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**LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR, Dr. Valentine M. Moghadam**

As I write these words, New York Governor Eliot Spitzer has resigned and been succeeded by his lieutenant-governor, David Patterson. The revelation of Spitzer's association with a prostitution ring came as a shock to those of us who had been impressed by his zeal in taking on financial and corporate malfeasance. The United States is mired in two crises – one political/military and the other financial/ economic – and it was good to know that at least some members of the establishment were insisting upon ethical standards in the corporate domain and prosecuting those who betrayed the public trust. Then came the exposé of Spitzer's own unethical behavior. Whether or not he was set up and/or deliberately singled out is beside the point. From a feminist perspective, his behavior and downfall have a certain depressing familiarity, and confirm only too well our understanding of the (gendered) nature of power and the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity. It may well be true that one's private sexual behavior has no bearing on the conduct of public office, and in any event should remain private. But

there is no condoning the illegal aspects of the Spitzer affair; nor can one dismiss the unethical matter of the apparently large sums of money transacted for the services of a young sexual worker hired at least once (that we know of) in the course of the former Governor's official travel – all of which was done in a most duplicitous fashion.

Would women in power behave differently? There is some evidence that women are less likely than men to be corrupt. Even the women leaders that progressive feminists are not fond of – Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, Benazir Bhutto, Madeleine Albright, and Condoleeza Rice, with their objectionable political records – have not been accused of corruption or tainted by sexual scandal. So perhaps there is a difference. At the moment, though, it is too soon to tell with certainty. (I should add that my words do not constitute a *sub rosa* endorsement of a certain female candidate in the upcoming national election.) As more women enter the corridors of power

across the globe, hypotheses regarding gender and power will be tested, and research will be able to determine the extent of gender differences.

Turning to our Women's Studies Program, we are embarking on some initiatives that should please faculty and students alike. Area specializations, study abroad, student awards, and a research/policy Center are but four of our plans. Look out for more details in the fall.

Let me end by pointing out – happily – that the Persian New Year is upon us. *Now Rouz* ("new day") is a non-religious holiday celebrated by Iranians, Afghans, Kurds, and others on the first day of spring; it entails a number of lovely rituals as well as joyous encounters with family and friends. Happy spring to everyone!

Val Moghadam  
17 March 2008



## Fall 2008 Course Offerings:

**IDIS 280: Introduction to Women's Studies** (Staff, Multiple Sections)

IDIS 280 is recommended both as an overview for those generally interested in gender and women's issues, and as a foundational course for those committed to more advanced Women's Studies. Though the content will vary in specific sections, 280 will always focus on the intersection of gender with factors such as race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and nationality in U.S. and global contexts. Readings will be interdisciplinary as well as poly-disciplinary, drawing upon such CLA disciplines as literature, history, sociology, psychology, political science, communication and the arts. **Possible topics:** feminism; contemporary and older forms of patriarchy; gender, class, race and sexuality in the home, the workplace, the academy, and the media; language and culture; body image; diversity and differences among women; violence against women; women's movements, and women in politics.

**IDIS 281: Topics in Gender Studies (variable titles)** (Staff, MWF 12:30-1:20 BRNG B254)**IDIS 380: Gender and Multiculturalism** (Section 1/H: Staff, TTh 12:00-1:15 BRNG B254; Section 2: Staff, MWF 3:30-4:20 BRNG B254)

This course introduces students to a broad range of issues raised by the multicultural diversity of women's lives and experiences. It presents the voices of women from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds in the U.S. and other parts of the world to examine how race, class, sexuality, and culture interact in shaping society. Content will vary in each section.

**IDIS 480: Feminist Theory** (L. Graham, TTh 3:00-4:15 BRNG 1260)

This course provides an overview of feminist theory. It is divided into four general topics: (1) The role of women in traditional political thought and the emergence of modern feminist theories. (2) Considerations and contestations of identity. (3) A reexamination and a "rethinking" of basic political concepts and relationships and (4) global challenges.

