Driving back to Bucknell after October break, I popped in a CD of Destiny’s Child I hadn’t listened to in years, hoping the "oldies" would keep me awake during my four-hour ride. They not only kept me awake, but inspired me to develop this month’s newsletter theme into feminism and the media. On this one album, "Survivor," Beyonce, Michelle and Kelly delve into topics of sexual abuse, counting your blessings, feeling empowered after a breakup, and being an independent woman emotionally and financially.

More recent empowering songs include Ne-yo’s “Miss Independent,” an ode to female leaders in the business world taking care of themselves emotionally and financially. Meredith Brooks sang “Bitch” in the 1990s and Beyonce sings about what it's like to be a man dating a woman.

This month’s newsletter features empowering songs and feminist Web sites that inspire the Lilac staff, which we hope will inspire you, too.

—Susan Misur, Editor

Continued on page 11
Interim director’s note

By Tracy Shaynak, interim director

When Susie, our Lilac editor, asked me to focus my note this month on feminism, it seemed natural to think about this year’s commemoration of 125 years of co-education at Bucknell, and the women and men throughout the history of the University who have championed for a woman’s right to an equal education. As only the fourteenth male institution in the United States to become co-educational, Bucknell was well ahead of the majority of its peers, most of whom waited until the late 1960’s and early 1970’s to admit women.

As the 125 Celebration Planning Committee has discussed how to capture this moment in Bucknell’s history, we have been collecting information and anecdotes about the life of the University, both inside and outside the classroom. While more difficult to quantify, it is also interesting to think about the difference Bucknell has made in the professional and personal lives of its students, especially during those years when our peers and all but two of the Ivys were not admitting women. Even when these schools were just beginning to leap over the hurdles of change that accompanied the advent of Title IX, Bucknell had been co-educational for nearly 90 years.

For those of us who didn’t encounter similar hurdles, it can be easy to take for granted the college environment that exists today. It is difficult to imagine a time when there were few women in the classroom, when women were encouraged to pursue a limited number of career paths or when different policies applied to women and men that governed on-campus behavior. We don’t seem to hear a buzz on campus about women being treated unfairly in the classroom or not having the same access to educational resources. Women and men hold leadership positions, have similar access to internship and career-related resources and are, in principle, valued equally in the curricular and co-curricular environments that have been created on this campus.

However, the same cannot be said in regard to some aspects of student social life. What I hear from many female students, both those who actively identify as feminists and those who do not, is that they feel as if there are different expectations that apply to the social scene. One student expressed her frustration quite eloquently last year when she shared her desire to encourage Bucknell women to value themselves as much outside of the classroom as they do inside the classroom.

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Did you know...

... that the number of male family care providers helping elderly relatives has increased, showing a transition in the role that is stereotypically seen as female. Men now make up nearly 40 percent of care providers, according to the Alzheimer’s Association and the National Alliance for Caregiving. The estimate is up from 19 percent in a 1996 study by the Alzheimer’s Association. About 17 million men are caring for an adult, according to The New York Times. Women still fulfill most family care tasks, including dressing and bathing and others that often put men in a difficult position, the article says.

... that The Bucknellian’s front page article on campus sexual assaults prompted an on-air debate at Bucknell’s radio station, WBVU, the week after the issue was published. Bucknellian editors, radio staff and additional contributors weighed in discussing whether or not assaults should be reported in the Public Safety log and were encouraged that there is a dialogue on campus about the issue.
Acid attacks, stoning abound abroad

By Ally Hopper, '11

In the United States, domestic violence and violence against women continue to be a problem, however here we are lucky to have the government on our side.

There are laws set out to protect women in dangerous positions and numerous groups that have the sole purpose of providing a safe place and support for women in abusive relationships.

In other countries, however, this is not the case. Women are victims of sexism with rights subordinate to those of men. It is ok for a husband to abuse or cheat on his wife, and if she does anything to fight back she becomes the offender.

If a woman is even thought to have committed adultery, jail or even death is seen as a legitimate punishment.

