# Opposing "both sides": Rhetoric, reproductive rights, and control of a campus women's center

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ARTICLE INFO

Available online xxxx

SYNOPSIS

We analyze the rhetoric that high-level administrators used to justify control over a campus women's center's mission statement and programming related to reproductive rights. Appealing to valued cultural abstractions ("both sides," "tolerance") and the conventional reification of "The Law," administrators' rhetorical moves obscured their power, legitimated their decisions, and positioned themselves as magnanimous. We also highlight the ideological codes—what "everyone knows"—that administrators relied on to shape the terms of debate and to bend to right-wing pressures without appearing to do so. We conclude with recommendations for challenging the seemingly benign cast of "both sides."

## Introduction

Attacks on U.S. universities by the right and increasingly stingy state legislatures have led high-level administrators to pay attention to—and satisfy—the desires of politicians, corporations, right-wing watchdog organizations, rich conservative donors, and the public-at-large (Bérubé, 2006; Fosse & Gross, 2010; Geary, 2011; Newfield, 2011; Schrecker, 2010; Washburn, 2005). Administrators also consider whether they will alienate faculty, staff, and students to the point of resistance, especially at universities with a liberal public face. High-level administrators, then, have the rhetorical problem[1] of justifying actions that could displease insiders, while pleasing influential outsiders. In the case we examine, administrators drew on rhetorics that currently have widespread appeal outside the academy, and resonance within it, to justify their control of a campus women's center. Without understanding these rhetorics of social control, it's hard to reframe them—and fight back.

Women's centers are particularly vulnerable to these threats.[2] Women's centers' activities "var[y] widely across institutional contexts" (Pasque & Nicholson, 2011, p. 19), yet these centers are symbolically marked as feminist: subjective and political. Women's Studies is similarly marked, but professors can claim academic freedom to justify teaching and research that critics label as pushing an agenda. Pegged as service rather than academic units, women's centers have a harder time using academic freedom to legitimate decisions about programs.

Campus women's centers typically operate under the control of high-level administrators (Calkins, 1993; Kasper, 2004), and that control may extend to programming, including speakers on reproductive justice. Our story takes place at a large, research-oriented, public university in the U.S. We served on the board of the University Women's Center (UWC)—one as a faculty representative, the other as a graduate student representative—in the early- to mid-2000s.[3] Each March, during Women's History Month, the UWC put on a week of programs that included speakers, workshops, and performances. The programming committee in 2003 had scheduled a pro-choice speaker to come to campus. We discovered that an anti-choice student group pushed the programming committee to add an anti-choice event. Not finding satisfaction there, the students complained to high-level administrators. As a result, an administrator told the programming committee that they had to either add a "pro-life" speaker to their program or

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disinvite the pro-choice speaker and have no one speak about abortion.

As a result, board members and other interested parties decided to create a document that would inform the work of future programming committees, and that the committees could use to back up their decisions. A daylong retreat was held to brainstorm ideas for a new mission statement. The authors and other board members worked on the document over a few months, which included the mission statement and a list of "values." One item on that list was "Maintaining and improving women's reproductive rights."

A high-level administrator attended the retreat as well as monthly UWC board meetings, at which the document was refined and reworded. He said that he "liked the wording of 'reproductive rights'." Yet, months later, administrators made it clear to the director of the UWC, who then made it clear to the board, that the list of values was unacceptable, especially for "legal reasons." Administrators ultimately dismissed the efforts of faculty, staff, and students who had worked on the new mission statement and list of values, once again compromising the autonomy of the UWC.

Not surprisingly, administrators' responses to the board, to the press, and to progressive student groups masked what had happened: namely, that those with institutional power (men) had told those with less power (board members of the UWC, almost all of them women) at a women's center (presumably supportive of women's autonomy) what to do. How did administrators manage to present themselves and their actions as reasonable, fair, compassionate, and legally necessary? We will show that administrators changed our wording—from "reproductive rights" to "abortion"—to enable them to claim the moral high ground. "Reproductive rights" is an umbrella term that includes women's economic and social rights to maintain a pregnancy and raise children as well as a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy. The term "abortion" made it possible for administrators to call on the popular framing of this medical procedure as an "issue" with opposing "sides." By using the language of "sides" and conflating the women's center with the university as a whole, administrators implied that the board's work fell in the arena of First Amendment law—and was found wanting.[4] "Free speech" and "hearing both sides" resonate with the public as goods in themselves. But these vague terms also hide the content of each "side" and thereby the potential harmful consequences of a particular "side" for women as a group.

As sociologists we are interested in the content and uses of administrators' rhetoric as part of the reproduction of inequality, particularly gender inequality (Kleinman, 1996, 2007; Schwalbe et al., 2000). The rhetoric of "both sides" and "representing all views" appears reasonable and inclusive. We argue, however, that in the context of a conservative era and backlash against feminism (Cochrane, 2008; Douglas, 2010; Kasper, 2004; Pollitt, 2008), this rhetorical framing[5] – "both sides" – becomes a symbolic resource used by the powerful to control women, whether at a women's center on a college campus or in a woman's decision-making about her body and life.

We also point out examples of patterned absences (Kleinman, 2007, p. 2)—what administrators did not say. This includes ideas and images implicit in what they did say. These absent presences (Apple, 1999) served as ideological codes (Smith, 1999, p. 57–194): cultural assumptions—what

"everyone knows"—implicit in conventional frames. For example, Dorothy Smith analyzed "the family" as an ideological code. Typically understood as heterosexual-couple-married-with-children, "the family" becomes the model in comparison to which all other arrangements are positioned either as lesser (e.g., "female-headed households") or as (rhetorically) non-existent (e.g., "male-headed households").