**IDIS 491M: Sociology** (V. Moghadam, TTh 1:30-2:45 STON 215) cross-listed with SOC 339

The course introduces students to key concepts and major debates in the sociology of development and the study of globalization. In the process, we will examine Marxist, dependency, world-systems, and feminist perspectives on capitalism, imperialism, class, gender, and the prospects available to developing countries.

**IDIS 492: Internship** (Staff, hours arranged)**WOST 680: Feminist Theories and Methods** (P. Boling, TH 4:30-7:20 BRNG 1260) cross-listed POL 651

The unifying theme of this course is embodied experience, knowledge, and thinking. We will read broadly from texts dealing with women's and men's bodies, modes of disciplining the body (diet, exercise, cosmetic surgery, images of beauty), differences along axes of gender, class, race and sexual orientation, issues related to motherhood, standpoint theory, work, demands for gender equality, social constructions of gender, gender as performance, and third world feminism. There is also significant attention to research design, feminist methods and methodologies, and pedagogy; if there is a "slant" to all this, it is through the social sciences and political theory, reflecting my background as a political scientist, but I endeavor to be mindful of the variety of backgrounds from which students come to this course and inclusive in theoretical and methodological approaches.

**WOST 681A: Contemporary Issues in Feminist Scholarship** (A. Decker, W 3:30-6:20pm BRNG 1260)

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar uses feminist theory to critically examine some of the ways in which war and militarism are deeply gendered. We will begin by examining key theoretical debates concerning the gender politics of war. For instance, should feminists be soldiers or pacifists? Can military service "liberate" marginalized populations? Here we will also consider how gender identities become militarized in peacetime and in war.

In the next section, we will examine women's participation in revolutions, nationalist struggles, and contemporary warfare. As part of this discussion, we will be looking at how women's bodies have been strategically utilized as weapons of war and as symbols of peace. We will also pay attention to the gendered dimensions of forced displacement and exile. The third part of the course will focus on the role of the international community in waging war and maintaining peace (e.g. UN Peacekeepers, the International Criminal Court, and humanitarian aid agencies). We will explore how each of these "bodies" is explicitly gendered. During the final weeks of the course, we will examine questions relating to violence and memory. How do women and men differentially experience Truth and Reconciliation Commissions? Who becomes memorialized? Students can expect to engage with a number of different types of texts throughout the course (e.g. films, memoirs, novels, scholarly analyses, court documents, etc.).

## Related Courses:

**COM 381/H: Gender and Feminist Studies in Communication** (R. Jensen, TTh 12:00-1:15)**EDCI 513E: Teaching Bodies** (T. Johnson, TH 4:30-7:20) cross-listed ENGL 696T**EDST 506: History of Women's Education** (A. Knupfer, T 6:00-9:00 p.m.)**HIST 329: History of Women in Modern Europe** (W. Walton, MWF 10:30-11:20 AM UNIV 117)**HIST 492D: Seminar in Historical Topics: Women in African History** (A. Decker, TTh 12:00-1:15)**IDIS 373B / ENGL 396 B: Black Women Writers** (J. Dorsey, TTh 3:00-4:15)**POL 360: Women and the Law** (P. Boling, TTh 10:30-11:45)

## *Retrospective on Pen and Protest: Intellect and Action*

### A Symposium in Honor of Professor Berenice Carroll

Robert L. Oprisko  
March 20, 2008

Dear Sirs and Madams:

The Pen and Protest Symposium in honor of Bernice Carroll, held in the fall of 2007, was a major statement regarding the Women's Studies movement in academia and one with which I am honored to have been affiliated. The symposium embraced something that Prof. Carroll has stressed throughout her career, something that has been emphasized often by Prof. Dotson in her WOST 680 class, that academic writing must use theory to make the world a better place. Without action, ideas are not fully realized.

I was honored to have been in a position that allowed me to meet most everyone at the symposium. I was at the desk, checking people in and solving random problems from technological issues to parking, foodstuffs, and information regarding the status of the games being played that day. Not only were the panels always a lively exchange, but also the atrium in Lawson saw its share of action with old friends joining together for a

lively chat, colleagues exchanging excitedly with regard to a revelation that they had just witnessed from a panel, and introduction of new scholars from both graduate and undergraduate status to true veterans. It was exciting.