BBC news reported on an Iranian women being freed from prison after being under the threat of being stoned to death.

Mokarrameh Ebrahimi had been jailed for eleven years for committing adultery before she was released, along with the son that was conceived as a result of her affair. It is unclear why she was released, but Ms. Ebrahimi is one of the lucky ones.

Stoning is still allowed under Iranian law, and there are currently twelve people in Iran currently at risk of being stoned to death, most of them are women. MSN news reported on a 13-year-old girl in Somalia who was stoned to death by Islamic militants under accusations that she had committed adultery.

In reality, however, Aisha Ibrahim Duhulow had been raped by three men while traveling on foot to visit her grandmother.

When she went to the authorities for protection, she was accused of adultery and sentenced to death. She was killed by 50 men in a stadium in Kismayu in front of 1,000 spectators. The witnesses were told that she was 23-years-old.

In both of these instances, the violence is unacceptable. This is the government harshly punishing women for crimes that, even if they were committed, were not worthy of death. The fact that stoning is still permissible in Iran at all is horrible, but the fact that it’s mostly used against women makes it all the worse.

The perceived crimes these women committed were most likely not violent, but ones interpreted as disrespecting men. If a male were to do the same thing, while he may get put in jail, death would most likely not be the result.

Continued on page 11
Feminism on the radio

Destiny’s Child, Ne-yo empower independent women

Ne-yo, “Miss Independent”

By Rudo Mavema, ’09

I fell in love with this song from the first time I heard it; I can probably think of something from every line of this song that makes it a “must have” on every woman’s play list. “Miss Independent” puts a different, much needed spin on what a sexy, fly woman is, by placing emphasis on her achievements and her self value.

Unlike many other songs about Independent women, (Lil Webbie I.N.D.E.P.E.N.D.E.N.T comes to mind), this woman isn’t liberated only by the realization of the sexual power she has over men, and the idea that all she needs men for is to fulfill her sexual desires; rather she is fulfilled by her own achievements and does not need a man to complete her, and that’s what makes her attractive.

The lyrics point out that not only does the singer find her sexy, he is proud of the type of woman Miss Independent is and it makes him want to get involved with her, not just in bed, but dating her! Finally, a different side to what women have to offer, and a man who isn’t afraid of it!

For so long too many songs across the genres have focused on over sexualizing and objectifying women, we could finally be one song closer to a true appreciation of what women have to offer.

Ooh there’s something’ about kinda woman that can do for herself I look at her and it makes me proud It’s something’ about her Somethin’ oh so sexy about kinda woman that don’t even need my help She said she got it she got it No doubt, it’s something’ about her Cuz she work like a boss play like a boss Car and a crib she bouta pay em both off And the bills are paid on time yeah She made for a boss only a boss Anything less she tellin’ them to get lost That’s the girl that’s on my mind

Meredith Brooks, “Bitch”

Just when you think you got me figured out
The seasons already changin
I think its cool you do whatcha do
And dont try to save me

Im a bitch
Im a lover
Im a child
Im a mother
Im a sinner
Im a saint
I do not feel ashamed
Im your hell
Im you dream
Im nothing in between
You know you wouldn’t want it any other way
Feminism on the radio

Destiny’s Child, “Survivor”

By Kelsey Wiggin, ’11

Destiny’s Child is one of the most popular feminists groups in the music industry with several songs about independence and equality in different life situations.

Destiny’s Child “ Surviv or” is the anthem to women who are ending relationships and ready to rise to better heights than they were at before their breakup. In the song the women compare what the man thought she’d feel after the break up to what she actually does feel.

They show that it is possible to not only become a better, wiser woman by simply moving on and being positive but by not stooping to the level of saying negative things about an ex-boyfriend. These two ideas seem to be separated into the first section, when she is saying she is better than she was before, and the second and final section, when she says she isn’t looking to seek revenge on her ex.

Although these two ideas are separated in the song, they aren’t separate in reality and I think that is the point Destiny’s Child is trying to make with this song. A woman is better than she was before because she is finding positive ways to heal rather than seek revenge and vice versa. The two ideas work off of each other.