Ideological codes also have emotional valence; they become persuasive parts of a rhetoric because speakers can rely on others' reactions without explicitly making an emotional appeal. For example, administrators at the university and pundits did not say, "We think feminist faculty are shoving their views down the throats of innocent young women!" They didn't have to. Administrators' rhetorics fit the public's conception of (a) women's centers as feminist havens; (b) feminists as one-sided and intolerant; and, (c) female undergraduate students at this particular university as naive and vulnerable to feminist professors' ideological messages (for images of feminists, see Baker Beck, 1998; Kasper, 2004; Lind & Salo, 2002).

The codes were gendered, racialized, and classed, pitting bad women (white feminist professors)[6] against good women (young white, middle-class "girls" on their way to becoming "ladies"). Students in the "pro-life" group (white middle-class "girls," pro-motherhood and -babies) who pressured administrators to have the UWC sponsor anti-choice programming became victims of the UWC (i.e., feminists). Administrators who deliberately rejected our work and the autonomy of the UWC, even for understandable reasons in the current climate, appeared as fair-minded, benevolent patriarchs who saved unsuspecting undergraduate women on campus while we became the perpetrators who needed university lawyers to explain the First Amendment to us.

We will analyze the rhetorical moves and the ideological codes that administrators used to control a women's center, including the seemingly reasonable demand to present "both sides." We conclude with recommendations for programming from an alternative frame. This paper, then, adds to our understanding of the reproduction of inequality by examining the use of popular framing and ideological codes by the powerful to support or increase their power, especially with regard to women and reproductive rights; showing the difficulties of resisting the conventional framing; and offering suggestions for programming to counteract the benign cast of "both sides."

## What happened

The first author was elected to a three-year position as a faculty member on the advisory board of a campus women's center (established in 1997) during the 2002–2003 academic year. The director of the center was a tenured professor who received a half-time course release each semester and a yearly stipend. Bureaucratically, she answered to the provost's office. In March of 2003, students in the campus feminist group told the first author they were worried about the content of an upcoming session on "Faith, Sexuality, and Feminism" during Women's Week, and urged her to attend. The students, who volunteered as organizers for the week's events, heard that the session might have representatives of religiously-based heterosexist views. Their concern was

warranted. In a well-attended session, the first author heard three of five panelists give a literalist interpretation of the Bible, claiming that "homosexuality is a sin." This event led to a protest by queer students and their allies outside the women's center. Shortly afterwards, the UWC's director met with student protesters and a few faculty, including the first author. As we walked into the UWC, the director looked at the protest signs held by some of the students and said, "Oh, you brought your little signs." Students reported to us later that they felt patronized by the director.

For the same week of events, an anti-choice student organization submitted a proposal to bring a speaker to campus. The planning committee for Women's Week rejected the proposal, reasoning that the presenter was welcome to speak on campus, but that the UWC would not sponsor an anti-choice event. The committee had already scheduled a pro-choice speaker for the week. Members of the anti-choice group contacted representatives from the provost's office to complain, demanding that the UWC host their speaker. A high-ranking member of the provost's office told the programming committee that for "legal reasons" they must bring a "pro-life" speaker to campus in addition to the pro-choice speaker, or have no one speak on the topic of abortion. He called for a vote. A few members abstained, saying that they rejected the options. Not wanting to disinvite the pro-choice speaker, the majority reluctantly agreed to add the anti-choice speaker. But the anti-choice group failed to secure funding for their speaker by the UWC's deadline, so no anti-choice speaker was featured that year.

The first author, along with other board members, was surprised that the UWC would sponsor events that reinforced heterosexism and challenged reproductive rights for women. She raised these issues for discussion at a board meeting and said that a university attorney should be invited to explain the legalities. The attorney noted in an e-mail (and at the next meeting) that because the UWC's website had had an "open solicitation to all members of the University community" for proposals, it was effectively acting as "the state," and thus could not make "distinctions based on a viewpoint with which [the UWC] disagrees." She advised the center to avoid a public call for proposals in subsequent years.

The first author was skeptical of the argument, and the lawyers she consulted—specialists in constitutional law and academic law—disagreed with the university attorney's interpretation. But the university attorney's advice seemed easy enough to follow in the future, especially if the board were to create a stronger mission statement along with a set of values (as the board later called them) to which all UWC events and programs would be held to account. The mission statement at that time read: "The mission of the University Women's Center is to promote an equitable and empowering environment through education, support, advocacy and diversity. We celebrate women as shapers of the world." The content reflected, in part, a larger trend of "women's groups and centers [adopting] mission statements that essentially replace political action with objectives of helping women (and sometimes men) achieve personal goals" (Kamienski, 2004, para 3). The new statements would take clear positions on issues and policies affecting women's lives; these would provide guidance and organizational support for programming committees as well as justifications for programming if administrators intervened.

At the close of the spring 2003 semester, the first author and other board members nominated new board members for the following year, including the second author. Early in the fall of 2003, close to the entire board—including 15 voting and 15 non-voting members—met in a retreat to discuss proposed changes to the mission of the center and its statement of values. These discussions continued in the monthly advisory board meetings and in discussions over the board's listserv through the fall. Eventually, members agreed on a new mission and a set of values. The proposed mission statement read:

> The mission of the University Women's Center is to empower women and promote their equality in all spheres of life and to celebrate the work of women that betters humankind.