The culmination of the event took place at the Purdue Memorial Union for the banquet. There was a true sense of revelry at the opportunity to gather together. Songs, poetry, speeches, flowers, calls to protest, suggestions for writing, all were in abundance. There was an impetus for action and a pervasive feeling that change for the better was possible. Theory for what? If Pen and Protest is held as the standard of feminist scholars, then the construction of a better society becomes possible.

As a scholar of international relations and military theory, it was a pleasure to watch the spreading mirth at the fellowship of the symposium, especially during the banquet. Unlike many academic interactions, which come across as business sales meetings, Pen and Protest offered a glance, if ever so quickly, of victory. As Prof. Carroll has eschewed the "natural connection" between women and peace in "Feminism and Pacifism: Historical and



Theoretical Connections," it would be unwise to believe that the group of women who attended the symposium are incapable of substantially altering the fabric of social reality in the United States and elsewhere. I anticipate a lifetime of enjoying the fruits of the labor that happens here at Purdue University and elsewhere.

Sincerely yours,

Robert L. Oprisko

#### **Spring 2008 Brown Bag Speaker Series:**

January 31, 2008 12:00-1:00 BRNG 7150 "Foodways and Subjectivity in Jumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*," Laura Anh Williams, PhD Candidate.

March 18, 2008 12:00-1:00 Pao 1197 "Sex, Gender and Nation: Musings on the Five Wives of Idi Amin," Professor Alicia C. Decker, Women's Studies and History.

April 7, 2008 12:00-1:00 University Hall 117 "Contemporary Post-holocaust Narratives: Some Gender Differences," Dr. Debra Kaufman, Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University.

## Q&A with Kirstin Eismin of Lafayette's *Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program*



The YWCA of Greater Lafayette describes its mission as “eliminating racism and empowering women.” Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention is one of several programs through which the Y serves the Lafayette area. Kirstin Eismin, Outreach Coordinator and Purdue alum, seeks to expand community involvement and domestic violence awareness.

**Q:** Would you tell me a little bit about DVIPP and what you do here?

**A:** I am the Outreach Coordinator for the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (DVIPP). Here at DVIPP, we offer a wide range of community services. First and foremost we offer shelter to women and children. For residents in our shelter we offer case management, which entails goal setting; we help empower women to find a job, housing, childcare, etc. We also offer a child advocate to help deal with the generational effects of violence. We offer three classes that are free and open to the community, a self-esteem class, an anger management class, and a parenting class. Additionally, we have a Hispanic advocate and a legal advocate. We help with protective orders and have a 911 cell phone program. Lastly, we offer educational presentations to the community. My job entails fundraising, organizing large community events, one-on-one problem solving, as well as public presentations. While some may shy away from speaking in front of an audience, I have no qualms.

**Q:** How does your work relate to your background as a former grad minor and grad instructor in Women's Studies at Purdue?

**A:** As I sit and think about the answer to this question, I am reminded about how I thought and felt about injustice and inequalities during graduate school. It's one thing to talk about all the ways in which the world could and should be a better place; it's a far greater thing to work and live to change the world. Everything relates. Everything that I had ever discussed in class or with students has become real. I deal with people's lives every day, not just a student's grade, but real, tangible, life-altering things, such as house, food, and child care.

**Q:** What has your experience at the shelter been like? What kinds of things did you see and deal with when you were a case-worker there?

**A:** I have had some really great experience at the shelter, as well as some unspeakable ones. I had one woman who, after I helped her to find housing, a job and to heal her broken body, hugged me and said, “Never forget how much you have helped me.” I would say the worst thing is seeing children abused (verbally, physical and/ or sexually).

**Q:** I understand you're available to do guest lectures in Purdue classes. Can you tell me a bit about the content of the talks you generally give?

**A:** Each presentation is different, but most focus on defining what is abuse; often people don't understand what is verbal, physical or sexual abuse. I offer different tools to help people understand what it would be like to go through a domestic violence situation.

**Q:** How can members of the Purdue community get involved in supporting DVIPP and opposing domestic violence in our region?

**A:** We always are in need. Whether you want to donate your time, your money or your old clothes, we always need it all. If you want to donate to DVIPP, please contact us to see what our greatest need is at that time. As for opposing DV, the best thing that you can do is be there support your local DV shelter. Also, be aware of legislation and what is being done at state and federal levels. In 2007 a catastrophic \$35 million cut was made from the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds. This directly affects our shelter and all others in the nation.

For more information on volunteering with or donating to DVIPP, visit [www.ywca.org/lafayette](http://www.ywca.org/lafayette) or phone 765-742-0075.

For those in need of help with a domestic violence situation, DVIPP provides a 24-hour hotline at 765-423-1118 or toll-free at 1-888-345-1118.

## News from Affiliated and Joint-Appointed Faculty

**Dr. Evelyn Blackwood's** recent co-edited anthology, *Women's Sexualities and Masculinities in a Globalizing Asia*, has been awarded the 2007 Ruth Benedict Prize for an anthology by the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists in recognition of distinguished scholarship on a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender topic. Edited by Saskia Wieringa, Evelyn Blackwood and Abha Bhaiya, this anthology is published by Palgrave Macmillan Publishers (2007). The anthology is a unique collection of writings by both academic and activist scholars on women's same-sex sexualities and female masculinities in Asia. While the number of works on globalization and sexualities has expanded in the past 10 years, only this collection makes a sustained effort to examine the processes particular to women's sexualities and female masculinities in the context of globalization. The chapters in this book demonstrate not only the impact of processes of nation-building, citizenship, and transnational flows of knowledge in the production of sexualities and genders, but also significance of historical and cultural specificities in the construction and transformation of sexual subjectivities. In dramatic challenge to accepted theories, the book reveals the way both butch/femme communities and lesbian activist groups are implicated in globalization processes.

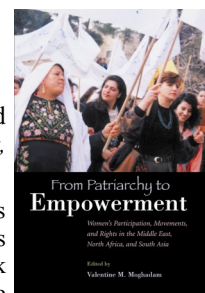


Dr. Blackwood has also recently published "Regulation of Sexuality in Indonesian Discourse: Normative Gender, Criminal Law and Shifting Strategies of Control" in *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 9(3): 293-307, 2007.

**Dr. Valentine Moghadam** of Women's Studies and Sociology has edited a book called *From Patriarchy to Empowerment: Women's Participation, Movements, and Rights in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia* (Syracuse University Press, 2007).

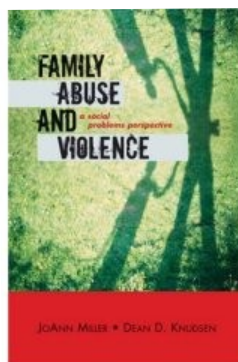
This rich anthology offers twenty studies on instances of emerging social justice and women's empowerment in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. These areas are home to huge populations where women's rights have withered under patriarchal rule, and many are beset by civic unrest. The book shows how changes are occurring as flood tides of capital, people, and information erode entrenched gender regimes, giving birth to energetic and forward-thinking women's movements. Highly original, conceptually sophisticated, and eminently readable, this book illustrates how local women are transforming their collective fates by questioning their status, forming alliances, demanding full participation in economic development and the political process, and mining opportunities afforded by globalization.

"If the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia are known for cultural conservatism and—apart from India—authoritarian polities, the women's movements and the feminist research that they have engendered hold the promise of unprejudiced analysis, non-violent practice, bridge-building, cultural innovation, and democratic politics. For women, this is a time of transition from patriarchy to empowerment. For the broader societies, women's empowerment accelerates the transition to modernity, democracy, and social justice." (From the Introduction)



**Dr. Alicia C. Decker**, Assistant Professor of History and Women's Studies, presented a brownbag lecture on March 18th entitled "Sex, Gender, Nation: Musings on the Five Wives of Idi Amin." In late March, she participated in a research conference at the University of Texas-Austin on War and Conflict in Africa. While there she presented a paper entitled, "Pedagogies of Pain: Teaching Women, War and Militarism in Africa." Over the summer, Dr. Decker will be returning to Uganda to complete fieldwork for her first book.

