN HAYES: A lot of them at home don’t get to sit down, you know, with the family. You know, with today’s world everybody is working and everybody is eating on different schedules. So it teaches them to sit down as a group—as a family—to have a meal together. If they break a glass or knock something over, that’s a learning experience to teach them how to clean up the glass without getting cut, how to wipe up the milk or whatever. I think we just have to remember that they’re three-year-olds and whatever happens is a learning experience.
NARRATOR: There are special qualities shared by the teachers at the center, which, in principal Cheryl Bunch’s view is a crucial factor in making the center a success.

CHERYL BUNCH: I was looking for some very special things. First of all I wanted a person who really wanted to work in this type of an environment; who had a good early childhood background. Secondly, I wanted someone who was flexible--willing to learn--who didn’t have all the answers. So the fact that you had been teaching in early childhood education for 25 or 30 years was not a factor. I wanted someone who was willing to learn and try new things. I was also looking for someone who was a team player--willing to listen and work as a part of a team. I was looking for someone who was willing to work with parents and to go beyond the normal work hours.

NARRATOR: Going beyond the normal work hours includes making home visits.

CHERYL BUNCH: I really think it makes a difference when teachers go into the homes, because when you can actually see the environment, or the living environment, of that particular child you have a better understanding as to where that child is coming from every day; whether it be a good environment or a not so good environment. But it gives you a better understanding of why the child reacts the way he or she does during that particular day.

CHRIS MEISSEL: There was a girl in my classroom that had very poor hygiene. She came to school with the same clothes on. She did not get bathed. So, I went and did a home visit and found out that there
CHRIS MEISSEL:

was no running water in her house. So, it was very depressing. So, I talked to Mrs. Bunch and she was very helpful, and we talked to the parent technicians; we talked to the mother—we had a conference. Mrs. Bunch got some other people involved to get some clothes.

We went over there and brought groceries to her place. And we finally found a new place in Marshall Manor for her to live. This place had running water, it had electricity and a lot of room for her kids—she has four children. So it was a sad story that turned into a really happy ending, but everyone had to get involved.

NARRATOR:

Teacher Chris Meissel recounting an experience he had which exemplified not only the Center’s environment of caring, but also the success which comes from people working together. A success shared between the family, the teacher, and the student.

CHRIS MEISSEL:

At first she was very quiet, and I noticed that, as the year developed, she became more outgoing—while she was socializing with the other children, she became more outgoing. Her speech was very poor, and, as the year went by, her speech improved. So this program had a significant impact on her. But I think most importantly her self-esteem improved. You know, every time I went to see her she was very excited. She would always call: Mr. Meissel’s here, Mr. Meissel’s here. So that really brought tears to my eyes and it really made everything worthwhile.

NARRATOR:

Chris Meissel and teaching assistant Keenan Hayes have the distinction among the staff of being the only two males. Their presence is vital to meeting yet another need of this particular
NARRATOR: community, that of positive male role models.

OFFICER SAMMS: Today we are going to talk about a very special safety rule for each and every one of you to follow. I know that everybody likes riding in the car, right? You like riding in the car, don't you? Well, I've got a friend who's going to help teach you some safety rules for when you're riding in the car.

NARRATOR: Positive male role models in the school are not restricted only to teachers. P.A. Samms is a police officer who has patrolled the Norfolk streets for over 15 years. His job includes spending time in the class rooms, the lunch room, and the halls of BCC.

OFFICER SAMMS: Kids need to see police officers in a different light. Mostly the police are seen by the kids as the person who comes into their neighborhood and arrests somebody. In the environment they are in they don't see that many positive role models. In the environment they're in, they don't see enough males in their life they can look at and say, hey, I want to be like him. The only ones they see--I want to be like him--are the ones that have the gold on the finger, driving the cars, got the good clothes on, the sneakers, and everything like that. So, this is coming into their lives a little younger seeing a positive influence of a person they had been told is someone that you should be afraid of.

Kids, in the beginning, were scared of police officers. They were. They were really scared of police officers. And you saw it driving through the neighborhood. But, now I feel like that it's not a problem no more. The kids are going up--every time they see a police officer, they want to
OFFICER SAMMS: wave to them, hi. The only thing they do that I like is that they always say, that's Officer Samms, you know, even if it's a white officer, that's Officer Samms. It's real nice to see that.

NARRATOR: The Berkeley/Campostella Center is affecting the lives of 175 inner-city preschoolers and their families, and meeting the challenges of getting those children ready to learn. Within the walls of a once traditional school, the focus is centered on the family, self-esteem, and an ethic of caring which pervades all of the Center's activities. While there are many success stories of children and parents, like Inez Wise, the future of the three- and four-year-olds who now thrive in BCC's innovative environment is in question. What becomes of these children as they leave BCC and go on?

CHERYL BUNCH: Something happens to children after they reach third grade, and it shouldn't happen, because the same kind of environment, or nurturing environment that we have here is not here just because we have young children, but it can be replicated in other grade levels, in other schools. We need to communicate to the teachers who are going to be receiving these children that these children are going to be ready for school; now will school be ready for them?

CHILD/STUDENT: I believe in me, because I am somebody important. I will achieve and succeed, because every day I will do my best to be the best. I can learn. I will learn.

NARRATOR: Getting Ready to Learn was written and produced by Betty Luse and Robyn Cochran. Script and tape editing by Doug Thiele. This has 53 Women's Profiles
been a public affairs production of WHRO/WHRV FM. I'm Doug Thiele.
NOTES ON "WRITING NEWS FOR RADIO" COURSE

This writing course (written and produced by National Public Radio) was offered to me by Betty Luse, Public Affairs Director at WHRO/WHRV, in my capacity of student intern/production assistant. The seminar consisted of completing a "Study Guide" with a taped (45 minute) session on the weekly topic and attending five one-hour sessions to listen to live radio discussion about the topic and "Study Guide" (total 10-15 hour commitment). The live radio discussion shows took place on consecutive Tuesdays beginning November 17, 1992. The topics and National Public Radio (NPR) journalists who provided their own material to study, then discuss were as follows:

Week 1  "Long and Complex Stories" with Patricia Neighmond and Roy Peter Clark;
Week 2  "Arts and Cultural" with Dean Olsher and Roy Peter Clark;
Week 3  "Grammar and Usage" with Marcus Rosenbaum;
Week 4  "Hard News/Newscasts" with Carl Kasell and Greg Peppers;
Week 5  "Features" with Margot Adler and Roy Peter Clark.

This course provided a rare opportunity to listen to NPR-type news/features at my leisure, while contrasting techniques and styles. The "live" weekly radio discussions (designed to follow up on the "Study Guide" and tapes) were opportunities to ask the writers and radio professionals questions regarding their approach to writing, their style, and their "tricks of the trade." The added benefit of
the live radio interactions was learning about the common problems (writing and time constraints were most often mentioned) of journalists at NPR affiliate stations.

I took notes on each taped discussion session. What follows is a summary (based on my notes and the "Study Guide") of points which I felt were/are important. While the course, overall, was not focused on the kind of work that I have been concentrating on (research, interviewing and writing feature/documentary/interview pieces), I was pleased to discover that in each session there were "words of wisdom" which I came away with ready to test out for myself.

"Long and Complex Stories"

Fortunately, I had completed work on the documentary "Getting Ready to Learn" before listening to Patricia Neighmond's taped documentaries. I developed an understanding of the many considerations involved when presenting a great deal of information in a short period of time--delivered via radio. Neighmond reiterated many of the same considerations I had just encountered, including the short attention span of an audience (usually involved in doing other activities while listening to the radio).

Presented in the "Study Guide" and tape were two lengthy news pieces by Neighmond. The first story looked at uninsurability as an upcoming health crisis for middle-class families. The second was the last in a series profiling Archie Harrison, who had recently died of AIDS. In both of these pieces, Neighmond's challenge was
to make health care policies and related issues understandable, connecting real people to those issues and showing how they would/could be affected. In each piece, she included comments of experts as a means to decode difficult language and explain ramifications of treatments or policy. For "real people" (in the insurance piece) Neighmond included stories representing both an extreme scenario as well as a more commonplace one—one more listeners could relate to.

(In producing "Getting Ready to Learn," we had many of the same challenges of presenting education policies: finding experts to explain the establishment of those policies; including management-type people (school administrators and teachers) who were involved with seeing that the policies were carried through; then incorporating into the story those parents and children affected by the policy. We also looked through our tapes of interviews for anecdotes which would bring a personal and compelling tone to our piece—a point which Neighmond reiterated in discussing her approach to putting together long form stories.)

Neighmond (in her capacity as NPR health reporter) talked about her desire to inspire her audience to come to a "point of view" about the subject matter she was presenting. Neighmond’s political agenda was to educate listeners about issues which could have an effect on their own health and well-being. She emphasized the need to create a balance in a news piece between "objectivity and feeling"—"sensitivity without sensationalism." I had a difficult time with Neighmond’s stylistic translation of the preceding goals which she incorporated into her pieces. In both stories she began with very personal account of tragedies, then shifted focus to a larger picture.
(including experts and medical treatments and policies, etc.), never returning to the rather intimate tone she began with. I found myself losing the thread of the story halfway through and, by the end, my empathy.

There was a great deal of discussion, however, generated by Neighmond's choice of endings, especially when it came to the story of AIDS victim, Archie Harrison. This story began with Harrison's death, meandered through a recap of the process of his acceptance of his disease, including a discussion with Harrison's doctor who administered treatment with AZT, and ended with Harrison's rediscovery of the important things in life. The key question raised was what do we, as the writers and facilitators of a story, want to do with endings? What points do we emphasize? Where is the line between sensational and respectful, compelling endings? Does one use the end, as in an essay, to summarize key points? Should one use background sound? Dialogue? Narrative? Many of the affiliates wanted to see Neighmond end with Harrison's death--the reality of AIDS--but Neighmond, who had been reporting on Harrison over the course of a year, admitted that she could not leave the story at the point of death. Interesting.