The proposed list of values included:

1. Ending all forms of sexism, ageism, heterosexism, racism, class inequality, ableism and other forms of oppression.
2. Establishing an environment for discussing social issues in relation to how they promote or hinder the equality of women.
3. Maintaining and improving women's reproductive rights.
4. Supporting and increasing the rights of LGBT people.
5. Improving the health of women.
6. Building coalitions with, and acting as allies for, disadvantaged groups.
7. Collaborating with groups who are working to end systematic forms of oppression.
8. Promoting the use of nonsexist language (e.g., first-year instead of freshman, you all instead of you guys).
9. Ending violence against women.
10. Being at the forefront of making changes towards equality.

In November 2003, the board agreed to adopt the first (overarching) "value." A month later, at the end of a meeting that ran overtime, the eight remaining voting members, including both authors, voted on whether to adopt the new mission and statement of values. The vote was seven yeses and one abstention.

At the January meeting, the director of the center announced that, after speaking with representatives from the provost's office, she had decided to accept the new mission statement but reject the list of values. The director had repeatedly told the board in the fall that our recommendations were "advisory." Some of us wondered if this was a warning that she would ultimately reject anything she didn't like.

We knew that the most controversial item for administrators would be "maintaining and improving women's reproductive rights." At the December meeting, two high-level campus administrators and the director of the center said the list of values was inappropriate because the center had to represent "all women" and the list was not "inclusive" of "all women's values." The director said she agreed with the administrators and rejected the list. Planning for Women's Week 2004 was already underway. In response, students on the planning committee who represented feminist, queer, and pro-choice groups resigned (about 75% of committee members). The second author was a member of one of the groups. The director then mailed the second author a formal letter

accepting his "resignation" from the board (he had not resigned) despite the board being a separate entity from the planning committee.

As an act of resistance and as an attempt to shed light on the actions of the director and representatives of the office of the provost, the student groups who left the planning committee organized an alternative week of events—called "Pro-Women's Week"—guided by the list of ten values. A student opened every event by reading a description of what had occurred and by reading the rejected statement of values. A prominent pro-choice speaker withdrew her participation from Women's Week after she heard about the director's decision, and instead spoke as part of Pro-Women's Week. Several other speakers did the same.

What had transpired between the university attorney's 2003 advice for avoiding legal problems and the programming for 2004? Following the attorney's advice, the planning committee had not made an open call for proposals. An anti-choice student group nevertheless submitted a proposal. The planning committee discussed the proposal at length and then rejected it. The anti-choice group contacted the chancellor, local media, and a conservative watchdog organization that monitors the university. A columnist in a local paper noted that the letter from the anti-choice student group appeared "to have struck a nerve at a time when the university [had] been combating a host of internal and external attacks for its perceived (or real) liberal bias" (Sheehan, 2004).[7]

Feminist, LGBTIQ, and pro-choice student groups requested meetings with representatives of the provost's office. They received an email from the provost (analyzed, below), stating that the UWC could not "take a position…on the issue of abortion." He did not respond to students' request for a meeting. A high-ranking member of the provost's office did meet with representatives of the anti-choice group, to hear their demands. As a result, a representative of the provost's office instructed the director of the UWC to add a link for the anti-choice student group's website to the UWC website and to organize a forum on reproductive rights, including anti-choice speakers, for the fall. A local columnist noted:

> Most important, the university made it crystal clear that the [UWC], despite its liberal reputation, takes no position on abortion. [A representative of the provost's office] said that neutrality has been the official position for years. A few years ago, he said, a group on campus asked to have the [UWC] mission statement amended to reflect a pro-choice position. *He refused*. (Sheehan, 2004, emphasis added.)

This same administrator had participated in revising the mission statement at the 2003 retreat and at board meetings in the fall. Many of us on the board suspected that he was there to monitor our work rather than to participate in good faith. His ultimate lack of support, despite his having said he liked the language of reproductive rights, suggests that our suspicions were warranted.

**Administrators' rhetorical moves**

> [A]s explained to the advisory board [of the University Women's Center] on at least two occasions by University

Counsel, it would be inappropriate for the Center to take a position as part of its mission statement on the issue of abortion. The Center must welcome women (and men) from across the university, and recognize that they have differing views on this sensitive matter. (E-mail from the provost to the student feminist organization, January 29, 2004.)

This passage contains the key rhetorical moves used repeatedly by the provost, other high-level administrators, and the director of the UWC to reject the board's decision to add "maintaining and improving women's reproductive rights" to the center's statement of values. Administrators used the same rhetoric to justify their (unwritten) policy of having an anti-choice speaker present on any panel or program in which a pro-choice speaker would appear—if an anti-choice group requested it. In addition, administrators used this rhetoric to justify having links to a "pregnancy support services" center in the town (which does not offer abortion as an alternative to pregnant women) and to other anti-choice groups on the UWC's website.[8] We'll now discuss administrators' rhetorical moves and the ideological codes underlying them. We will see why, taken together, administrators' responses became convincing to various constituencies and thus difficult to oppose.

*Reframing reproductive rights as "abortion" and the making of "debate"*

The UWC board had written "maintaining and improving women's reproductive rights" rather than "abortion" to acknowledge that abortion is only one of many reproductive rights, and that Roe v. Wade (1973) (and other relevant cases) does not guarantee financial or geographic access to abortion (see, e.g. Donohoe, 2005). Some of us wanted to include a paragraph about reproductive rights, of which abortion would be a part, but the vast majority preferred a series of brief bullet points for the website.