**Dr. JoAnn Miller** of Sociology and Anthropology has published *Family Abuse and Violence: A Social Problems Perspective*. 2007. By JoAnn Miller and Dean Knudsen. Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press. Dr. Miller is a candidate for President-Elect of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. She has also been awarded a five-year grant for the Downtown Lafayette Weed and Seed Community (US Department of Justice, Community Capacity Development Office), as well as a two-year grant for A Problem Solving Court Approach for Sex Offenders Returning from State Prison (US



Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance).

## Women's Studies Film Course Taught During Spring 2008: IDIS 281 "Gender and Film"

This spring semester a film course focusing on gender issues in cinema is being taught as part of the Women's Studies Program curriculum. Kara Kvaran, Graduate Instructor for Women's Studies and PhD student in History, developed and is teaching "Gender and Film" as IDIS 281 "Topics in Gender Studies."

In her course, Kvaran emphasizes the roles that film and television play in constructing and reinforcing gender roles, as well as how such mediums portray biases that exist within these cultural products. By analyzing film and television representations through a gendered lens, students move away from being merely passive viewers and consumers. In a sense, viewing and analyzing the films through a gendered lens enables them to think on their own and question displays of gender in the media.

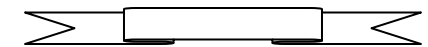
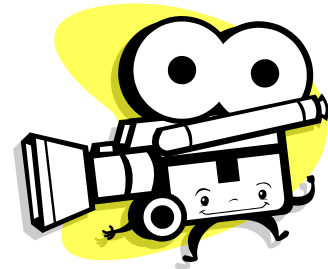
Made up of thirty-two students, the course utilizes both interdisciplinary and

international approaches by examining a variety of films and using feminist and media theory texts. In addition to foreign and less-known films, popular and classic works that students have most likely already seen, such as Disney's "Cinderella," "Halloween," "Rambo," and "Aliens," are also screened and examined through a different lens. A film like Disney's "Cinderella," for example, demonstrates that early in our lives we are presented with socially constructed gender roles and biases.

The course serves as an excellent example of how issues like gender and social construction continue to be relevant in the media and deserve to be viewed with a critical eye.

Michelle Carreon

M.A. Student in American Studies  
Teaching/Research Assistant for the Purdue Film/Video Studies Program



### GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING AWARD WINNER

Cynthia Konrad has won the Graduate Student teaching award for the Women's Studies program. This is the first time this award has been presented by Women's Studies. A banquet in honor of all the Graduate Student Teaching Award winners will be held on April 17th in the North Ballroom of the Purdue Memorial Union.

Congratulations, Cindy!

## Reflections on The Vagina Monologues

The 2008 Production of The Vagina Monologues, presented by the Purdue Organization for Women's Equality and Rights, took place on February 15th and 16th in Loeb Playhouse. The following is a letter from former cast member Kimberly Pavel.

Television tells women how they should act. Magazines dictate how a woman should be shaped. Radio stations encourage female stereotypes of stupidity. From every aspect of life, women are bombarded with discouragement and false pedestals. We're never celebrated for just being who we are: women. The Vagina Monologues is a haven. It's the one place where a woman is encouraged to love herself: to feel it's ok being "imperfect."

For the last three years I've participated in the Vagina Monologues: twice as an audience member, once as an actress. Each experience brought me something new. Until I saw the Monologues I had no idea women struggled with the same

insecurities I did. I felt I had to be silent about my problems; I wasn't normal. Through the Monologues I learned that it's perfectly fine to be proud of my body hair, menstrual cycles, or just "down there" in general. It's what makes me, me. There's nothing shameful about being a woman.

By seeing the show, I learned to like my body. By being in it, I fell in love. There's just something about orgasming in front of strangers, family, and friends that makes you embrace yourself. You can't be that intimate in front of others without reveling in your own sexuality. Reading the "Hair" monologue was one of my proudest moments. I was helping other women: passing on the knowledge of female empowerment.

The Vagina Monologues are about learning to love yourself. You don't need to change in order to feel sensual or loved. You should feel those things by just being you.