(All of this discussion was very pertinent to our own process of finding an ending for "Getting Ready to Learn." We actually tried three different endings, inevitably settling on a combination of posing a question (with tape) and cutting to a child's voice. We took a risk by ending with a question, but we felt that the question was both profound enough and central enough to the story line that it added to the piece. Bringing in a child's voice to end the story brought the focus
back to a positive and personal note, which we were more comfortable with, and which we knew would be appealing to listeners.)

After listening to Neighmond I concluded that, while it is important to ask myself as a producer whether I have achieved a balance of the objective and the personal, ultimately, it is the story itself and my intuition/feelings (as a writer) which decides the shape of a piece (for better or worse).

"Arts and Cultural Stories"

This was a "fun" session from which I picked up a lot of "pointers." The two pieces that we studied in advance (both Olsher's) were: Mayberry Day at Mount Airy North Carolina, and a profile of the company called Muzak, which produces "elevator" music. The distinction made by Dean Olsher between arts and culture was that, as he saw it, arts pieces are really subsets of culture pieces. Both types of stories are still news pieces: the story needs to be presented as factually as possible (without personal opinions on the part of the reporter, Olsher commented).

The importance of arts and cultural pieces as they are presented on NPR are to elevate the mind and lift the human spirit—which fulfills one of the mission statements of NPR. The key to doing these types of pieces is to first ask what it is that most people don’t know about a particular aspect of culture or an event, then to find a way to inform the most people about your story. Olsher's hint was to assume your audience knows nothing. He stated that one could avoid the risk of coming off as the "expert" reporter by letting the subjects tell the story.
What follows are more ideas I found helpful:

1) Let tape run while going in and out of an interview to collect sound.

2) Always collect background noise after your interview by putting the mike in front of the interviewee's face for a good 30 seconds without anyone talking.

3) All reporting is good storytelling.

4) H. L. Mencken wrote that stories should have a "symphonic forward thrust" (pace of a poem with forward motion).

5) There should be a balance between script and tape; transitions should be smooth (ask the question: is this advancing the story to the next point?).

6) Use your intuition and your personal style; take risks by trying "new forms and new ways of telling stories" ("Study Guide", 5).

7) Olsher's style frequently follows the structure of a Shakespearean drama: exposition (plot and characters introduced); rising action (conflict and plot develop); climax (conflict needs to be resolved); falling action (resolution); denouement (conclusion is consistent with story and audience satisfied).

8) Take the role of a tour guide.

"Grammar and Usage"

I really hated this session! My knowledge (or lack thereof) of "proper English" is a constant source of frustration for me--and my editors. In the "Study Guide" (with accompanying tape), Marcus Rosenbaum provided reasons for using
"proper English," along with sentences which needed corrections for grammar and usage. While it was obvious to me that the use of correct grammar and words accurately portraying my subject was necessary in order to make myself understood, I never considered the element of trust which the proper use of language can inspire in an audience. Rosenbaum emphasized the three C's of good writing: clarity, credibility and consistency. From the "Study Guide": "A good story can be made even better if it is presented in good language."

The "Study Guide" and discussion session provided opportunities for me to assess my particular grammar and usage weaknesses. Usage problems include: 1.) using words which are incorrect in the context of a sentence (often having confused a meaning); 2.) using an incorrect preposition after a verb; 3.) misplacing modifiers. The most frequent grammar problem in my writing is using a plural pronoun with a singular noun (or visa versa). I overwrite consistently, throwing in too many words which clutter a sentence and dilute meaning.

I found two recommendations made by Marcus Rosenbaum particularly helpful. The first piece of advice was the necessity of a good editor--a consistent theme reiterated throughout the writing course. The second helpful hint was the list of reference books which, in Rosenbaum's opinion, should be on every writer's desk: American Public Radio style book, a recent *American Heritage Dictionary*, NPR stylebook, *Sound Reporting* (Marcus D. Rosenbaum and John Dinges, eds.) published by NPR, *The Careful Writer* (Theodore M. Bernstein), Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*, and a pronunciation guide.
There was an interesting discussion which took place concerning the ethical implications of language; in particular, the use of words which may or may not be politically correct. The general consensus from the NPR side of the discussion was that you should avoid sounding politically correct, yet be politically correct. Included in the writing course materials was a 24 page "Usage, Grammar, Pronunciation" guide (with NPR writing guidelines). This guide, and NPR's new publication Sound Reporting (Rosenbaum and Dinges, eds.) contain guidelines for what is politically correct:

abortion: When you must, use the term anti-abortion to refer to people who are opposed to abortion, and use abortion-rights for people who are in favor of legalized abortion ("Study Guide" 2);

lady: Do not use as a synonym for woman ("Study Guide" 11).

Most of the material found in both of these NPR resources (which Rosenbaum and others recommended) are practical and immensely helpful suggestions and reminders. The subject of political correctness, however, reminds me of my own "radical" perspective, and my tendency to use language that I consider mainstream and acceptable, but which, to a larger PBS audience, may be objectionable. Interesting!

"Hard News/Newscasts"

This particular session was not directly related to the kind of writing and producing that I am currently involved in doing; however, several interesting ideas and suggestions were presented.
1) Additional reference sources: a world almanac, an atlas, and a thesaurus.

2) Reporters needs to learn more about their story than they will ever report--you need to know what you are talking about!

3) Take home tapes of your own voice (in whatever capacity) regularly and study them.

4) Always check your sources of information; also attribute your information to your source.

5) A newscast should consist of either "hard" news, or news which is interesting to many people--optimally both are included.

6) Always attempt to write using an active, not passive voice.

7) Carl Kasell stated: you want to sound like you are telling the story, not reading it; that you have a real interest in what you are reporting.

"Features"

Metaphysically speaking, this session was the entire reason for my participation in this course. Margot Adler, the spiritual writer, was a familiar persona, but Margot Adler, the NPR features journalist, was a surprise discovery. I did not know that Adler was a radio personality doing what she refers to as "anthropological journalism" or, what Roy Peter Clark (in the "Study Guide") refers to as "culture broadly defined. . .the life forces. . .the kinds of things that connect people together" (2). This session provided some new and challenging perspectives which fit more closely with my own feminist ideals and personal style.
In this session, Adler discussed her reporting philosophy and style, as well as some concrete approaches to the interviewing and writing that she does. The agenda she takes into her work is decidedly political: to "turn the world upside down; to take standard perceptions and throw them away; to start out with an obvious thought and smash it" ("Study Guide" 3). In one of Adler's features (presented on tape and transcribed in the "Study Guide") she goes to the underworld--the NY city subway tunnels--to see how its homeless inhabitants live. The two "myths smashed" in this story are that homeless shelters may not be safe alternatives for some individuals who value more independent living situations with familiar dangers; and homeless persons are not all unemployed, in fact, many have regular jobs. Adler's stories are multi-dimensional, often with a plot and subplot. While the homeless were the main focus of the story, the subplot which developed had to do with the transit police's changing perceptions of the homeless. One of the officers told an anecdote about an event which called his attention to the fact that he had stopped describing the homeless as "bums," that he had replaced that stereotype with compassion and empathy for individuals and their circumstances. The transit police served as narrative guides for the story. Adler recommended looking for such "guides" in the interview process for help in telling the story.

Adler described her stories as journeys to where the world is more complex and transformative. She subscribes to Noam Chomsky's view of the necessity to redefine news and politics (working to expand the definitions as they are currently being used by the media). Adler suggests that with every potential story, a
reporter/writer ask: 1) What is different about this story? 2) What will someone care about fifty years down the road? 3) What are the broader issues? Adler's features, more than any I have heard on NPR, focus on the knowledge of ordinary people. There are layers of symbolism in her stories, which I find refreshing and valuable (specifically for the purpose of redefining "news" and politics).

There were many specifics offered in this session about the interview and writing process. Adler makes the distinction between being a voyeuristic interviewer and an interviewer who considers him/herself an equal participant in the process. She approaches her subjects with respect, as experts in a world unfamiliar to the journalist (insiders versus outsiders). In describing the art of an interview, Adler talked about the necessity of engendering trust and being willing to be open about yourself, as an interviewer, so that others will respond with openness. Questions, Adler stated, should be serious, respectful and loving. She takes no "set" questions into her interview, yet she almost always asks the subject, at some point, what they have learned, and how are they different. Adler mentioned, as an aside, that it helps to allow for long pauses in an interview, to wait for the subject to respond. Adler's silent pact with each interviewee/subject: when the person hears the piece on the air, within 3 1/2 minutes they should be okay listening to themselves. They then phone her to say how accurately she captured their ideas and issues.

Upon completing her interview, Adler returns home to listen to the tape, logging (though not completely) the contents, putting stars next to the "good stuff." She then dubs off 45 minutes of the best of her tape and puts 15 minutes or so of
ambiance onto a second dubbed tape. Next she listens to the best material on the
dubbed tape again. In the process of this listening, she makes an exact list of the
new cut and thinks about order. Adler looks to the tape to define the story. She
begins with a lead, puts the tape in a first draft order, and begins the writing. From
the first draft tape and writing, she polishes the piece, then puts it aside for day.
The next day she often changes things, and wrestles with the ending. According to
Adler, to create effective endings, the interviewer/editor needs to pay attention to
climax. She stresses the importance of time to allow ideas to "fulminate." The last
step in Adler's production process is to add the background sound.

