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ABSTRACT

DISSEDITION: Bringing the Community to Campus: An Oral History of Women’s Week at Ball State University

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This dissertation examined the annual Women’s Week events hosted by Ball State’s Women’s and Gender Studies Program. It served to paint a historical picture of how the local Muncie community has been linked with the academic community at Ball State through events about women’s issues. The program began when a group of people wanting to broaden the educational offerings and evolved into an academic program that brings community education related to women’s issues to the Ball State campus. This research used qualitative research interview with four key informants to examine the community links and history of Women’s Week at Ball State University by answering two specific research questions. The participants described their roles in the Women’s Week events from organizing the program to presenting about their lifelong passions.
Many of the discussions were fond recollections, but challenges were also brought to light. Presenting relevant topics and maintaining student involvement were two subjects mentioned by the informants. Improvising and long term planning were also emphasized.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The women of this country ought to be enlightened in regard to the laws under which they live, that they may no longer publish their degradation by declaring themselves satisfied with their present position, nor their ignorance, by asserting that they have all the rights they want.

~ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1848, para. 24

Traditional historical accounts have robbed women of their place in history by burying rather than illuminating women’s stories and lives (Gluck, 1977). In the official written history of Ball State University (Edmonds & Geelhoed, 2001), the Women’s and Gender Studies Program is not once mentioned. Edmonds and Geelhoed (2001) mentioned other programs and departments formation and their achievements, but did not mention Women’s and Gender Studies directly. The only note in the Edmonds and Geelhoed (2001) history related to women’s studies was a protest led by the student group, Feminists for Action, when Ball State University was labeled a “party school” by Playboy (p. 255). This omission is consistent with histories of higher education.
institutions that fail to mention women’s and gender studies programs and the impact on the institution (Bowles, 2009; Crowley, 1999; Ginsberg, 2008).

Women’s and gender studies as a discipline within higher education was created in order for both men and women to learn about issues not normally discussed in formal education, such as the role women played in history and in issues of gender and class (Lucas, 1996).

Women, especially, have often used learning as a way to change their social status and move forward in society (Klein et al., 2007). Historically, women’s and gender studies has been a discipline where feminist activism and ideology can connect with academia, creating space where students can learn about new issues and move forward in society. Oral histories about women have helped fulfill a feminist goal of countering patriarchal histories with more inclusive versions that reveal and validate women’s lives and contributions (Gluck, 1977).

**Purpose**

This dissertation investigates how the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University developed a week-long program – Women’s Week to bridge the community and the academy related to topics concerning women. The program of Women’s Week began with a group of people wanting to broaden the educational offerings and evolved into an academic program that brings community education related to women’s issues to the Ball State campus through Women’s Week. While there is a body of literature that discusses the history of women’s and gender studies in the United States (Boxer, 1982; Howe, 2000; Perry, 1995), local history and research about the idea of women’s and gender studies within the local Muncie, Indiana community is scarce.
Much has been written about the local community being representative of “small town America,” and although women played a major role in the development of this community, their roles or achievements are not highlighted (Lynd & Lynd, 1929; Moxley, L., 1991). Through the examination of the annual Women’s Week events hosted by Ball State’s Women’s and Gender Studies Program, this study aims to paint an historical picture of how the local Muncie community has been linked with the academic community at Ball State through events about women’s issues.

The purpose of this study is to share stories of the people who have participated in the creation of events sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University, through their own voices. The stories specifically highlight how these people worked with the local community to create events that eventually became the yearly week of events known as Women’s Week.

This study contributed to the understanding of issues in the growth and development of women’s and gender studies programs and their connections with the local community where they reside that are unique to the United States. By analyzing the lived experiences of selected participants, along with the archival documents of the program, this study examined events that highlight women’s issues as a part of Women’s Week. This study also considered the impact that Women’s Week had on the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and the connection to the local community.

Higher education in the United States has changed considerably since the 1960s and 1970s when women and minorities were often denied equal access to education. Although diversity continues to be a hot topic on college campuses, the culture of each individual classroom still reflects the attitude of the professor in charge. Through the
telling of these stories, the participants of this study shed light on the effects of the choices they made with the students and community members involved in the Women’s Week events.

**Setting**

Founded in 1918, Ball State is a public, residential university in Muncie, Indiana. Muncie is a midsized city located sixty miles northeast of Indianapolis. About 21,000 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled each year (Ball State University, n.d.). Once primarily focused on teacher education, the university is now home to many departments and programs.

The Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University is an interdisciplinary program that houses both a major and a minor. There are typically five to ten classes taught each semester. Normally between 100 and 150 students a year take women’s and gender studies classes and are involved with the student groups. Typically 80-90 students are registered as majors or minors in the program each year.

Women’s and Gender Studies has been a formal program area since the late 1970s. The Women’s and Gender Studies Program is housed in the College of Sciences and Humanities and has undergone multiple transformations since inception. In its current state, the program is called the Women’s and Gender Studies Program. It has a part-time director, who is currently a tenured faculty member in Sociology. At this time, there is a total of twenty-six affiliate faculty who teach courses related to women. Most of these faculty members are full-time in other departments, as the Women’s and Gender Studies Program is not a department and does not have any full-time faculty members.
Two student groups are closely affiliated with the Women’s and Gender Studies Program: Triota (the Women’s Studies Honor Society), and Feminists for Action. Both of these groups often sponsor events during Women’s Week. Students who major or minor in Women’s and Gender Studies and have a GPA of 3.0 or above are invited to join Triota and participate in its numerous volunteer activities throughout the school year. Feminists for Action is open to any Ball State student, regardless of their academic program, who is interested in learning more about feminism and women’s and gender studies. This group also sponsors at least one event per month that highlights women’s issues or allows for open discussion of feminist topics. Although the Women’s and Gender Studies Program does not officially sponsor the two groups, faculty members associated with the program usually serve as advisors.

The mission of the Women's and Gender Studies Program is to provide a forum for learning and teaching about women and the way society identifies gender roles. In addition to the academic major and minor in women's studies, the program helps students identify career opportunities and offers a wide variety of programs. It also fosters research about women, advocates for change in women's lives, and serves as a resource to the university and larger community (Women’s and Gender Studies, n.d.). Women’s Week provides a forum for community voices to be shared with the women from the university.

Academically, Ball State’s Women’s and Gender Studies Program is an example of how an undergraduate education may be interdisciplinary. The major is a wide-ranging examination of women’s and men's gendered experiences. It introduces the theories and methodologies of the discipline of women’s and gender studies. It explores
the issues of gender, culture, sexuality, race, class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ability, and religious differences. The interdisciplinary nature of women’s and gender studies means students take courses offered by a variety of departments. These courses also can be applied toward an additional major or minor (Women’s and Gender Studies, n.d.).

Students in the Women’s and Gender Studies Program not only learn about women’s struggles throughout history, but also topics in many other disciplines, such as psychology or English. Specifically, this type of education highlights women’s issues both locally and globally. It also encourages students to branch out from the classroom and interact with their communities through service learning and other outreach activities. Many classes in Women’s and Gender Studies Program require students to complete outreach projects, where they take what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to a community program. The students also learn about current women’s issues and influential women in the local community by attending events during Women’s Week. These activities are important because outreach and praxis are key to the field of women’s and gender studies. Other programs across the country sponsor similar events and activist projects (Dean, 2007; Naples & Bojar, 2002; University of Michigan, 2010).

Women’s Week is an annual event at Ball State University planned by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program to celebrate the achievements and experiences of women. Women’s Week is held during the last week of March, which is National Women’s History Month. Women’s Week events officially began on Ball State’s campus in 1988. In 1994, the series began to take the shape that it is today. In 2008, in
honor of the 20th anniversary, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program sponsored an entire month of events instead of just one week (Women’s and Gender Studies, n.d.).

**Theoretical Foundations**

Qualitative research allowed exploration of the human element that is often overlooked in other types of research paradigms. I approached this study with humility and respect, seeking to gain insight into the perceptions of the participants regarding their own constructed knowledge of their experiences. I wanted the participants to understand that my objective was not to degrade, criticize, or evaluate the program, but to let them tell their own stories of their personal experiences.

Through this study, I preserved the oral histories of selected participants as a record of their lived experiences and compiled contemporary artifacts to supplement the stories. This oral history project allowed the participants to fill in some of the gaps that exist in historical record of Ball State University, so that they might give voice to and preserve their own rich and unique history within the Women’s and Gender Studies Program. Along with the interviews, I gathered educational artifacts, such as program records; published articles from newspapers, magazines, and books; photographs; and other documents. I used these documents to research the history of Women’s Week and also complement the stories told by the participants.

The interviews followed a three-interview series (Seidman, 2006). The purpose of the first interview was to put the participants’ experiences in context of their role in organizing Women’s Week. The second interview focused on the concrete details of their personal experiences with Women’s Week. The purpose of the third interview was
to ask the participants to give meaning to their experiences. This three-interview series is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

**Critical Feminist Theory**

Academic programs in Women’s and Gender Studies utilize a variety of theoretical lenses as part of the curriculum, instructional design, and educational outcomes. For this study, critical theory and critical feminist theory were the framework and lens used to explore how the Women’s Week events sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program serves an important role in connecting Ball State to the Muncie community. Where critical theory may be understood as a critical analysis of social institutions in order to illuminate the structure of domination and oppression (Brookfield, 2005), feminist theory may be thought of as “an analysis of women's subordination for the purpose of figuring out how to change it” (Gordon, 1979, p. 107). Critical feminist theory is an amalgam of these two theories, seeking to reveal structural oppression, transform systems, and emancipate oppressed individuals, using gender as a key category of analysis. By making visible previously invisible female experiences, critical feminist theorists work to correct "both the invisibility and distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position" (Lather, 1991, p. 71). Showing the connection between individual experiences and societal contexts, critical feminists theorize issues such as poverty to emphasize structural explanations over individualistic explanations of particular phenomena.

A critical feminist theoretical approach offers an opportunity to examine the connection between structural oppression and the individual experiences of women (Bloom, 1998). Specifically, it serves as an important theoretical lens for researching the
impact of transferring from community groups into academia, with its focus on the
importance of personal experience and the emancipation of particular groups of people
from elements of society and academia that are oppressive. The personal experiences of
women are especially important when examining women’s and gender studies as a
discipline, as that was the foundation for its creation (Boxer, 1982). Because of the
interdisciplinary nature of women’s and gender studies, the field’s mission to empower
the voices of a wide range of women, its commitment to both understanding the
complexity of women’s lives and to the compassionate treatment of those being studied,
women’s and gender studies practitioners and programs are ideal hosts for offering
women a venue to share their stories and insights with others (Gluck, 1977).

**Narrative Theory**

Narrative theory also played an important role in the framework of this study.
Many researchers value human narrative as the missing link between historical artifacts
and historical events. Sometimes the missing piece of a puzzle can easily be explained
by people who were present and actually lived through historical events. As more and
more researchers realize this, more and more researchers are gleaning insight from
narrative studies. Chamberlain (2006) noted that,

> scholars in these fields [sociology, anthropology and psychology] “turned” to
> narrative as an analytical model was partly a response to the emphasis on the
> positivist methods that dominated the social sciences between the 1940s and
> 1970s. Rather than observing everyday behavior and actions as manifestations of
> rational purpose, which may produce cultural artifacts and activities that are
> observable, explicable, and utilitarian, such behavior and activity could be seen as
conceptual frameworks. The flowering of histories demanded new sources and methods. The use of narrative as a descriptor of oral histories did not become commonplace, however, until the 1980s, and as a mode of analysis, not until the 1990s. (pp. 384-387)

Historical events have been passed down because people either have recorded or have told stories of events that have occurred. If people had not told their stories, we who live in the present would be ignorant of historical events. How would recorded historical events have changed if someone else had told the stories? We may never know, but we must accept that there are many stories that have never been told and many voices that have never been heard. This study will try to discover some of these untold stories.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) explained that the heart of narrative analysis is “the ways humans experience the world” (p. 2). For this project, hearing the stories of how some of the organizers of Women’s Week at Ball State University created the events and why they chose the activities that they did provide the background for the narrative. An example of these stories included hearing about when Gloria Steinem came to campus and how that was arranged or how much planning went into organizing a whole month of events instead of just one week for the 20th anniversary. This highlights why narrative theory is an important framework to guide this study because paying close attention to what the participants say as well as how they say it will help shape the overall narrative.

Personal narratives have offered much in the writing of history. Parse (2001) explained,
Narrative discourse conveys stories of everyday living and discloses meanings through the linguistic choices made by the narrator. In this sense, narrative is meaning-making, and it is pervasive in human living. The researcher may identify a discipline specific frame of reference as a guide to the study and in so doing discloses the ontological lens of the narrative. (p. 43)

Ontology is concerned with beliefs about what there is to know about the world. Realists argue that social reality is an “external reality, which exists independently of people’s beliefs or understanding” (Snape & Spencer, 2003, p. 11). Materialists argue that, “there is a real world but that only materials of physical features . . . of that world hold reality” (p. 11). Idealists, on the other hand, argue that, “reality is only knowable through the human mind and through socially constructed meanings” (p. 11). My ontological lens is the last one, one that is idealistic in nature, and I chose feminist critical theory as the frame of reference through which I will view the data.

Narrative theory analyzes life events through the personal anecdotes of storytellers. Parse (2001) listed the major assumptions underpinning the method of collecting data according to narrative theory:

1. In human existence, matter, life and meaning are fused.

2. “Human experience is enveloped in a personal and cultural realm of non-material meanings and thought” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 15).

3. Experience is constructed through interpretation of meaningful recollections, perceptions, and expectations.


(Parse, 2001, p. 43)
During the participants’ interviews, the questions focused on having them describe their experiences in creating educational events that try to appeal to both the campus and local communities. Their perceptions of how welcome these events have been and power issues they may have faced were also addressed.

**Importance of the Study**

This study was important for several reasons. First, this study went behind the scenes to show the creation of activities and events that highlight women’s issues. Second, it examined how a local community contributes to and interacts with and in academia. Finally, it placed value on the role of this Women’s and Gender Studies Program on campus in organizing and hosting these events. Women’s and gender studies started through community activism; it then moved into academia; and now it works with the local community to create events that bring awareness and education to the public.

The intended audience for this study includes people interested in women’s issues. The study examines how women’s issues are cemented within an academic framework that has historically been patriarchal. It also brought attention to feminist topics and awareness-raising events that educate faculty, staff, students, and the local community.

The critical feminist theoretical lens and the oral history methodology allowed this research to study individuals’ lived experiences and their roles in creating feminist programs on campus, by examining not only records from the program, but hearing the stories from the organizers themselves in the interviews. Much has been written about the very first program in the United States at San Diego State College (Boxer, 1982), but nothing has been written in the official history of Ball State about the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and their annual events that provide educational opportunities.
for everyone in Muncie. It is important to understand how the Women’s and Gender Studies Program works with the local community to create events.

**Limitations**

As with all studies, this research had limitations. The limitations included not having the right documents in the archives. At the proposal stage of this study, I had a general idea of what kinds of documents I had access to, based on the labels of the file folders that were provided to me by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, yet they were not as complete as I expected. To supplement the program archives, I found records and letters from the program at the larger archives in Bracken Library on the Ball State campus. Much of it was useful, but some brochures were missing and some of the information was not complete. The archival documents were used to set the scene for the stories from the interviews and for basic historical information. These archival materials helped explain the stories and memories that the participants provide.

Another limitation was gaining access to the most knowledgeable people. Based on Spradley’s (1979) criteria, at the beginning of the project I had invited key informants to participate, including the long-time program director and multiple community members. However, not everyone was willing or able to participate. Once four participants agreed to the interviews, their memories varied, and their interactions with the Women’s Week activities spanned across multiple years. I searched and read through the archival materials and used those documents to validate and provide accurate information with which to compare the interview information. A final limitation given the methods selected is that this research is not generalizable across other women’s and gender studies programs. Every program is different, but the stories from the participants
will add to the literature about women’s and gender studies programs. This narrative provided an example of how this particular program uses activism and awareness in academia and in connection with the local community.

**Scope of the Study**

The scope of the archival data was restricted based on the availability and selection of the documents. The time period that I examined in this research started from the first Women’s Week in 1988 to the 20th anniversary of the events in 2008. I chose this time frame to have a manageable length of time to examine and also to focus my data collection to records and people that were involved during this time. This made the archival research portion of this study more efficient and focused while sifting through the program’s records and archival documents. It also made it easier to find and reach people who helped with the organization of Women’s Week because the time frame was not that far in the past.

**Insider/Outsider Perspective**

As the researcher, I have a personal interest in selecting this topic. I am an alumna of the program and an activist at heart. I also have taught in the program and have personally interacted with many of the participants. That being said, my insider perspective allowed me to be intimately involved with the documents and match the personalities with the people along the way (Given, 2008). Also, my position enriched the story because I can add insights from my own personal experience, as they fit with the data. From my training both as a historian and an adult and community educator, I looked at this program from a new perspective by analyzing the program’s outreach and activism as a form of community education (McDowell & Pringle, 1992). Members of
the local community, coming together with members of the academic community to share their own experiences and learn about topics unique to women continued the tradition of consciousness-raising activities that is found in the history of both the women’s movement and community education.

The insider/outsider perspectives are frequently discussed in regards to traditions in qualitative research. Thompson (1998) defined them in a very clear and direct manner. One, the outsider perspective, privileges the analysis of data from within the framework of the researcher’s existing knowledge and culture. The outsider perspective aims to understand a foreign culture according to the outsider’s own, usually more dominant, cultural language and conventions. The second, the insider perspective, privileges the culture observed. The insider perspective aims to represent the lived experience of the indigenous people through establishing a dialogue rather than analyzing a code. (para. 2)

It is very interesting to use the term privilege in regards to a feminist topic. I am obviously privileged as an insider to understand the inner workings of the program for a certain period of time, but I was drawn to feminism in the first place by a lack of privilege I felt in society. The idea of privilege and its different facets will play a major role in the telling of these stories.

The insider role is important to this research. Insider interpretation requires the researcher to abdicate the authoritarian role in an investigation (Given, 2008). The researcher should attempt to describe a culture according to the ideology underlying the codes and conventions of the participants. The researcher wants to provide lived experience of the culture being investigated. Hence, the insider perspective derives
primarily from dialogue rather than analysis. The approach is more humanistic than scientific. It is more meaning-making, instead of meaning-capturing.

An insider interpretation relates similarly to Geertz (1973) and his notion of a “thick description” (pp. 5-6). His definition of a “thick description” focuses on not just explaining a human behavior, but its context as well, so that the behavior becomes meaningful to someone who might not be familiar with the behavior or the context. Geertz aimed to provide social science with an understanding and appreciation of “thick description” in the direction of anthropological study. His theory that asserts the essentially semiotic nature of culture has implications for the social sciences in general and, in this case, women’s and gender studies, in particular.

Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is . . . There are a number of ways of escaping this—turning culture into folklore and collecting it, turning it into traits and counting it, turning it into institutions and classifying it, turning it into structures and toying with it. But they are escapes. The fact is that to commit oneself to a semiotic concept of culture and an interpretive approach to the study of it is to commit oneself to a view of ethnographic assertion as, to borrow W.B. Gallie’s now famous phrase, *essentially contestable*. (Geertz, 1973, p. 29)

The thick description theory, referenced by Geertz, was useful for this research because I was able to use the stories told to me in the interviews to provide context for the events during Women’s Week each year. Readers of this research may not know why these events happened on campus and so the context and thick description should help with their understanding. This theory was also helpful within the overall critical feminist
lens for this research. As mentioned earlier, a critical feminist theoretical approach offers an opportunity to examine the connection between structural oppression and the individual experiences of women (Bloom, 1998). I have first-hand knowledge of the inner-workings of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program as it currently operates. The participants in the interviews also had first-hand knowledge of the events and can share that information to provide more context. The participants and I were able to provide a thick description of the history of Women’s Week, which include stories of individual women and the structural oppression they have faced.

**Researcher Statement**

While I think my access and experience at Ball State University are an advantage for the analysis, I recognized my bias and tried to control my assumptions as much as possible in the process. Experienced researchers and experts in the field of qualitative research see self-discovery as essential to learning about qualitative research (Brown, 1996). Simmons (1988, as cited in Brown 1996) regards awareness of one's "biases, blind spots, and cognitive limitations . . . as high a priority as theoretical knowledge" (p. 20).

Scheurich (1994) remarked that one's historical position, one's class, one's race, one's gender, one's religion, and so on—all of these interact and influence, limit and constrain production of knowledge. In other words, who I am determines, to a large extent, what I want to study. I further believe that in addition to social and historical position, a researcher's evolving self in terms of his or her deliberate educational and professional choices also influence selection of a research topic (Mehra, 2001). The methodological framework for this study allowed for an interpretation that comes out of
the interaction or intersection between the reality of researcher and that of the researched. Throughout the process, I took measures to be aware of and monitor my bias and subjectivity while collecting data and analyzing it.

These measures included recording my personal reactions and critically analyzing those reactions. I looked for my beliefs and biases in a regular review of my reactions and focused on the insider or emic voice in this research. I identified my role in the data as necessary. I analyzed the data critically and used facts found in the data to back up my findings.

**Research Questions**

The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do the organizers who were involved in the Women’s Studies program describe their experiences in creating events and activities for Women’s Week?

2. What are the perceptions of the organizers regarding how these events linked Ball State University and the local Muncie community?

Through qualitative methods for collecting data, I preserved the stories themselves and coded the interviews for an analysis of content. I emphasized the stories that the participants told. Oral histories of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program as well as the Women’s Week events themselves were preserved through the telling of their personal stories.

**Definitions**

Women's studies can be defined as an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to topics concerning women, feminism, gender, and politics (Temple University Subject
Guides, n.d.). The term feminism can be used to describe an academic discourse, or to describe a political, cultural, or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender, as well as a movement that advocates equality for women and campaigns for women’s rights (Cornell, 1998; Humm, 1992).

Community education is broadly identified as education for community within community. Community is not just the place or context in which education is to occur, but fostering community is also a central concern (Edwards, Sieminski, & Zeldin, 1993). These ideas are often used by women’s studies as a discipline (Fisher, 1987). In the field of adult and community education, Wood and Judikis (2002) defined community as a group of people, who have a sense of common purpose(s) and/or interest(s) for which they assume mutual responsibility, who acknowledge their interconnectedness, who respect the individual differences among members, and who commit themselves to the well-being of each other and the integrity and well-being of the group. (p. 12)

Women’s studies originated outside academia with activists, including students, who wanted to draw on women’s collective experience to understand and to change the prevailing power structures (Bunch, 1979). At the same time, in adult and community education, women active in feminist and community politics pushed for the introduction of new material and teaching methods. At all education levels, women criticized their exclusion from course content, as well as the hierarchical structures and authoritarian teaching methods which tended to exclude women. They wanted not only to change course content, but also to make knowledge more accessible to women. This included
both bringing more women into higher education and taking women’s studies into the wider community (McDowell & Pringle, 1992). Besides practicing feminist pedagogy, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State takes their knowledge about women’s issues into the wider community by hosting the Women’s Week events. These events are open to local community members and they often showcase local feminists and women’s groups. Women’s Week carries on the traditions of both the women’s studies and community education fields.

**Summary**

This research narrated the story of how the Women’s and Gender Studies Program interacts with the local community through yearly educational programs known as Women’s Week. Oral histories with participants who helped organize the events and archival data were used in the analysis. Chapter Two provides the feminist theoretical framework that led to the creation of women’s studies and feminism in America. The chapter also summarizes the pertinent literature from the field of community education that informs this study. Chapter Three discusses the methodological issues that come with doing an oral history project and conducting in-depth interview. Chapter Four reports the research findings, starting with a brief look at the beginning of the program and the events that were created to supplement the first women’s studies class at Ball State. Then, the oral histories focus on the time period from 1988 to 2008 when Women’s Week became an annual series of events. The analysis explores the collaboration between the program and the community. Chapter Five summarizes the overall research, as well as conclusions and discussion from the data. It includes some recommendations for future study.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat or a prostitute.

~ Rebecca West (Marcus, 1983, p. 219)

This chapter reviews the literature that created the framework for this research. First, community education will be discussed; next program planning within adult education is explored. Then, feminist theory will be covered, including a brief history of feminism. A short history of the field of Women’s Studies is also detailed here. The historical literature is important given the chronological nature of this study.

Community Education

Recent literature suggests that community education is an opportunity for local citizens, communities, schools, agencies and institutions to become active partners in addressing education and community concerns (Broadbent & Papadopoulos, 2009; Doherty, Jacob, & Cutting, 2009; Larrotta & Brooks, 2009). Community education brings community members together to identify and link community needs and resources in a manner that helps raise the quality of life in communities.
Community education is a unique educational concept that embraces the beliefs that: education is a lifelong process; everyone in the community—individuals, businesses, public and private agencies—shares responsibility for the mission of educating all members of the community. Citizens have a right and a responsibility to be involved in determining community needs, identifying community resources, and linking those needs and resources to improve their community (Allen, Bastiani, Martin & Richards, 1987).

Community education is characterized by citizen involvement in community problem-solving and decision-making, usually through community councils; development and implementation of lifelong learning opportunities for learners of all ages, backgrounds and needs. It is also exemplified through the use of community resources in the schooling/education curriculum; opportunities for parents to become involved in the learning process of their children and the life of the school and optimum use of public education facilities by people of all ages in the community. Finally, community education is implemented through coordination and collaboration among agencies and institutions to deliver educational, social, economic, recreation, and cultural services to all members of the community; partnerships with business industry and schools to enhance the learning climate; and utilization of volunteers to enhance the delivery of community services (Rohrer & Cade, 1992).

Community education results in a responsive education system and an improved climate for learning in the schools. It also produces efficient and cost-effective ways of delivering education and community services as well as broad-based community support for schools and other community agencies. Community education puts an emphasis on
special populations, such as at-risk youth and minorities, and allows for collective action among educational and community agencies to address quality of life issues (Rohrer & Cade, 1992).

The concepts of community education and community development have their roots in the colonial era of the British Empire (Cantor & Roberts, 1979; Kirkwood, 1978). More of these roots are described in the book *School and Society*, by John Dewey, which was written in 1899 (Olsen, 1988). This book stressed the importance of schools being socially responsible. In 1911, the National Society for the Study of Education published a report on the *School as the Community Center* (Olsen, 1988). Two years later, Joseph Hart (1913) wrote a book titled, *Educational Resources of Village and Rural Communities*, which addressed the use of school resources for the community. These works were the philosophical beginnings of community education in the United States.

In 1926, Charles Stewart (C.S.) Mott established a “family philanthropy” called the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (Berridge, 1973). It was school-based and centered on the ideas of using school resources for individual and community improvement and on using the community as a teaching aid or learning resource (Berridge, 1973; Seay, 1974). C.S. Mott firmly believed that community education went beyond providing learning activities for citizens. He believed that participating in learning opportunities would get citizens interested in socially constructive activities that they were willing to spend leisure time learning and doing. Adults would be drawn into the school and would get involved in the school in some way. Often, this adult involvement fostered a further
interest in continued learning. Community education would stimulate and fill several needs (Brookfield, 1985).

Adult educators have adopted elements of this perspective and talk of the “educative community” as a “living learning laboratory,” linking the family, school, and community (Hiemstra, 1993, p. 23). Implementation of this philosophy is exemplified in To Make the Community Your Classroom (McClure, Cook, & Thompson, 1977). Not only school-connected, citizens are engaged in programs designed and delivered locally. In various contexts, peers discuss their lives, aspirations, and challenges amongst one another; such discussions lead to more formal meetings, which themselves lead to plans of action.

Community education covers many facets of life. People use community education to learn from one another about how to improve their lives and about what impedes progress towards their goals. These activities are frequently local in scope but often large in their impact. They are under-represented in the current body of adult education literature because their ad hoc, extra-institutional nature. Some of these programs may not be seen as educational to people, but as friendly gatherings where they might happen to learn new information. That makes it difficult to document these activities and put them into set categories (Broadbent & Papadopoulos, 2009).

Besides the variety of activities encompassed in the field of community education, there are also distinctions between the liberal and liberating notions of community education. The liberal notion of community education regards communities as organic harmonious entities. Advocates of this philosophy and procedure argue that it is possible to serve the needs of all members of a community at any one time. An example of this
comes in this definition of community education: “the process of identification of community needs so that the community and its members can grow through social and educational programs” (Fellenz & Coker, 1980, p. 319).

The liberating concept of community education acknowledges that communities are groupings designated by inequalities of class, status, and power, and in choosing to meet the needs of one segment; the educator must ignore or even oppose the needs of another. In this belief, education is the arm of radical social action aimed at promoting collective advancement of the working class and disadvantaged or minority groups. Community education assumes a political significance. Community development and community action are seen as intertwined and allied to the pursuit of social justice. The advocates of this radical concept of community education look for their role models in the past, from the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee (Horton, 1990) and the history of feminism in the United States.

**Program Planning**

Planning educational programs is a central task in the field of community education. Through the planning process, educational programs are created, and refined, essentially defining the nature of adult and community education practice (Hendricks, 2001; Mills, Cervero, Langone, & Wilson, 1995). Accordingly, program planning is discussed throughout the history of adult and community education and multiple models of adult and community education planning have been developed (Caffarella, 1994; Sork & Buskey, 1986). Most of the models have defined what effective adult and community education program planning should be, without focusing on the realities of program
planning practice as it actually occurs (Caffarella, 1994; Cervero & Wilson, 1994a, 1996).

Adult and community educators have also addressed the social and political aspects of program planning (Cervero & Wilson, 1994a, 1994b; Sork, 1997; Yang, Cervero, Valentine, & Benson, 1998). This represented a turning point in how program planning is viewed and understood by researchers and practitioners (Sork, 1996).

Qualitative research related to power negotiation has demonstrated the relevance of power and negotiation in program planning (Archie-Booker, Cervero, & Langone, 1999; Carter, 1996). Each context is unique, and planners use various influencing tactics and positions of power are used in different types of situations. Nevertheless, several aspects of the issue have been suggested as important across situations: the nature of the power relationships involved, the degree of conflict associated with the situation (Cervero & Wilson, 1994a), and the characteristics of the planner (Yang, 1996).

Some of the relevant literature and research has drawn on Cervero and Wilson's (2006) model of program planning as negotiating power in light of the context, discussing relational power as an integral part of the process. While Cervero and Wilson, and those who draw on their work, do attend to context, they do not specifically attend to issues that are relevant to feminist-program-planning contexts. Tom Sork (2000), in his chapter in the Handbook of Adult Education, noted the absence of feminist analysis in program planning dialogue and asked, “What would a book written on program planning from a feminist perspective look like?” (p. 174). Sork and Newman's (2004) chapter in Dimensions of Adult Learning echoed the same concern and considered why there has not been an infusion of feminist scholarship in this area of adult and community education.
literature. There is a considerable amount of feminist scholarship within the field of adult and community education that could arguably be connected to the issues that surface in program planning. For instance, feminist authors such as Birden (2004), English (2006), English and Irving (2008), Mojab and Gorman (2003), Mayo and Thompson (1995), Thomas, (1999), Thompson (1997), and Tisdell (1998) examined facets of the feminist analysis of power constructs and positionality, studies of learning organizations, grassroots education for women, work and learning, pedagogy, and adult development.

There are critical feminist works in the field of adult and community education that place an emphasis on analyzing power, discourse, and knowledge as it is created and reflected on between individuals and organizations (Bracken, 2008; English, 2006; Tisdell, 1998). English's (2006) study of feminist nonprofits argued that understanding power through a critical feminist lens of power, knowledge, and discourse is important to our understanding of how effectively feminist organizations integrate relational learning and power into their daily practices. Her study recommended that characterizing feminist forms of organization purely as essentialist feminine stereotypes of altruism within feminist groups prevents one from grasping the critical characteristics of a feminist dynamic. She traced threads of power and resistance to power as a healthy part of the growth process. She also advocated that it is realistic to expect conflict over who decides what and to struggle with operating within complex threads of power. This puts the process of struggling for equitable uses of daily power as a necessary outcome rather than as evidence of some sort of inability to get things done efficiently in the absence of a traditional organizational structure.
Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a body of writing that attempts to describe, explain, and analyze the conditions of women’s lives. According to Charlotte Bunch (1979), feminist theory is “a way of viewing the world” (p. 250). It “provides a basis for understanding every area of our lives” (p. 250). According to bell hooks (1991), “it is a way to grasp what is happening around and within us” (p. 59). Feminist theory also has put forward strategies for activism and action to improve the conditions in which women live and work.

The basic issue that has concerned feminist theorists, depending on the terminology, is women’s inequality, subordination, or domination by men. At the root of these is the issue of gender asymmetry or the designation of women and things associated with women as different from, inferior to, of lesser value than men and things associated with men. Feminist theories examine and try to explain the causes and conditions in which men are more powerful and men’s production, ideas, and activities are seen as having greater value and higher status than women’s. For many feminist theorists, this comes to mean examining and explaining all structures of domination, whether based on gender, race, class, age, sexuality, nation, or some other difference (Grant, 1993).

There are important challenges to recognize within feminist theory. Women in many different situations and from many perspectives have theorized about feminism, thus there is not a single feminism. Feminist theories have a history, but not one that is nonlinear or centered around one cause. Examinations of contemporary feminist theory should be grounded in the history of debates and conversations (Grant, 1993; Hekman, 1999).
Many women theorize about feminism, including political and social activists, scholars and academics, poor women, working-class women, privileged women. Also included among feminist theorists are women of different sexual orientations and racial and ethnic backgrounds. These women have not always labeled their work, ‘feminist,’ or even, ‘theories,’ but their writing engages in the activities and thought that try to explain women’s situations, to understand gender disparities, or to understand unequal distributions of privilege and power, all the while using gender as one element of their analysis (Grant, 1993).

For this study, it is essential to focus on feminist theory in the United States. Some international work will be discussed because it is influential to the national story, but the Women’s Studies Program at Ball State University was built on the historical base of feminist theory from the United States. The community activism of the program, including the activities of Women’s Week, are derived from the feminist movement in the United States. This discussion is not all encompassing, but certain core ideas, issues, and themes have been debated throughout the history of feminism and feminist theory. Many ideas have emerged in every time period, but new perspectives often emerge as the dialogue continues over time. Some ideas are triggered by conversations with other intellectual and social movements, some by evolution of women’s movements, and others as a result of historical, political, and social developments.

Eras in Feminist History

Since this is a historically-based research project, it makes sense to examine the main readings of feminism chronologically. In the opinion of this researcher, the first person to specifically influence feminism in the United States is Mary Wollstonecraft
(1792) and her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in her native England. Her text is one of the first in the Anglo-American tradition that attempts to theorize the position of women within the dominant political and social discourses of its moment. Other authors came before who brought up concerns about women’s issues, including Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz (Paz, 1988). Yet, Wollstonecraft’s work is significant as a starting point because many other writers were influenced by her work.

The next major era for feminism in the United States is the time period where women’s suffrage was at the forefront. Prior to this, the demand for female enfranchisement in politics and other areas, such as education, dominated much of the thinking about women, even by those who thought that focusing on suffrage, as the center of the women’s movement was wrong. Nancy Cott (1987) emphasized the difference between modern feminism and its past history, particularly the fight for suffrage. She placed the turning point as the time period before and after women obtained the vote, which can be defined as the first wave of the women’s movement. She made the case that the beginning women’s movement was primarily about woman as a total person. Then in the early 1900s, the suffrage cause brought feminist concerns to the front in our cultural dialogue. The movement transformed into one above all interested in social differentiation, including individuality and diversity. New questions asked more about women as a social construct. These ideas included gender identity and relationships within and between genders. This symbolized a political shift from an ideological position at ease with the right, to one more radically related to the left.

Kent (1993) wrote that the rise of patriarchy was responsible for the diminished profile of feminism in the inter-war years all over the world. Some feminist scholarship
shifted away from the need to establish the origins of family, and towards analyzing the process of patriarchy (Stocking, 1995). In the immediate post World War II period, Simone de Beauvoir stood in opposition to an image of the homemaker. She provided an existentialist dimension to feminism with the publication of *The Second Sex* (Beauvoir, 1949). As the title implies, the starting point is the implicit inferiority of women.

De Beauvoir thought a woman defines herself through the way in which she makes something of what the world makes of her (Moi, 1999). Therefore, woman must regain her own definitions, to escape her defined role as ‘other’ (Bergoffen, 1997). In her examination of myth, she appeared as one who does not accept any special privileges for women. Ironically, feminist philosophers have had to extract de Beauvoir from out of the shadow of Jean-Paul Sartre to fully appreciate her contributions (Sullivan, 2000). De Beauvoir brought forth new ideas that were later expanded in the United States.

Betty Friedan (1963) and *The Feminine Mystique* next influenced American feminism, and women all over the world. This is the text that most historians identify as starting the second wave of the women’s movement. For her 15th college reunion in 1957, Friedan conducted a survey of Smith College graduates, focusing on their education, their subsequent experiences and satisfaction with their current lives. She started publishing articles about what she called “the problem with no name” and got passionate responses from many housewives grateful that they were not alone in experiencing this problem.