~Kimberly Pavel



**Purdue Women's Studies Undergrads Selected to Present at Ohio State's Women's Studies  
2008 Graduate Conference**

**Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00- 11:30 Session 1: Theorizing Subjectivity**

**Kathryn Ziegler** Fighting and Formidable-Femininity as a Form of Third Wave Feminist Gender and Activism

**Mejduleene Shomali** Fat, Femme, "Filisiteenia": Observations on a Queer Arab Girlhood

**Davida Haywood** Black Feminist Thought, (Re)Invention & Performance: Triangulating the Leadership Experiences of African American Women Educators

**10:00- 11:30 Session 2: Feminist Movements and Globalization**

**Kate Clonan-Roy** The Socio-political Mobilization of Indigenous Women in the Zapatista National Liberation Army

**Rachael Needham** Comparing Movements: Islamic Feminism versus secular Middle Eastern Feminism

**Caitlyn Seitz and Laura Willis** The Green Belt Movement

**1:00- 2:30 Session 3: Narrativizing Experience**

**Anna Hensley** "In the Dark With a Six Inch Blade": Rethinking SCUM and the Possibility of a Violent Feminism

**Dong Isbister** Reconstructing Sexual Identity in New Cultural Contexts: Wang Ping's *The Last Communist Virgin* and Its Implications

**Anne Mitchell** Girlhood Interrupted? Cultural Memory, Trauma, and Respectability in *Warriors Don't Cry*

**1:00- 2:30 Session 4: Locating Identity**

**Nisha Deo** The Indeterminate State of Culture

**Carrie Hawkins** Fleshy Figures

**Clare Ford** Facebook as Constructed Identity

**2:45- 4:15 Session 5: Troubling and Troubled Representations**

**Melanie Beaudette** "Have I Crossed the Line?" t.A.T.u. and American Sexual Boundaries in Young Female Pop Music Performance

**Jennifer Lang** "Surviving" Sex Work: Examining Political Performances and Representations of Sex Work

**Alina Bennett**: Reeve In Ruins: A Critical Case Study

**2:45- 4:15 Session 6: Feminisms at Home and Abroad**

**Jaelyn Tabor** Feminist Futures and the White House

**Margaret Dongas** Fortification: A Closer Look at How Progressive Student Groups Interact

**Kari Puchovich** House of Love

**Purdue Student Wins Annual Southeastern Women's Studies Association Undergraduate Paper Prize**

Congratulations to **Sara C. Wooten**, whose paper "**Politics of Abuse: Transwomen and the Struggle for Validation in the Feminist Movement**" has won the Southeastern Women's Studies Association's annual undergraduate paper competition, which includes a cash prize. Sara is presenting her paper at the 2008 Southeastern Women's Studies Association Conference. Congratulations, Sara!

**Purdue Graduate Students Participate in 2008 National Women's Studies Association Conference**

The following Women's Studies Graduate minors are scheduled to present papers at NWSA in Cincinnati this June:

**Sherrema Bower, Heidi Freeman, Alexandra Hill and Cindy Konrad**

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This publication is co-edited by Kara Kvaran and Alexandra Hill. Please direct any editorial concerns to the Women's Studies Program.



## Women's Studies 2007-2008

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Alexandra Hill  
Cynthia Konrad  
Kara Kvaran  
Dharmini Patel  
Katja Pettinen  
Craig Stalbaum  
Laura Williams  
Beth Williford

### Limited-term Lecturer

M. Catherine Jonet

### Research Assistant

Robert Oprisko

### Work-study

Rachel Smederovac

### Undergraduate Majors and Minors

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Denise Paddock  
Lindsay Robertson  
Sarah Schantz  
Rachel Smederovac  
Aimee Steiner  
Samantha Wagner  
Erica Whitley  
Sara Wooten

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Anna Bowers  
Tara Brennan  
Mary Brinati  
Amanda Bruening  
Michaela Charon  
Karissa Donnoe  
Pamela Frazier  
Darcie Fuller  
Miranda Hartman  
Anthony Heygood  
Brittaney Hruby  
Katheryn Katona  
Angela Koehn  
Alecia Loyd  
Kelly Mallegni

Karen Miranda  
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Lacy Nabb  
Rachael Neely  
Stephanie Paulson  
Lauren Rehme  
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