Adler uses several techniques which I love in her stories. She incorporates
dialogue in narrative to make people more real and to add tension and jargon. She
describes situations using several senses--and does so beautifully. And, lastly, she
incorporates "I" (herself) a lot. (There was much discussion, both in the "Study
Guide"/tape session and the live radio session about knowing when to incorporate
the "I," oneself, as subject.) She suggests watching out for "gratuitous situations";
your role as interviewer is really only as a conduit to a subject. She does, however,
icorporate her impressions of events or her feelings about events if it brings
something special to the story to "help make it."

I have used quite a bit of paper in summarizing what I found to be the
important parts of this session--indication of my enthusiasm. I hope to be able to
consult these notes often to make my own work as dynamic and revolutionary as I
find Adler's to be. I also intend to follow her recommendations by reading two
writers whose ideas about politics, the media, and writing greatly influenced her: George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language" and Noam Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media.
THE PROTOTYPE FOR

WOMEN'S PROFILES
THE PROTOTYPE FOR WOMEN'S PROFILES

My first graduate course was entitled "Women Writers." It was there that I was introduced, for the first time, to the narratives of Virginia Woolf, Toni Morrison, Marge Piercy, Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer. I was introduced to the experiences and ideas of bell hooks, Adrienne Rich, Patricia Hill Collins, Mary Daly, and Sandra Harding in the next course, "Feminist Thought." More courses, disciplines and voices (those of writers, friends, teachers) followed: Anita Clair Fellman, Gerda Lerner, Maxine Hong Kingston, Carol Gilligan, Lee Ellen Knight, Carolyn Heilbrun, Ann Oakley, Elaine Hall, Zora Neale Hurston, Alexandra Kollontai, Hildegard of Bingen, Marguerite Porette, Ethel Hellman, Alice Walker, Mary Shelley, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and many, many others. The words, the stories, and the struggles of these women, women of diverse cultures, race and class, are the traditions from which Women’s Profiles emerges.

Women’s Profiles is a radio forum for the narratives of, primarily, Hampton Roads women. I have created an environment or structure, which has as its operating premise feminist/humanist ideals and which incorporates my experiences as student and intern. Those ideals begin with the partnership of women scholars and activists who will work with the producers of the show. Next, they embrace a particular methodology (focusing on the "subject") of oral history narrative and interview style. They also include locating women narrators as subjects who represent...
a diversity of individual experiences and truths. Finally, they include the ideal of women's voices at the center of all points in the process of Women's Profiles. Attainable and challenging goals.

This section of my notebook contains the essential requirements for this creative project: program format, the establishment of the partnership for Women's Profiles, a grant proposal, and a "potential" script in written form. The first three requirements are all incorporated in the grant proposal, which has been submitted for review to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH). The script (10 minutes) is one which will also be submitted to VFH in the final proposal and is an example of the kind of show I/we envision.

Following the script are three forms which I have developed using oral history resource books. I include them because they (or others like them) are essential to both the management and archival efforts in any oral history/media project. I have written the release form (which must be signed by interviewees before any taped material can be aired) in accordance with the goals of the project: to keep woman/subject/narrator central. Once production begins on Women's Profiles, however, it is conceivable that one or more of the forms could be changed as circumstances require.

On to the "middle stage" in the birth process of this creative project! All the work that's gone before has prepared me for this point; still, the process isn't any easier. There's no turning back now.
Dear Staff,

Enclosed is a copy of our draft proposal for a project we are calling Women's Profiles. We would like to take advantage of your offer to review this proposal. It is not complete in some areas, which will become apparent as you read it. There are two particular areas of this project which we are still developing, the budget and the advisory group, or "partnership." If you could comment on some of our initial plans for those areas, as well as the rest of the proposal, it would be greatly appreciated.

We would like to submit a final proposal by mid-April, to meet the May 1st deadline. Your suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Robyn Cochran  
(804)489-9476  
Producer
GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

SPONSOR: WHRO/WHRV FM Public Radio for Hampton Roads
Address: 5200 Hampton Boulevard
Norfolk, Virginia 23508-1598
Phone: (804) 489-9476

US CONG. DISTRICT: 1st, 2nd, 4th

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Betty Luse, Public Affairs Producer

FISCAL AGENT: Raymond Jones, Vice President Public Radio Services, Station Manager

WORKING PROJECT TITLE: Women’s Profiles

PROJECTED AIR DATE: Summer, 1993

ESTIMATED AUDIENCE: 72,000 12+ Weekly Cume

FORMAT AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT:

Women’s Profiles is a series of short radio programs designed to highlight women’s lives: in particular, women of southeast Virginia and extending to northeastern North Carolina. By presenting an ongoing series of seven minute profile/oral histories we hope to illuminate the choices, issues and concerns of many women across a wide spectrum of culture, race and class. The goals of this program are: 1) to inform and inspire the public radio listeners of WHRO/WHRV by presenting women in their communities whose contributions have been and continue to be important; and 2) to provide women a forum for sharing their experiences, ideas and knowledge. These women will represent a variety of roles: writers, judges, musicians, shipyard workers, activists and healers, to name a few. We will also focus on issues which deeply affect women’s lives; mother-daughter relationships, gynecology and birth practices, feminism, spirituality, etc.

Women’s Profiles will be a resource of women’s voices, women’s stories and women’s ideas—the only one of its kind in the Hampton Roads radio market.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Betty Luse, Public Affairs Producer

PRODUCER: Robyn Cochran

EDITOR/ENGINEER: Doug Thiele

(The proposed project is a new activity for which funds have not previously been sought.)
VFH GRANT PROJECT NARRATIVE

Women's Profiles is the working title of a radio program consisting of 20-25 modular shows (each 10 minutes long) featuring particular women and/or issues which affect women's lives. The goals for this project stem from a desire on the part of the public radio management team to spotlight the accomplishments of local women and, in doing so, to add to the movement (begun by feminist scholarship) to rectify the absence of women's narratives in the media. The first goal of Women's Profiles is to inform and inspire the listeners of WHRO/WHRV by presenting local community women whose contributions have been and continue to be important. The second goal is to provide women a forum for communicating their experiences, ideas and knowledge.

This program is informed by two basic assumptions which will, in turn, be the guiding principle for each contact made, each interview conducted, each piece of research done, and each studio production session completed. The first assumption is a basic humanistic one: the experience/s of every individual offer a valid and valuable truth which broadens the definition of humankind. Every human voice is precious and unique, yet women's voices (thus women's definitions of truth) continue to be either marginalized or silenced. Women's Profiles meets the goals of the humanities by valuing women's experiences--women's truths--and bringing voice to those who have not been heard.
The second assumption addresses the continued need for women to be in contact with the experiences and truths of other women. In *Writing a Women’s Life*, humanities scholar and feminist author Carolyn G. Heilbrun puts forth her belief that now, more than ever, women need to tell each other their own stories. She writes:

As long as women are isolated one from the other, not allowed to offer other women the most personal accounts of their lives, they will not be part of any narrative of their own. Like Penelope awaiting Ulysses, weaving and unweaving, women will be staving off destiny and not inviting or inventing or controlling it (46).

Women are more than the subjects of Women’s Profiles: they are at the center; they are the narrators. Women’s Profiles will add to the necessary dialogue between women (and between women and men) by highlighting women’s values, priorities and life-choices within social and historical contexts which have been influenced by race, class and gender.

We hope that in our presentation of these narratives, the Hampton Roads audience will hear of many unique and innovative forms of activism, community involvement, politics, and artistic endeavors. At the same time, we hope to challenge outdated stereotypes of what women could, or should be.
The Methodology

Our approach lies somewhere between a traditional profile piece (who, what, where, when and why is it important to know approach) and a more informal oral history narrative (personal knowledge of events approach). Our narrators will be a diverse collection of Hampton Roads women: women of color, working-class women, lesbian women, women of varying ages, white women, middle and upper-class women. The women of these compelling stories, despite their low profiles, will have made important contributions to their communities and thus be viewed as role models for many.

To place women at the center of their narratives we will seek them out in their own environment rather than ask them into our studio. That environment will provide the background sound for each piece. Women’s Profiles will also incorporate interview guidelines, informed by feminist scholarship, which address the dynamics of the interview process.

There are three specific interview goals for all of the interview work conducted for Women’s Profiles. The first goal is to involve the narrator in the project: 1) thoroughly informing her about the program and its goals; 2) assuring her that any part of the taped interview she does not wish to be "aired" will not be; 3) keeping her informed of the production schedule and air date; 4) acknowledging her for her participation and offering appreciation for sharing her story.

The second interview goal is to insure that the narrator is, in no way, exploited by the interviewer, or the interview process. We hope to avoid this
situation by involving the narrator in the overall project and by following the suggestion of sociologist Ann Oakley. Writing about women interviewing women, Oakley states:

... in most cases, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship (41).

Our interviewers will be women, and, when interviewing women of color, our interviewers may be women of color, particularly when the balance of power is affected by the presence of a white woman carrying tape equipment. Further, as interviewers, we will make sure that we are accessible to our narrators by encouraging them to phone us if they have any questions about the project, or anything which came up in the interview process.

Finally, our third goal in the interview process will be to focus on the subjective experiences of each narrator without "conducting" the interview session by imposing a generic list of questions. While we recognize that the questions an interviewer asks can shape a story, it is our goal to minimize this affect in the interview process (as much as is possible). There will be some questions asked narrative to narrative which will provide continuity for the overall series, questions like: What have you learned from your experiences; what do you view as the biggest challenges which face us today, especially women and children; Who are your heroes and heroines. The challenge of the interviewee will be to listen carefully to a
narrator, asking questions which follow a lead, which ask for clarification or explanation of language used, ask for feelings, or for introspection or retrospection.