Most women who have experienced messy breaks ups can attest to this. The times that they find positive ways to heal allow them to feel more empowered and ready to meet new people. On the other hand, when they are trying to make their ex-boyfriend jealous they usually feel satisfied for a short while but in the long run are set back.

One of the most significant and effective lyrics in the song is “After all of the darkness and sadness/Still comes happiness/If I surround myself with positive things/I’ll gain prosperity” which sums of the meaning of the song in a few short lines. First comes sadness after the break up, then happiness through being proactive and finding positive things, and finally a more successful and experienced woman that she once was.

“Now that you are out of my life, I’m so much better
You thought that I’d be weak without ya, but I’m stronger
You thought that I’d be broke without ya, but I’m richer
You thought that I’d be sad without ya, I laugh harder
You thought I wouldn’t grow without ya, now I’m wiser
You thought that I’d be helpless without ya, but I’m smarter
You thought that I’d be stressed without ya, but I’m chillin’
You thought I wouldn’t sell without ya, sold 9 million

I’m a survivor, I’m not gonna give up
I’m not gon’ stop, I’m gonna work harder
I’m a survivor (what), I’m gonna make it
I’m a survivor (what), keep on survivin’
Feminism on the radio

Ciara, “Like A Boy”
By Tanea Byrd, ’11

If Ciara’s “Like A Boy” discusses anything, it’s the need to destroy gender roles, even more than discussing trust in relationships. In the video she makes the transition from a white, flaring mini-dress to loose-fitting jeans and a tank-top, adopting a perfect example of male stance and body language.

Ciara is fighting a culture creating passive women “waiting” for the man who lies, cheats on her, and “plays with her head.” She’s challenging the notion gender is innate with force and determination; she’s changing her clothes and putting on this form of masculinity, and is thus saying that these behaviors are learned, and hurtful but also that they can be changed.

I love Ciara’s “Like A Boy” because it doesn’t fall into the stereotypical assumptions women do not cheat. She makes it clear there is a willing person behind all men’s affairs; a woman who is willing to cheat with him. Every time a man cheats on his wife, there is another woman who is helping to make it possible. Both genders are at fault when it comes to deceitful behavior in relationships.

I’m sure men are also hurt by infidelity, unreturned phone calls, and wives showing up at 4 a.m.; and I think that this is Ciara’s point. She’s given us a good picture of what it means to “do unto others as you would have them do to you” but she’s taken the opposite approach, she is singing about hurting a man so he can know what it feels like.

A song following this same trend is Beyonce’s “If I Were A Boy,” but personally I don’t get the same vibe from this song. She too dresses in men’s clothes but they’re still tight and “sexy,” and she ends the video in a skirt accepting the fact men are going to be untrustworthy and as a woman she must just deal with it. The ballad itself is beautiful. It’s the guts of the song that are troublesome. Unlike Ciara, I think the point of her song is if a man were more like a woman, men wouldn’t be so bad.

Beyonce, “If I Were A Boy”

Women won’t find their power by belittling men. No one is powerful when they are blaming someone else for being the reason why they are unhappy.

Regardless what you feel about either song, I am always fully behind any mainstream song that is thought provoking regarding the unfair gender roles that continue to exist in relationships. If anything, this should be a call to action to truly listen to the words of our favorite songs.
Feminism on the Internet

Whether you’re already a self-proclaimed feminist or not exactly sure if you are, women’s organizations across the country have Web sites dedicated to the topic. And the WRC gives out T-shirts to anyone who wants one reading “This is what a feminist looks like” because a feminist can be anyone—there is no typical or atypical feminist, no certain personality, gender, racial or age qualifier. This is what the websites below are trying to prove. One is even devoted to feminists who are against abortion, going against the stereotype that all feminists advocate abortion rights.

If you consider yourself a feminist, all you need is an open mind and a desire for equality for all human beings. The following Web sites promotes these things and more.

