

# Panels on Roles of Sexes Look at Myths, Realities

Lisa Pope  
Staff Writer

Imaging. There's been a lot of it going on in the Gallery during these past two weeks. If you felt funny vibes seeping out when you walked by, it's because faculty/staff members were wrestling with the idea of "Where I Stand Looking at the Woman/Man Who is Not Yet."

Fortunately not all on the same day. "The Woman Who is Not Yet" took center stage first, Wednesday, September 26. The theme was addressed by a panel composed of Ellen O'Brien, Claire Helgeson, Linda Brown, Jane Caris, Carol Stoneburner, Becky Gibson, Carol Clark, Cathy Tritschler and Adele Wayman. It was not a debate or an occasion for oratory but, as Carol Stoneburner said, a "shaped, intentional discussion." Such discussion was far from rigid; the wide range of represented disciplines meant that many angles of women's existence were addressed. Ellen O'Brien,

for example, spoke of the difficulty women have in freeing their natural voices; they are too much conditioned by societal warnings against loudness or aggressiveness. Carol Clark spoke of voices being stilled also: women's economic voices. She pointed to how little traditional "women's work" is valued by the economy; things such as child-rearing and housework are seen as less important than "real," wage-earning jobs.

Jane Caris read from her poetry, while Linda Brown read from her soon-to-be-published new novel. However, not all of the panel members chose prose or even words to express their thoughts of gender. Adele Wayman, for example, highlighted images of women in art, from classical statues to her own work, and that of Miriam Shapiro, who was reinterpreted the myth of Eve in several of her paintings.

Turning from "the Woman Who Is Not Yet," the second face of the topic appeared

one week later, with discussion of "Where I Stand Looking at the Man Who is Not Yet." Panel members included Roy Nydorf, Sam Schuman, Jerry Godard, Michael Geisler, George Loreo, John Stoneburner, Bill Gibson, Ernest McCoy, Joe Groves, Vernie Davis, Jack Zerbe, Tom Powell and Tom Clark. The ensuing discussion was really a journey, passing along the way male and female roles are perceived in childhood, society's reluctance to accept a mingling of the masculine and feminine, and the concrete wall men face in trying to break out of the gender stereotypes. In other words, John Wayne is a hard image to shake.

The discussion produced a host of stimulating comments from "men are up a tree" (Roy Nydorf), to "men can be feminists... but we find it difficult to listen, to watch" (Jerry Godard), to "The Man Who is Not Yet will develop courage" (Tom Powell). As in the first panel though, there was no last word —no definite conclusions.

There are many more words to come: the panel discussions are only the beginning of a two-year Images Project sponsored by the Women's Studies Department. The project is designed to help faculty come to terms with their thinking of gender, but student involvement is very important too. In fact, the panel discussions will conclude with a student dialogue about "The Woman/Man Who is Not Yet," on October 10, from 4:15-5:45 p.m. in the Gallery.

Plans are also being made for further images-related activities. For example, Miriam Shapiro will be on campus next semester, as the project focuses on gender images in art. Also, the drama department is planning to stage a feminist interpretation of William Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.

The imaging has only begun. As Carol Stoneburner said, "If you cannot imagine an alternative future, you cannot get there."

## Bungee Jumping Finds a Brave Taker at Guilford

Michael Tobkes  
Staff Writer

Think back to the summer before you began your freshman year — it's not that long ago for most of us. Do you remember what you were doing or thinking in those final days before embarking on the college journey? Maybe the memories are very vivid for you, or maybe they are not. For freshman David Lee, however, vivid may just about be an understatement.

This past summer, Lee joined the ranks of the few and daring, taking part in the latest sports-craze/adventure, known as "bungee jumping."

Bungee jumping entails ascending in a tethered hot-air balloon some 150 feet above the ground, stepping out onto a two-foot square wooden platform, and diving head-first into the sky. The jumper is secured by three nylon cords, five-eighths of an inch thick, that are attached to a Swiss harness with metal hooks.

After diving off the platform, the jumper experiences about 50 feet of freefall in a few seconds time, before the cords are fully extended. At this point, he drops another 50 feet, coming within 50 feet of the ground. Next he rebounds 75 feet or so, and bounces up and down, until the balloon lowers him to the ground. After three minutes or so, it's all over.

Balloons Over Charlotte is owned by Dan Stone, who looks to be in his mid-thirties, but won't admit his age. His is more than likely the only company east of California that provides the brave the opportunity to bungee jump from a hot-air balloon.

Before last June, Stone's business was limited to champagne-flights from south

Charlotte, with views of the NCNB building, open farmland, and South Carolina's now-defunct Heritage U.S.A. Since expanding the operation to include bungeeing, 500 people have paid \$100 apiece for two jumps (\$75 for the first, \$25 for the second).

Customers range in age from 18 to 65. The physical requirements are simple: you must be 18, weigh less than 250 pounds, and be free of any back injury or other chronic health problem. Stone requires participants to sign a waiver, releasing him from any responsibility in the event of injury while jumping.

Though some jumpers find the experience terrifying, most find it enthralling, and see little threat of physical danger. So far only four people have actually chickened out at the last minute. One person was injured in Charlotte, but he was attempting complicated flips at the time, which novices are not allowed to perform. In fact, that person, a 51-year-old used-car salesman is one of Stone's most frequent customers; he receives a discount because he drums up business and draws spectators who pay \$3 per carload to watch from the ground.

There have been no fatalities in the U.S. to date, although a controversial Reebok sneaker ad was pulled from the airwaves last spring. The commercial depicted two people bungee jumping from a bridge, and presumably only the one wearing the Reebok survived.

France has seen two deaths as a direct result of bungee jumps off of a tower in which their cords were severed. There have been no deaths reported in New Zealand, where the sport is also popular. In Australia bungeeing has been temporary

ily suspended pending an investigation into an incident in which the participant suffered a broken collarbone.

The FAA has not begun to set any regulations in the U.S., however Balloons Over Charlotte has voluntarily had its equipment inspected and deemed to be safe (the use of three cords, instead of one, is supposed to provide added safety). FAA Supervisor Bill Murphy believes the agency has no jurisdiction since the balloons are tethered to the ground, and therefore, are not technically "flying objects."

Despite the inherent dangers, there is

actually little physical skill involved. One participant called her experience, "death survived," and told *Time* "sky diving is a lot less scary." According to Guilford's David Lee, "Most people are crazy enough not to be scared."

Lee says he felt the biggest rush at the top of the first recoil, but that when he reached the end of the line and began to spring back up, it was an unnatural feeling—"we shouldn't be doing this," was his reaction at the time.

see BUNGEE on page 8 >

## Vadas

> continued from page 6

a variety of perspectives presented on feminism. And you want them to be presented by an as articulate, capable person as you can find. You can not have a better person to present them than Melinda... She is quite prominent," said Powell.

Vadas' radical convictions on feminism stems from complex philosophical theories which were developed by feminists Catherine McKinnon and Andrea Dworkin.

"Radical feminist analysis finds the subordination of women within the practice of the sexual," explained Vadas. "It is in fact a well-hidden form of political sadism in which women as a group are targeted by men as a group."

Vadas said she does recognize that not every man is necessarily an oppressor of women, but she insists that doesn't exempt them from blame.

"It is the responsibility of all men to end the political sadism against women, just as

it is the responsibility of all Christians to stop anti-semitism," said Vadas.

For men who lack appreciation for feminist theories Vadas advises them to dress up as women for a few years and consider how they are treated. She also urges them to listen to testimonials provided by women who have been victimized by men.

Vadas has written numerous articles on her beliefs and how they relate to contemporary issues such as civil rights. Her articles are strongly thought out; in an article on pornography she wrote 125 drafts before she submitted the final version.

"The articles are more empirically from a legal standpoint. I go very slowly because I don't have that much working time," said Vadas who adds she was hoping to someday publish a book.

Despite receiving many accolades for her work and it being printed in prestigious philosophical journals, she has remained modest.

"I don't know why I'm being interviewed. There's nothing especially interesting about me," said Vadas.