Administrators had a copy of what we wrote. But in every public statement made by higher-level administrators—including the administrator who said that he liked our wording ("reproductive rights")—only "abortion" appeared. This word did a lot of rhetorical work in justifying their rejection of the list of values. In the administrator's statement above, the word "abortion" stands out, partly because it has largely disappeared from popular media, such as films and television shows. Few characters in these media have the procedure, even under conditions in which women off the screen would likely do so (see Stevens', 2007 analysis of *Knocked Up* and Lowen's, 2008 analysis of *Juno*). One would not know—from the mass media—that half of all women in the U.S. will have an unintended pregnancy and that 1 in 3 will have an abortion by age 45 (Guttmacher Institute, 2011).

Why did administrators change our wording? To invoke "abortion" controversialized what was going on (for examples of controversialization on topics other than abortion, see Parry, 2006; Harrington, 2011). Reducing reproductive rights to "abortion" tapped the current code for controversy. Administrators could count on audiences adhering to the cultural construction of "abortion" as a debate, with two opposing sides. The provost activated the frame of controversy, along with that

of "free speech," something that universities are supposed to embody.

The controversializing accomplished by the term "abortion" also masks that the terms of the "debate" were created by, and continue to benefit, the right. "Abortion" serves as an ideological code—supporting the status quo—because of how "abortion" is currently framed: one "side" is about saving babies that would otherwise be killed, leaving the "other side" to defend itself from the charge of being baby-killers. This coding takes women's moral autonomy out of the picture; hides the fact that the "pro-choice side" does not mandate abortion (Colson, 2005, para 19); and omits from the frame any larger analysis, including the conditions that lead to unwanted pregnancies, the difficulties that poor women face in bringing up children they desire, and the relationship between lack of reproductive rights and gender inequality (for more, see Condit, 1990).

"Abortion," especially as it plays out in the conventional mass media, deflects from the rest of the anti-choice agenda. As Amanda Marcotte (2011) puts it:

> The mainstream media has always…*struggled* to understand that the anti-choice movement is anti-contraception, anti-STD prevention, and anti-sex education. It just doesn't fit the official narrative…This was by anti-choice design… [If anti-choicers] make their arguments about sex and female liberation, and especially if they attack contraception overtly, they lose. (para 1 and 2.)

How else might administrators have reacted? If they wished to support the professional autonomy of the UWC—and the moral autonomy of women generally—and were willing to risk displeasure on the part of conservative right-wing legislators and donors, they might have said:

> The "pro-life" group on campus is arguing that the UWC should not be allowed to take a position on abortion, suggesting that the Board is deciding whether abortion is good or bad. This is not the case. Rather, the Board is advocating for *reproductive rights*, which includes the right of each woman to decide, for herself, whether to continue *or* end a pregnancy. They also wish to enhance the social and economic conditions that would give all women real choices, such as prenatal care, postnatal care, and resources to bring up a child. *Roe* establishes that women will be protected from "unduly burdensome interference with [their] freedom to decide" to end a pregnancy (see Solinger, 2001, p. 19). That is the law of the land, and a center committed to equality for women unsurprisingly accepts that law. We stand with the UWC in supporting women's moral autonomy.

Would administrators of a university say they are against women's moral autonomy? That is tantamount to saying that women don't deserve full citizenship. The provost could have said that women, like all citizens, deserve the right to make decisions about their bodies, and that a women's center has the right to exercise professional autonomy in its programming.[9] If woman-as-capable-moral-agent is put at the center of the frame, then carrying a fetus to term *and* terminating a pregnancy become valid options.

Even the right's strategy since the early 1990s—shifting its rhetoric from (largely) demonizing women to (largely) vilifying abortion providers (Halva-Neubauer & Zeigler, 2010)—has not changed the fundamental terms of debate. The right has pushed the idea of a special connection between every pregnant woman ("the mother") and the fetus ("the baby"). Treating mother-and-baby as a unit, they can conclude that abortion hurts women. This rhetoric still robs women of the right to terminate a pregnancy, though the woman who has an abortion is now portrayed as "a victim who has been *deceived* into an act that she will regret for the rest of her life" (Halva-Neubauer and Zeigler, p. 111, emphasis added). Without bad influences (the "abortion industry," "feminists"), every pregnant woman, they claim, would choose to maintain a pregnancy.

The right's framing has been so effective that many women who call themselves pro-choice also decouple abortion rights from women's equality:

> Do you think abortion is tragic and terrible and wrong, that Roe v. Wade went too far and that the prochoice movement is elitist, unfeeling, overbearing, overreaching and quite possibly dead? In the current debate over abortion, that makes you a prochoicer.... [I]t is hard to find anyone who will say a good word in public for abortion rights, let alone for abortion itself. (Pollitt, 2006, paras 1, 2.)

The mass media "naturalize" maintaining a pregnancy, under all conditions (Latimer, 2009, p. 211). "Pro-choice" public figures, such as Hillary Clinton, say that abortion is "a sad, even tragic choice" that ideally "does not ever have to be exercised or only in very rare circumstances" (quoted in Saletan, 2005, para 5). University administrators' statements were made at a time, continuing to the present, in which abortion is portrayed at best as a sad necessity, and at worst, as murder. Administrators could count on their audiences thinking of "abortion" as a controversial issue—rather than as a legal, safe, and common procedure in the U.S. If this is an "issue" with "two opposing sides," the demand to present both sides comes to seem reasonable.

Rhetorically, administrators weren't quashing the work of a women's center's faculty, staff, and students or accepting the right's framing; rather, they were taking a neutral stance. The ideological code—everyone knows abortion is bad, it's just a matter of *how* bad it is—is out of sight, but understood. In the U.S., invoking both sides means that one is enacting neutrality, with neutrality valued as necessary for "free speech" to prevail. Administrators' use of this frame also resonated with some academics' belief that a university should offer a "marketplace of ideas," a rhetorical term we address in a later section.