Feminist.com is your source for all things feminism—the history of the movement, news, activism efforts, Q & A, interviews with empowering women contributing to the feminist movement, campaigns about violence, and more. Consider the site a “feminist 101.” It even has listings of women-owned businesses, and you can join the site’s mailing list to receive updates and articles.

Feminists for Life

Feministsforlife.org is organized by a group identifying as pro-life feminists. Often, many see this as a contradiction, which is why the site contributors feel its necessary to spread awareness you can be against abortion and declare yourself a feminist at the same time. The site encourages help and assistance for mothers so they feel safe and prepared to have a baby even if they have a career or are in school. The group fights for women’s rights worldwide and even reaches out to colleges.

Moms Rising

As advocates for mothers’ rights and women everywhere, contributors to Momsrising.org keep readers up to date with news on toxic toys, paid sick days for all, equal pay, children’s health care, all to make our country more family-friendly. The site features blogs and the “Motherhood Manifesto” film along with tips for flexible work options in the workplace. Started in 2006, the site aims to bring awareness to motherhood and family issues while also influencing legislation.

The White House Project

The whitehouseproject.com was founded about 10 years ago to help women advance in all levels of government, whether locally or nationally. The site encourages parents to take daughters to the polls to see what voting is all about and features interviews with female leaders across the country. The group also holds workshops and events and sends speakers to various groups.
I feel that (regarding the reporting of sexual assaults), while the absence of the truth is not a lie, the withholding of this important information is wrong. Why pretend like it’s not happening unless they want this information to be covered up?

Nicole Falcaro, '09

I don’t think they should be reported unless the people involved in the sexual assault give authorization to release it to The Bucknellian. I feel like the Public Safety log deals with events not associated with direct human conflicts (like things getting stolen, fire alarms going off, alcohol violations) and I feel sexual assault is on a different level.

Liza Banhalmi, '10

I think incidents of sexual assault should ABSOLUTELY be reported in the Public Safety log. Sexual assaults are a crime and threat to safety, so the publishing of such reports is clearly protected under the Jeanne Clery Act (listing the place and time of the assault does nothing to compromise the victim’s anonymity, so that argument is null and void). I also don’t think listing sexual assault along with other things in the Public Safety log in any way trivializes its seriousness. It would simply make the campus community aware sexual assaults are perpetrated as frequently as fire alarm-pulls, etc. And that, I think, will finally raise a red flag for people.

Kelly Malloy, '10
Like many of us, she has witnessed amazing, bright, talented women who actively acknowledge and claim their power in the classroom, but do not do the same in their social lives, at parties and in their relationships.

Similarly, others have expressed their concern about the degree to which it seems female students feel the need to buy into a social culture that can be demeaning to women in order to feel accepted and attractive.

While few students seem to publicly acknowledge this reality, we know there are similar frustrations being voiced in conversations around campus between friends and classmates in the library, in residence halls, at the gym, in the classroom and in the LC.

There are many students who will privately acknowledge that disparities exist, but don’t know how to make change or feel powerless to do so. One thing we do know, however, is that it will require students, both female and male, to work together to challenge the perceived norms.

As we think about all that has been accomplished over the past 125 years at Bucknell, it is also important for us to think about how we can create an environment that is truly respectful of everyone in all aspects of campus life.

We were one of the first. We can and should continue to work as a community to be one of the best.

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Interim director’s note continued

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Additional Information: Sexual Assault Reporting

By Tracy Shaynak, Sexual Assault Survivor Advocate Program Coordinator

I greatly appreciate the Bucknellian Staff’s recent coverage regarding sexual assault reporting and the importance of community notification. In my role as the Sexual Assault Survivor Advocate Program Coordinator, I feel it important to provide some additional information regarding sexual assault and the incidents that have been reported this semester.

Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes on college campuses. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, less than 5% of rapes and attempted rapes are reported to campus or local authorities. As such, it is impossible for us to truly know whether or not this semester’s reports represent an increase in the frequency of sexual assaults taking place on campus, or in the number of people reporting. It may be both. We are thankful for the survivors who have come forward for assistance, and for the friends who have aided many of these students in getting the help that they needed and deserved.