Women's Profiles will consist of two categories of shows: those that highlight individual women, and those that highlight issues which affect women. In highlighting issues, one or more women may be interviewed with regard to that issue; however, poetry reading, dramatic readings, letters read (etc.) may be other creative vehicles used to explore women's experiences of particular subjects. It is also possible that women who do not live in Hampton Roads, but are visiting scholars and writers will be the focus of either issue profiles, or longer personal profiles which will air as Women's Profiles specials.

The Work

The projected date to begin the interview/taping sessions is Spring, 1993, with production and airing of Women's Profiles on WHRO/WHRV to take place as soon as Summer, 1993. The project can be broken down into the following areas of work:

1) establish, and consult with, a partnership;
2) locate women narrators;
3) interview women narrators;

1Anderson and Jack discuss interviewee's role in their article "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analysis."
4) edit tape and write script;
5) produce show (combining tape, script, narration and introduction);
6) transcribe scripts;
7) promote program;
8) manage budget;
9) maintain contact with narrators (including an acknowledgement of their participation);
10) solicit local underwriting to support the program for the following year (1994-1995);
11) assess audience response.

The Proposed Budget

The budget to be submitted will ask the VFH for an amount not to exceed five thousand dollars which we will use to pay two salaries: one to Robyn Cochran, producer; the second to Doug Thiele, engineer. Those costs will be matched by "in-kind" contributions of WHRO/WHRV which includes the work of Betty Luse, Executive Producer, in addition to the following: equipment fees, studio use fees, promotion, travel, audience assessment, and acknowledgement of narrators in the form of certificates of appreciation given at a year-end gathering.
The Partnership

Participating in this project will be a team or "partnership," as we have called it, of scholars and activists in the Hampton Roads region. Women of color will be well represented in this partnership, and we will be working closely with Old Dominion University's Women's Studies Program and its Women's Center. Betty Luse, Public Affairs Director of WHRO/WHRV FM, and Robyn Cochran, production assistant and recent ODU graduate with a master's degree in the Humanities will also be members of the partnership (as well as producers).

The partnership will help create goals, locate narrators, offer format suggestions, and broaden the experiential base so that we have a more collective approach in the production process. (It is also possible that members of the partnership will take part in interview process for particular women highlighted in the series.) The partnership will be dedicated to the task of insuring that scholarship, quality and respect are maintained in the production of Women's Profiles.

Promotion and Audience Assessment

We will assess the impact and contribution to Hampton Roads public radio listeners of Women's Profiles by following through on a carefully conceived promotion and evaluation plan. The promotional component of that plan includes
pursuing local written media coverage; spot announcements in advance of the programming; highlighting our new show in the WHRO/WHRV program magazine; and, lastly, sending out announcements to local women's organizations, including ODU's Friends of Women's Studies and Returning Women Students sorority.

After airing close to half our shows we will ask for both listener feedback as well as the feedback of our partnership to ascertain how we are being received locally, and how well we are staying true to our goals of presenting women's diverse experiences in a personal, informative and compelling way. When the series of 20-25 shows has been completed and all of them have been aired, we will again look to various women's organizations in the local community to complete a questionnaire regarding topics for future shows, the impact of individual shows, etc.

Narrative Summary

We believe Women's Profiles will be an important addition to the programming already offered to the WHRO/WHRV public radio audience which extends from southeast Virginia to northeastern North Carolina. It would be the only series of its kind in the Hampton Roads radio market to focus exclusively on women and women's experiences. Women's Profiles will provide a heightened awareness to a largely non-academic, but educated, audience of the contributions which women of diverse race, class and culture have made to their communities.
With a unique format of profile and oral history story-telling, local women will be adding their perspectives on issues which they see as important, not only in their communities but in the world. Our narrators will be reflecting on the nature of relationships and service to others which are both important themes in the humanities. They will serve as, or complement, the voices of other "experts" heard on national and local programming which WHRO/WHRV carries (i.e."Fresh Air"; "Morning Edition"; "Options in Education").

Finally, this project seeks to meet human needs by bringing to voice an array of women. As Ursula K. LeGuin said, in her commencement speech to Bryn Mawr graduates in 1986:

I am sick of the silence of women. I want to hear you speaking all the languages offering your experience as your truth, as human truth, talking about working, about making, about unmaking, about eating, about cooking, about feeding, about taking in seed and giving out life, about feeling, about thinking; about what women do; about what men do; . . . listen to other women, your sisters, your mothers, your grandmothers--if you don't hear them how will you ever understand what your daughter says to you (158-159)?
LAKATA HASIE:

THE WOMAN WITH THE PONIES

A PROPOSED PRODUCTION FOR WHRO/WHRV
PUBLIC RADIO
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR WOMEN’S PROFILES

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: BETTY LUSE
ASSISTANT PRODUCER: ROBYN COCHRAN
SCRIPT AND TAPE EDITOR: ROBYN COCHRAN
WOMEN'S PROFILES: PROMOTIONAL SPOT AND INTRO

(Music begins)

NARRATOR: This is Women's Profiles, a series devoted to women's voices as they are heard throughout the communities of Hampton Roads. I'm Robyn Cochran, and I'll be going to where women work, live and play to talk with them about what's important in their lives. Join me, won't you?

This is Women's Profiles, the series which focuses on the lives and stories of Women in Hampton Roads. I'm Robyn Cochran, and today I travel to Chesapeake and Virginia Beach to tape conversations (plus some singing) with Lakata Hasie, The Woman with The Ponies.

(Music fades)
NARRATOR: My eight year-old daughter loves horses, and has ever since I can remember. It is a love which is shared by the woman who is both her hero and one of her role models; a woman who has been an important part of our life ever since the June day, two years ago when the red truck with the logo on the side which read "Hasie's Party Ponies" pulled up in front of our suburban home.

Lakata Hasie McKeon Sweeney has a small-framed muscular body, reddish-brown hair, a broad effusive smile, and intense blue eyes. She is a woman in great demand. Recently, I was able to sit down with Hasie in her Chesapeake home and, with T.V., family and friends in the background, speak with her about her personal life, her business, and her love for animals, especially, horses.

HASIE: My earliest memories are the smell of them, and the look into these huge, giant eyes that touched my soul. Their soft nickering when they talk and communicate, their pawing of the ground, their tossing their mane and their head—all their expressions was so easy for me to read and understand them. Other people didn’t know what they were saying, but I did.

It's been a life long love affair. I mucked and cleaned out stalls for riding privileges. I mucked and cleaned out stalls and trained other people's animals for riding lessons. My skill is a combination of just life long energy with the animals plus keen observation of their behaviors, their interactions with two-leggeds, and their interactions amongst themselves. And that's where I fit in.

SONG: (Recorded on Hasie's phone message:) Head 'em up, move 'em out. Rollin', Rollin', Rollin', Hasie's Party Ponies, Get these ponies rollin', Hi Ho. Head 'em up,
SONG: head 'em up, Dress 'em up, Dress 'em up, feed 'em up, feed 'em up, Hi Ho.

NARRATOR: You told me a long time ago how Hasie's Party Ponies came to be, would you tell that story again?

HASIE: I discovered my son was hearing impaired, and therefore handicapped. To pay for his therapy, his auditory trainer, his close-captioned T.V. device, his hearing aids required a lot of money, and at the time I didn't have that much money or resources to get any. But, my son needed this, and a mother is a mother of invention when it comes to their children--they come first.

So, therefore, I started the business that came in a dream, Hasie's Party Ponies. The original dream, the name and title of my business was Party Ponies, and I was driving a truck and it said: birthdays, preschool, company picnics on the side of this little logo of a pony with balloons coming out of its mouth.

I thought about this whole idea for a long time. I talked to mothers and I talked to other horse related people in my industry. Mothers were very enthusiastic about it; the horse related people said its been tried before, but could not be done. The very week that I thought about just canning the idea and not trying was--I was reading a Reader's Digest. In this Reader's Digest I opened up to a page and it showed a series of light bulbs getting dimmer and dimmer. It got dimmer with a negative comment, and every single negative comment made that bright idea darker, until in the end there was darkness. And because of that Reader's Digest I decided I was not going to let anybody--I don't care who they were or how much input they had or influence they had over me--destroy my bright idea.

NARRATOR: Lakata Hasie is a woman who was born with determination. Originally from a small coastal town in Canada, Hasie calls herself a "half-breed" Indian-
NARRATOR: Abenaki and French Canadian. At age three she was given the Abenaki name for female moose when she put her hand on the nose of a wild, injured moose who had wandered into her back yard. At age 16, after a fight with her abusive adoptive father, she left home to make her own way. She has supported herself with a variety of jobs, from door-to-door insurance sales to mental health work at Southeastern Training Center for the mentally retarded.

Today, at age 40, Hasie operates a thriving pony party business—which brings horses, sheep, goats, even a very large Newfoundland dog to the customer's door—all with the help of her sister, Charlie, and Joe, the man Hasie recently married. She also cares for and trains all of her animals, tends to the needs of her two sons (Philip and Joey), is working on her black belt in Karate, and, when there is time to spare, gets out her paints and creates portraits and landscapes depicting Native American peoples and symbols.

HASIE: My business, when I first opened up in '84, I had no idea that it was going to grow to the level it has for the children. I feel I have an obligation to the children in Tidewater area to teach them about four-leggeds, that they can be a joy, even farm animals that they don't get to see. To touch a sheep, to feel a goat's horn, to feel that soft, soft muzzle of a horse just pushing his nose up into your hand, there's nothing that can express those teachings for them.

ANIMAL SOUNDS: (Sheep, goats, pigs, feed being dumped into troughs)

HASIE: Can't help but love 'em. They're such beautiful animals, you know.