### Neutrality as tolerance and inclusiveness

Echoing the administrators' rhetoric of viewpoint neutrality, the director of the UWC spoke as if views on "abortion" were at stake, not women's "reproductive rights." She was quoted as telling a local reporter: "We want to have a full, full discussion of the subject. The [UWC] serves over 20,000 women on the campus, so we have a very diverse audience and we need to be respectful of these varying viewpoints." In the context of the article and popular discourse, readers would understand "the subject" as abortion.

Neutrality connotes balance, generosity, tolerance, and inclusiveness. Yet, an abstract tolerance for all views avoids a discussion of the values that underlie each position. Allowing "tolerance" to trump everything else can result in the acceptance of views tied to oppressive values. As Karla Mantilla (1994) argued in her analysis of the rhetoric of tolerance:

Under tolerance, choices are to be made somehow randomly, perhaps willy nilly, since proponents of tolerance abhor making a judgment about better or worse. In fact no one can actually live this way because we make choices about what is best for us from the moment we wake up in the morning. And our choices are not random and amoeba-like—they come out of our values. We simply cannot make a choice without making a value judgment about better and worse. But tolerance in and of itself cannot be a guiding principle in making choices because no values are attached to it. It simply says anything goes. When it comes to my body and my life, anything most emphatically does not go (para 2).

Including a point of view in a debate validates it. A women's center representing the point of view of a movement that would remove a woman's right to decide to maintain a pregnancy or have an abortion—and that increasingly "redefine[s] contraception itself as abortion" (Joffe, 2009, p. 4)—reinforces gender inequality by positioning women primarily as reproductive objects. Banishing the set of values from the website and including "all views" obscured the political ramifications of neutrality. To claim neutrality in the face of inequalities is, by default, to reinforce them (Zinn, 2005). By keeping the UWC from taking a stand in support of reproductive rights, administrators rendered the UWC complicit in the perpetuation of gender inequality.

Like other women's centers, the UWC emerged from women's collective concerns and needs, not from an abstract position of neutrality. The process began with a 1995 faculty report on the status of women at the university. Noting the "seriously disturbing" lack of faculty promotions among women, the chancellor convened a Task Force on Women in 1996. It found the following areas needing attention: security, health services, legal services, work-life issues (maternity leave, child care, elder care), career development and mentoring, and a chilly climate. The report recommended establishing a women's center to (1) create "a safe, equitable, and healthy university environment"; (2) address the needs and concerns of women of color; and (3) "advocate for systematic changes that will improve the lives of the women and men of the University community."

The list of values created by the board in 2003 fit these findings and recommendations. Yet, when anti-choice students complained to administrators about the "pro-choice bias" of the UWC, administrators went along with them. Administrators did so, however, without appearing to kowtow to the legislature, conservative donors, or the public-at-large. Rather, they portrayed themselves as magnanimous, calling for tolerance and the public airing of all views. An appeal to inclusiveness also fit the liberal image of the university, satisfying those invested in maintaining that image.

How could a women's center take a stand for women's equality if it must include all views? As one student in the feminist campus organization said to us in 2003, "The UWC represents the views of all women—except feminists." Tellingly, members of the anti-choice student group who demanded inclusion in the UWC's programming did not become active participants in the center, even after administrators met their demands.

The provost argued that "the center must welcome women (and men) from across the university, and recognize that they have differing views...." Here, the provost conflated the availability of the center's *services* with the *stands* taken by the center. As several of us argued, a women's center's services should be open to all, but it does not have to represent the views of everyone (more on this in a later section). Certainly there are racist and heterosexist women (and men) on campus, and women who have internalized sexist messages. Should the UWC represent those views? If a group called "White Supremacist Women" submitted a program, should the UWC accept it? Failing to state an anti-heterosexist view on the website, for example, had already culminated in a session on faith, sexuality, and feminism with three speakers who made heterosexist comments. This, we argued, could happen again.

Only by examining the content of each side can one see the harms—to women as a class—of the anti-choice view. But administrators' rhetoric hid those harms behind the seeming generosity of a "welcoming" and "inclusive" attitude toward *individuals*. Historically, women's centers, black cultural centers, women's studies, African American studies, and other centers and curricula came into being as a result of oppressed groups struggling for inclusion in the academy. The right has co-opted this language, demanding the inclusion of views benefiting historically privileged groups (see AAUP, 2005; Blake, 2011). Again, inclusiveness as an ideological code remains an abstraction, an apparent good in itself that lies outside an analysis of oppression and privilege.

*Feminists vs. women*

Administrators' rhetoric of tolerance and neutrality implicitly tapped powerful ideological codes. To many in the public—and to conservative legislators and donors—a women's center is coded as feminist. Rhetorically, this coding stymied the board. Feminists are positioned as un- or anti-feminine women; as women who are anti-motherhood and anti-babies; as women who are against the traditional heterosexual family, whether lesbians ("non-women"), bi/pansexual ("hyper-sexual"), or heterosexual (selfish "career women"). Lind and Salo (2002) compared the use of "women" and "feminists" in news and public affairs programs in U.S. electronic media. Like previous studies, they found that "'feminists' are demonized more often than are 'women'" (p. 219); are almost "ten times more likely to be associated with words such as jerks, bitches, radical, or bad"; and are significantly less likely "to be linked with the home than 'women'" (p. 224).