Much has been made of the number of assaults that have been reported this semester. To place it into context, this number has been compared with the total number of assaults that were reported last year. We have indeed received a number of reports within a relatively short period of time. However, it is important to take a longer look at our Clery statistics and realize that yes, we had three incidents reported last year, but in each of the two prior years, we had more than 15 total incidents reported. Although the number of reports we have received this semester is cause for concern, it is equally if not more important to consider how few were reported last year and in any year when survivors don’t appear to be coming forward.

Accurate, timely information is important, and the campus community needs to work together to foster an environment where students feel comfortable coming forward. However, in deference to survivors and the nature of these crimes, I ask some to consider that, in many cases, even releasing seemingly general information (e.g., hall location) could compromise a survivor’s right to confidentiality and sense of security. There are indeed times when the community needs to be informed, and when a report brings to light a perceived threat that must be shared with the campus community (e.g., a stranger assault), we remain ever-committed to protecting the survivor’s confidentiality while balancing the community’s right to know.

Given the knowledge that sexual assault is significantly underreported, it is important that we also realize that reported statistics are not a reliable indicator to help one determine whether or not to be cautious. It is important that as a community we acknowledge that sexual assault happens at Bucknell. We should always be careful and watch out for our friends, and dedicate ourselves to working together to foster meaningful prevention and change.
Am I a Woman? So I’m confused and a little bit panicked, to be completely honest. I’m like ultra-feminist woman being a Women’s and Gender Studies major, working for the Women’s Resource Center, taking part in the Vagina Monologues, and even co-writing a course curriculum for next semester for a class entitled “Race and Gender.”

But I’m a senior now and after all of this time bouncing around Feminist Land, I still do not have an answer, and that has me worried! I think I’ve fallen into the abyss, the Great Divide between two schools of feminist thought that have weaved their ways through my last three-and-a-half years here. My strategy until now has been to sit quietly on the sidelines, saying to myself that “the answer will come someday, just wait it out.”

However, I’m graduating in five months and cannot possibly go into the world with the Feminist stamp on my forehead without knowing the answer. Have we determined that it is good to be a woman, or are we getting rid of gender labels altogether?

The essentialist viewpoint, that is the “women rule, men drool” stance, says that there is something inherent and special about women and that we should embrace and celebrate our womanhood. This school of feminism leads to all sorts of “women only” groups, all-girl schools and colleges and special scholarships for women, to name a few examples.

At Bucknell, it could be argued that groups like the Society of Women Engineers, the existence of the Women’s Resource Center, and the Vagina Monologues are all a result of this side of the women’s rights coin. The idea is that by uniting women, whether in a social, educational or supportive atmosphere, women will become more inspired and empowered by the increased exposure to people, a.k.a. other women, who understand their daily struggles and problems.
Sexual assault reports increase, continued

The purpose of the log is to inform the campus of ongoing crimes, ultimately allowing students, faculty and staff to take appropriate preventative measures. While the public safety log includes a ridiculous number of fire alarms and notices of lost property, we believe that the campus is also legally entitled to reports of perhaps more serious crimes, such as sexual assaults.

When we requested that these reports be included in the Public Safety log, we did not ask for the disclosure of either the victim’s or the perpetrator’s names or even the location of the assault. We only asked Public Safety officials to indicate that a sexual assault occurred on campus, to which we received no response.

Why do we think it’s necessary for sexual assault reports to be included in the Public Safety log?

Because the omission of these reports from the log gives the impression that sexual assaults are not occurring on campus. Because The Bucknellian staff members had to schedule meetings with Public Safety officials to even find out that seven sexual assaults were reported this semester. Because this information should not only be clumped together as part of the annual crime statistics, but be readily available to students in a timely manner.

Just realizing that sexual assaults are an immediate threat, rather than a distant possibility, can lead students to take further precautions.