CHRISSY: (Teen helper) You have such a nice farm, it's like something you would read in a story book, everything is so loving.
HASIE: Well, Chrissy, it's going to get better as time goes on, it's not the way I want it yet. I'm working on it. It's really important for me to have this farm exactly like I want it for my babies.

NARRATOR: Chrissy is one of the many teens and pre-teens who come to Hasie's farm to work the parties as helpers--most often in exchange for riding lessons, but also to earn tips. This is the vocation my daughter aspires to. These "horse buddy kids," as Hasie fondly refers to them, arrive early to brush and groom the horses, then accompany Hasie or Charlie to parties where they spend the day leading ponies and riders around grassy yards. Many of Hasie's helpers have been with her for years.

HASIE: But it's not just the earning of tips, it's the responsibility, its the communication with the animals on the farm, getting to know all my animals on an intimate level and being responsible for them. Plus my preaching, preaching, preaching on grades and, you know, right conduct, and good manners and social behaviors. They learn skills here that they won't learn flipping a hamburger. There they are part of a big organized machine, here you are not a machine, you are part of the farm.

And some of the children that originally started that were my little horse buddy kids now are in college for Vet school at Virginia Tech. It's amazing. They have grown up. One little girl, Melanie, she now has her own horses and she breaks and trains and teaches. So the influence will continue. And these children, now that have gone on to their own life, they see a woman working her own business; that is a feature in their mind that they don't have to work for somebody else, that they can open up their own business one day, because I did it. The kids look up to me and I always want to be at the best behavior, in the best attitude, and always something positive for them.
(Drum beat and singing begin under voice.) (Drum and singing come up.) That's a very simple song. You all can learn that very easily. All the little children that work with me--I teach it to them on the road.

My daughter invited Hasie to come and speak to her second grade classmates. She stood proudly, as she introduced her friend, Lakata Hasie: "She's Native American," she said, "and she has a lot of ponies."

I always feel they're people that need, and have a need and come into my life, and I feel like Great Spirit sent them here for a reason. I like to be in service in all ways that Great Spirit has manifest it for me to be of service. Any which way it happens then I follow with that energy, and I go with it, go with that flow.

(Native American song ending on drum beats.)
ORAL HISTORY FORMS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tape Number

Narrator: __________________________________________________________________________

Occupation/Business: __________________________________________________________________________

Place of Interview: __________________________________________________________________________

Date of Interview: ________________ Session Length: __________

Project Title: __________________________________________________________________________

Interviewer: __________________________________________________________________________

Others Present: __________________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address (Narrator): __________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________ Phone: ________________

CONTENTS:

Counter

Subject

89 Women's Profiles
INTERVIEW HISTORY

Narrator: ______________________________________________________

Interviewer: ____________________________________________________

Series: __________________________________________________________

Interview Dates/Times/Descriptions

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Personal/Biographical Information and Description of Narrator

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Release Form: Signed _________________________ Unsigned: _____
SAMPLE RELEASE FORM

I understand that this interview (both in tape and written transcript form), conducted by ____________________________, representing ____________________________, is now the property of ____________________________. I give my consent to the use of this interview for the program ________________, as it has been described to me. Further, I understand that I will in no way receive any monetary compensation for my participation in this interview, nor for the broadcast of any portion of this interview, nor for the broadcast of any portion of this interview, both in the local and national public radio market. Further, I have been informed that any portion of this interview which I, at this time, do not wish to be used for broadcast purposes will not be used.

Further conditions I wish to add:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Intervener’s Name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________
SPEAKING AND LISTENING
It is with great difficulty that I write this final section’s introduction. Letting go of this creative project represents an ending to a way of life that has sustained and nurtured me for the last three years.

As a women’s studies/humanities student I have had the privilege of working with many women students and faculty to understand our own (and each others’) circumstances as they have been shaped and influenced by a patriarchal, racist society. In the process of forming relationships, both inside and outside of classrooms, with peers as well as women writers or historical figures, we shared personal stories (along with plenty of tears and laughter), we made connections, and we gained knowledge and personal growth. My academic work placed women at the center, which has been a very powerful experience for me--it is no coincidence that I have sought a potential source of work to replace my unique learning environment.

The birth process of Women’s Profiles, with a gestation period coinciding with my last academic year, is connected to my personal process of moving from object to subject and finding my "liberated voice" (hooks 9). In section one, my work journal and BCC script depict my beginning efforts to learn production skills and establish relationships at WHRV. In section two, I relied on my scholarship, my support network and my newly acquired skills to develop the theoretical foundation for Women’s Profiles as a prototype. The sample script, based on my conversations
with Lakata Hasie, represents one type of show within the series of Women's Profiles that I/we envision producing.

All of the work in the beginning and middle stages of this birthing has been, largely, a matter of finding the right words, and committing them to paper. But, as Women's Profiles took shape, I was encouraged to see it in a broader context. I elected to use my voice as an advocate both for scholarship which meets the needs of an individual and for media programming which focuses on women. As Women's Profiles moves toward its crowning moments, I have become a subject/narrator to present this creative project/radio-show-to-be to an audience outside of Old Domininion University and WHRV FM radio.

The final section of this creative project is an optimistic glimpse of the future; one where the experiences of women are incorporated into both scholarship and work, one where women (across race, class, and culture) are gaining visibility, voice, and power.
CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

Graduate Student Conference

FEMINISM: THE THIRD WAVE

February 26th - 28th, 1993
The Pennsylvania State University

CALL FOR PAPERS

The third wave of feminism is comprised of a new generation of feminist. Coming of age in an era labelled "post-feminist," the third wave confronts attitudes which link feminism with man-hating and the denigration of family values. Building on the foundation of the second wave of feminist activists during the 60's and 70's, a younger generation is working to invigorate the feminist movement at a time when the political environment has systematically attempted to declare it dead.

This conference intends to bring together graduate students from the northeast who are working on feminist projects. The conference will provide an opportunity for students to create change by merging boundaries across disciplines which address issues of ethnicity, race, sexual diversity, gender, religion and class. The goal is to further and deepen our understanding of feminist roots, current realities and futures.

We seek papers that emphasize the following categories:

- Developing an agenda for change
- Assessing the current status of feminism
- Recognition of women of the second wave
- Creating links between scholarship and activism
- Building coalitions across diverse groups of women

We seek proposals from students and other members of the feminist community. A variety of formats (e.g. presentations, performance art, workshops and interactive dialogues) are welcome. People from all disciplines are encouraged to submit papers. Please send two copies of the proposal, which should be no more than 1 page in length. Include your name, address and day time phone number.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS: DECEMBER 1, 1992

Send proposals and requests for information to:

Graduate Student Conference
Women's Studies Program
13 Sparks Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-4025
Fax (814) 865-3641
CONFERENCE LETTERS

ROBYN COCHRAN
613 BERKLEY PLACE
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23452
(804) 486-6978

November 19th, 1992

Graduate Student Conference
Women's Studies Program
13 Sparks Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA. 16802

Dear Conference Organizers:

I am a Women's Studies/Humanities graduate student, finishing my last year at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. For the past year I have been working as a student intern at our local public radio station in public affairs. I am currently in the process of organizing a committee to oversee my graduate project, which is to co-produce a short-format profile show featuring a veritable rainbow of women--women of different cultures, class, race, profession, religious beliefs and historical time periods.

I would like to bring to "Feminism: The Third Wave" a presentation which outlines the process of: getting an internship at a public radio station; working for a year in varied capacities at the station (including helping to produce a thirty minute documentary about educating parents and pre-schoolers, and witnessing my boss, a new friend and mentor, die of cancer); and my work to date on "Women's Profiles." I believe my presentation would work well with a panel of other students who have brought their scholarship into their work through internships, graduate projects, or papers. I would also be willing to develop a paper for a presentation or workshop emphasizing in either format the many factors which, in my view, must accompany the successful blending of feminism, community, work, family and school.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding this proposal. And, whether or not I am presenting my experiences, I am excited about attending this conference. I consider myself a young second and older third wave feminist who has never strayed too far from my ideals, but, who, nevertheless, needs regular injections of fresh ideas, enthusiasm and optimism about the future, and practical suggestions for living as, as Marge Piercy would say, "strong women."

In Sisterhood,
January 6, 1993

Dear Participant:

Congratulations!! We are pleased to inform you that your abstract has been accepted for the Feminism: The Third Wave conference to be held at Penn State University, February 26-28, 1993. Your session will be held on Saturday, February 27, 1993. Presentations should not exceed fifteen minutes in length (about 8 double spaced pages) unless you are part of a group presentation or roundtable discussion.

Enclosed you will find a packet with a map of the State College area and a list of motel accommodations (unfortunately conference rates are not available). We encourage you to make your motel reservations as soon as possible for best availability. Also enclosed is a registration form for the conference, please indicate if you need audio-visual equipment (slide projector, VCR, or overhead) so we can make necessary arrangements.

Registration begins Friday, February 26 at 5:00 P.M. in 13 Sparks Building. At 8:00 P.M. Friday evening we will officially begin the conference with performance theater. Presentations, workshops, and interactive discussions will take place all day Saturday and Sunday morning. Saturday evening we will have a drumming/pulsing workshop with Layne Redmond, a drummer who specializes in the history of women, ritual, and drumming. The conference will close on Sunday with a complimentary lunch and discussion of what we can do in our communities and on our campuses to advance the feminist agenda. A book table will be available throughout the conference with all your favorite feminist works.

We are very excited about the conference and look forward to your participation. The weekend will be a great opportunity to share ideas and experiences. Please let us know if you plan to attend the conference by returning the enclosed registration form and your $10.00 registration fee (checks payable to Penn State University) by February 1, 1993. If you have any questions about the conference contact Kathy Foster (814) 863-4026.

See you at the conference!!

Sincerely,

Kelly Ward
Co-Chair, Feminism: The Third Wave
Graduate Student Conference
"FEMINISM: THE THIRD WAVE" CONFERENCE

I attended Penn State's "Feminism: The Third Wave" conference as both graduate student in attendance and presenter. This is a summary of my experiences from both perspectives, and it is followed by the paper I presented.

I had never been to central Pennsylvania or State College before, and I was quite taken with the snow-covered hills, the quaint townships and the large, impressive Penn State campus. This was not only a conference weekend--and my first for presenting a paper--but a family get-away as well. While I spent the better part of two days shuffling between classrooms, my kids took their Dad sledding--a first for two children born and raised in "The South." While it actually worked to combine family with academic interests (I had had my doubts), I would have been much more relaxed and enjoyed both experiences more had I finished the paper I was to present a good week in advance--my biggest lesson of the weekend.

I attended four sessions total, including my own and an excellent slide presentation given by Layne Redmond about the frame drum. The first session I attended reaffirmed my life choice to pursue women's studies via the humanities, versus the field of psychology. There were three studies dealing with "Gender as a Variable," and, while the work is no doubt important, there was nothing new about the results. One study showed that men were more often chosen as "leader types"
in taped interviews. Another study showed that women in non-traditional work settings are still being seen as tokens, which has a related effect on their self-confidence. The third and final project presented was understandable only to those very familiar with Bem's Sex Role Inventory and "gender schematics"—unfamiliar territory to me.

The most compelling and disturbing sessions were the second and third I attended, both dealing with feminism and inclusion. In the second session, entitled "The Diversity of Women," LaVerne Gyant, director of the black studies program at Penn State, expressed her frustration and anger on behalf of her students who sit in women's studies classes and hear nothing about their experiences of racism and sexism. Gyant was eloquent and brutal in her exhortation to our largely white audience to look more closely at the dynamics of oppression "lest we become the oppressors."

Gyant said many things that made me stop and think. White women talk about rape being a violent crime, Gyant said, when for black women throughout history, rape was/is only one form of violence experienced on a larger continuum of crimes of violence and denigration. White women act as if sexual harassment and abuse are something new, when black women, as Gyant pointed out, have been dealing with those problems—overshadowed by a conspiracy of silence—for at least a couple of hundred years. Women's studies courses, she said, must talk about the oppression felt by black women long before the late 19th and early 20th century. And we, as white women's studies teachers, must incorporate more of the dissident,
angry, radical black voices in our classes and go beyond the "token" black women, like Sojourner Truth and Alice Walker. Black women students who may be in a women's studies course for the first time must not be asked to leave their race to be a feminist. They still have to live in a racist world, Gyant reminded us.

Jenice View, who presented her work on creating "Leadership-Partnerships" in the black community echoed Gyant's frustrations with organizations wanting black participation, yet having no idea what the issues are for blacks in their communities. View's suggestions were to include women of color in the planning stages of projects; to start where black women are by finding out what they are already doing to meet the needs of their communities; and to search for commonalities between black and white communities in order to form agendas and strategies. Jenice View also noted the importance of honoring black women's commitments first to their communities and to their black sisters and black brothers. "We may bring our black brothers with us," she said.

The third session focused on how "feminism" is received on the international scene. Interestingly enough, this panel discussion began in a women's studies classroom in the U.S. with examples of student reactions to the word "feminist." Similar reactions were also reflected by respondents from Spain, Nigeria and Morocco: man-hater, radical, liberal, lesbian, along with the international addition of capitalist and imperialist. While in these other countries women were doing work to "lift" the status of their sisters--promoting equal education, better health care, greater access to the professions--they were rarely calling their activism "feminist."
The women who represented each of these different countries on the panel, while knowledgeable of Western feminism, voiced their skepticism about a movement informed by a capitalist/individualist ideology. They stressed the need for greater emphasis on the communal over the individual, and the importance of motherhood and family structures which help to elevate the status of women in their societies.

I found myself wanting to get defensive in all of these discussions—the same way white males must feel in women's studies courses. I also found myself wishing I had taken more courses which focused on women in other countries, or women of color and their experiences in the U.S. I also found myself nodding in agreement with others who suggested that the U.S. feminist movement work harder at inclusion, continue to update agendas with leadership from women of color, and be more willing to appear radical by questioning capitalist ideologies and the politics of the "individual."

The final session, the one in which I presented my paper, was Sunday morning. This session felt less adversarial, and our content and topics often overlapped. The first presenter gave the course outline which she had been using for a course on female friendships. I followed her with my discussion on blending scholarship, activism and work—which included discussion of the necessity of women's support and friendships. The woman that followed my talk presented her Ph.D. dissertation on the therapeutic and rehabilitative possibilities of writing workshops for women prisoners. She talked about the empowering experience of sharing stories, which led to expanded discussion of the ideas in my presentation.
I was very anxious before presenting my paper. I found myself engaged in a continual internal battle to defend my work because it was not scholarly (as many presentations were), and, therefore, surely not that important. When I went into the classroom where I was to present Sunday morning, I was astounded to find it filled with more than 30 women. Committed to my final draft—which I had reworked just the night before—I was more than ready to get things over with. To my surprise and delight, the response was very positive. My tone was light and humorous, while at the same time serious, realistic, and positive. Before leaving our meeting room, I spoke to several women who had done similar work and were curious about my feminist oral history approach or who had information to share with me. One woman asked me if she could get a copy of my talk to send to her sister who was experiencing, she said, "similar things."

Unfortunately, I had to leave the conference (to begin our eight hour drive home) before the final lecture given by Dr. Carolyn Sachs, acting director of the Penn State Women's Studies program. She was to speak on an article by Angela Davis regarding inclusion and third wave feminist activism. I would have liked the closure that that session undoubtedly provided. By the end of the weekend, I felt as if I had had a crash course in "what feminism isn't" and "women-continuing-to-do-work-in-support-of-other-women (and men) while-standing-in-the-midst-of-a crowd-of-critics." We still have so far to go! The challenge is, of course, to go beyond the classroom with our ideas, to make the work happen, and to be inclusive. The fun part was sharing my work, hearing Layne Redmond play her drums, meeting new and
interesting people at the bed and breakfast, and seeing glowing pink-cheeked children exhausted from kicking, running, eating, throwing, stomping, rolling and sledding in/on/over the snow.
CONFERECE SCHEDULE
Graduate Student Conference

FEMINISM: THE THIRD WAVE

February 26th - 28th, 1993
The Pennsylvania State University

8:40 - 10:00  Paper Session I: Open Topic
Room: 174 Willard Bldg.  Moderator: Linda LaSalle

"Female Friendship Course"
Julia M. Taylor, Athens, Ohio

"Bringing Together Scholarship, Activism, and Work"
Robyn Cochran, Old Dominion University

"The Writings of Women Prisoners: Voices from the Margins"
Susan Ross, Kutztown University

"Leadership Development for Women: Toward a Model of our Own"
Judith M. Curley, Penn State

10:15 - 12:00  ACTIVISM: STRATEGIES and OPPORTUNITIES
Room: 112 Kern Bldg.  Moderator: Linda LaSalle

Community Activism
Centre County Women's Resource Center

Campus Activism
Womyn's Concerns

National Activism
Ni-Ta-Nee Chapter of NOW

12:15  Lunch  Otto's (Kern Bldg.)
A vegetarian lunch will be provided for everyone registered for the conference.
CONFERENCE SPEECH

PAPER PRESENTED AT: Graduate Student Conference, Feminism: The Third Wave
DATE: February 28th, 1993
PLACE: Pennsylvania State University

I'm going to be talking this morning about a program called Women's Profiles and bringing together scholarship, activism and work with our stories.

First, let me offer you a sense of who I am (today) with a glimpse of where I've been. My closet persona is a Rad-fem who would, if she could, jump into the Utopia in Marge Piercy's book, Woman on the Edge of Time.

The persona before you, Robyn Cochran, is, currently living in The South—a very unique culture in the U.S. I'm a full-time graduate student attempting to finish my degree this May—maybe even before my thirty-sixth birthday. In former lives, I have been a Court Reporter, a lay health worker in a Feminist Women's Clinic, a sex "educator" in an experimental store front called "The Foam Rubber Place," a waitress, and a mental health worker. I have been married to one man for the past 14 years, and for the largest part of the last eight years I have been occupied as an unpaid "domestic worker" and mother of two.

Four years ago, I took a class at Old Dominion University called "On Power." At the first session, the instructor for that class gave a warning: this class will change your life. It did; I began taking women studies courses. I went from changing diapers...
and watching "GH," to reading Virginia Woolf, Marge Piercy, Toni Morrison and many others, all the time feeling more and more powerful. The first three years I took courses a semester at a time, until this year, when I enrolled full-time.

Two years ago, I faced the eventual necessity of doing work which offered monetary compensation and I explored the possibility of becoming a media production assistant--something I had looked into briefly after completing my undergraduate degree. After a series of information interviews, I found myself at the local Public Radio station (WHRO/WHRV in Norfolk Va.) and at the door of a woman to whom I will always be indebted--Vianne Webb. In stark contrast to having heard that I was too old, that T.V. and radio were very competitive etc. etc., Vianne, and her co-worker and good friend, Betty Luse--both committed to the idea of mentoring--welcomed me aboard as an unpaid intern. (Later I learned that Vianne, in her mid-thirties, had been forced to enter paid employment to support herself and her three young children.)