Feminists are often cast as non-mothers and "the opposite of 'family'" (Creedon, 1993, 75; see also Luker, 1984). Mother is a moral identity (McMahon, 1995), implying that a woman without children cannot be a good person (Kleinman, 1996, p. 5). Yet mothering is not materially valued in the U.S., even for mothers who are white, heterosexual, and upper-middle-class (Hays, 1996). But in the "debate" about abortion, the right uses mothers and motherhood to *create a contrast* between women

who are anti-abortion and those who argue for abortion rights, rhetorically pitting Good Women (mothers) against Bad Women (non-mothers, feminists, lesbians). It's an easy leap from there to position some women (i.e., pro-choice feminists) as villains, along with "the abortion industry." As pointed out earlier, the right's latest frame—abortion hurts women—still portrays abortion as baby-killing.

In the case of the UWC, "feminists" at a women's center became the bad women who don't want or value children; that they didn't want "pro-life" programming meant that they were on the side of the bad. Sixty-one per cent of women who have abortions already have children (Jones, Finer, & Singh, 2010), and many women who have abortions and do not yet have children will have them later (Fried, 2006). That many feminists have children and that some self-identified pro-life women have abortions and then return to picket at clinics (Simonds, 1996) become rhetorical impossibilities within the right's frame.

Pro-life rhetoric is about saving babies, but not all babies, pregnant women, and mothers are equally valued (McQueeney, 2009; Roberts, 1998; Sidel, 2000; Solinger, 2001). The conflict between the UWC's board and administrators took place at a university where more than 60% of undergraduates are female, predominantly white women from middle- to upper-middle-class families. That the demographics are well known reinforced the following interpretation: Feminists are spreading anti-motherhood and anti-conventional-family messages to white, middle-class "girls"; white middle-class "career women" are forcing these messages on them, corrupting them, offering only one side, and worse, the side that would abort babies and eviscerate conventional womanhood/motherhood.

Just as the pro-life position infantilizes women by taking away their moral autonomy and reinforcing the belief that women are incapable of making life and death decisions in all realms (Schwalbe, 2008, p. 40–41), the assumption about female college students at this university portrays them as children in need of (patriarchal) protection. The "pro-life" student group, a subset of white middle class women, could be seen as especially innocent—and victimized by The Feminists. As Lind and Salo (2002, 223) found in news reports, "'feminists' are less often framed as victims, and more often framed as having agency, than are 'women'." Popular discourse positions feminists not only as women who attack men and boys, but as women who hurt women and girls.

Yet, the "pro-life" student organization exercised a lot of agency, if not downright chutzpah: contacting top-level administrators, meeting with them, speaking to the press in an angry (i.e., unfeminine) tone and achieving a public forum to express their grievances and goals. But because they were standing on the side of the good—"pro-life," pro-motherhood/pro-traditional family—they could still be seen as innocent, given the abovementioned cultural codes. Students from the feminist organization who wrote letters and contacted administrators, in contrast, were not granted a meeting with administrators. Feminist students might have been seen as irremediable, already corrupted by feminist professors (see e.g., Vickers, 2005).

The anti-choice student group did not argue that the UWC should get rid of pro-choice programming; they asked "only" that the UWC add to its programming. This request appears fair and balanced. The content and goal of their anti-choice position—

to keep all women from having the right to choose abortion—were obscured by the code of free speech. Feminist students on the planning committee and board members argued (in planning meetings and frequently over the UWC listserv) that the anti-choice student group could host as many speakers as they wanted on campus, and were denied only co-sponsorship by the UWC. Our counterarguments, however, had little rhetorical weight.

*What is "political" and who is "sensitive"?*

Administrators could frame abortion as a political issue because it is conventionally construed as having opposing sides. That is quite different from feminists' usage of "political." For feminists, lack of reproductive freedom is political because it reduces women's power, robbing them of autonomy, dignity, and citizenship (Flavin, 2009; Nossiff, 2007; Schwalbe, 2006). But this understanding of what is "political" would have placed administrators in opposition to women's moral autonomy and undermined their image as responsible, neutral arbiters. The rhetoric of abortion as political (in the sense of two sides fighting each other to win) allowed administrators to claim that they stood above politics.

"Administration" is coded as masculine (Williams, 1992); that the administrators were upper-middle-class white men in powerful positions made them seem like wise patriarchs rescuing women and girls from an emotional tug-of-war. The unruly women/feminists needed the cool bureaucratic hand to bring them into line. At the same time, only "one side" (the feminists) was positioned as acting up, specifically as riling up—and victimizing—the "other side." Board members broke the code of (white middle-class heterosexual) femininity. Unapologetically rejecting a view that disempowers women as a group rendered the board "insensitive."

In the provost's email quoted above, he implied that the "issue of abortion" is about personal experience or feelings (hence a "sensitive matter"). Because each side represents a constituency that has strong emotional reactions, the provost said, it would be "inappropriate" for the UWC to take a side. As in the case of "inclusiveness," the content and consequences of each side become irrelevant. Rhetorically, whether a person feels offended or validated by a view trumps the systematic harm done to women as a group by the anti-choice movement.

Ironically, administrators and columnists failed to acknowledge or validate board members' feelings, despite numerous references to the sensitivity of both sides. Rather, in public accounts, the board was characterized as ideologically heavy-handed, exclusionary, and inequitable. The source of the board's lack of "sensitivity"—rejecting a position that erodes women's rights—remained unexamined.