Public Safety told The Bucknellian that the numbers reflect an increase in reporting, rather than in actual incidents. But we have to ask, exactly what allows for such an assertion. We have had the same organizations and resources for years. What has changed in the past three months to suddenly trigger an increase in reporting? Until that can be answered, the possibility remains that the number of actual incidents may have increased—crucial information students should be given.

We are, by no means, suggesting that any of these resources are ineffective. But if sexual assault still persists on campus and does so in considerably high numbers, then perhaps there is still more to be done.

Public Safety also suggested that omitting reports of sexual assault from the Public Safety log makes victims feel more comfortable and allow more students to come forward. We still have no verifications for that claim.

Perhaps it is the silence surrounding sexual assault that causes so many of them to go unreported every year. Perhaps, the realization sexual assaults are not scattered and rare occurrences on campus can encourage a more open atmosphere where discussions can take place and more students can come forward. The reporting of sexual assaults can prevent another student from falling victim.

The Bucknellian’s news report on sexual assault presented information that we had gathered from the sources we interviewed. The editorial was aimed at questioning the information that was provided to us and at assessing, from the perspectives of a group of student journalists, whether enough was being done to prevent sexual assaults.

Stoning, acid attacks abroad, continued

What happened to Aisha Duhulow in Somalia is simply unacceptable. She was an innocent victim of rape who sought help from her government, but instead of giving her the help she needed she was faced with a harsh accusation and killed for what happened to her.

The violence towards women isn’t only from the government. Domestic violence is prevalent as well.

In Iraq, a particularly harsh form of domestic violence is men pouring acid on their wives faces.

The fact that these men can get away with this while women are being put in jail for potentially committing adultery is absolutely disgusting.

We are lucky to live in a place where this would not be tolerated.

While there is still a long way to go before women are completely safe in even the United States, we at least have the government backing up basic laws to protect our rights to life.
By Chrissy Friedlander, '09

Although we are all familiar with the especially-heated arguments surrounding comprehensive and abstinence-only sex education in regard to preventing unwanted sex, rarely do we consider the role single-gender sex education plays in solidifying the gender roles that may proliferate sexual violence later in life.

This concern, as well as how to teach sex education to benefit of all children and young adults, regardless of their gender, will be the focus of our paper entitled “Separate and unequal: gender specific sex education and its later implications of violence.” With research conducted by Page Kannor '09, Taneea Byrd '11 and myself, our findings will culminate our semester of questioning the link between the body and political power in Professor Amy McCready’s Sex and Social Order class.

Although the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network’s (RAINN) most recent statistics state that a sexual assault is committed every two minutes in the United States, education on matters of rape and sexual assault to children have been less than adequate, if offered at all. Some parents, in wishing to protect their children’s innocence and prevent them from “growing up to fast,” have encouraged their school districts to take the “ignorance is bliss” approach to teaching sex education, limiting the amount and type of instruction their children receive.

This notion of childhood sexual innocence as a reason for delaying sex education, however, is somewhat of a misnomer, as children relatively begin to develop an awareness of their own sexuality as early as in infancy.

Further, when children bring up questions regarding their own sexuality, they are not usually well received by educators and parents’ alike, resulting in scolding or punishment for having such thoughts or feelings. In contrast to children naïve to sex being thought undeserving of the sexual violence done onto them, assaults committed onto children who are highly sexual in their demeanor have been rationalized by the child’s knowledge of sex, thus “becoming fair game” for perpetrators.

Due to this social response, children quickly realize that sexuality is something they cannot talk about openly, and, further, must feel ashamed about. Unable to have a say in their own sexuality for the sake of maintaining the societal view of childhood innocence, these children are put into sexual situations that they may not be able to deem as safe or unsafe.

Since children are usually not given the right or power to refuse kissing or touching from relatives in scenarios not deemed abusive, for example, how will they know that they have the power to refuse such kissing or touching when it makes them uncomfortable?

Although their motivation for this type of education – protecting their children – is understandable, reality has shown that severely-restricted education, especially of the single gender and gender-specific persuasion, can very well lead to the very problems of sexuality that parents and schools had originally tried to circumvent.