The reappearance of feminist activism in the late 1960s was complemented by new debates over what might be considered feminine issues, such as concerns for the earth, spirituality, and environmental activism. This created an atmosphere favorable to
restarting the study of mothering as a central focus on women and their roles in their societies. Some saw this as a denial of determinism (French, 1985; Rich, 1976b). For socialist feminists, patriarchy held the assets of capitalism (Reed, 1975). The activism of the second wave allowed women to focus on different aspects of feminism, instead of fighting for one main cause as the first wave did.

The theory written after 1963 is not so much defined by historical events or dates of publication, but really by shifts in the discourse and concerns that arose from feminist theory. The shifts are gradual. They evolve over many years through the impact of both conversations and challenges. In a timeline format, the changes can roughly be recognized between 1975 and 1985 (Boxer, 1982).

The period from 1963 to 1975 showed feminist theory as part of the activism of the women’s movement. Contrastingly, during the period from 1975 through 1985, writing about feminist theory was produced by academic women that associated with the new field of women’s studies. This new field brought forth many new concepts and ideas (Conway, Bourque, & Scott, 1989; Ginsberg, 2008).

Before this time, feminists worked primarily from grassroots organizations. The shift gradually moved into academia. Women's studies was first conceived academically apart from other departments in the late 1970s. It gained momentum as the second wave of feminism gained political influence in the academy through student and faculty activism. As an academic discipline, it was modeled on the American studies and ethnic studies programs that had arisen before it (Ginsberg, 2008).

In 1977, a decade after the first women’s studies course appeared across the United States, the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) was founded to
promote and sustain “the educational strategy of a breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge” that would “transform” individuals, institutions, relationships, and, ultimately the whole society (NWSA, 1977, pp. 6-8). Insisting that the academic is political and the cognitive is affective, the NWSA’s constitution clearly reflected the influence of the women’s liberation movement on women’s studies. Research and teaching at all educational levels and in all academic and community settings would be not only about but for all women, guided by “a vision of a world free not only from sexism, but also racism, classism, ageism, heterosexual bias-from all the ideologies and institutions that have consciously or unconsciously oppressed and exploited some for the advantage of others” (pp. 6-8). Women’s studies challenged its practitioners to think beyond the boundaries of traditional sex roles, of traditional disciplines, and of established institutions. By breaking down the divisions that limit perceptions and deny opportunities, by revising pedagogical processes as well as courses and curricula, this educational reform has itself become a social environment.

Forty years after the first women’s studies program was established, there are more than 900 programs in the U.S., boasting well over 10,000 courses and an enrollment larger than that of any other interdisciplinary field (NWSA, n.d.). There are around 40 scholarly journals (Association of College & Research Libraries, n.d.) as well as countless newsletters. There are numerous community groups and centers, along with conferences and programs all over the world (Banaszak, 2005).

The literature about women’s studies as a field in higher education has many aspects: its history (Kennedy & Beins, 2005), political issues (Aleman & Renn, 2002), theories (Bowles & Klein, 1983), and structures (DiGeorgio-Lutz, 2002). Because of the
nature of women’s studies itself, these categories often overlap, and some literature will be mentioned more than once. Much of the writing done about women’s studies first appeared in periodicals, but now books and monographs are more prevalent and are included in this review.

**History of Women’s Studies**

Women’s studies first appeared in the last half of the 1960s when women faculty in higher education, stronger in number than ever before, began to create new courses that would facilitate more reflection on female experiences and feminist aspirations (Evans, 1980). Supported and sometimes led by feminist students, staff, or community women, these innovators were often political activists who sought to understand and to confront the sexism they had experienced in movements for the liberation of other oppressed groups. The free-university movements and the civil rights movement inspired their efforts at organization and course development (Rossi & Calderwood, 1973). A “passion for women’s history” represented “more than just a desire for female heritage” (Trecker, 1981, p. 86). It also was a “search for ways in which a successful female revolution might be constructed” (p. 86).

In the mid-1970s, in one of the first essays to discuss the neglect and distortion of women in university courses and curricula, Sheila Tobias called for a new program of ‘Female Studies’ at Cornell University, justifying her stand with an analogy to Black studies. At the same time, courses on women appeared at a number of universities, including a program of five at San Diego State. That fall, *Female Studies I* was published. It was the first of a 10 volume series through which practitioners of the new classes shared their syllabi, reading lists, and experiences. Compiled by Tobias (1970), it
featured outlines of 16 courses taught or proposed during 1969 and 1970, as well as a 10 course curriculum from San Diego State, which in September 1970 became the first officially established integrated women’s studies program in the nation. In December, *Female Studies II* was published. It was an anthology of 66 course outlines and bibliographies collected by the Commission on the Status of Women of the Modern Language Association and edited by Florence Howe (1970). With Howe’s leadership the commission had begun to function as a ‘clearinghouse’ for information in the new field (Chamberlain, 1988).

The rapid growth of women’s studies reflected the widely shared perception that changing what and how women (and men) study about women could and would affect the way women live. It offered a new opportunity for students and scholars to redefine themselves and their experiences around the world. It also allowed for discussion about whether there was a definitive separation between the women’s movement and academia. Victoria Schuck (1974) perceived three rounds in the history of the women’s movement, of which only the third posed a challenge to academia. Contemporary feminism, through women’s studies, “aimed at destroying the sexual stereotypes bequeathed by nineteenth-century male academics” (pp. 413-414).

To Florence Howe (2000), women’s studies represented a third phase in American women’s struggle for education. First, in the early and mid-nineteenth century, proponents of improving female education accepted cultural assumptions about women’s nature and demanded a higher education appropriate to woman’s role as a moral teacher. Next, in the late nineteenth century, they began to stress the identity of male and female intellectual capacities and to call for access to the standard courses. Only in the third
phase did they challenge the male hegemony over the content of college courses and the
substance of knowledge itself.

The double purpose of women’s studies—to expose and redress the oppression of
women—was reflected in the widespread attempts to restructure the classroom
experience of students and faculty. Circular arrangement of chairs, periodic small group
sessions, use of first names for instructors as well as students, assignments that required
journal keeping, reflection papers, cooperative projects, and collective modes of teaching
with student participation all sought to transfer to women’s studies the contemporary
feminist criticism of authority and the validation of every woman’s experience. These
techniques borrowed from the women’s movement also were designed to combat the
institutional hierarchy and professional exclusiveness that had been used to shut out
women (Rossi & Calderwood, 1973). Indeed, collaboration in teaching and program
governance has been a vital contribution of the women’s movement to educational
innovation.

The responsibility of women’s studies to the larger feminist community also
became a debated issue in the early years. Bitter conflict developed between factions
who weighed differently the political and academic aims of the campus movement.
White, middle-class, heterosexuality feminists were attacked for attempting to separate
women’s studies from the radical women’s movement (Forfreedom, 1974).

More fearful that women’s studies would be destroyed by internal conflict if not
by external opposition, Catharine Stimpson (1973) analyzed the sources of the inner
turmoil. She identified the problems as women’s acceptance of cultural stereotypes of
femininity and their consequent distrust of women in power, as well as ideological
conflict among five categories of women’s studies practitioners: “pioneers” who had taught about women before women’s studies, “ideologues” who had come to women’s studies through feminism, “radicals” who had been politicized, “latecomers” who became interested after women’s studies began, and “bandwagoners” who found women’s studies useful for their careers. Stimpson saw hope for survival in the “buoyancy that comes from sensing that to work for women’s studies is to belong to a historical tide” (p. 314).

Adrienne Rich (1976a) addressed the issue of women’s studies’ possible co-optation within the university system. She found that, despite its tenuous hold on the university, women’s studies continued to be a place where students may claim an education, demand to be taken seriously, and are taught what they really need to know to live as women in the world. Rich envisioned a university transformed by feminist principles, with competition replaced by cooperation, fragmentation by wholeness, and even the line between campus and community shaded. It was a goal that depended on women learning to use their power constructively as an agent of change. Rich wanted students to claim their knowledge and use it in their everyday life, not just keep it in the classroom.

With the increasing integration of women’s studies in to the educational establishment, a new constituency of students entered the classroom. Unlike the students of the early 1970s, they were less likely to identify themselves as feminist, or sometimes to even understand such basic concepts as sexism and feminism. Susan Snaider Lanser (1977) was startled to find her students not only apolitical but still suffering the burden of traditional sex-role expectations.
Consciousness raising, (hooks, 2000) borrowed from women’s liberation to become a teaching device in early women’s studies classroom, took place less often. Cheri Register (1979) identified four stages in both the classroom process and the development of women’s studies and the women’s movement. Moving from compensating, to criticizing, to collecting and constructing, and finally to conceptualizing anew, students and teacher would pass through despair to emerge with a new and positive basis for understanding and living with a feminist perspective.

New perceptions of women’s studies were accompanied by new structures. To facilitate communication among practitioners and to enhance the development of scholarship and teaching, the National Women’s Studies Association was founded in San Francisco in 1977. After careful preparation, it was designed to express both professional and feminist values. A complicated structure allowed for equitable representation of various constituencies—regional groups, students, staff, elementary and secondary teachers, lesbians, Third World women, community women, etc. The intent was to counter the tendency toward exclusiveness and exclusion that characterizes many other professional organizations. Sliding registration fees for conventions provided funds to equalize transportation costs for residents of nearby and distant places. Widespread participation would be encouraged by eliminating keynote speakers (Greene, 1976).

In fulfillment of the commitment of women’s studies to be inclusive of all women and all women’s concerns, programs for the NWSA conferences in the late 1970s and early 1980s included hundreds of sessions. Even with all this diversity, women’s studies faced challenges from within. The most extensive debates addressed the relationship of women’s studies to the feminist movement and the integration of activist and academic
goals, inside as well as outside the classroom. Although these debates served to stimulate and to enrich women’s studies, they also provided a source of potential conflict among constituent groups and required that the NWSA perform a delicate balancing act (Davis & Frech, 1981). These sorts of debates continue at the NWSA conference even today.

Conviction remained strong that women’s studies must be explicitly political, consciously an academic arm of women’s liberation, and actively part of a larger social movement that envisions the transformation of society (Gordon, 1975). Unlike other academic pursuits, it must not separate theory from practice. Since feminism made women’s studies possible, women’s studies must in turn make feminism possible. Today’s women’s studies practitioners and programs enter into innumerable community activities in many ways: teachers are taking women’s studies into prisons (Bergeron, Lempert, & Linker, 2005), studying the socialization of girls (Lipkin, 2009), and examining feminist mothering (O’Reilly, 2008).

Challenges from lesbians and women of color to make women’s studies truly inclusive continued. Much of the writing from this period directed the movement towards becoming more mainstream (Code, 2003). Others believed that women’s studies should be integrated into general education by redefinition and expansion of basic required courses rather than offered as an alternative general education curriculum (Lougee, 1980). Some feminist educators saw this approach as a threat to the survival of separate women’s studies courses or questioned whether content could be abstracted from a feminist framework or taught by faculty at large without sacrificing essential goals. Others found classroom dynamics transformed by the presence of students seeking mainly to fulfill degree requirements (Ness & Brooks, 1980).
Christine Garside Allen (1975) argued that women’s studies should combine introductory and advanced-level interdisciplinary courses with intermediate course work in the disciplines. Greta Hoffman Nemiroff (1978) analyzed the difficulties and value of interdisciplinary work. Because women’s studies challenged the discipline-based categories in which the structure and economy of most universities are grounded, she felt it could not be easily assimilated within the academy. Practitioners have advanced women’s studies development by systematic efforts to examine and expand its interactions with other disciplines.

Being an interdisciplinary program or department is important to women’s studies in academia. Gloria Bowles said, “Perhaps one day the Renaissance man will be replaced by the interdisciplinary woman” (as cited in Bowles & Duelli-Klein, 1983, p. 40). Although Bowles has pioneered a course on theories of women’s studies, she cautioned against the potential danger of what Mary Daly (1985) called “methodolatry” (p. 11). Instead of artificially creating a system of ideas, women’s studies instructors should locate their questions in the women’s movement and obtain techniques suitable to women’s survival needs.

It is specifically this feminist endeavor to improve women’s lives that Bowles and Duelli-Klein (1983) considered important to the improvement of women’s studies’ methodology. The way to avoid sexist methods such as context stripping is to ground theory in feminist action research. Researchers must abandon the pretext of value-free objectivity for conscious subjectivity more appropriate to studies explicitly intended to be for as well as about women.
Duelli-Klein’s examination of feminist methodology draws on Marcia Westkott’s (1979) analysis of how sexist content, method, and purposes influence representations of women. Westkott recommended other ways of thinking about reality that link subject and object, rather than separating them. Feminist thought typically uses methods of analyzing self and other, person and society, consciousness and activity, past and future, knowledge and practice. It is open and compelling, instead of closed and controlling. It reinforces understanding with active dedication to improve the condition of women. Westkott finds that these feminist critiques of content, method, and purpose are the building blocks of women’s studies theory (1979).

The feminist theory of the 1990s includes discussions that evolved from the women that gathered in Beijing for the fourth United Nations Conference on Women. These women attempted to articulate a common global agenda for change in women’s lives. In September 1995, the group at Beijing released a declaration that included this passage:

We reaffirm our commitment to: The equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development. (United Nations, 1995, para. 8)
There were 38 specific points made in the declaration, but the focus on the rights of every person is really inherent to feminism and the theories behind it. By specifically referencing discrimination, they emphasized that not everyone is equal worldwide and that should be a major part of ensuring everyone’s human rights.

The 1990s to the present mark the era commonly associated with the third wave of the feminist movement. Third-wave feminism seeks to challenge or avoid what it deems as the weaknesses to the second wave’s definitions of femininity, which often assumed a universal female identity and over-emphasized experiences of upper middle class white women. Third-wave theory usually incorporates many elements of feminism including queer theory, transgender politics, anti-racism, womanism, post-colonial theory, critical theory, postmodernism, and ecofeminism (Heywood & Drake, 1997).

Also considered part of the third wave is a celebration of sexuality as a positive aspect of life, with broader definitions of what sex means and what oppression and empowerment may mean in regards to sex. This includes reconsiderations of the second-wave oppositions to pornography and sex work. Many proponents of the third wave of feminism challenge existing beliefs that participants in pornography and sex work cannot be empowered (Johnson, 2002).

Advocates of third-wave feminism believe that it allows women to define feminism by incorporating their own identities into the belief system of what feminism is and what it can become. In their introduction to the idea of third-wave feminism in *Manifesta*, authors Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards (2000) suggested that feminism can change with every generation and individual:
The fact that feminism is no longer limited to arenas where we expect to see it—NOW, Ms., women's studies, and redsuiwed Congresswomen—perhaps means that young women today have really reaped what feminism has sown. Raised after Title IX and "William Wants a Doll," young women emerged from college or high school or two years of marriage or their first job and began challenging some of the received wisdom of the past ten or twenty years of feminism. We're not doing feminism the same way that the seventies feminists did it; being liberated doesn't mean copying what came before but finding one's own way— a way that is genuine to one's own generation. (p. 47)

Third-wave feminism began as a response to alleged failures of the second wave and also as a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave. Feminist leaders rooted in the second wave like bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Maxine Hong Kingston, and many other feminists of color, sought to negotiate a space within feminist thought for consideration of subjects related to race (Gills, Howie, & Munford, 2007).

Some third-wave feminists prefer not to call themselves feminists, as the word feminist can be misinterpreted as insensitive or elitist by critics. Others have kept but redefined the term. Third-wave feminism seeks to challenge any universal definition of femininity (Henry, 2003). Third-wave feminism deals with issues that seem to limit or oppress women, as well as other marginalized identities (Siegel, 1997). Consciousness raising activism and widespread education is often the first step that feminists take toward social change.
Consciousness among women is what caused this, and consciousness, one’s ability to open their mind to the fact that male domination does affect the women of our generation, is what we need . . . The presence of feminism in our lives is taken for granted. For our generation, feminism is like fluoride. We scarcely notice we have it—it’s simply in the water. (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000, p. 17)

This body of work revolves around responses made to multiple challenges from within feminist culture as well as intellectual and global change outside its borders. The internal critiques come from those who still feel excluded from feminism in academia, including women of color, poor and working-class women, women with disabilities and older women. The external influences on feminism include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) theories, reproductive technologies, postmodern works and shifts in global power to name a few (Heywood & Drake, 1997). Feminist theorists have tried their best to delve into these changing landscapes with creativity and openness.

**History of the Ball State Women’s and Gender Studies Program**

The atmosphere was set for change in the 1970s at Ball State University. People were reading *The Feminine Mystique, Ms. Magazine*, and hearing about Roe v. Wade in the news. Things really got started for Women’s Studies at Ball State University in the summer of 1971. The History Department sponsored a series of films and presentations, entitled, “Adam’s Angry Rib: Women on the Move.” Many of the speakers were prominent national feminists and large groups of people attended.

After one of these presentations, a group of people went out for conversation and drinks. The idea of creating a course in Women’s Studies was discussed. Aware that
there was a national trend towards programs and departments, this group felt that Ball State should be part of the movement. They made the decision to start the arduous paperwork process. The two people most influential women in this process were Sharon Seager and Betty Newcomb. They were aided in their efforts by Victor Lawhead, Dean of Undergraduate Programs, who offered his support during the process.

With this support and because of these individuals’ hard work, the first Women’s Studies class (ID 210) was taught in the Spring of 1972. ID was the title for the interdisciplinary aspects of the class, and it was team taught by Seager, Newcomb, and Marie Vogel. It was comprised of 60 students, a huge class compared to those is taught in Women’s and Gender Studies today. No one had been trained in Women’s Studies, not at Ball State, not anywhere. The instructors relied on helpful librarians for books, as well as guest lecturers from campus and the local community.

The movement continued with more speakers, like Shirley Chisholm, and more classes. An informal Women’s Studies Committee was formed in 1974. In 1975, Richard Burkhardt, the Dean of Faculties, gave the committee official status and asked them to create a program that would house a minor in Women’s Studies.

Althea Stoeckel, a professor from the History Department, became the first chair of the Women’s Studies Committee. The committee worked on getting more courses approved, and by 1977, there were 12 new courses being taught in several disciplines. Securing these approvals they shifted their focus to getting the minor approved, and that was accomplished in December 1980.

The decade of the 1980s led to several further changes, including the naming of a new chair of the Women’s Studies Committee. In addition a quarterly newsletter was
published for started, published for a few years, and then discontinued. In lieu of a newsletter, *The Purple Sheet* began later in the 1980s. Publication was sporadic, having been stopped for a few years, but was later resumed so friends and alumni of the program could be updated to the news from the program. In 1986, Women’s Studies received their first office space, in North Quad room 113/114. Also in this decade the committee was at long last given official program status, and underwent a title change, to become known as the Women’s Studies Program. By the end of the decade (1988) Michael Stevenson, was given the title of Director.

Not yet satisfied with the new program name, a larger discussion about what to title the program began in the 1980s. It was not until 1989 that this was resolved and the program was renamed Women and Gender Studies. Still, not everyone involved with the program was happy about the change and by 2001 the title reverted back to the Women’s Studies program. A name change occurred again in 2009 when the program was renamed the Women’s and Gender Studies program.

The 1990s was a time of continued growth for the program. Women’s Studies originally gained more room in North Quad for the expanding program, but by 1999, the program moved to its current space, Burkhardt Building 108. Throughout this decade, the program continued its outreach and activism activities. Over time, the program has sponsored a Lunchtime Book Discussion Series, the Winterfest Information Fair, and Women’s Week. The Women’s Studies program is a member of the National Women’s Studies Association, and has had a collaborative, work relationship with several community agencies. Some of these include, the American Association of University
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Women, A Better Way, League of Women Voters, Ball Memorial Hospital, Planned Parenthood, Habitat for Humanity, and the National Organization for Women.

From 1994 until 2009, the Director of the program was Dr. Kim Jones-Owen. She was instrumental in moving the program forward with classes designated specifically as Women’s Studies classes, as well as the new major in Women’s Studies. In 2005, the very first major in Women’s Studies graduated, and many more have followed. Julee Rosser was named the Acting Director of the program in 2009. The Dean of the College of Sciences and Humanities appointed a new Director, Dr. Lisa Pellerin, from Sociology. She has been the Director from the summer of 2009 to the present day (2012).

Town and Gown Theory

One of the challenges in several of the disciplines mentioned has been meshing the local town together with the students involved on campus. Town and gown are two different communities of a university town; "town" being the non-academic residents and "gown" representing the university community (Martin, et al., 2005).

Historically, universities and their surrounding communities have struggled to work compliantly to address mutual problems (Martin, et al., 2005; Mayfield, 2001; Miller, 1963). In the United States, hostility towards universities was originally created from geographical isolation. Universities were often located in rural areas far removed from the social problems of the larger society. Universities promoted themselves as exclusive strongholds of knowledge. Despite their secluded beginnings, universities were soon challenged by the expansion of urban areas. Many universities were taken over by their surrounding communities, becoming urban campuses overnight. Many colleges and
universities responded to urbanization by building higher walls and gates. The schools attempted to preserve their separation from the local communities (Mayfield, 2001).

Ultimately, higher walls did not work. The problems of the larger society permeated university campuses. This led to the relationships between universities and communities declining even further. Kysiak (1986) described the status of university-community relations at Yale University and Northwestern University. Kysiak commented that,

although universities bring great prestige to a community, many citizens perceive them solely as large, powerful, non-taxpaying entities that soak up city services and provide little in return. This perception, combined with the universities’ penchant for making unilateral decisions without city consultation, made the relationship between the two entities more and more acerbic as time went on. (p. 50)

Not all historical relationships between universities and communities were antagonistic and unproductive. The Land Grant College Act (1862) facilitated the development of agricultural and mechanical technologies (Brunner, 1966). In 1889, the University of Chicago opened “Hull House,” a women-led, university-community partnership designed to help mitigate the effects of industrialization and urbanization on the low-income population of Chicago’s West Side. At Columbia University, President Seth Low urged faculty and students to become involved in community work (Harkavy, 1998). Unfortunately these examples represent exceptions to the rule. They are infrequent spikes in groundbreaking university-community relations in a stagnant history.
Muncie and Ball State play a role in the history of town and gown studies. Local politicians and the Student Government Association often discuss mutual benefits and issues, but hardly any progress is made. The most recent town forum specifically discussing these issues was held in 2000 in conjunction with UniverCity (Ball State University, 2000).

Summary

The greatest promise of women’s studies and its most enduring problem are inextricably linked. The passion that moves women’s studies flows out of the combination of personal and professional interest. The integration of scholarship and politics provides academic feminism with an endless supply of questions to research, courses to teach, and missions to accomplish. It affects every major issue considered here: the adaptations of feminist principles to the classroom, the conflict between political and academic aims, the attempt to transform academic structures as well as curricula, the interaction of campus and community feminism, the struggles against racism and homophobia inside and outside of women’s studies, and the difficulties of interdisciplinary programs in a discipline-based academia.

As history has proven, feminism has come a long way but has a long way to go. The phrase “feminist theory” has been scoffed at in academia. Women have often been associated with the home and given limited access to higher education. Fortunately, there have been and continue to be women that have thought in complex ways about their own condition, their bodies and lives, social, political, and cultural institutions, creativity and science, justice, and liberty. Not only have they thought about these ideas, but they have acted on them in their local, national, and international communities. Being active in
their communities brings feminists together to identify and link community needs and resources in a manner that helps them raise the quality of life in their communities. It also allows for students in women's studies to use their education and be active in bonding with their local communities. Learning can take place both in and outside the classroom. Like bell hooks (1991), feminists have found in the activity of theorizing many ways to grasp what was happening around and within them, to comprehend it and to change it.
I have met brave women who are exploring the outer edge of human possibility, with no history to guide them, and the courage to make themselves vulnerable that I find moving beyond words.

~ Gloria Steinem, 1971, p. 49

This chapter describes the methodology that was used to complete this research. The description starts from the top with a general discussion of qualitative research and moves to the exact details of how the oral history interviews were conducted. Information regarding use of archival materials and record keeping are also included.

The purpose of this study is to bring to light the stories of the people who have participated in the creation of events sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University, through their own voices. The research questions that guided this study were:

3. How do the organizers who were involved in the Women’s Studies program describe their experiences in creating events and activities for Women’s Week?
4. What are the perceptions of the organizers regarding how these events linked Ball State University and the local Muncie community?

Qualitative Research

The methodological approach that guided this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research allows the researcher and reader to step into the lives of the participants by examining the participants’ experiences from their own points of view. In this study, I have explored the experiences and activities of the people who created Women’s Week at Ball State University. The readers are able to catch a glimpse of how some feminist events have connected the campus and local Muncie community.

In qualitative research, the three basic ways to collect data have traditionally been through interviews, observations, and examinations of documents and artifacts (Merriam & Simpson, 1995). The primary qualitative technique to gather data for this study involved key informant interviews and document analysis. The interview protocol was a three-interview process (Seidman, 2006). The researcher served as the primary research instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 1998). The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) of data analysis was used by this researcher to compare information gleaned through document analysis to the information gathered through interviews.

Oral History

Oral history is the ideal methodology for this study because of its focus on the telling of personal experiences of historical accounts through interviews. Through qualitative means of conducting the study, I considered the human element when collecting the data. I asked questions of interest, but then also allowed the participants to
take the interviews in a different direction. Fogerty (2006) identified the stages that researchers go through when conducting interviews. He stated that oral history begins with the conception of an interview or series of interviews and continues through research, narrator selection, and the interviews to transcription, editing, publication, and finally, public use in a variety of formats. At each stage of the process, context is created that becomes an important part of the interview and its meaning.

Gluck (1977) emphasized the ability of an oral history interviewer to decide which peoples’ lives will be added to the historical record. By opening up the historical record to include the lives of those ‘everyday people’ most often left out of traditional historical accounts, feminist oral histories can help assure that a fuller representation of the population is included in both libraries and history books.

Historians working with non-living subjects by necessity privilege archival research and this can cause many problems in traditional historical accounts. For example, Andrea Hinding (1993) wrote about German archivist Hans Bloom’s insightful work, which proposed that those who created the records also play the largest role in deciding which ones to keep. The imbalance in record-keeping has a great effect on the writing of history, which has often literally become the history of and by the powerful. Oral history can become a major tool in correcting these flawed histories by recording the experiences of those left out of traditional accounts. As Reinhartz (1992) wrote,

oral history, in contrast to written history, is useful for getting information about people less likely to be engaged in creating written records and for creating historical accounts of
phenomena less likely to have produced archival material. Relatively powerless groups are therefore especially good candidates for oral history research. (p. 131)

Also, Jones and Osterud (1989) noted the usefulness of oral history in countering incomplete histories drawn from archival records, writing that, “one of the greatest strengths of oral history is that it can partially redress the class, race, and gender imbalances in traditional documentary records” (p. 556).

One of the first oral history projects came during the Works Progress Administration (WPA). It contains more than 2,300 first person accounts of slavery and hundreds of photos of former slaves. These accounts were collected in the 1930s as part of the Federal Writers’ Project of the WPA (Library of Congress, n.d.). Oral history projects in England during the 1950s focused on the everyday lives of ordinary citizens (Perks & Thomson, 1998).

Many of the “experts” did not appreciate the intrusions of oral history, as described in the reflections on the doomsday reaction of some Italian historians. Portelli (1998) wrote that “oral history has no unified subject; it is told from a multitude of points of view, and the impartiality traditionally claimed by historians is replaced by the partiality of the narrator” (p. 73). Many traditional historians did not want to be replaced when it came to deciding what history is. They would continue to assert the need for intervention, and the interpretation of oral testimony is where they often reassert their authority, but many oral historians would continue to privilege the voices they collected in oral history interviews.
Oral history pioneer Willa Baum (1977) passionately advocated for the idea that the primary source was the most important. Along that same idea, Jo Blatti (1990) wrote that for her “an interviewee’s account is not seen as a ‘folk’ version in need of professional correction or amplification but as a freestanding construction that, together with other possible versions, forms the core of a series of interpretations of an event” (p. 623). Robert Smith (2006), who followed Baum as director of the Regional Oral History Office that is affiliated with University of California at Berkley, upheld the value of historians’ interpretation of oral interviews. He argued that when historians synthesize what has been recorded in a form that reveals more clearly what was said is important for understanding an aspect of the past.

Reinharz (1992) pointed out that feminists have come down on both sides of this debate. She noted that some historians believe that analyzing oral history testimony amounts to speaking for the narrators. For this reason, researchers such as Nancy Seifer and Patricia Sexton try not to engage in analysis and instead present their interviews as fully finished free-standing documents. Others, such as Elizabeth Hampsten, feel differently and urge women historians to “use our authority to help bring other voices into print and use our voices to comment on what we have learned” (as cited in Reinharz, 1992, p. 137). Reinharz concluded, “In my view, feminist oral historians need not silence themselves to let other women be heard” (p. 137).

I find both arguments compelling. Personally, I have found the idea that the narrators’ accounts might be all but useless without “professional” analysis to be elitist and distasteful. However, I am strongly moved both by Reinharz’s words that feminist researchers should not silence themselves and by Hampsten’s idea that researchers’ use
of oral history testimony can help illuminate neglected voices. Although I integrated some first-person oral testimony into this research, I placed the main emphasis on the participants’ accounts. I consider myself both a data source and the interpreter constructing the narrative. My personal involvement with the events and program was included in both the findings and conclusion.

**Interviews**

Interviewing is the appropriate methodology for this study because as Seidman (2006) explained,

So much research is done on schooling in the United States; yet so little of it is based on studies involving the perspective of the students, teachers, administrators, counselors, special subject teachers, nurses, psychologists, cafeteria workers, secretaries, school crossing guards, bus drivers, parents, and school committee members, whose individual and collective experience constitutes schooling. A researcher can approach the experience of people in contemporary organizations through examining personal and institutional documents, through observation, through exploring history, through experimentation, through questionnaires and surveys, and through a review of existing literature. If the researcher’s goal, however, is to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry. (pp. 10-11)

My intention was not to begin with a specific set of goals and hypotheses, nor to conduct experiments in which scientific data would be analyzed. Rather I let my participants share their own recollections, which shed light on the meaning of the
personal experiences and perceptions of the people involved with creating and organizing Women’s Week each year. When considering a methodology for this study, I looked at the five reasons offered by Strauss and Corbin (1990) for doing qualitative research:

1. The conviction of the researcher based on research experience
2. The nature of the research problem
3. [The understanding of] what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known
4. [The desire] to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known [and]
5. [The need] to give intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods (pg. 19).

Qualitative research is useful for this study because the nature of the research problem itself dictates that humans tell their own experiences of what happened in a certain time and place in history. Through qualitative research, and through in-depth interviews, specifically, I wanted to uncover that which was unknown because my participants had never before informed the general public of their stories. Using open-ended questioning and multiple interviews along with document analysis, I gained fresh ideas about topics and events that have already been recorded in history. For the analysis of both the archival materials and the interview information, I used constant comparative analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the constant comparison method as following four distinct stages:

1. comparing incidents applicable to each category,
2. integrating categories and their properties,
3. delimiting the theory, and
4. writing the theory. (p. 339)

The analysis for this study followed these guidelines closely. According to Goetz and LeCompte (1981), this method “combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents observed” (p. 58). As social phenomena are recorded and classified, they are also compared across categories. This process undergoes continuous refinement throughout the data collection and analysis process, continuously feeding back into the process of category coding. “As events are constantly compared with previous events, new topological dimensions, as well as new relationships, may be discovered” (p. 58).

Qualitative research gave me this opportunity to gain fresh ideas and allowed me to convey what Roberts (2004) credited Straus and Corbin with as the “intricate details of phenomena” (p. 110). These details would otherwise be lost through any other type of methodology. Oral history interviews and archival document analysis allow for a plethora of details to be studied from the origins and events of many different Women’s Weeks at Ball State University. The archival document analysis took place before, during, and after the interviews with the participants. The documents (Women’s Week flyers, letters, photos, news clippings, etc.) were analyzed to create interview questions and clarify information given to me by the participants. The archival materials were also used to refer back to when I was writing Chapter 4.

The participants’ narratives of their personal experiences give context and credence to this study, but oral history involves more than simply conducting interviews.
with participants. It encompasses the collection of a variety of data. It becomes a historical document that is available to the general public.

**Research Questions**

Throughout the inquiry process, I collected data from a variety of sources to answer the guiding research questions:

1. How do the organizers who were involved in the Women’s Studies program describe their experiences in creating events and activities for Women’s Week?
2. What are the perceptions of the organizers regarding how these events linked Ball State University and the local Muncie community?

**Collecting the Data**

I conducted formal and informal interviews with the participants, took notes, audio recorded the interviews, transcribed all of the interviews, and researched the archival materials. I began by researching the archival material, particularly the photographs and documents. This helped me to have some background knowledge of the history of Women’s Week before the interviews began.

In order to find participants that met the criteria I established for the project, I consulted the archival materials and other persons affiliated with the Women’s and Gender Studies program. I created a list of potential participants to contact. After deciding on the participants and asking for their cooperation, I followed a three-interview process (Seidman, 2006). The interviews were roughly an hour long each. The interview protocols can be found in Appendix A. The three-interview process is designed so that the first interview establishes the context of the participants’ experience. The questions focused specifically on the organization of the events of Women’s Week throughout the
years. The second allowed participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurred. The questions focused on the community involvement of the events discussed in the first round of interviews. The third encouraged the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience held for them (Seidman, 2006, p. 17). The third interview asked questions where the participants could discuss any challenges, as well as opportunities for growth.

Following these guidelines, my goal was “to have the participant reconstruct his or her experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 15). Through this reconstruction process, I learned more about how the participants in this study defined their experiences with creating and organizing Women’s Week events during their time at Ball State University. People derive meaning from their experiences, and I wanted to understand the meaning of their experiences from their own points of view. Including structure to the oral history interviews allowed for me as the researcher to contain the information into a manageable amount of data, but still give the participants the opportunity to tell their stories and share their own history.

The purpose of the first interview was to ask the participant to share as much as possible about his or her experiences in the context of the historical event that is being studied. Since this study revolves around the Women’s Week events, I asked the participants to tell me as much as possible about their experiences during this time in history. The most important aspect of the first interview was to have the participants reconstruct their experiences as a creator or organizer of Women’s Week so as to provide a context for the second interview.
The purpose of the second interview was to have the participants give as many
details as possible regarding their experiences in light of the context. I asked the
participants to try to relive some of the events that they mentioned in the first interviews.
I asked them to say as much as they wanted about each topic giving as many details as
possible. I let them know that it is not possible to exhaust the subject and that they could
share as much as they would like to share. I simply wanted them to tell me, from
memory, what they experienced during this time in history.

The purpose of the third interview was to ask the participants to reflect on the
meaning of their experience (Seidman, 2006). Making sense or making meaning requires
that the participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their
present situation. It also requires that they look at their present experience in detail and
within the context in which it occurred. The combination of exploring the past to clarify
the events that led participants to where they are now, and describing the concrete details
of their present experience, establishes conditions for reflecting upon what they are now
doing in their lives. The third interview can be productive only if the foundation for it
has been established in the first two (Seidman, 2006). I believe the three interview
format allowed me to gain the most information and go back to confirm information with
the participants.

After each interview, I transcribed the conversations into a written format. I
added the dates of the interviews as well as continuous numbering for easy referencing.
Following Fogerty’s (2006) suggestions for transcribing, I made “the initial edit – usually
performed by the interviewer, the narrator’s edit, and the final edit, contained in a copy of
the printed/published transcript” (p. 217). I did this for each of the interviews. I saved
the transcripts to a flash drive, to a hard drive on the computer, and in a researcher’s notebook for safekeeping.

Most oral historians agree that interviews should be audio recorded. Fogerty (2006) described the audiotape as that which “represents the interview in its purest form” (p. 227). While transcripts of interviews are more widely used by researchers, the audio recording of an interview offers much more than a hard copy of the interview that is read. Through the audio recording, one is able to hear tone of voice, hesitation, voice inflection, excitement, dread, fear, and even sarcasm, which are often overlooked as one reads a transcript.

I began this study by collecting documents and other materials that helped me to better understand the history of Women’s Week at Ball State University. Howarth (1998) saw the need to utilize documents in oral histories. He stated, “The idea of basing interviews on photographs and documents does not seem to have been pursued by oral historians to any great extent. The field is wide open, with enormous amounts of work most urgently needed” (p. 132).

By studying the documents, I was able to view them as tangible parts of history, but tangible parts of history that cannot speak. “Documents give a certain specious air of being trustworthy accounts of that period. But history does not happen in documents” (Lummis, 1988, p. 13). History happens through the lived experiences of humans who explain historical documents. These documents are most useful in oral history projects when participants, who lived through historical events, are able to explain, from their experiences, what the documents are. I asked all of the participants to give meaning to the information from the documents because without their explanations, the documents
were simply pieces of information tucked away and forgotten on dusty library shelves and in old file folders.

**Research Notes**

In my search for the most effective way to keep research notes, I used the guidelines set forth by Spradley (1979). The different types of notes that Spradley discussed are “the condensed account, the expanded account, analysis and interpretation and the reflexive field work journal” (pp. 75-76). For this project, I used the condensed account and the field work journal.

**The Condensed Account**

During the interviews, I took condensed notes of my thoughts. Because it is not possible to write down everything that is being said as it is being said, these notes were abbreviated. I wrote down a few words that I knew would remind me later of a story or even things that happened during the interview. These condensed notes consisted of “phrases, single words, and unconnected sentences” (p. 75). The purpose of condensed notes is to use them as a reference to go back to when I am transcribing and coding the information.

**Field Work Journal**

During the study, I wrote in my journal periodically. This journal helped me to reflect on the study, on my own thoughts and biases, on my perceptions of the methodology that I am utilized, and the participants of the study. I carefully dated each entry. According to Spradley (1979), the journal should “contain a record of experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs, and problems that arise during field work” (p. 76).
I used the journal as much as possible so I could refer back to it after all the interviews were completed. I wrote about my fears and mistakes because I knew that this journal was for my eyes only. I could be honest with myself, writing down mistakes, fears, and biases. I wanted to be as forthcoming as possible, so I needed to first be honest with myself about the fact that I have fears and biases. My goal was to overcome these fears and not to allow my biases to cause me to have a closed mind or to interfere with the study. I wanted to conduct a study in which the voices of people in the Women’s Studies program would be heard, in spite of my fears and biases.

**Data Analysis**

For the data analysis, I did not prescribe prior codes to the interviews. Instead, I tried to recognize themes as I analyzed the data. I coded each interview and used constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) when comparing the interviews among the participants. This method involves comparing all sources of data to each other in order to identify similarities and differences. To conduct constant comparative analysis, the researcher begins with a particular incident from an interview, field notes, or document and compares it with another incident in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons lead to tentative categories that are then compared to each other and to other instances (Merriam, 1998).

The first part of the data analysis included collecting historical documents from the Ball State University Archives and also documents from the Women’s Studies office. I specifically looked for documents that were from or about Women’s Week or were during the time period that was being studied. As I interviewed the participants, I constantly compared their stories to each other as well as to the documents that I
collected. After conducting the initial interviews, I conducted additional interviews to ask questions based on previous participant responses. I planned for time to go back to the documents between the interviews to compare the written documents to the participants’ stories. As I discovered themes, I asked additional questions in order to clarify meaning. I understand the importance and ethical responsibility of properly representing the voices of the participants as well as analyzing the data fairly using qualitative methods. My home office was my main research station, and I kept two separate notebooks, one for documents and one for interviews.

The coding process began with reading one interview at a time and jotting down the main ideas that were discussed. I read through each interview and added more ideas. After reading all of the interviews, and cross-coding them, I identified the different themes. I then categorized the themes within headings and subheadings. I left an audit trail (Lincoln, 1985) in order to ensure that my work was accurate, by adding line numbering to all of the interviews so that “an auditor could subsequently trace any statements back to the original data on which they were based” (p. 198). I dated each interview and each entry of my field notes.

I had two different researcher’s notebooks that contained articles for the literature review and transcripts of all interviews. Audiotapes were also dated, labeled and secured for easy retrieval. Again, I followed Spradley’s (1979) suggestions regarding how to take field notes, and thus, leave an audit trail.

I read the interviews several times in my search for common themes. The first time I read the interviews, I simply jotted down the commonalities on a piece of paper and on the transcript itself a one-word summary of each of the conversations. As I reread
the transcripts, I prescribed a color to each of the themes. I color-coded each of the interviews as I searched for these themes.

I wanted to organize the findings by themes instead of by participants because this study was not a case study, but rather an oral history. Since the historical focus of this study was the events of Women’s Week, I wanted to highlight what each participant said about their various experiences either creating the events or helping with the organization of the activities. Showcasing all of their thoughts on one theme at a time allows the reader to hear several voices and opinions about each of the themes individually.

**Selection of Key Informants**

In considering potential participants, I reviewed Spradley’s (1979) guidelines for choosing an informant:

During the past ten years I have listened to hundreds of students discuss their relationships with informants. Many of their difficulties resulted from identity differences, cultural barriers, incompatible personalities, and lack of interpersonal skill. But the most persistent problems came from their failure to locate a good informant. I have identified five minimal requirements for selecting a good informant: (1) thorough enculturation, (2) current involvement, (3) an unfamiliar cultural scene, (4) adequate time, and (5) nonanalytic. (p. 46)

These five requirements will be thoroughly explained, but it should be noted that Spradley (1979) stated that while it is possible that not all participants will meet these five criteria, he highly recommends that the first informants selected meet all five. I ensured that the participants met the basic tenets of all five of Spradley’s (1979) requirements.
Thorough Enculturation

An important characteristic of a potential participant of a study is that he or she be very familiar with the culture, having lived in it for quite some time. A person who has recently moved into the culture is not as informed about the way things are as a person who has lived in the community for an extended period of time. Good informants know their culture so well they no longer think about it. They do things automatically from years and years of practice. One way to estimate how thoroughly someone has learned a cultural scene is to determine the length of time they have been in that scene. The more thoroughly enculturated an informant, the better (Spradley, 1979).

Current Involvement

A second requirement of the first participants of a study, according to Spradley (1979), is that they have current involvement in the culture. When people are currently involved in a cultural scene, they use their knowledge to guide their actions. They review what they know; they make interpretations of new events; they apply their knowledge to solving everyday problems. When people stop using some part of their cultural knowledge, it becomes less accessible, more difficult to recall. Informants who leave a cultural scene forget the details and can only remember general outlines of the activities that went on. Some of the participants are more currently involved than others, but they all still have some form of involvement today.

An Unfamiliar Cultural Scene

The third requirement, selecting an unfamiliar cultural scene, is more for the interviewer than the interviewee. It is important, according to Spradley (1979) that researchers select to study cultures and experiences with which they are unfamiliar.
While I knew about Women’s Studies in general and had experience teaching in the program, I had no experience with the creation of Women’s Week in the 1980s and the organizing of the events. I had been an attendee at some of the events since 2003, so I had just enough unfamiliarity for this to be a positive interviewer trait. I was familiar with the interviewees as people, but I was unfamiliar with the history of Women’s Week at Ball State University and the personal experiences of those involved.

**Adequate Time**

Spradley’s (1979) fourth requirement for selecting a potential participant is that the participant be willing to give of his or her time for the study. Interviews can sometimes be lengthy and time consuming. Therefore, potential participants must be informed of this and must be willing to give of their time for the study. Spradley (1979) explained,

> In estimating the amount of time someone might give to interviews, it is well to keep in mind that a busy informant keenly interested in the project will often make time (emphasis in original). Because interviews involve the informant as an expert witness, they generate considerable enthusiasm. High priority should be given to someone who has adequate time for the research. (pp. 51-52)

I asked each potential participant if they would be willing to participate in three separate interviews. I estimated that they would take at least an hour for each interview and I informed the participants of this ahead of time to see if they had the ability to share that much time with me. I also explained this in writing in the Informed Consent. A copy of the Informed Consent can be found in Appendix B.

**Nonanalytic**
The fifth requirement for selecting a potential participant, according to Spradley (1979), is that he or she not analyze the information that he or she is giving from an outsider’s point of view. Some participants believe that they are actually helping the interviewer by explaining what they believe the interviewer would eventually conclude. Interviewers should search for participants who are willing to speak naturally and who do not analyze what they are saying. Spradley (1979) explained it this way:

The ethnographer wants to discover patterns of meaning in what an informant says. This requires constant analysis of utterances, taking them apart to find the tacit relationships and patterns (emphasis in original). Some informants can assist in analyzing their own culture – provided it is always from the perspective of the insider. In our society, many persons draw from psychology and the social sciences to analyze their own behavior. They mistakenly believe they can assist the ethnographer by offering these analytic insights. Such individuals make poor informants for the novice ethnographer. (pp. 53-54)

While I follow Spradley’s (1979) logic that an informant who analyzes his or her own speech would not help a study, this requirement was difficult to establish before the interviews. I asked the participants to speak freely and honestly to the best of their memory. If they analyzed their thoughts between interviews, they did not share that with me.

I had three potential participants in mind when I began the project. One participant was unable to participate, so another participant recommended both the third and fourth participants in my study. They met each of Spradley’s requirements. More about each individual will be provided later.
Establishing Rigor

The purpose of this study was to examine the community activism and education sponsored by the Women’s Studies program through the stories of the people who participated in the creation of the Women’s Week events at Ball State University, through the use of their own voices. Through in-depth interviews, the organizers gave first-person narratives of their experiences. Oral histories were preserved through the documentation of audio recordings of personal stories of the participants. I am aware that I have a tremendous responsibility to properly represent the participants in the study to the best of my ability. As I interviewed the participants, I documented their stories on text, and I assessed and evaluated the interviews through qualitative means.

Credibility was increased by adhering to some of the naturalistic techniques that provide trustworthiness created by Lincoln and Guba (1985). For example, I ensured prolonged engagement with my topic and participants by scheduling the interviews regularly throughout the course of the study. I kept a timeline of the data collection and put it in the appendices. I conducted these interviews during the spring of 2011. While prolonged engagement is not a necessary quality when conducting an oral history project, I spent a considerable amount of time with the participants and with the archival data while conducting this study. Trustworthiness is not attained through prolonged engagement, however, but rather through the building of close interviewer/participant relationships. The participants and I all share common interests with women’s issues and an appreciation for the Women’s Studies program at Ball State. Because of the relationships that have been developed, and because I am a member of their community, a common bond of trust was established and nourished.
While interviewing the participants, I conducted member checks (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) with the participants to ensure accuracy of the study. Member checks involve “taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). I discussed main points and events with each participant during the course of the second and third rounds of interviews. The participants added to the stories and agreed with main points throughout the course of the interviews. They had the opportunity to add or change their thoughts in our discussions. I also conducted some email correspondence with each of the participants throughout the study.

Dependability was “enhanced through the use of well-informed” participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 513). Before conducting the formal interviews, I established a relationship of trust with each of the participants through phone calls and emails. I felt that it was necessary for the participants to understand that I valued their time and opinions. I also developed a strong connection, respect for, and camaraderie with my participants.

Transferability is provided by the use of thick description (Geertz, 1973). Through the process of interviewing, I tried to ask questions that evoke rich information. With these questions, I was able to write a thick description of the themes that I identified from the interviews.

Confirmability was built around audit trails, field notes, and a reflexive journal. All data is organized and saved. Hard copies of the data have been printed. All information is saved and stored in at least three different locations, including the hard drive of my laptop computer, a flash drive, and a researcher’s notebook for safekeeping.
I triangulated the data by analyzing my findings from more than one “vantage point” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 257). I used multiple sources of data, such as pictures, documents, artifacts, and the participants shared stories of their experiences during Women’s Week.

Regarding my biases, I have my own set of beliefs and attitudes, regarding the Women’s Studies program at Ball State University, and this is based on my own experiences and research. As an educator and feminist, I am not neutral on the topic of women’s rights, but I do not believe that I have to be neutral in order to conduct an objective study. Neutrality, after all, is an attitude or thought toward something. It takes place in the brain. Objectivity, on the other hand, is an act or behavior. It is seen in the way one conducts a study. Regarding objectivity and neutrality, Bernard (1994) stated, Objectivity does not mean (and has never meant) value neutrality. No one asks Cultural Survival, Inc. to be neutral in documenting the violent obscenities against indigenous peoples of the world. No one asks Amnesty International to be neutral in its effort to document state-sanctioned torture. We recognize that the power of the documentation is in its objectivity, in its chilling irrefutability, not in its neutrality. (p. 153)

While I know in my mind that I am not exactly neutral on this topic, I strove to be objective throughout the project. Bernard (1994) attested to the fact that “objectivity gets its biggest test when you study your own culture” (p. 154). This is because researchers who research their own cultures have strong ties to the culture. They often overlook things that an outsider might see, simply because of their familiarity with the culture. They also have their own sets of beliefs that were shaped by this culture. Barbara
Meyerhoff, as quoted in Bernard (1994), decided to conduct a research study on her own cultural group. Bernard (1994) explained her inner conflict:

She had never thought about studying her own kind, but she launched a study of poor, elderly Jews who were on public assistance. She agonized about what she was doing and, as she tells it, never resolved whether it was anthropology or a personal quest. Many of the people she studied were survivors of the Holocaust.

“How, then, could anyone look at them dispassionately? How could I feel anything but awe and appreciation for their mere presence? . . . Since neutrality was impossible and idealization undesirable, I decided on striving for balance.”

(Bernard, 1994, p. 154)

Likewise, I tried to be a balanced researcher in my own study. I echo her sentiments of feeling nothing but awe and appreciation for the participants of this study.

**My Key Informants**

I purposefully selected the participants to interview. Patton (1990) explained that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful sampling*. (Patton, 1990, emphasis in original)

I carefully identified participants who were willing to share their stories so that I might learn a great deal about the experiences of those who have created and organized the events that have comprised Women’s Week in recent history. I used one of the more common forms of purposeful sampling, that of “snowball, chain, or network sampling” (Patton, 1990). As Patton (1990) said, “this strategy involves identifying participants or
cases of interest from people who know people who know people who know what cases are information-rich, that is, good examples for study, good interview subjects” (p. 182).

I began with one person, Julee Rosser, who I felt met all of Spradley’s (1979) requirements mentioned earlier. I created a list of potential community members that have participated in Women’s Week in the recent past and conferred with Julee about possible additions to the list. I contacted Vicki Peterson and she also met Spradley’s (1979) requirements. The person that helped spur me to this project, Kim Jones-Owen, was unable to participate because of health reasons, so I contacted a colleague of hers from the late 1980s-early 1990s, Irene Goldman-Price. Irene agreed to participate. Then I asked Adam McLachlan, current staff in the Women’s Studies office, to participate. This ensured that the study would cover the time period I wanted to examine. That gave me a total of four participants for this study.

During the course of this study, I interviewed four different people who helped organize events for Women’s Week. When deciding on the number of participants for this study, I remembered that the sample size should not be so large that it is difficult to extract thick, rich data (Geertz, 1973) nor so small that it is difficult to achieve data saturation (Flick, 1998). By interviewing four people and using archival data to research their stories, I accurately covered the time frame I am interested in and their involvement.

Summary

This study examined the community activism and education sponsored by the Women’s Studies program through the stories of the people who have participated in the creation of the Women’s Week events at Ball State University. This was done in the methodology mentioned above, with interviews of four participants. The methodology
for this oral history included narrative inquiry with critical feminist analysis. The narrative inquiry involved asking a set of predetermined questions, but allowing the participants to speak freely and off-topic. This allowed new ideas and stories to be included in the overall oral history created in this project. The critical feminist lens allowed me to analyze the participants’ stories and the archival data by showing the connection between individual experiences and societal contexts, specifically the context of Ball State University. Their stories and the history of Women’s Week were analyzed along with the archival data from the program to create a detailed oral history of the activities of Women’s Week from 1988-2008.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

*How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes.*

~Maya Angelou (Orr, 1983)

This chapter will define the themes created from the oral history interviews and archival research. Many examples and stories are shared from the participants to highlight the significance of Women’s Week at Ball State University and the links historically developed to the Muncie community. Descriptions of the participants and information from the archival materials are also discussed.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to bring to light the stories of the people who have participated in the creation of events sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University, through the use of their own voices. The stories will specifically highlight how these people worked with the local community to create events that eventually became the yearly week of events known as Women’s Week. I sought to
understand their experiences and to have them describe the experiences in their own words. I also wanted to create a written record of these events, since none has existed previously. Universities often have histories written to document their growth and sustainability (Geiger, 2004; Feldman & Desrochers, 2003). Likewise, the time period and programs in question represent a situation when support and resource allocations have changed significantly. The impact of resource allocation and university level support have been particularly challenging for the women’s week program and the women’s studies program as a whole.

**Research Questions**

The research questions that guided this study were:

(1) How do the organizers who were involved in the Women’s Studies program describe their experiences in creating events and activities for Women’s Week?

(2) What are the perceptions of the organizers regarding how these events linked Ball State University and the local Muncie community?

**Description of the Women’s Week Program**

Women’s Week is an annual event at Ball State University planned by the Women’s and Gender Studies program to celebrate the achievements and experiences of women. Women’s Week is held during the last week of March to coincide with National Women’s History Month. The Women's and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University is an interdisciplinary program embracing a wide variety of academic approaches relevant to the study of women, gender, and feminisms in contemporary and historical societies.
Context

To examine the results of this study, I will begin with describing the context of this research project. The interviews were held over the course of the spring 2011 semester in locations chosen by the participants. For one individual, this meant conducting the interviews via standard mail as well as email. For another participant, it meant traveling to her home near campus. All of the other interviews were held on Ball State University’s Muncie campus, either in my own office, the office of Disabled Student Development, or at the Women’s and Gender Studies office. The participants selected the meeting place, since they were graciously giving time to assist with this research.

Participants

The participants are past participants in Women’s Week events at Ball State University. Each participant has a personal interest in documenting the history of and their involvement with Women’s Week and the Women’s Studies program. They eagerly volunteered to share their stories so that program could be formally documented.

Dr. Irene Goldman-Price was affiliated with the Women’s and Gender Studies program from 1986-1997 through her position as Assistant Professor at Ball State in the English Department. She was involved with the restructuring of the program in 1988-89. She planned events, sat on the curriculum and governance committees, and taught an Interdisciplinary Women in Literature course. She directed the program from 1991-1994, taught the introductory class, advised Feminists for Action, directed several committees, supervised the office staff, and oversaw the curriculum. Irene also helped establish
Women’s Week as an annual event at Ball State and has returned as a presenter. She has participated in every facet of the program, including as a donor.

Adam McLachlan, the current Administrative Coordinator for the Women’s and Gender Studies program, has served in this capacity since 2009. One of his main duties is to work with the Director to plan every facet of Women’s Week. He currently helps the Director decide which events to include in Women’s Week. Adam also does a majority of the fundraising for Women’s Week and organizes all the little details, including dates, times, room reservations, food, etc. He is also an undergraduate student in his senior year. He is pursuing a Women’s and Gender Studies major. In addition to his organizing role, Adam has also participated as a student in Women’s Week with the student group Feminists for Action.

Vicki Peterson is a Muncie resident who has been a transcendental meditation practitioner since 1973. She has been an ardent member of the women’s movement and has participated in Women’s Week, both as an audience member and as a speaker. Julee Rosser, assistant director, invited her to speak at Women’s Week in 2007 after they worked together to restart the transcendental meditation group on campus. Vicki has attended several events since then and has continued to work with students regarding women’s rights and transcendental meditation. I selected Vicki as a participant because she has experience as a non-Ball State affiliated community member. She has experience as an audience member for Women’s Week events and as a speaker.

Julee Rosser has been affiliated with the program since 1995, first as a student, then as an instructor and administrator. She was a student in the program starting in 1995 and then became an instructor when she completed her master’s degree. She has also
served as Assistant Director and Interim Director during her time with the program. She held numerous roles while as a student and as Women’s and Gender Studies staff. As a student, Julee helped with the behind the scenes organization of events. She has also introduced speakers and moderated panels. Julee has also directed the Women’s Week committee and worked with many community members to organize events. She is currently an Affiliate Faculty member in the Women’s & Gender Studies Program.

**Emerging Themes**

Based on a critical feminist analysis of the information gained through the interviews, five prominent themes have emerged. They include:

1. Specific ways in which community members have participated in Women’s Week.
2. Challenges to organizing Women’s Week.
3. Collaboration and support between Ball State University and the community of Muncie, Indiana.
4. Camaraderie through Women’s Week
5. Women’s Week as a broader view of feminism and women’s studies

**Theme #1 Specific Ways in Which Community Members Participated**

When asked about how community members have participated in Ball State University’s Women’s Week activities and event, the informants described participation from members of the local Muncie community in three specific ways. First, they were invited to participate as speakers or panel members. Second, they attended events, and they participated as a part of the philanthropic campaigns. Third, they participated in the
Women of Achievement Luncheon and panel discussion that is sponsored by the College of Sciences and Humanities.

Involving the local community has always been an important aspect of Women’s Week. This stems from the Women’s and Gender Studies program starting from the grassroots women’s rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The women’s movement had “consciousness raising” meetings where people would discuss important issues. These same discussions became Women’s and Gender Studies courses when they were introduced into higher education. Students and faculty frequently wanted more discussions so that led to speakers and events, which in turn led to Women’s Week. Community members were and continue to be invited, so many different topics and perspectives can be discussed. Students can learn about new topics, activism, and career paths while at these events. Community members help provide that information.

Irene, one of the founders of Women’s Week, mentioned that one of the foundational purposes and critical aspects of Women’s Week was to involve as many groups or departments from the campus and community as possible. Julee also mentioned this aspect in her interviews. Women’s and Gender Studies has always been interdisciplinary and so have the Women’s Week events. Over the past 40 years, many university and community groups have collaborated to make Women’s Week possible, reinforcing the foundational purpose of Women’s Week bringing campus and community together to support a common cause. Past departments that have participated include History, Art, Journalism, English, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Natural Resources and Environmental Management (NREM), and Anthropology, to
name a few. The Multicultural Center, Disabled Student Development, Career Center, Health Education, Spectrum, and the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies are just a few of the offices and groups that have also participated. The departments and groups involved would take ownership of the events they were sponsoring which helped with attendance. Not all of these departments or groups have participated every year, their participation often hinged on the theme and the ideas for presentations. The Multicultural Center and Disabled Student Development have been frequent contributors over the years, both financially and with advertising. Currently, the Multicultural Center hosts a film during Women’s Week as part of the Heritage Film Series. Disabled Student Development hosts a speaker or film related to women and disability.

The Women’s Week committee would also have receptions for the main speakers and invite them to interact with classes and student groups. For example, when Gloria Steinem came to speak for Women’s Week in 2002, a reception was held and the Women’s and Gender Studies students were invited to attend, offering them an opportunity to interact with Ms. Steinem individually. Julee mentioned that many students told her that interacting with Gloria was a highlight of their college careers. The Women’s Week committee would also work with local groups like the National Organization of Women (NOW), and the American Association of University Women (AAUW). One such partnering occurred in 1989, when NOW sponsored a reception for Judy Collins, a well-known singer. In subsequent years they have sponsored additional receptions. Patricia Ireland, a former president of NOW, served as the keynote speaker for Women’s Week in 1998.
The American Association of University Women has also sponsored presentations and events. In 1999, the AAUW’s Action for Girls and Women Study Group presented about their Diversity in Literature project, sponsored by the Community Foundation of Muncie and Delaware County. The project looked at best practices for promoting diversity in elementary school curriculum. AAUW has also given funds to the general Women’s Week account, but has not done so in recent years.

Adam also discussed the NOW and AAUW involvement. He said he believed that the program’s connection to both groups was not as strong as it has been in the past. He could not remember the last time either group donated money to Women’s Week. He wondered if it was related to the theme or if they were not as interested in the events as they had been in the past. He would like to try and get them involved again, particularly since he wants the 2012 theme to be Women of East Central Indiana. Julee’s comments about NOW and AAUW were similar to Adam’s thoughts. Julee mentioned that she thought both groups were still active, but did not know why they no longer participated with Women’s Week.

Irene also discussed an instance in 1994 when the keynote speaker for Women’s Week was Chief Wilma Mankiller. Several local Native Americans requested the opportunity to do a welcoming ceremony for her and the Women’s Week committee both encouraged and supported that event. The student group, Students for Native American Culture, was instrumental in organizing Chief Wilma Mankiller’s visit. In 2001, Native American issues were also highlighted. The Women’s Week committee collaborated with Excellence in Leadership to host
Winona LaDuke as the keynote speaker. She discussed activism among Native American women. Ada Deer also spoke that year on Native American Tribal Issues for the 21st Century. Native American issues were also discussed at a presentation during Women’s Week in 2010 relating to werewolves and the Twilight book series phenomenon. Carmen Siering and Colleen Boyd discussed myths related to Native American tribes and the overall anti-feminist rhetoric writing in the series.

Vicki Peterson, an established member of the local Muncie community brought her knowledge about transcendental meditation to campus and participated in Women’s Week over many years. According to Vicki, transcendental meditation is “a simple, natural, effortless technique that allows the mind to just settle down and just be without the experience of something. It’s just awareness and that’s very restful and allows the body to be relieved of stress.” Vicki was asked to help restart the transcendental meditation student group on campus, and they would have meetings in the Women’s and Gender Studies office. Vicki also worked with Women’s and Gender Studies students in Muncie. She would meet them in the Women’s and Gender Studies office or in the Transcendental Meditation club, and then the students could take her classes in the community.

Vicki presented to Women’s Week in 2007. Her presentation was entitled, _Transcendental Meditation Program: Taking a Twenty Minute Vacation Twice a Day._ Vicki describes her session in the following way:

I tried to relate it to how women need to be multitasking all the time and it is good to be grounded and have a way to relieve stress. It’s stressful being a woman, so
you have to have a way to relieve stress. Transcendental meditation is a good way to do that.

Not only has Vicki presented at Women’s Week, but she has also attended events. Her husband, author and physician John Peterson, has presented several times at Women’s Week. His presentation in 2007 was entitled “Women’s Liberation: A Man in the Middle of it All.” He also wrote a book about the women’s rights movement, which he presented in previous years. In 2007, Vicki’s co-worker, Sarah Lyttle, also presented at Women’s Week. Her presentation focused on how yoga can assist during menstruation and menopause. Vicki mentioned attending both of those events and also several others on the same day in 2007. She said it made sense to go from one presentation to the other on the days that she was already there on campus. She also praised the variety of different topics that were all presented on the same day, so Women’s Week attendees could learn about so many different women’s issues. Adam mentioned that this multifaceted focus is intentional, noting that he tries to organize the events so that a variety of topics are covered. There is always a theme for the week, but many different issues are covered so participants can pick and choose what they want to attend.

Women’s Week also has been connected to the Muncie community through philanthropic campaigns. For many years, the organizers would raise money at Women’s Week events for specific charitable groups, such as the Susan G. Komen Foundation. From the archival data, it seems that 1996 was the first year that a philanthropic activity was advertised for Women’s Week. That year, Women’s Week attendees were invited to participate in a Habitat for Humanity build. This sparked interest in Habitat for Humanity in Muncie, specifically the women’s-only builds they host every year. Triota,
the Women’s Studies honor society, and Feminists for Action, the campus feminist
student group, have participated with Ball State faculty and staff in recent years. These
partnerships offer students an opportunity to be involved in the community with requiring
a monetary donation, which many students cannot afford. In 1999, a donation drive was
sponsored during Women’s Week for Wayside Mission. That organization provided
shelter, food, and clothing for any local women and children in need.

While Julee Rosser was part of the Women and Gender Studies program (1995-
present), she worked with a committee and interns that focused their energy specifically
on Women’s Week. This increased support enabled the program to sponsor special
activities, such as raising money for charity. Breast cancer awareness was the
philanthropic campaign for Women’s Week in 2000. Any donations that year were given
to the Susan G. Komen Foundation. In 2001, the Third Wave Foundation was the
platform for philanthropy. When Gloria Steinem was the keynote speaker in 2002, the
MS foundation was the recipient of the Women’s Week philanthropic campaign. In
some cases, the philanthropic campaign was more about spreading information than
it was about fundraising. Julee recounted one year when Feminists for Action
spearheaded the campaign by selling the Diva Cup at events and had the owners of
the company come for Women’s Week to discuss their invention. While Julee was
sure that money was raised, she felt that the information that Women’s Week
participants gained from the campaign was more valuable over all.

Just as with the philanthropic campaigns, there were often many interactions with
women in the local community. When discussing those interactions, Julee said that she
had great dealings with Bea Mott Foster, who was the editor of *The Muncie Times*. Julee
contacted *The Muncie Times* in 2004 in order to try to place an advertisement for Women’s Week. She said it was not easy to get in touch with Bea to get approval, you had to speak with several others first. Once she did interact with Bea, Julee said that it was wonderful. She and Bea discussed the upcoming events and the prices of advertising. Not only was Julee able to get advertising, but then Bea attended the Ramona Africa event. Julee also mentioned Bea has attended several events since 2004, particularly the Indiana Women of Achievement events. Interacting with Bea was one of Julee’s favorite memories from Women’s Week. It also allowed Julee to develop another connection within the community and provided the Women’s and Gender Studies program with a new ally. From 2004 until Bea’s death in 2011, the Women’s and Gender Studies program would send her the Women’s Week program so Bea would know and advertise the events.

Adam has also had positive interactions with the local community. He discussed his interactions with a reporter named Ivy Farguheson from *The Star Press*. He met her in 2009 and she became interested in both attending and writing about several events. He remembered that she asked several great questions during the “Men Doing Feminism” panel. This line of conversation led us to a discussion about downtown businesses actively supporting Women’s Week. Adam mentioned that he delivers the Women’s Week brochures to several businesses downtown and they happily advertise the events. The Silo, a new bar in the downtown district, even hosted an event during Women’s Week 2011.

One of the other major interactions with the community that Julee highlighted was the College of Sciences and Humanities sponsored luncheon for the Women of
Achievement Awards. Previously, Women’s and Gender Studies instructors would be invited to attend with one of their students. Julee said she really enjoyed bringing a student to the luncheon. She said, “But that was a big part, when I was able to take students, and watch them interact with some of these people that were being honored and having the students be honored with a free lunch and the opportunity to go.”

The Women of Achievement Awards are another annual event where members of the Muncie community come to participate in Women’s Week. Julee mentioned that several attendees of that event often stay to attend other Women’s Week events on the same day. She believed that they plan to be on campus for the entire day and participate in events that interest them. Adam also mentioned that that he knows multiple women from the local Muncie community attend the Women of Achievement event every year. He has hoped every year that they would sponsor other events, not just the awards. We also discussed the benefits that students have received from attending the luncheon and Adam thought that the Sciences and Humanities Task Force for Women should invite more students in the future. He believed that would provide students with more interactions with prominent women in our local Muncie community.

In his interviews, Adam said that he knows the local community is involved in Women’s Week, but he would like to see more involvement. Some events have happened downtown or at Minnetrista and he would like to see more of that. He also noted that he would like to see Women’s Week be a citywide program, not just on campus. We also discussed creating a Women of Muncie theme for the next Women’s Week and what that would entail. We discussed inviting local women to discuss their
achievements and having a group of students interview local feminists and do a panel presentation about the interviews.

I asked Adam if he knew if any community members had been on the Women’s Week committee, and he said he didn’t remember any during the time he has participated with the planning. Adam mentioned a couple other events that he felt the local Muncie community really participated in. He said that in the past there would be a music night during Women’s Week and many people would attend, including local musicians and bands from Indianapolis. There have also been poetry nights that Adam mentioned had some community involvement.

Community members have participated and contributed to Women’s Week in so many ways over the years. It is interesting to see how Julee and Irene view community participation from an organizing standpoint. They enjoyed meeting other like-minded people that lived in the same community they did. They both felt that involving community members in the activities of the Women’s and Gender Studies program was important to its sustainability. Vicki and Adam seem to look at community members’ involvement from a perspective of who attended and why. They thought that community members participated in Women’s Week because they wanted to, not necessarily because they had been recruited to by organizers. I think each of these positions provide unique insight into history of Women’s Week events and their participants.

**Theme #2  Challenges to Organizing Women’s Week**

Although the Muncie community and campus involvement is a benefit to Women’s Week and the Women’s and Gender Studies program, the benefit does not come without challenges. The participants described many of the challenges to
organizing Women’s Week. Some of the key issues included student involvement, recruitment, and logistics. This theme directly relates to research question #1. I asked Irene about her interest in helping with Women’s Week. In addition to Women’s Week being important for bringing the community together, it was also an important component of the program. Irene noted:

Women’s Week was initiated under Michael Stevenson to give visibility to the program and to women's issues. Under my direction, Women's Week was a part of a larger mission to integrate women's issues into the campus community and the wider world. The purpose was to engage students, faculty, professional and non-professional staff in events that were scholarly and entertaining and would enhance the community's understanding of women's lives and the way society defines women's roles.

To this end we sponsored each year a scholarly lecture series to promote scholarship by campus faculty that had to do with women; a variety of programs throughout the year, and our showcase was Women's Week, planned for Women's Month in March. Under the tenure of Kim Jones-Owen, who succeeded me as chair, an important service-learning component was added. We wanted to contribute to the wider community and to welcome people in to contribute to our program.

Irene also described how well-organized the program and organizers needed to be in order to make Women’s Week successful. Those who wanted to help organize the events would be on the committee starting in the Fall semester. During Irene’s time with the program, the committee was approximately 15
students, faculty, and staff. It was the committee’s responsibility to identify
speakers and events, create the schedule, coordinate with departments and groups
in the community, and make sure each piece was in place.

Irene also mentioned that the major challenge for her was having enough stamina
to last the entire Women’s Week. She also mentioned challenges with supervising the
students to make sure that they were taking proper care of the invited guests. She
believed that it was important to have students involved in the planning, but they need to
have specific tasks to complete and someone needs to be in charge of making sure the
tasks are done properly.

Adam mentioned ideas similar to Irene. His experience started with involvement
as a student. He said:

Oh my, let me think back. I guess really my interest started in the program itself,
as a major and then more with Women’s Week as an intern. I went to the events
before that, but I’d say becoming an intern, that sort of thrust me into, that was
my obligation, was working on Women’s Week. I did that and then I have been
doing it ever since. There are always, you know, two or three events, every year,
where I say, I gotta see this.

Adam also said that now, as Administrative Coordinator, Women’s Week is one of his
main responsibilities. I asked him how it all begins, whether he has to go out and recruit
individuals to participate or if they come to him. Adam said that most of the time a
theme is decided upon and then he and the Director decide what fits. Many campus
people want to present, but then Adam also must go out and find other related events and
activities. Sometimes finding those other events are difficult and the challenge is for
Adam to do it on his own, when more students are involved with planning or coming up with events that can make it easier.

While Irene mentioned that her challenge was finding stamina to make it through the week, Adam said that the complexity of planning such a large week of events is the challenge for him. We also discussed the value of a philanthropic campaign during Women’s Week. He said overall, there can never be enough planning before Women’s Week. The earlier the planning starts, the better the week has been for him. Planning ahead has made the week enjoyable for him. He told me that he’s learned a lot.

I learned a lot of basic skills. You know, being forced to stand up in front of people and organize within a longer time frame. Not just organizing for this one thing in a few weeks, but taking a year to organize and get it together. Also, you know, branching out of my comfort zone, which has been a huge learning curve for me. Just to oversee that kind of project through to the end and the public speaking. I’m in a public speaking class now and a lot of the stuff we’ve had to do or that she is talking about in the class I’ve done in the past for Women’s Week. Also, I think Women’s Week as an avenue is really important. Being able to bring people to campus that otherwise wouldn’t have been brought in and people that are interesting and then you know especially being the one coordinating it, you get to have more interaction with them outside of their presentation. You get to exchange emails and meet up somewhere. It’s great.

So there are challenges to the planning, but they also lead to perks from Adam’s perspective. Ultimately, though, it comes back to student involvement. Adam said outside the usual planning issues, the main problem is making sure students attend the
events. Some students would always come for extra credit, but he has to also make sure that the topics are interesting enough for a wide variety of people.

Student involvement was a challenge that Julee mentioned also. Julee believes that having Women’s and Gender Studies students participate in semester-long unpaid internships in the office was helpful because they assisted with the planning and learned a lot of valuable skills. Julee discussed this strategy:

The interns employed several strategies to help with Women’s Week events. One strategy was bringing people from different parts of the university, so the Multicultural Center, Disabled Student Development, you know, people just all over the campus, and student groups. We’ve had a strong effort to bring in student groups like Today’s Black Woman, uh, Black Student Association, Asian Student Association, Native American Student Association, etc. We had our interns creating connections, like there was one who was a liaison for other student organizations, so they would go talk to those groups at their meetings. The intern would let the students know that the program wanted different groups to get involved and sponsor speakers and other events.

Interns did other things for Women’s Week as well. They fundraised, created brochures, advertised events, introduced speakers and much more. Julee mentioned that the interns appreciated learning this kind of activity, so they could add those things to their resumes.

Julee emphasized student involvement because of her experience as a Women’s and Gender Studies student. She discussed her time as an intern when she assisted with Women’s Week. She mentioned how great it was to be a part of the
events.

We did the introductions as interns. We filmed them; I was on the filming crew.

Uh, we did different events. That really pulled me into the program, you know?

The activities, and spending time with the other students and Kim and I got to videotape. I felt really special.

Julee believed that this should continue, whether it is with interns or student volunteers. She thought that having more students participate with the planning would have them feel like a bigger part of the program and not just a student who takes classes.

Students are not the only challenge. Julee mentioned that having more support would help. She said that, in her opinion, currently the two biggest challenges are the lack of support from the university and the lack of a Women’s Week committee. She believed that the university currently does not support the Women’s and Gender Studies program, in general, and that is reflected in the lack of support for the events during Women’s Week. The planning committee has not been in existence for several years now and Julee said that it ultimately takes a toll on the people of the office, such as the director, the graduate assistant(s), and the administrative coordinator. They spend a lot of time and effort planning and in previous years, a committee of fifteen people and several interns would shoulder that burden. Having more people help with the planning makes it less stressful for the administrative coordinator, according to Julee.

Julee said that the lack of committee also affects student involvement. She said:

People, like the presidents of those student groups were invited to be on the committee, weren’t invited now because there is no committee. You know, we
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talk about it being interdisciplinary, and we want student groups to work with each other, but if we don’t have the resources then that’s not going to happen.

Julee also mentioned that an intern would also act as a liaison to student groups in the past. They would work with group and assist them with co-sponsorships during Women’s Week. It was a great opportunity for students in Julee’s opinion.

**Theme #3  Collaboration and support between Ball State University and the community of Muncie, Indiana**

The participants indicated ways that Ball State and the local community collaborated for Women’s Week. Much of the information that the participants provided for this theme related to both of the main research questions for this project. All of the participants spoke about their experiences with collaboration for Women’s Week. Irene remembered that the local chapter of NOW planned an event for women's week several times during her tenure with the program. She described them:

The NOW chapter was small, but loyal, and members came to Women's Week events all the years I was there, whether or not they had anything to do with the planning. It seems to me that there was a program on women and health that they helped sponsor along with Planned Parenthood one year.

She also remembered that there were often many community members in the audience and described the intersection of the Ball State community and the Muncie community. She said that intersection happens on many levels because wives of faculty and staff members have been involved in women's issues in the community and on campus. Her examples included Sue Errington, a former State Senator, who is married to a retired Ball State professor. She also mentioned Sandra Worthen, the wife of the Ball
State President during Irene’s tenure. Sandra supported Women’s Week in various ways, particularly by hosting receptions and dinners. Irene mentioned that women clergy were also involved, as they would participate in panels and attend events.

I also asked her about whether or not she remembered having events off campus during her time with Women’s Week. She said that off campus events were sometimes included in our brochure as related events to encourage the sense that women's issues, concerns, performances, and so forth took place in the wider world beyond campus as well. She did not think that more community members would necessarily attend off campus events because it seemed to her that accessibility and parking are important issues. She mentioned that the campus is pretty centrally located with good parking.

Based on previous interviews, Adam and I discussed opportunities for growth for Women’s Week. For Adam, this includes more community involvement. He said, in a perfect world, he would set up Women’s Week in a conference style. He said,

I think that would be cool, with a lot of people could sign on and do their thing. Say you are really focused on feminist art, well we have a timeslot on Thursday at 2pm it can just be you know it’s at this time, people can choose to go to this or something else, like conference style or you know like a symposium, or how NWSA does their poster presentations, something like that. We would have a keynote or two, but kind of more grassroots, everyone would be really interested and doing their own thing and it would encompass every discipline on campus and it would be full of arts, entertainment, science, just everywhere. That would be absolutely awesome.

Adam also thought that this would be a way to bring more community members
to campus. He would do one day filled with a variety of events and participants could wander to whichever session they were interested in. He acknowledged that this type of arrangement would require additional help. He expressed his belief that if some events were held off campus, like at Minnetrista, then the staff there could be in charge of those programs. Adam said then Women’s Week would just be in charge of advertising it, but it would not add too much extra stress to the overall planning. He thought this was something that could be implemented for Women’s Week 2012.

Vicki also agreed with the idea that the Muncie community should be more involved in Women’s Week. We discussed how to get more townspeople to attend Women’s Week events. She indicated that having events in the Student Center would be better because there is a parking garage for the public. She also mentioned that there should always be food, because everyone loves free food. Advertising all over town was another important component for Vicki. She said that events should be publicized more frequently so people can be reminded several times. That way people would be able to plan in advance and not forget to attend.

Vicki also agreed that holding events off campus might be a way to collaborate more the local community. She also mentioned co-sponsoring with Ivy Tech. She believed that downtown or Southside events would be the most interesting to her. She thought that would bring different types of people to Women’s Week.

She asked me if I would go to events if I were not affiliated with the program. I told her that I would, depending on the topic. She said many women are as busy as we are, so in order to make them want to go, the events should have both childcare and food provided. Vicki also mentioned several women from the community that she considered
her “She-roles” and wanted me to share those names with the program for next year’s Women’s Week.

Julee has seen the local community play a part in Women’s Week over the years. She said:

Women’s Week has been such a major part of the Muncie community because we ask for, um, people of the community to come in to do presentations. We have also joined together with the College of Sciences & Humanities for the Indiana Women of Achievement awards which honor women from all over the state, including many from Muncie, for their contributions to women’s rights in a variety of fields.

Julee mentioned specifically one community connection that she enjoyed. She worked with Monica James and the Strength of Sisters program at Southside High School. Some of the interns from Women’s and Gender Studies worked with that group and the students in that program created posters which were then displayed at Emens during Women’s Week in 2009. The Southside students came to campus, discussed their posters at a poster session, and interacted with Women’s Week attendees.

Student involvement was emphasized as a challenge, but Julee mentioned student and community collaboration as a major area for growth.

The opportunities for growth lie in creating collaboration among people who are interested in the program. Possibilities could be jointly created events that students come together and create, like the Black Student Association, Asian Student Association, Latino Student Union, Disabled Student Development, you know, those possibilities are endless. Also, opportunities to work with alumni.
Part of what we did in the past was have an alumni come back and speak, so that opportunity is there to invite, you know alumni back. Another opportunity is to have an alumni dinner or event at the end of Women’s Week where we not only bring people together at the Alumni Center but we also ask for money from alumni to sponsor our programs and/or the Andrea Scamihorn scholarship, so people donate money to that and that goes directly to the students. So Women’s Week had always been a moneymaker for program up until recently. It was always something that you know we had, that kept the program going.

Julee also mentioned collaboration with community organizations, like SOS, AAUW, Lifestream, and others. She said that, again, if interns were allowed like they were in the past, then they could be liaisons to the groups to create events and co-sponsorships. Julee mentioned that these would be more opportunities for students to learn skills that they could use in the future. Women’s Week is all about learning, Julee said, whether it is in the planning, the organizing, or the events themselves. The students and participants involved always learn something.

**Theme #4  Camaraderie through Women’s Week**

So even though organizing can be a challenge, providing opportunities for student involvement and learning as well as camaraderie add incomparable value. The participants mentioned the camaraderie they felt with others when organizing and participating in Women’s Week. This theme is directly related to research question #1. Irene articulated her thoughts on why Women’s Week is so important.

The idea was to get a mix of events in a variety of fields so that a wide range of people would be interested in at least one or two events during the week. It
was all in support of the academic mission of the Program, and students really
were able to see the connection between what they were learning in the
classroom and what other people out in the world were thinking and doing
with their lives.

Students that participated in the planning learned about event planning and all
that goes into making large events happen successfully. Students gained skills that
they could use in the future once they graduated and moved into careers. Irene
emphasized student involvement as an important reason that her time with Women’s
Week was so meaningful. She felt camaraderie with the students that were involved
because they were able to bond when attending events.

From a student perspective, Adam said he really enjoyed seeing and interacting
with the individuals that previous to Women’s Week had been the subject of class
discussion and homework assignments. He gave the examples of Gloria Steinem and
Ramona Africa. He believed students learned more by hearing from those women in
person, rather than just hearing about them in class. Seeing Women’s Week events
with other students and faculty led to discussions both in and out of class about the
issues that Adam learned. Networking with speakers and presenters as well as the
camaraderie Adam found in the program led him to his current position with the
program. It also reinforced Adam’s confidence that he chose the right major.

Julee has participated in Women’s Week in several different roles as well. She
attended events as a student and also assisted with events then as well. She also was
chair of the Women’s Week Committee when she was Assistant Director of the program.
She said:
When I reflect about Women’s Week and all that went into it, the thing that stands out the most in my mind is how many amazing people I was able to work with and how interesting it is when you bring people together without knowing what it’s going to look like. And just having different people in the room, different ideas, about how they, what events they wanted to see and how they want to see them done and watching people do intros when they’re afraid of public speaking that was huge. That’s a big jump for a lot of people. That’s my big reflection looking back on it. And I’ve reflected a lot.

Julee also said that there are just so many unique and exceptional people that she has worked with for Women’s Week that she has difficulty remembering them all. She said that she often sits back and reflects right after a Women’s Week ends, because she wants to think and remember something about each event that year.

Adam said he enjoys reflecting right after each event. He has felt a sense of pride after successful events where there was a lot of participation. He has also thought about how to do things differently when an event does not go as planned. Overall, he has felt a sense of accomplishment for himself, the volunteers, and the program after each Women’s Week is finished. Each year, they have provided a week of events that spreads feminism and women’s issues to a wider audience.

**Theme #5 Women’s Week as a broader view of feminism and women’s studies**

Participants discussed ways that Women’s Week can be seen as a part of a broader view of feminism and women’s studies, the answers shared on this topic help to answer both research questions addressed in this project. Going off the sense of
camaraderie she felt being with other feminists, Irene described how she viewed Women’s Week overall.

The most important thing I learned during Women's Week is that the event itself creates a community. This happens partly because the people involved in the planning, and the students and faculty from the WS department, see each other many times during the course of the week and have many experiences in common that they can then draw from for the rest of the school year and beyond. When you've heard a great lecture or concert, you've met a fascinating person, and you've done that in the company of friends, you tend to feel closer to those people with whom you've shared the experience. But the community goes beyond that. At least in the 1980s & 1990s, there wasn't much space for feminist viewpoints on campus. A class or a teacher or administrator here or there, but overall the campus climate was pretty traditionally oriented. Come Women's Week, you are surrounded by feminist, pro-women points of view. Several times a day you hear the message that women have done remarkable things and that therefore you as a woman can also do remarkable things. You listen to people who validate your perspective and expand it. You see that women's issues cross disciplinary lines and cross the lines between school, work, and home, between personal life and professional life. I found each year that my students were profoundly changed by this experience, this validation of what they had been learning in their classes.

Several participants discussed the importance of the co-curricular nature of Women’s Week. Since the Women’s and Gender Studies program is interdisciplinary, the curriculum varies greatly. Adam and Julee both mentioned trying to find speakers...
and events from a variety of topics based on the different yearly themes. Vicki said as a participant she liked the different options available on different days. Beginning with the first Women’s Week, Irene said the purpose was to support the learning that was going on in women's studies classes in various disciplines. The idea was to demonstrate in the widest possible variety of ways for students that the issues they were studying were real and had real manifestations in the world.

Irene also provided examples of how Women’s Week covered many different disciplines. She said a panel of women union members would put a face and voice on classroom study of women and work, or women and economics. A lecture about family life on a particular Caribbean island illustrates how all families are not patriarchal, thus suggesting that the European/American "traditional" family is a construct, not the only way that people can live good lives. A performance of classical music written by women demonstrates that there were, in fact, women composers.

Students that attend Women’s Week events are presented with real life women who are engaged in the activities that students are studying about. It is a living breathing teaching aid. With this type of practical application on display students might have discovered an issue that they are passionate about or even find a career path to follow. The events mentioned show knowledge from the classroom being used in everyday life and in a broader, local, and national picture.

Vicki and I discussed her presentation at a previous Women’s Week, which was discussed in the first interview. I asked her about why she chose the title, “Transcendental Meditation: Taking a Twenty Minute Vacation Twice a Day.” She said, “I probably chose it because women are notorious for not taking time for
We also talked about why transcendental meditation is a good topic for students to learn about, especially during Women’s Week. Vicki said:

Because if you are learning, then your brain working efficiently is a good thing, tm is about having your brain work better. It’s all about removing the mental static and it becomes a lot more fun to learn when there is less stress in the nervous system. You can’t just stuff things into your container of knowledge, you need to expand that. Plus, it gives the experience of the source of all knowledge. That you feel more and more at home with the things you are learning.

Vicki thought that Women’s Week in general is like that. She thought that anytime she has attended events, participants have been there to participate in lifelong learning and experience things they might not get to experience in the classroom. If the participants are not stressed, then they are open to more knowledge. That is why she believed that transcendental meditation was helpful during Women’s Week. It is a skill that the students might learn and use in their daily lives, not just the time they are in college.

The transcendental meditation presentation, like many others over the years, served the purpose mentioned so many times by the participants. With clear minds and openness to the wide perspectives, students can identify which aspects of feminism they are drawn to and want to study further. Women’s Week reinforces the interdisciplinary nature of the program and overall variety of perspectives that come from the women’s movement.
Summary

Overall, the participants of this research project have provided some vital information on how Women’s Week at Ball State University has been organized and how the local community has participated. They discussed challenges and growth for the events. The participants also described ways that they built camaraderie amongst themselves and the participants during Women’s Week. Finally, several of the participants discussed the benefits of participation for those who attend, including knowledge about feminism and Women’s Studies that they can use outside the college setting. The information provided by the participants answered the research questions that were created for this project. The data also has provided ways for Women’s Week to expand in the future, which will be discussed further in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I write for those women who do not speak, for those who do not have a voice because they were so terrified, because we are taught to respect fear more than ourselves. We’ve been taught that silence would save us, but it won’t.

~ Audre Lorde (Tate, 1983)

This chapter interprets the themes presented in Chapter Four. It also contains discussion of how the themes fit within critical feminist theory and the U.S. women’s movement historically. Conclusions about the research and recommendations for future areas of study are also included.

**Interpretation**

This qualitative research investigated the stories of people who participated in the creation of Women’s Week, an annual event sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies program at Ball State University, through their own voices. Three separate interviews were conducted with four different participants. These interview discussions covered such topics as history of Women’s Week, particular events, organizing, cultural
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awareness, problem-solving, and community involvement. Other topics included relationship development and the women’s rights movement in the United States.

In order to gain insight into this topic, several sources were tapped, including archival documents, (both from the Women’s and Gender Studies program and Bracken Library’s Archives and Special Collections), my researcher’s journal entries, my notes during the interviews, and the transcripts of the interviews themselves. As mentioned in chapter three, the intention of using these varied sources was to garner as much information as possible about the topics and time-period. The sources allowed me to reconstruct a history of Women’s Week at Ball State University.

A critical feminist lens was used to analyze the data. Critical feminist theory can bring to light “both the invisibility and distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position” (Lather, 1991, p. 71). The events of Women’s Week work to showcase the female experience. The participants of the study described their own personal experiences as feminists and how they worked to end women’s inequality at Ball State University and in Muncie. I chose critical feminist theory to look at individual experiences within the specific structure of Women’s Week. This approach offers an opportunity to examine the connection between structural oppression and the individual experiences of women (Bloom, 1998). Through the interviews and archival data, I was able to provide a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the experiences and events in the history of Women’s Week at Ball State. The discussion below shows the connection between individual experiences and societal contexts.

The participants not only described their participation in and lessons from Women’s Week, but also described learning about themselves and others. They talked
about the events and planning as well as their own reflections about their personal involvement. They described not only their own unique experiences, but also their opinions and perceptions about the Women’s and Gender Studies program in relation to the local Muncie community. These shared stories led into the participants’ future goals and ideas for Women’s Week. This chapter is organized by the two research questions for this study. The results shared in chapter four are discussed in relation to the emerging categories and themes and positioned within the relevant literature review from chapter two. The chapter ends with my conclusions, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for future research.

The key themes from chapter four include: Specific ways in which community members have participated in Women’s Week; challenges to organizing Women’s Week; collaboration and support between Ball State University and the community of Muncie, Indiana; camaraderie through Women’s Week; and Women’s Week as a broader view of feminism and women’s studies.

**Research Question One**

*How do the organizers who were involved in the Women’s Studies program describe their experiences in creating events and activities for Women’s Week?*

The participants described their experiences during the interview process. One theme was the challenges to organizing Women’s Week. They each described the challenges faced when organizing and participating in such a large-scale program. Sometimes it was discussion of logistics or student involvement. Other times it was simple things, such as where to park. Every participant agreed that challenges would always arise when planning Women’s Week. It seems like this might be a no-brainer, but
hearing about the logistics of putting on large events was significant. Benefits and challenges of programs are both discussed in the realm of community education (McClure, Cook, & Thompson, 1977). The authors echo the sentiments of these participants, that once events are put into action, the challenges in creating them are outweighed by the learning that takes place at the events. Many of the challenges are logistical, but many others are similar to those discussed in the program planning literature (Bracken, 2011; Caffarella, 1994). Negotiations of power with individuals and the university itself take place within every Women’s Week discussed in this research. The feminist program planning research puts the process of struggling for equitable uses of daily power as a necessary outcome, rather than as evidence of some sort of inability to get things done efficiently within the given program structure (Bracken, 2008; English, 2006; Tisdell, 1998). Power was an issue discussed in several interviews. In some instances it was in regards to the power of the university administration and the amount of support provided to Women’s Week. Power given to individuals within the planning was also mentioned. Some participants tried to balance power while planning events and some mentioned giving power to students to organize and plan. The act of giving and sharing power is historically debated within feminism (hooks, 2000) and therefore also an important part of feminist program planning (Tisdell, 1998).

Discussions about student involvement were also significant to the overall themes and research questions. There have been times where students have really influenced the Women’s Week programming and other times where they have merely participated by attending events. There is a definite ebb and flow to student involvement, which was discussed as a challenge in the interviews; this fluidity reflects a larger trend within the
broader picture of feminist theory and the women’s movement in the United States. At many points in history, the women’s movement has been strong and active, but at other times it has been quiet and regrouping.

Feminist theories have a history, but not one that is nonlinear or centered around one cause. The examination of feminist theory should be grounded in the history of debates and conversations (Grant, 1993; Hekman, 1999). Participation or lack thereof, in feminism should be considered also. With the critical feminist lens, I looked at the conversations that I had with my participants. Their individual experiences make up the history of the Women’s Week events at Ball State University. Their stories of struggle and optimism mesh well with the overall history of feminism and women’s studies in the United States. If feminism itself is grounded in debates and conversations, so is Women’s Week. Feminists come together on campus for a week every year to debate and converse about their passions, careers, and lives. It gives current students, alumni, and community members the chance to share and learn, just like women did in the second wave of the feminist movement. Continued participation by all parties in these Women’s Week events keep feminism and women’s studies alive at Ball State. As mentioned by the participants, Women’s Week is vital to the Women’s & Gender Studies program. It is the one piece of programming that has not been changed since the program’s structure was changed. It gives students and faculty in the program a chance to connect and share knowledge. It gives the community a chance to see what topics are covered in Women’s & Gender Studies classes and it allows students to present the information or learn more about topics they are interested in. It goes above and beyond what happens in the classroom.
The program focuses on a weeklong program of events instead of activities throughout the year because of its resources. As the participants mentioned, it is challenging to plan a week of events, so a whole year gives them time to plan successfully. The week of events could be further strengthened with more university and community support. It could begin simply with financial support, but if that is unavailable then simple attendance and advertisement of the week would be immediately beneficial.

Camaraderie was another theme. Often friendships developed by planning committee members working with students to create an event. Relationships also developed during Women’s Week at the events themselves. The participants described collegial moments with students, presenters, audience members, etc. Based on my experiences and those of the participants, bonding and connecting with like-minded people is a great part of Women’s Week every year. I believe this reinforces the idea of feminists lifting each other up, which is very prevalent in the women’s movement overall. Women bonded over the suffrage movement, but the best form of feminist bonding can really be seen in the consciousness raising groups during the second wave (hooks, 2000). These relationships and bonding have been necessary for feminists to survive in a patriarchal system. In the realm of Women’s Week, these connections and networking give feminists power to fight against patriarchy. In the interviews, Irene discussed the power and camaraderie she felt with meeting speakers and discussing similar interests. Julee and Adam also discussed the power they felt as students participating in Women’s Week. They developed skills and self-confidence, which helped them as they took other roles in organizing Women’s Week. People with like-
minded interests participate in Women’s Week and connect with one another. This leads to more people joining together to support many feminist causes. These relationships grow the movement and the community.

Similarly, the participants also described their experiences with Women’s Week within a broader view of feminism and women’s studies. Both feminism and women’s studies are cross-disciplinary, so events during Women’s Week cover many different topics and issues relating to women. These programs and events fit directly within the main ideas surrounding the creation of Women’s Studies as an academic field. The double purpose of women’s studies—to expose and redress the oppression of women—was reflected in the widespread attempts to restructure the academic experience of students and faculty. Classes and events with student participation all sought to transfer to women’s studies the contemporary feminist criticism of authority and the validation of every woman’s experience. These techniques borrowed from the women’s movement also were designed to combat the institutional hierarchy and professional exclusiveness that had been used to shut out women (Rossi & Calderwood, 1973).

This study examined how women’s issues are cemented within an academic framework that has historically been patriarchal. Women’s issues are marginalized in many disciplines and classes on campus, so the organizers of Women’s Week have historically brought those issues to light with their programming. The patriarchal administrations of this university have consistently ignored the importance of Women’s Week events and the Women’s and Gender Studies program overall. They may occasionally acknowledge the events by donating money, but have never made it a
priority to advertise or support Women’s Week. Historically, like in the national movement, women’s issues are continually marginalized.

The Women’s Week events continue in this model. Women’s issues are still marginalized. For example, Native American topics have been discussed at several different Women’s Weeks. These presentations have addressed the distinctive issues that Native American women have and continue to face, particularly on reservations, while also adding another marginalized narrative to the overall voice of women’s studies as a discipline. Students and other event participants learn about topics, like Native American issues, that they may not read about in class or in popular media. The programs also encourage further learning about topics that peak participants’ interest. The participants of this project mentioned several topics and events that really created long lasting memories for them and made them feel more connected to feminism overall. Again, this goes back to the origins of feminism and the second wave where women (and men) came together to discuss issues and felt a sense of belonging and camaraderie (hooks, 2000). The participants of Women’s Week then and now continue to recognize the marginalization of women in our patriarchal society. Participating in Women’s Week allows them the chance to voice their opinions on how to combat the marginalization.

**Research Question Two**

*What are the perceptions of the organizers regarding how these events linked Ball State University and the local Muncie community?*

During the interviews, the participants discussed specific ways in which community members have participated in Women’s Week. One interviewee is a community member herself and has participated as an audience member and presenter.
The other participants have been affiliated with Ball State University but have had meaningful experiences with local Muncie community members directly related to Women’s Week. In some instances it was working with groups of people, such as local Native Americans. Other times it was specific individuals presenting or advertising Women’s Week. Each time, the participants described positive partnerships built with local community members who have participated in Women’s Week. Those relationships address educational and social issues, which are an integral part of community education (Fellenz & Coker, 1980). Many of these issues are what have created the town and gown atmosphere in Muncie. One of the challenges in several of the disciplines mentioned has been meshing the local town together with the students involved on campus. Town and gown are two different communities of a university town; "town" being the non-academic residents and "gown" representing the university community (Martin, et al., 2005). Some of these issues include the student population and its lack of interest in Muncie, job creation or lack thereof, and the educational rift between local Muncie residents and their Ball State counterparts. Women’s Week events have tried to fix the rift by meshing the two groups together for learning and conversation, but much more should and could be done. There may be more opportunities for connections to be made between campus and community, particularly with the current political climate. Feminist issues are at the forefront of the political debate and people will rally around those topics. Perhaps the next Women’s Week could have events around these issues. Sue Errington, a local political candidate, has participated in the past few Women’s Weeks and she may be able to help bridge the divide.
The participants also discussed how Women’s Week contributed to the local feminist movement. The participants of this study have lived through the second and third waves of the women’s movement in the United States. The women’s movement has shaped how the events and connection to the Muncie community has been influenced. When the Women’s Week events first started in the 1980s, organizers were following the second wave model and involving the community in every facet. Women’s studies as a discipline came from the community, so the organizers were working with the community members who had similar interests. As the third wave of the movement expanded, Women’s Week became more focused on the students on campus. Community members were brought into Women’s Week to show students what was going on outside of campus and encourage them to continue their feminism outside of the classroom.

The participants also discussed the collaboration and support between Ball State University and the community of Muncie. From the start of Women’s Week events in the 1980s to the present, faculty and staff at Ball State have worked with local community members. Local business owners advertise and host events. Community members have moderated panels, presented their life’s work and brought local young women to learn about feminism. Students at Ball State have attended events and learned about women’s issues and future careers from Muncie residents. This correlates to a point made by Adrienne Rich (1976a). Rich emphasized that students should claim their education and use it in their everyday life, not just in the classroom.

This research project also covered the camaraderie that developed through Women’s Week. Participants discussed developing relationships with both students and
presenters while organizing and going to Women’s Week events. Two of the participants recounted fond memories of working closely with Women’s and Gender Studies students to organize previous Women’s Week events. These students would help with the planning, fundraising, and other various tasks. They learned valuable skills outside the classroom that could help them after graduation. The students were able to meet influential feminists and make connections within the field. The participants of this research got to know their students more closely and helped them expand their skill set and research interests. Again, the students follow the path encouraged by Rich (1976a) and put their classroom education to good use.

Overall, from the view of this research, Women’s Week can be seen as a broader view of feminism and women’s studies. As mentioned in chapter two, the second wave of the women’s movement in the United States thrived through groups of people meeting at consciousness-raising groups and discussing women’s rights (hooks, 2000). These groups led to the field of women’s studies. Having discussions and presentations on women’s issues every year during Women’s Week is an extension of what was started in the 1960s and 1970s. Students on campus come to events to learn more about the feminism they read about in textbooks. The organizers of the events ask local community members and national feminist leaders to support and facilitate presentations in order to further the educational pursuits of feminists at Ball State University. The women’s movement and feminist issues link the local community and the Women’s and Gender Studies program at Ball State University. The events during Women’s Week help strengthen that bond.
Conclusions

This research examined the community links and history of Women’s Week at Ball State University by answering the two research questions discussed above. The participants spent hours with me describing their roles in the events from being the main organizer to presenting about their lifelong passions. Many of the discussions were fond recollections, but challenges were also revealed. Within the Women’s Week program it was important to the informants that a variety of topics were shared and that student involvement was maintained in the planning and implementation of the program itself. Since challenges always arise with large-scale programs, improvising and long term planning were also emphasized.

Participants also discussed the local community involvement. Muncie community members have participated in Women’s Week events in a variety of ways over the years. Some have presented on a variety of topics, hosted welcoming ceremonies, moderated panels, advertised events, and co-sponsored activities. The community’s involvement has been an invaluable resource. Based on the interviews for this project, participants of Women’s Week events, whether from Ball State, Muncie, or both, have benefited from their involvement. It might have been knowledge gained or the camaraderie of like-minded individuals, but the participants of this research project have enjoyed their time with Women’s Week.

Recommendations

I believe that Women’s Week should continue and grow upward and onward, with or without direct university funding and support. The program should go back to its roots and involve more community members with the planning, organization, and overall
attendance. The Women’s Week committee should be recreated so that the current Director and Administrative Coordinator do not shoulder the whole burden. The committee could be made up of volunteer faculty, staff, students, and community members. The committee could utilize feminist program planning topics (Bracken, 2008; English, 2006; Tisdell, 1998) for future planning and leadership. Tisdell’s (1998) discussion of themes of positionality or difference, the construction of knowledge, voice, and authority should be really beneficial to the structure and content creation of events for future Women’s Week.

Student involvement is also important. They are just being introduced to feminism, and are beginning to see the social structures that marginalize others firsthand. They are eager to be active with their newfound feminism, and they are willing to help out with events, advertising. They can and should be a big asset. Women’s Week can be better and I hope to help it thrive.

Another recommendation that comes from this study relates to the way to transfer research outcomes in qualitative research. While, it is not important or even possible to generalize the results of the research, lessons learned from this specific example may be shared with other programs. The events and activities from Women’s Week might be compared to another university’s outreach programs, but the stories from the participants are uniquely their own.

**Future Research Studies**

While working on the interview transcriptions and going through the archives, other topics and questions came to mind. Future research could be done regarding student involvement in Women’s Week events. I think a similar study interviewing
previous students would be very insightful. Perhaps they could add to the ideas in this project related to community involvement.

Also, in regards to community participation, another research project might just interview local Muncie community members. From the interviews I conducted, I learned about many other women and organizations that have participated over the years. It might useful to talk to them and have data that focused on Women’s Week from the outside in. With the information I did locate in the archival documents, I could potentially do more research using quantitative methods. Calculating the amount of community participants and events throughout the history of Women’s Week would be very interesting and relevant to this area of study.

I could have sought out other participants with different perspectives as to the history and political situation of Women’s Week and the Women and Gender Studies program. Another study could be a more-broad reaching one that invited previous administrators in the College of Sciences and Humanities, or even other former Muncie community members. Other participants could provide more saturation and even opposite, negative viewpoints, but the people that agreed to participate provided me with their own, unique memories to complete this study. I can keep other potential participants and viewpoints in mind for future research.

There are also many, many other people that have participated in the planning of Women’s Week. This project could be expanded to look at the earliest part of the history of the program. It might be interesting to speak with others involved with the program and the decisions to have events for Women’s Week. More research could also be done looking at the program as it is today. Ultimately, the entire history of the Women’s
Studies program needs further study. It might be better suited as an archival project instead of an oral history, but I think these stories deserve to be told.

Finally, I argue that it would be worthwhile to consider efforts that would bring more stories about the Women’s and Gender Studies program to light. The program here at Ball State University is in a time of transition and if the memories and events of the past are not captured and recorded now, they will likely be lost forever. It is time that the program moves from its marginalized state and into a more prominent place at the University. Feminism and women’s rights is important and its role at the university needs to be documented better. I hope that other researchers feel the same way I do and we can all continue to record the history of this vital program.

**Summary**

This research narrated the story of how the Women’s and Gender Studies program interacts with the local community through yearly educational programs known as Women’s Week. Oral histories with participants who helped organize the events and archival data were used in the analysis. I hope the participants’ stories are what stand out most in this research. I really enjoyed talking with them and hearing about their time with Women’s Week. It reminded me of how fondly I remember my time in the program, including attending Women’s Week events. I hope to continue to research the program here at Ball State University and more topics in the field of women’s studies overall. I also hope that I can continue to inspire my students with feminism and women’s rights as the participants of this research inspired me.
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Protocol #1

1. Name?
2. Current and/or previous affiliation with Ball State & Women’s Studies?
3. How long have or did you serve in that capacity?
4. What role did you play in regards to Women’s Week?
5. How long were you in that role?
6. Why were you interested in creating/organizing/participating in Women’s Week events?
7. What different strategies were employed to help organize the events that you assisted with?
8. Upon reflection, how effective were these strategies? Do you have specific examples to share?
9. Did you have any involvement with the local community during the time you were involved with Women’s Week?
10. Do you feel the local community plays a significant role in Women’s Week events?
11. Please describe one event and/or memory that you consider a success from your time with Women’s Week.
12. Please also describe one event and/or memory that you consider a failure or disappointment from your time with Women’s Week.
13. Is there anything you would like to change from your involvement with Women’s Week?

Irene Goldman-Price Interview Protocol #2

1. Based on the information I was able to gather from the first round of interviews, it appears that members of the local community have mainly participated in
Women’s Week as speakers/panel members, audience members, and/or as part of the philanthropic campaign. Would you agree with that? Do you think there were community members that played other main roles during your time with Women’s Week?

2. Could you describe an interaction you had with a community member or group during your time with Women’s Week?

3. Can you think of any community members or groups that regularly participated in Women’s Week during your time at BSU? (Such as NOW, AAUW, Minnetrista, etc.?) Did they participate in several events or just one? Did they come every year or only when affiliated with an event or speaker?

4. Were there events held off campus during your time with Women’s Week? (I saw some Related Events, but I’m curious if any of the major events were ever held off campus.)

5. Do you think community members would have attended more of the events during your time with Women’s Week if they were held off campus? Does location matter, in your opinion?

**Julee Rosser & Adam McLachlan Interview Protocol #2**

1. Based on the information I was able to gather from the first round of interviews, it appears that members of the local community have mainly participated in Women’s Week as speakers/panel members, audience members, and/or as part of the philanthropic campaign. Would you agree with that? Do you think there were community members that played other main roles during your time with Women’s Week?

2. Could you describe an interaction you had with a community member or group during your time with Women’s Week?

3. Can you think of any community members or groups that regularly participated in Women’s Week during your time at BSU? (Such as NOW, AAUW, Minnetrista, SOS, Women of Achievement, etc.?) Did they participate in several events or just one? Did they come every year or only when affiliated with an event or speaker? Could/Should they be more involved?

4. Do you think student groups, like FA (or ASA, DSIA, BSA, etc.) could also be involved? Can they be the ones who get into the community and advertise? Have they done that before?

5. Does the Provost’s office still sponsor a lecture series? Are there any other regular individuals or groups that participate in Women’s Week every year?
Vicki Peterson Interview Protocol #2

1. From the Women’s Week records, it looks as though you presented in 2007 & the title was “Transcendental Meditation: Taking a 20 Minute Vacation Twice a Day.” Does that sound accurate?
2. Is that a presentation or title that you use often?
3. Do you remember why you accepted the invite to speak or why you thought TM would be a good fit for Women’s Week?
4. Why do you think TM is good for college students in particular to hear about?
5. Do you think the local Muncie community is open to learning about TM?

Interview Protocol #3

1. Please reflect on the meaning your experience with Women’s Week holds for you. (i.e. What did you learn from your time as an organizer/participant?)
2. What were the challenges that you faced when you participated in Women’s Week?
3. What do you see as opportunities for growth for Women’s Week?
4. Do you think that the Muncie community should be more involved with Women’s Week? If yes, how?
5. How can the Women’s and Gender Studies program get the Muncie community more involved?
6. Do you think there is any other information I should include in my study of Women’s Week? Am I missing anything?

Other questions were directed to respondents for purposes of explanation, clarification, or expansion of a line of inquiry derived from an answer.
APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TO CAMPUS: AN ORAL HISTORY OF WOMEN’S WEEK AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Researcher: Courtney J. Jarrett

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Michelle Glowacki-Dudka

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in an oral history research study being conducted by Courtney J. Jarrett for a dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Michelle Glowacki-Dudka in the Department of Adult, Higher, and Community Education at Ball State University.

According to the Oral History Association, “oral history is a method of gathering and preserving historical information through recorded interviews with participants in past events and ways of life.” You have been approached for an interview because you participated as a creator or organizer of Women’s Week events during the time you were affiliated with the Women’s Studies program at Ball State University.

Purpose:
The goal of this oral history project is to bring to light the stories of the people who have participated in the creation of events sponsored by the Women’s Studies program at Ball State University, through the use of their own voices. These interviews will supplement written records about the history of Women’s Week at Ball State University.

Procedures:
The interviews will take approximately one hour each. During these interviews, you will be asked questions about your role in organizing different events and your experiences related to Women’s Week. The interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed. The results of your interview will be used in conjunction with archival materials and shared in the results of this dissertation project.

Risks/Benefits:
The risks associated with participation in this interview are minimal. There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but your willingness to share your knowledge and
experiences will contribute to the lacking history of the Women’s Studies program at Ball State University.

**Confidentiality:**
Unless you check below to request anonymity, your name will be referenced in the transcript and audiotape and in any material generated as a result of this research. If you request anonymity, the tape of your interview will be closed to public use, and your name will not appear in the transcript or referenced in any material obtained from the interview.

**Voluntary Participation:**
Your participation in these interviews is voluntary. Even if you decide to participate, you may withdraw from any of the interviews without penalty, or request confidentiality, at any point during the interview. You may also choose not to answer specific questions or discuss certain subjects during the interview or to ask that portions of our discussion or your responses not be recorded on tape.

**Contacts and Questions:**
If you have any questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Courtney Jarrett at ejjarrett@bsu.edu or 765-749-6260, or the faculty sponsor Dr. Michelle Glowacki-Dudka at mdudka@bsu.edu or 765-285-5348.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please feel free to contact Chris Mangelli, Director of Research Compliance at Ball State University, 765-285-5070.

**Statement of Consent:**
I agree to participate in these oral history interviews, and to the use of these interviews as described above. My preference regarding the use of my name is as follows:

____ I agree to be identified by name in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

____ I wish to remain anonymous in any transcript or reference to the information contained in this interview.

__________________________________________  ________________________
Participant’s Signature  Date
Researcher’s Signature

Date
APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTION TIMELINE

January 2011
Made contact with and confirmed participation with the four participants. My first interview with Julee Rosser was on January 31st.

February 2011
Completed first interview with Vicki on February 11th. Completed first interview with Adam on February 17th. I received email responses from Irene on February 20th. Also transcribed and went through archival data related to first interviews during this month.

March 2011
Created interview protocols for 2nd round of interviews. Irene responded on March 23rd.

April 2011
Completed 2nd interview with Vicki on April 5th. Julee’s 2nd interview was on April 8th. Adam’s 2nd interview was finished on April 12th. At the end of the month, I transcribed the interviews, went through more archival data, and created the interview protocols for the 3rd round.

May 2011
Irene sent me her 3rd set of responses on May 12th. Julee and I completed her final interview on May 13th. I met with Adam one final time on May 18th. My last interview for the project was with Vicki on May 19th. I transcribed the 3rd set of interviews at the end of the month.

Summer 2011

I spent the summer coding my data and creating themes. I continued to refer back to my researcher’s journal, the archival data, and the transcripts themselves. I created outlines for Chapters 4 & 5 in July.