Sensitivity is marked as womanly (Frye, 1983, p. 1), so the board's lack of sensitivity was code for unwomanly women (i.e., feminists). As young sensitive women presumably victimized by (one-sided) "feminists," the "pro-life" students became the only ones who had justifiable feelings of hurt and anger. The director's comments in a local paper appeared as neutral: "We want to be fair to people that have such strong, passionate beliefs on [abortion]" (bracketed substitution in original document). Because the article was about "pro-life" students' demand to be included, the placement of the director's comment in effect validated the "side" of the "pro-life" group.

By relying on ideological codes, administrators persuasively portrayed one side ("the feminists") as insensitive, the other side as victims, and themselves as the rational and benevolent patriarchs. As white men in high-level positions, their "sensitivity" to "the matter of abortion" did not feminize them, but implied that they were men in authority who had the sensitivity to deal with all women, and the smarts to do the right thing.

### Rhetorical use of the law

Administrators further appealed to the rightness of their stance by drawing on "The Law"—that which cannot be challenged and should not be broken. For example, in his response to students and the board, the provost invoked "University Counsel," referring to "at least two occasions" in which a university lawyer had "explained" things to the advisory board. The first author was on the board at this time, and a university attorney came to only one meeting. We don't know of any other occasions. But by referring to "at least two occasions," the provost communicated his frustration with the advisory board—who, if it had listened to Counsel, should have dropped the issue. Furthermore, this statement disregarded the fact that another university attorney had previously advised the board that it could lawfully "plan programs that represent a particular viewpoint." By alluding to more than one meeting—and ignoring the contrary view of another university attorney—the provost implied that Counsel's view was fact rather than opinion.

A law requires lawyers (lower-case) to interpret and possibly contest it. "Counsel," then, served as a code for authority-of-an-objective system (Truth), with an unstated powerful emotional valence. No one is supposed to be above The Law. That administrators called in lawyers (University Counsel) reinforced the framing of the advisory board as unruly women pushing the bounds of lawfulness.

To avoid lawsuits and placate conservative members of the legislature, right-wing donors, and right-wing watchdog groups, administrators had incentives to avoid appealing to the existing legality of abortion or to specific laws/cases which rendered it so. Rather, it was in their interest to invoke The Law—an authoritative code known only to experts. Rhetorically, then, administrators weren't telling board members of the UWC what (not) to do; rather, The Law—a reification—dictated what must be done (or not done). Administrators, then, were acting responsibly, keeping the board and "The University" law-abiding.

Those of us who wanted the UWC to stand for women's rights made some trouble for administrators, but we were not a constituency that mattered.[10] Lacking power, money, and popularity in the public realm, we were hardly a threat. A lawsuit might come from the right, but only some annoyance would come from us. When the director of the UWC echoed the rhetoric of administrators, it further strengthened the idea that only the members of the advisory board were out-of-touch and out-of-control feminists.

Recall that in the spring of 2003 a high-level administrator told the planning committee—after members had already lined up a pro-choice speaker—to vote on whether to add a "pro-life" speaker or drop the topic of abortion and disinvite the pro-choice speaker. The first author asked the director (in 2003) to have the university attorney speak to the board about the legal reasoning behind this interference in the decision-making of the programming committee. The university attorney put the following in an e-mail to the director, who forwarded it to the board:

> I understand that at least one member of your planning committee requested some explanation and guidance concerning how programs can or should be selected for Women's Week. The process you chose to use this year included an open solicitation to all members of the University community to propose programs for your consideration. Having made that opportunity available, you were effectively acting as the "state" in making choices among the proposals submitted. That role prohibits you from making distinctions based on a viewpoint with which you disagree. Certainly other criteria could be used to select or reject particular programs—but not criteria based on a particular viewpoint or the message itself. This does not mean that you must always present "both sides" of an issue in your programs. You are free to invite speakers and plan programs that represent a particular viewpoint. For example, if you chose to have a program on religion, you would not be required to invite speakers of all faiths. If you opened the program to proposals, however, you would not be able to limit your selections to Christian speakers and exclude other faiths *because* you believed Christianity was the only true religion.

The following year (2004) the planning committee followed these recommendations, rejecting the anti-choice proposal only when there was no "open solicitation" for proposals. A representative of the provost's office, however, ignored the lawyer's guidelines in his statements to the press:

> There's no viewpoint discrimination here…All we've done is agree to what we would always do. If we're going to present a forum or a panel on a topic, we will have speakers from both sides. What we're interested in is both views being made known, and having our students be able to evaluate for themselves what they believe. There is nothing remarkable about [this University] doing that. It's what we do.

These comments did more than change the parameters of what was considered legally appropriate. They positioned administrators as benevolent patriarchs, protecting the interests of students. The administrator also spoke as if he were responding to a lawsuit ("there's no viewpoint discrimination here"), which was not the case.

What is "viewpoint discrimination"? The first author consulted with two lawyers who specialize in U.S. constitutional law and another lawyer who previously worked as a university attorney. Most of these conversations and meetings took place during the 2002–2003 academic year, when the board was told by a university attorney that having an open call for papers put the UWC in the position of "effectively acting as the 'state'." The first author described the goings-on in detail and asked whether it made sense, in their interpretation of viewpoint discrimination, to apply it to the actions of the UWC.

Neither of the lawyers found this a reasonable interpretation. Later, we consulted with four other lawyers, two of whom read a draft of this article. All had the same reaction.