I have been in that intern position for almost two years, during which time I have learned a great deal, one of my hardest lessons being Vianne's death (from cancer) this past fall. Originally, I planned on using my internship for graduate course credits, but I changed that plan when I opted for the creative project (over thesis) to fulfill graduation requirements. I envisioned a radio series as my creative project: highlighting a variety of women, their life histories, their choices, their views of their world. And that, to make a long story short, is why I am standing in front of you this morning.
One of the ways I am suggesting that scholarship, activism and work can be brought together is by identifying a specific project in the work that we do which will benefit women and, at the same time, further our academic pursuits. I realize that while some schools offer this kind of opportunity others do not. In this regard we often need to be our own advocates in the academic system—at least initially—to get the kind of education which will further our long term goals. The three members I asked to be on my graduate committee, including our women studies director, Anita Clair Fellman, had been involved in media productions, and were equally enthusiastic about my project proposal. Gaining support within the academic system is crucial to the success of a project such as the one I am engaged in.

Let me give a brief description of the radio program I have proposed: Women’s Profiles will be a resource of women’s voices, women’s stories and women’s ideas—the only one of its kind in the Hampton Roads radio and television market. By presenting an ongoing series of seven minute profile/oral histories we hope to illuminate the choices, issues and concerns of women across a wide spectrum of culture, race and class to be added to the milieu of informative and educational public radio programing.

I am still developing the theoretical basis for the interviews. Currently, I am reading feminist approaches to oral history, looking at what feminist writers in literature, sociology, anthropology and journalism have to say about the challenges of gathering women’s words and women’s stories—as well as the importance of doing so. My creative project is actually a prototype of a radio series, not the completed
product. I did that purposely in order to assure my ability to fulfill my graduation requirements without depending on the radio station's ability to produce the show.

I am responsible for laying the groundwork in preparation for producing this show; this includes writing a project proposal, a grant proposal and establishing an independent advisory-type committee. The grant, which will be submitted to the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities in May, is, in essence, my appeal for a salary, plus a salary for an engineer. I have initiated a "partnership" consisting of community women; women in academia; Betty Luse, who will be the executive producer; and myself. The partnership will help to create goals, locate narrators, offer format suggestions, and broaden the experiential base so that we might have a more collective approach to the production. Yesterday, LaVerne Gyant spoke about bringing women of color in at the planning stages of a project, and that is precisely what I am attempting to do in setting up our partnership. The "partnership" is, in many ways, my advocate in a fairly conservative media system—one which I am new to—helping to insure that activism and scholarship is the basis of Women's Profiles.

Now, this is where my ultimate goals stretch into what, for some, is the radical end of feminism: I am putting myself at the center of the creative project entitled Women's Profiles. (Remember I am talking about two things here: my graduate project which is the prototype of Women's Profiles, and the actual show itself, which we hope to begin production on soon.) I am going to be incorporating my
experiences as an intern (my story), including work which I have completed in the last two years, as background for this project--with excerpts from my work journal where I write about visiting Vianne at her home shortly before she died. The background information represents the social context in which this radio project took/is taking shape. I want my graduate project to be informative and creative on many levels--indeed, how can it be otherwise if it is to be an accurate reflection of myself and my accomplishments in feminist scholarship, activism and work.

Further, what I hope to achieve in this "scrapbook," along with documents which lay the groundwork for Women's Profiles, is a sense of process: pursuing a passion for women's studies through a graduate degree, which led to finding interesting work and securing an internship, which led to blending skills and resources in an effort to affect many women's lives in the form of a radio show. I want to combat the notion one finds in scholarship that life and people are static. We are not. I'm also interested in finding ways to indicate process--movement, change, age--in the produced profiles of women.

I don't have to tell anyone sitting in this room that we learn a lot about ourselves in the process of engaging in feminist activism, scholarship and work; and, in turn, that what we learn shapes what we DO. It was after engaging in feminist scholarship that I came to appreciate the extent to which we are all reflections of our place in time, class, race, culture, and, fundamentally, gender roles. The extent to which I have been able to combine scholarship with work and work with activism is
directly related to my efforts to analyze my own story in terms of how I was shaped by the factors, the isms, I just mentioned. In the past, I have raced out to embrace feminist causes and projects, wanting to be a part of that larger voice to change society, without ever pausing to give a thought to where I fit into that society. Feminist scholarship has given me a great many tools to do that kind of work. I hope that by continuing to own my own experience, by continuing to find time and space in my life to look at how my personal agenda is influencing what I do, and how I do it, so that I can be a more effective advocate for myself and for other women. That is certainly important work for me to do so that the narrator I am with in an interview session will be given an opportunity to share her story in her own words.

In *Writing a Woman's Life*, feminist author Carolyn G. Heilbrun puts forth her belief that now, more than ever, women need to tell each other their own stories. She writes:

> As long as women are isolated one from the other, not allowed to offer other women the most personal accounts of their lives, they will not be part of any narrative of their own. Like Penelope awaiting Ulysses, weaving and unweaving, women will be staving off destiny and not inviting or inventing or controlling it (46).

The future radio program Women's Profiles will add to the necessary dialogue between women (and men) by highlighting women's experiences, choices and truths, and forming narratives which have women at their center. My creative project prototype of Women's Profiles--that scrapbook which earns me my Masters degree--highlights my experiences and places me at the center of all that work. These are
two more examples of bringing together scholarship, activism and work.

Let me add another challenge which we, as women, must be responsible for issued by Ursula K. LeGuin to the graduates of Bryn Mawr in 1986. She said:
". . . listen to other women, your sisters, your mothers, your grandmothers--if you don’t hear them how will you ever understand what your daughter says to you?" This will be my challenge in doing the actual interviews for Women’s Profiles; listening to narrators in a way that allows me to respond with questions which follow a lead, ask for greater depth of feeling, of introspection or of retrospection.

Finally, if, in the last four years, I had not been listened to by other women I would not have been able to bring together my scholarship, activism and work. In a campus feminist support group at ODU called W.I.S.E., in women’s studies courses, in the women’s studies department, and at work, I have made lasting friendships which have sustained me. Let’s face it, we have not changed the world sufficiently such that we aren’t occasionally made to feel very crazy for no other reason, that I have yet to put my finger on, than that of being strong women. My friends keep me sane, and challenge me to be more and more myself.

We are strong women and we need each other if we ever hope to create that utopia, one in which scholarship, activism and work are complements to each other, not separate and distinct, but areas of concern where individuals are at the center, sharing stories and being heard.

Thank you.
From local cable access shows to syndicated newspaper sections, the media have women in their sights.

PAGE 10

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The

wooing of

women

"As a
general
point, I
think it's
essential
that
women have
greater
access to
media."

ANITA FELLMAN,
Old Dominion University

"We want to do something that appeals to women," says Debra Lall, host of 'Defining Women,' a cable access program with a talk show format.
The media seeks a special relationship with female audience

By DEBRA GORDON
Staff writer

Under the bright television lights, before the watchful eyes of 50 women, Wilma stood and, in a low-pitched, halting voice, told of the years of sexual and physical abuse she suffered at the hands of her father and husband.

Several in the audience wiped tears from their eyes.

Then, the program's host asked a psychotherapist to comment on Wilma's story. Though its improvised studio in Chesapeake's vocational education center is airwaves away from the slick network talk shows, "Redefining Women" represents a national media trend: the wooing of the female audience.

The reason for this love dance?

Twenty years after the women's movement began, the media woke up to a waning audience, an audience that now wielded economic clout.

Newspapers were the first to realize they were losing their female audience. In 1991 — a year in which women bought half of all new cars sold in this country — the Newspaper Advertising Bureau released a study showing an almost 18 percent drop in daily readership among adult women during the past 20 years.

It was a rallying war cry.

In the past two years, newspapers have added separate women's sections — like the Chicago Tribune's nationally syndicated Womanews; beefed up beat coverage on women's issues, as in the Charlotte Observer's full-time day care reporter and the St. Paul Pioneer Press' full-time women's health reporter; and expanded coverage of women and family issues throughout the newspaper.

In Hampton Roads, The Virginian-Pilot's Hampton Roads Woman section has been joined by two female-focused magazines, the "Redefining Woman" talk show on public access stations and a syndicated public television news analysis program directed at women. Another locally produced television program and a radio series are in the works.

Nationally, there's cable's 9-year-old Lifetime: "We look at Lifetime as being pro-female, but not anti-male."

And we're noticing this newfound attention. "I actually think it's great to have — as long as the women's sections and these programs are not dealing with frivolous issues," said Linda Williams, president of the Hampton Roads chapter of NOW.

"As a general point, I think it's essential that women have greater access to media," said Anita Fellman, director of the Women's Studies Program at Old Dominion University. "And if these various forms reflect a wide range of women's concerns, beyond the ones normally covered in the media like cooking and decorating and food, then that's very good news."

The originators of these media insist they're not trying to "ghettoize" women's issues. Rather, they strive to provide a forum that speaks to and about women.

"We're simply trying to say that women work, and there should be on broadcast television a program for women who work at a time..."
MEDIA

Continued from Page II

when they're not working that can provide them with information they can use,” said Jane Cohen, vice president of programming and development for Allbritton Television Productions, which produces “Working Woman.” “It’s very different from pandering to women.”

The formats of the various women-targeted media vary but their goals are similar: appeal to women by presenting substantive issues in an accessible, often interactive manner.

While our sample is by no means inclusive, it does provide a perspective of what’s available:

Television, radio

Debra Livelli was surprised when the local access cable show she produced and hosted, “Critter Corner,” proved successful.

“I thought, if people are interested in animal issues, imagine how they’d react if we did something on women’s issues, something with real substance.”

“REDEFINING WOMEN” is the result. The 30-minute talk show is taped at Channel 40 in Chesapeake’s vocational education center and airs over local access stations in Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Chesapeake. It has no budget, no paid staff and no commercial support. But it does have a following.

Every six weeks, more than 50 women spend their Saturday morning sitting on folding brown chairs in a makeshift studio watching Livelli and her guests tape two editions of the show. They do more than watch: 13 minutes of the program is devoted to questions from the audience.