By teaching these children, the presumed functions of their sexual bodies – for boys to penetrate, for girls to protect their virginity – without informing them of the functions of the other, single gender sex education may actually create the context in which unwanted sex may occur.

Further, this notion of childhood innocence that has been used to protect children from unwanted sexual experiences may actually aid in stripping away a child’s own sense of sexual autonomy, thus making him or her unable to define what pleasurable sex is, what it means to consent, or – even more frightening – that he or she has the power to consent in later sexual experiences.
What's Happening: December

Monday, 12/1, World AIDS Day, 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.—Stop by Walls Lounge for a luncheon and international poetry reading.

Have a safe and relaxing winter break!

Senior column continued...

The women can bond over their biological likenesses without the influences of “the other half,” a.k.a. men.

The underlying assumption here is that sex (that is, male and female or how one is biologically constructed) is very tightly linked to gender (that is, man or woman or how one is socially constructed). Females, thus, are born with the biological tendencies to favor “womanly” things in society, for example dolls, having more emotions, and possessing a very tight connection with family, especially children.

Society has defined womanhood in a very particular way, thus females are treated in this particular way. For example, all females are assumed to take the womanly roles of caretaker, child-rearer and nurturer. The feminist angle, then, is to eliminate these stringent gender roles and definitions in society to enable women to break free of the limitations that correspond with them. This school of thought thinks of gender roles as oppressive, particularly women’s roles and particularly in a patriarchal society. Solutions to these oppressions are embodied in pushing laws and legislations that seek to grant women equality with men in the workplace, for example, and to push women to become CEOs and high-up political figures. At Bucknell, men and women’s equal and undivided access to facilities like the gym are results of this kind of feminism.

This is most certainly a huge topic to tackle in a short article, but my intention is not to close the feminist gap in 1000 words or less, that is for sure. After all, perhaps the question can only be rhetorical now, as we do not fully understand the relationship between gender and sex, biology and society. It really is a question of nature versus nurture, and that is an issue where everyone has an opinion, but no one has an answer.

What I am saying, however, is that in this new subject area called Gender Studies, it is exciting how deeply and richly the topics run, how much we have learned and how far we have left to go, and how these are concepts that affect each and every one of us every single day. What I have briefly outlined above, for instance, does not even begin to scratch the surface of the complexity of the puzzle. Other questions like where gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people fit into the discussions and solutions are not addressed in this text and are, in fact, just beginning to be addressed in these ever-expanding gender conversations found in classes, literature and groups across the globe.

So maybe it is ok that I am not completely pro pure-womanhood or pro world-without-gender yet. Maybe it’s not so bad to be in the abyss after all. I can say that at least it makes life interesting, and at least I have some stumpers for those people who do not believe that Women’s and Gender Studies is a legitimate major.
The staff at the WRC wishes you a safe and fun winter break.
We hope to see you again next semester.

Check back with us to see what events are coming up in the spring!
For more information, e-mail shaynak@bucknell.edu.

The Women’s Resource Center is a place of advocacy, support, and safety for all members of the Bucknell University campus community. In order to promote Bucknell’s mission that its students develop into productive citizens with a sense of justice and carrying the qualities of self-awareness and compassion, and in line with Bucknell’s commitment to diversity, the Women’s Resource Center actively engages in a feminist model of empowerment to 1) promote women’s rights and self-determination 2) redress inequities, both historic and contemporary, based on sex, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation, and 3) celebrate the achievements and highlight the struggles of women the world over. We recognize that inequities faced by women are played out through other forms of oppression related to race and ethnicity, disability, religion, nationality, and economic class, and programs of the Center address all of these sources of disempowerment. We work to achieve these goals through a variety of educational, social, and cultural programming, as well as leadership opportunities, placing special emphasis on the needs of students. Overall, we seek to foster a campus community in which women and men live and work in a climate of mutual respect, understanding, and equality.

Come visit us! The WRC lounge is open to students, faculty, and staff Monday–Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm!