



# WOMEN'S CENTER

208-885-6616

Corner of Idaho and Line Streets

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March 1998

## Spousal Accommodation

by Susan Palmer

Dual-career households have surged over the last two decades, not just in academe, but in society in general. With the swell in the number of women attending graduate school, more academic marriages and partnerships occur. Consequently, dual-career couples must negotiate to maximize each partner's professional potential while simultaneously maximizing the quality of the relationship.

Dual-career couples face what Kathleen Gerson calls "hard choices." One partner may accept underemployment, or the couple may endure a commuter relationship, or persuade an employer to offer them a shared position. For dual-career couples, however, spousal accommodation is the most appealing so-called "choice".

In higher education, spousal accommodation policies are increasingly essential to diversify the faculty population and to recruit and retain female faculty, faculty of color, and "stars." Often, all three of those qualities are in one candidate. This is a particularly salient issue in rural, sparsely populated areas where professional job opportunities are more scarce. As private industry already knows, if there is no formal spousal relocation or accommodation policy, the desired job candidate has the advantage to negotiate for just about anything. Without a formal policy, these negotiations are handled clandestinely. New faculty commonly negotiate for moving expenses, start-up funds, equipment, and now, spousal employment. The best pack-

age wins in a competitive market.

In an era when academia is more attentive to intersections of race, class, and gender, entertaining spousal accommodation reveals that these considerations are at odds, rather than well aligned. At the university we have an array of staff positions varied in both wage and prestige. Additionally, we have faculty who are stratified according to rank, but also stratified as "stars" versus "ordinary lights." Finally, there are tiers of administrators. Spousal accommodation is advantageous for professional women, professionals of color, and "stars." It is generally disadvantageous for nearly everyone else.

If salary differentials, working hours, and benefit packages don't provide adequate stratification within an academic community, add spousal accommodation and you'll witness an unimagineable level of polarization. For the category of employees ineligible for spousal accommodation, the policy is inherently unfair because it is offered only to the privileged few. Employees ambitious enough to want to move up the career ladder often perceive that their opportunities are unfairly eclipsed by spousal accommodation.

On the one hand, equal opportunity guidelines lead us to expect each individual will be judged on her or his merits, and personal information should not be a consideration. Yet, affirmative action is also intended to help overturn the asymmetrical employment practices of the past by actively luring a more diverse pool of prospective employees. To achieve diversity, sometimes more than the individual must be considered. Also, as demands heighten for greater family friend-

liness on the part of employers, we expect them to be helpful with regard to child care, family leave, and spousal employment.

Any institution that adopts spousal accommodation needs to identify the monetary and non-monetary resources it is prepared to commit. Spousal accommodation requires a great deal of both. Oregon State University, for example, participates in an elaborate "family employment program" that consists of a wide network of prospective regional employers in the business sector, educational institutions, and state and local government. OSU employs a staff member to locate employment opportunities, coordinate position openings and hiring activities for partners of new personnel, and provide resources and referrals for 33 major employers participating in the network.

Both Oregon State University and Washington State University earmark a sizable amount of money for partner accommodation, in the form of OSU's one-time "faculty fellowship" or WSU's underwriting one-half of the spousal salary for two years, with the department receiving a full faculty appointment for half the cost. The idea is that these temporary accommodations will lead to permanent employment with time.

The University of Idaho faculty defeated a spousal accommodation policy last year because its unfairness was pronounced. As it reconsiders the issue now or in the future, the unfairness must be resolved and the administration must be forthright and specific about designated resources before drafting an appropriate policy.

## Savory Moments with Auntie Pasta

Greetings My Culinary Cousins,

As the weather warms, here's a spicy little recipe from Lady Bird Johnson—one of her family favorites at the "Texas White House." The state of Texas celebrates its own Independence Day on March 2nd. If this recipe isn't hot enough, rest assured that a lot of folks are still plenty hot under the collar that Mexico lost its Texas land. This is not meant to fire up that debate. Refresh my memory, did we refer to her as First Lady Lady Bird Johnson?

### LADY BIRD'S PEDERNALES RIVER CHILI RECIPE

4 lbs. ground beef or ground turkey  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tsp. ground cumin  
2 1-lb. cans tomatoes, *not* drained  
2 cups hot water

1 large onion, chopped  
1 tsp. ground oregano  
6 tsp. chili powder (to taste)  
salt to taste

Sear meat, onion, and garlic in large, heavy pan until lightly colored. Add oregano, cumin, chili powder, tomatoes, salt, and hot water. Bring to boil. Lower heat and simmer about one hour. Skim fat as it cooks out. Serves 8-12.

## No Rest for the Wicked

Dear Sisters,

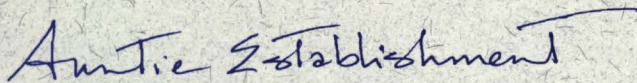
Of course, I have been planning to write about Monica Lewinsky, but to tell you the truth, I've gotten bored with the whole business. None of the jokes I've heard (not to mention the graphic speculations featured on the nightly news) are fit to print, and besides, what the leader of the free world does with his Wee Willie Winkie in the small hours of the night is really more than I care to know. I am still trying to forget that he wears boxer shorts. Like many people of Scottish descent, I might wonder what's under the kilt, but I know better than to ask.

Now, before any of you jump on me, I have to add two disclaimers. The first is that if Bill Clinton did show Paula Jones his naughty bits in an Arkansas hotel room, he should be turfed out of office. If he sexually harrassed anyone ever, you boil the tar and I'll gather the feathers. When it comes to abuse of power, I don't believe in pleas for forgiveness or second chances, no matter if you're the president or Jimmy Swaggart. There is, fortunately, a trial in progress which should settle the Clinton question, and, depending on its outcome, we can all either rest easy or rue the day.

As for my second disclaimer—Kenneth Starr's investigation into Whitewater is now four years old and so far the only tangible result is that you and I are thirty million dollars poorer. Sisters, I have a theory about independent counsels. Whichever party wins the White House gets to give cabinet posts and cushy staff jobs to its friends and donors. The losing party gets to hand out independent counsels. Starr's look into the Lewinsky affair is beginning to remind me of Anthony Perkins peering through the peephole into Janet Leigh's motel room. It's just plain creepy. I see Linda Tripp sitting in an old rocking chair in the Pentagon attic, hiding a voice-activated tape recorder in her pocket and repeating over and over again that she wouldn't hurt a fly. Yikes.

The older I get, the less black and white things seem, so ladies, saddle up that top rail—I'm riding the fence on this one.

Hi-Yo Silver,



Auntie Establishment

Applications for scholarships for single parents and children of single parents are currently available at the Women's Center. The *Shirley Grossman Caldwell Scholarship* is available for an undergraduate or graduate single mother, demonstrating academic potential and financial need, who is the primary caretaker of her children. The *Agnes Eikum Chase Memorial Scholarship* is earmarked for a full-time undergraduate single parent, or child of a single parent, with demonstrated academic merit. The deadline for filing applications at the Women's Center is *Friday, March 13, 1998*.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND BROWN-BAG LUNCH PROGRAMS

Free! Public Welcome 12:30 p.m. Women's Center Lounge March 1998 885-6616

March 1  
Sunday  
evening  
Pullman

**Miz Wizard's Science Secrets** JANE CURRY portrays Barbara Knight, aka Miz Wizard, as she prepares for and tapes the première show of Miz Wizard's Science Secrets for public access cable TV, channel 82. She tells stories about women's contributions to science, engineering, invention, and math...about revolutionary research and media portrayals...about obstacles faced and overcome by women whose passion is discovery. Meet Nobel Prize winners and girl inventors. Miz Wizard even conducts demonstrations—most of the time they don't explode. This 90-minute program incorporates slides, video, music, demonstrations, storytelling—even a riddle and a story problem. Jane Curry is an author, storyteller, performer, and recovering academic, who received her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. *This program is at the Wadleigh Theater's Daggy Hall at 7:00 p.m. on the Washington State University campus.*

March 3  
Tuesday  
evening

**The Most Massive Woman Wins** JODI BENHAM directs this one-act play set in a liposuction clinic waiting room. The audience is invited to glimpse into the lives and minds of four women (played by JAMIE FISH, REBECCA O'ROURKE, PAMELA PALMER, and BRITTENI SOJKA) who are unhappy with their bodies. The characters—Rennie (bulimic), Carly, Cel, and Sabine,—are often able to pick up on each others' thoughts without speaking straight at one another, as much of the dialogue is directed to the audience. During the play, they explore weight, happiness, love, and life. Will they find the answers we are all looking for? **Lines**, a one-act, avant garde comedy that explores the relationship between competition and survival, will also be performed. *You may reserve a seat in advance this night only by calling the Women's Center, 885-6616. Tickets are \$5 for general admission and \$3 for UI students. Following the show you are invited to talk with the director and cast at a reception at the Women's Center. The play begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Collette Theater. Seating is limited.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND BROWN-BAG LUNCH PROGRAMS  
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**March 4**  
Wednesday  
noon

**Organized Womanhood** SANDRA HAARSAGER began research in 1993 for her latest book, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920*, with a grant from the UI John Calhoun Smith Fund. Haarsager profiles over a dozen women often overlooked by historians, as well as the power of women's clubs in shaping the social, economic, and political climate in towns, cities, and states within the Pacific Northwest. The book examines notable figures like Permeal Jane French, who successfully ran for state superintendent in 1898 with the support of women's clubs. French was later named the new dean of women at the University of Idaho where she served from 1908 to 1921. Haarsager also chronicles the development and influence of such women's organizations as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). *This public presentation is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Moscow and the UI Women's Center. The program begins at NOON in the Agricultural Science Building, room 62, and is free and open to the public.*

**March 5**  
Thursday  
afternoon  
& evening

**Images of Women & Coffeehouse Concert** ROBIN GREENSTEIN, singer and songwriter, is performing in Moscow with the support of ASUI PRODUCTIONS. Greenstein's music merges folk, pop, rock, blues, and jazz influences. Her performances are described as strong and soulful singing with powerful original songs, playing guitar and banjo. *In the afternoon at 4:00 p.m., Greenstein will be at the VOX in downtown Moscow presenting a combination lecture/performance, Images of Women, that depicts views of women through traditional Anglo and Afro-American folksongs. That evening at 7:30 p.m. in the SUB Borah Theater, Greenstein will be in concert sharing her original material, as well as taking requests. Both ASUI Production programs are free and open to the public.*

**March 10**  
Tuesday  
evening

**Visions on the Palouse Video Premiere** JANE JACKSON is a video producer/director for KUID and a lecturer in the UI School of Communication. Jackson's latest production, *Visions on the Palouse*, features several local female artists including, LOUISE COLSON, COLLEEN ESPARSEN, CAROLYN FORTNEY, JODI GEAR, LINDA GOLDING, KAREN HAGEN, ALISON MEYER, REBECCA ROD, SARAH SWETT, and LINDA WALLACE. Jackson uses her own filming artistry to capture the special qualities that define life on the Palouse. Having arrived on the Palouse last summer, Jackson sought to "discover first and second hand the draw this area has on my sister artists...to become infected by their vision and the source of that vision." Jackson has been engaged in video and film production for a variety of markets (educational, industrial, commercial, and feature films), including working with American Zoetrope, Francis Ford Coppola's film production company. *KUID TV and the UI Women's Center invite you to meet a new talent on the Palouse, and preview this premiere video at the Brink Faculty Lounge at 7:00 p.m. There will be a reception with Jane Jackson and the featured artists following the show.*

**March 11**  
Wednesday

**Just a Little Skin Cancer?** Many people, some doctors included, have only a limited understanding of the deadly and unpredictable nature of malignant melanoma, a very serious skin cancer. Melanoma is more common than any non-skin cancer among people 25 to 29 years old, and the incidence of melanoma has more than doubled in the last 20 years. MARLA KALE, a public information specialist with the UI University Communications and a melanoma survivor, will share information that could help you save your skin...and your life.

**March 12**  
Thursday  
evening  
Lewiston

**Mother Wove the Morning: A Reading by Four Women** KARI GALLOWAY, SHIRLEE HENNIGAN, SHEILA SCOTT, and JEANMARIE SIMPSON, will perform at this Women's History Month program to benefit the YWCA of Lewiston Sue Wheel Richmond Domestic Violence Shelter. "Take a train, take a plan, ride a bus or a bike, but go to *Mother Wove the Morning*...a magnificent, emotionally-charged performance. Bravo!" (*Evening Press*, Dublin, Ireland) *Sponsored by the Lewiston Civic Theatre, this performance begins at 7:00 p.m. at the Lewis-Clark Center for Arts and History. Tickets are \$15 and available at the door.*

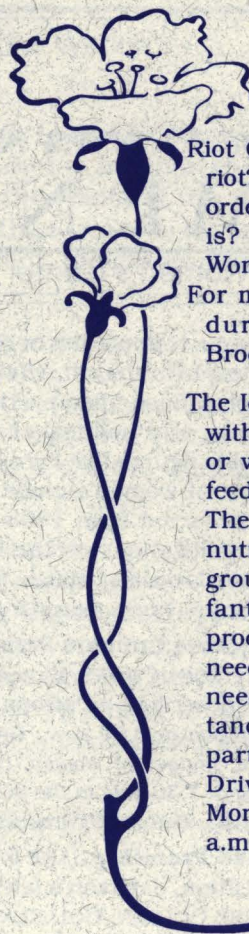
**March 25**  
Wednesday  
evening

**Idaho Women and the Land Video Premiere** LAUREN FINS, UI Forest Resources Department, has presented her combination of lectures, dramatization, interpretive readings, and videotaped interviews—"a highly textured ensemble"—to audiences throughout the region. You can view the premiere of her new video that draws on journals, letters, interviews, and oral history to explore women's perceptions, feelings, and connection to the land within the framework of historical data on resource use. This program gives voice to women's stories from native peoples, early pioneers, immigrant laborers, and contemporary residents. *KUID TV and the UI Women's Center invite you to preview this premiere video at the UI Administration Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. There will be a reception with Lauren Fins and Alan Lifton following the show.*

**March 28**  
Saturday

**Alternative Approaches to Science Education** DR. MARALEE MAYBERRY co-author of *Effective Educational Environments*, and associate professor of sociology at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, will be the keynote speaker at this day-long conference sponsored by Athena. Workshops and panel discussions will be held throughout the day. Registration, which includes lunch, will be \$20 (\$15 for students) prior to the conference, and \$30 (\$25 for students) the day of the conference. Athena is an association supporting the interests of faculty and professional staff women at the University of Idaho. *Contact Beth Palmer, conference chair, 885-6192 or palmer@uidaho.edu, for more information.*

The Women's Center Newsletter is published six times during the academic year. It includes announcements and information about the many services and programs offered by the center to the university and regional communities. There are also items of general interest about women's and men's issues. If you have announcements or information to include in subsequent issues, please let us know. Suggestions for changes, improvements, or additional items are always welcome. Disability access is on the north end of the building through the TAAC. A taped copy of the newsletter is available on request for the visually impaired.



Riot Grrrl Moscow is starting. Wanna riot? Create change in the boy world order? Or just find out what a riot grrrl is? Thursday nights, 5:00 p.m., UI Women's Center.

For more information contact Luci at duro3595@novell.uidaho.edu, or Brooke at 885-8383.

The Idaho WIC Program helps families with children under the age of 5 years or women who are pregnant, breast feeding, or have recently had a baby. The WIC program helps by providing nutrition education in individual and group settings. Nutritious foods, infant formula, and special nutrition products are also available based on need. To participate, you must be in need of financial and health assistance. Stop by your local health department at 333 East Palouse River Drive in Moscow or call 882-7353, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. for an appointment.

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Women's Center

JILL ANDERSON ..... Office Coordinator  
SUSAN PALMER ..... Women's Resource Specialist  
for Education Outreach, Gender Equity, and Research  
VALERIE RUSSO ..... Women's Resource Specialist  
for Sexual Assault Prevention Education, and Crisis Services

Telephone ..... 1-208-885-6616  
Fax ..... 1-208-885-6285  
E-mail ..... wcenter@uidaho.edu  
Home Page ..... <http://www.uidaho.edu/~wcenter/>  
Office Hours ..... 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday

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