“We want to do timely issues that appeal to women,” explained Livelli. So far, the program has investigated such topics as sexual abuse, crime prevention for women, mid-life dating after divorce and gynecological issues.

Having an all-female audience, she said, enables the women to ask more genuine, open questions. “If there are guys in the audience, they might not get it. Women have a real sisterhood.”

Donna Utz of Chesapeake, a self-defined feminist who has attended two tapings, enjoys the program because of its emphasis and support for women. “I don’t think it’s talking down to women; we need all the support we can get. Women need to stick together on the issues.”

“WORKING WOMAN” doesn’t air in Hampton Roads — yet. That’s something creator Jane Cohen is working on. But it does air in such major markets as Philadelphia, San Francisco and Washington.

The program, which shares the name but not the resources of Working Woman magazine, was created two years ago to reach the enormous pocketbooks of its namesake audience.

“Working women are increasingly sophisticated, affluent, hip to hype and more fragmented and isolated,” said Cohen.

Her show uses a 30-minute magazine format to reach that audience. It spotlights a working woman of the week, provides a two-minute compilation of that week’s news for the working woman, includes a lifestyle segment on such things as travel, health or fitness, and closes with a feminine image, ranging from a poetry reading to visuals of women artists.

The program airs in most markets on Saturday or Sunday mornings as part of news/information programming. Its appeal, says Cohen, is based not on ratings or numbers, but on concept and audience.

“The number of working women has increased over 200 percent since World War II; two-thirds of the millions of information era jobs are held by women, and they’ll take about two-thirds of all new jobs created in the ’90s. We provide an opportunity to reach those women.”
WHAT'S ON THE AIR & IN PRINT

"TO THE CONTRARY" — 30-minute news analysis program originating from Maryland Public Radio and aired on more than 200 public broadcasting stations. Seen in Hampton Roads on WHRO Channel 15 at 11 p.m. Sundays.


"REDEFINING WOMEN" — Local access cable television program that uses a talk-show, audience participation format to highlight issues important to women. Taped every six weeks in Chesapeake. Airs over local access stations in Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Suffolk and Norfolk. Check local listings for times. For information, call Priscilla Kaufman at 547-1748.

"WORKING MOMS" — Planned weekly, 30-minute television program still awaiting sponsorship. Will spotlight issues pertinent to working mothers, whether they

work in or outside the home. Will air over WTVZ Channel 33 once funding obtained. For information, contact John Baggio at 490-1966.

"HAMPTON ROADS WOMAN" — Weekly magazine published Sundays as part of The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star. For information, see Page 2.

"VIRGINIA WOMAN" — Bimonthly magazine published in Richmond available through subscription ($7.50 per year) or in hotel rooms from Virginia Beach to Richmond. Focus on profiles and features. For information, call Rose Marie Gabrielle at 794-2311.

"WOMAN TO WOMAN" — Monthly tabloid distributed free throughout Hampton Roads in supermarkets and hair salons. Focus on features and profiles. For information, call editor Dana Van Wagoner at 588-2238.

"WOMEN'S PROFILE SERIES" — Proposed 8- to 10-minute radio spots on WHRV profiling local women. Awaiting funding. For information, contact Robyn Cochran or Betty Luse at 489-9476.
Take a news analysis program like “Meet the Press,” give it an all-female panel that evaluates the week’s events through a feminine prism and you have “TO THE CONTRARY.”

The 30-minute weekly program is produced by Maryland Public Television and aired on 200 stations, including Hampton Roads’ WHRO (Channel 15).

Each week, host Bonnie Erbe, legal affairs correspondent for Mutual/NBC radio network, is joined by a diverse pool of rotating panelists, including Nina Totenberg, legal affairs correspondent for National Public Radio; Linda Chavez, political commentator for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Julianne Malveaux, economist, writer and faculty member of the African American Studies Department at the University of California, Berkeley; Katherine Bushkin, director of editorial administration, U.S. News & World Report; and Gwen Ifill, New York Times correspondent.

The show’s goal is twofold: to provide a feminine perspective on the news while incorporating the voices of women and minorities who aren’t often heard, said producer Susan Morrison.

Thus, a recent analysis of President Clinton’s economic plan focused on his proposal to create more jobs by improving the infrastructure. Because those jobs are typically in male-dominated professions, the panel explored the concept that an entire area of society would not be helped by the program.

The show is needed, says Morrison, because women view issues differently than men.

“It’s an attitude women have in terms of life: if life were a poker game, men would play five-card draw — trying for something different if things don’t work out; whereas women play seven-card stud: they play with the hand they’re dealt.”

Morrison thinks the female commentators bring a broader perspective to the news because of their broader perspective on life.

“Women manage a house, whether they’re single or married, they manage a life and sometimes coordinate other lives. Men, on the whole, have someone to coordinate their life for them.”

Publications

During the 1980s, Dana Van Wagoner concentrated on the outside of women, teaching them how to dress in her role as fashion consultant. In the ’90s, however, she’s focusing on the internal woman as editor of the new monthly tabloid, WOMAN TO WOMAN.

The magazine began publication in November. Currently, 40,000 copies are distributed free in Hampton Roads.

When Van Wagoner returned to her hometown of Virginia Beach after her divorce last summer, she had no concrete career plans. Then her friend, Steve Beasley, who owns Tidewater Publications, suggested the market was ripe for a woman’s magazine.

“It thought, wow! and immediately I was off with ideas for this magazine,” recalled Van Wagoner. The fact that she didn’t have any publishing or writing experience didn’t phase her. Years of dressing women meant she knew what women wanted.
"Women are asking to be heard, and this way they can."
DANA VAN WAGONER, editor Woman To Woman

The slick newstand magazines treat women like victims, she said. Her magazine focuses on women as survivors. "Women are asking to be heard, and this way they can," she said.

Her goal is to inspire, inform and entertain with articles about local women, women-owned businesses and tips for making women's lives easier.

The articles are written by freelancers, but Van Wagoner attends all interviews herself, often feeling personally renewed when she hears about her subject's accomplishments.

"I want to know who they are; I want to get the full flavor of them. It helps me personalize the magazine," she said.

Rosemarie Gabriele, editor of VIRGINIA WOMAN magazine, knows who her readers are. "If you're looking for a strictly highbrow, female audience and that is your targeted person to buy your merchandise, then you won't find a much better publication than Virginia Woman," she brags.

The 2-year-old magazine, now entering the Hampton Roads market, has been distributed primarily in Richmond. It strives for a broad-based focus, with articles about fashion, restaurant reviews, profiles and career information.

The seeds for the magazine were planted when Gabriele researched a freelance story on rape and incest. She noticed a number of articles elicited sympathy for the offender.

"I was 400 percent appalled," Gabriele said. "I traced it back to the publications; while many had female editors, their publishers were male. I don't have anything against men, I love them all. However, they have a different focus and different way of seeing the world than women do. It seemed we needed to read more articles written by women that were not going through male publishers who were going to put their own focus or their own view into the article."

Despite research that showed 25 publications had failed in the Richmond market in the past few years, she forged ahead, finding a private investor to fund the publication.

Since it was launched in 1990 with 24 pages and a circulation of 15,000, Virginia Woman has grown to 48 pages with a circulation of about 28,000. It's distributed in hotel rooms from Virginia Beach to Richmond and is also available by subscription.

Although Gabriele has yet to earn a salary from the publication, she did break even last year and has tripled its revenues each year.

"I want to promote this image of women and being successful and being in leadership roles, whether it's in the home, workplace or community," she said. "We are winners. I would like for every woman to internalize that and believe it with their heart and soul that they can do anything they set out to do."
In the works

"Working Moms" is still on the drawing board, but that doesn’t stop its originators, video production team Elaine Roberts and Gary Bell, and advertising executive John Baggio, from pitching its potential. Baggio culled the idea from a similar cable television show airing in Chicago called "The Baby Years."

"It’s for women who work in the home and outside the home," said Roberts, who with Bell owns Creative Edge Video in Chesapeake. "It’s for women who don’t have time to talk to other women and who are going through similar situations. It’s a forum for them to tune in and discuss their problems."

Like "Redefining Women," "Working Moms" will incorporate audience participation and local experts commenting on a variety of issues affecting women with children. For instance, the show’s demo tape explored when is the right time to have a second child.

"We see it as providing an emotional lift, a shared experience for women," said Roberts. "A lot of working women feel isolated. This can be a bonding, a sharing of information."

The three are still looking for sponsors, although they have a commitment from Chesapeake General Hospital. WTIZ, Channel 33, has agreed to air the program once funding is obtained.

It doesn’t have a name yet, but public radio intern Robyn Cochran has the concept down cold. She wants to highlight women’s lives through 8- to 10-minute radio profiles in ways that make women human, not stereotypical.

But she doesn’t view her proposal, which would air over WHRV radio, as appealing only to women. "It should appeal to people who are interested in other people, in real human interest stories," she said.

The women profiled should have made a difference, said public affairs producer Betty Luse, "whether we know it or not."

The station will air the profiles once Cochran, a graduate student in ODU’s humanities/women studies program, obtains funding. Production should begin this spring, Luse said, with an air date of late summer.
As the other's words enter our psyche, a process of connection begins between her thoughts and feelings and our thoughts and feelings in response, so that she affects us and we begin to learn from her—about her, about ourselves, and about the world we share in common, especially the world of relationships. Once we let the voice of another enter our psyche, we can no longer claim a detached or objective position. Rather than blurring perspective or clouding judgment with feelings, relationship is the way of knowing, an opening between self and other that creates a channel for discovery, an avenue to knowledge.

(from Meeting at the Crossroads, by Lyn Mikel Brown and Carol Gilligan)
WORKS CITED