They agreed with the first author's understanding of the First Amendment as applied to a state university: The university *as a whole* is the site of freedom of speech. A *unit* in the university (e.g., a women's center) could have programming that aligns with its mission. All kinds of speech go on at a university; speech is constituted by what is put forward by groups, centers, and individuals. To remain viewpoint neutral, the university must allow a variety of views. A student group, for instance, should not be turned down for university (read: state) funding on the basis of its viewpoint (though they may be turned down for other reasons). Thus we have pro-choice and anti-choice student groups, the College Republicans and the Young Democrats, and so on. A state university's women's center whose programming committee deems anti-choice messages inconsistent with its mission has the right to do so.

But could someone in the future sue the university, arguing that the UWC—because it is organizationally accountable to the provost's office—is an arm of the state and thereby had committed viewpoint discrimination? Of course. And administrators may have interpreted the comments made by the anti-choice group's president to the press as a threat:

> In the last five months, your [UWC] attempts to silence our organization, outright refusals to entertain discussions offering an alternative view to abortion, and your support and promotion of pro-abortion thought on this campus have been shameful, hypocritical, and illegal…Time after time the [UWC] has shown that it is intent on pursuing its own agenda while trying to placate our group as you ignore our concerns.

Like the comments from administrators, this appeal drew on the ideological code (with its positive valence) of free speech; reduced the arena of reproductive justice to abortion; and, positioned anti-choice students as under attack by feminists (the UWC).

Despite administrators' responses in the case of the UWC, the university was no stranger to lawsuits based on accusations of free speech violations. In 2003, leaders of a Christian fraternity refused to sign a statement endorsing the university's policy on non-discrimination. Reports noted that fraternity members took this stand because the non-discrimination policy would have kept the fraternity from disqualifying members based on religion or sexual orientation.

Members of the fraternity sued the university on the grounds that prohibiting them from selecting members based on religious affiliation was a violation of their rights to free speech and free association. Campus administrators stood by their decision, and the case went forward. This case followed two other high profile lawsuits against the university in which administrators stood their ground. All three cases dealt with issues of religious tolerance and discrimination.

Administrators were unwilling to test the law, however, when it came to the UWC and reproductive rights. Instead, they used the specter of The Law—unambiguous, beyond interpretation—to justify their actions, implying that board members were discriminating against the anti-choice group and squashing its First Amendment rights. Yet contrary to the wording from the president of the anti-choice student group,

no one at the UWC had said that anti-choice speakers should be banned from campus.

In the public arena—whether in media coverage or the words of administrators—the UWC (a unit) was conflated with the university as a whole. That conflation made it easy to believe that administrators, if they supported the UWC's board, would be silencing the speech of the anti-choice group. That the drama played out on a university campus—an arena of ideas—made it harder for people, particularly those outside the university, to think of administrators' control over the planning committee's decisions as unfair. A local newspaper columnist made this code explicit. In a column titled, "Students Have Rights to Ideas," she wrote: "After all, a university is a marketplace of ideas, right? Why is that sometimes so hard to remember?" (Sheehan, 2004). The title implied that board members had denied the right of anti-choice students to have or promote their ideas on campus. In fact, a thriving "marketplace of ideas" depends on individuals and groups having opportunities to formulate and articulate the ideas in which they believe. Nothing would destroy this market faster than insisting that every group or unit must neutralize itself by sponsoring the very ideas it exists to oppose.

University lawyers are meant to protect the university and avoid lawsuits; that is their job. But in the rhetorical arena, administrators drew on The Law as an ideological code for final authority and on University Counsel as uninvested observers and failsafe representatives. In this framing, only The Feminists at the UWC had an agenda, and it was one that bordered on the unlawful.

## Conclusion and implications

We might have had more success if the director had stood with the board. If she had done so, she would have risked losing her position at the center, but not her full-time, tenured job. Full-time staff-level directors have more to lose; only with strong support from faculty, staff, and students are they likely to take a feminist stance. If the goal is to have a women's center that advocates for basic rights for women, then it's best to push for a director who is on the faculty—and who is willing to return to her home department if she takes unpopular stands.

What has happened since these events played out at the UWC? At the end of the director's five-year term, administrators did not reappoint her. Rather than saying they rejected her, they changed the position. Claiming that the UWC required full-time work, they made the job into a staff position. Administrators appointed a recruitment committee, which included faculty members, and that committee hired a new director. The new director said that university attorneys had informed her that any pro-choice programming must be followed by anti-choice programming if a group on campus requests it. As of this date (six years later), there has been no programming on reproductive justice sponsored (or co-sponsored) by the UWC. The director—with reason—feels hamstrung on this issue, choosing not to sponsor programming on reproductive justice as a way to avoid supporting anti-choice events. With this strategy, she has successfully rejected co-sponsoring anti-choice programming when asked to do so by student groups.

We speculate that administrators wanted a staff-level director rather than a tenured professor because a faculty member in the future might, unlike the director we encountered, stand up to them. We understand the structurally difficult position of any staff-level director; there is no good option for resisting administrators' control without risking one's job. But a women's center's refraining from programming on reproductive justice—during a time of active attacks on women's reproductive and moral autonomy—represents a victory for the anti-choice right. Programs on less controversial topics, such as human trafficking or pay equity, are routinely supported by the UWC. Reproductive freedom is basic for women's equality, but absent from the UWC's programming.

What are directors and women's center employees to do? We recommend that they provide programs that move away from "sides" and the individualist focus of liberalism. Instead of accepting the debate model endorsed by administrators, directors and supporters could refocus programming on analyses of privilege and oppression—especially systematic harms to women as a class—and connecting those harms to other systems of inequality. Such programs would leave conventional debates behind (pro-life vs. pro-choice) and instead provide feminist *analyses* of social problems, whether historical, sociological, psychological, epidemiological, and so on. This might entail an examination (for example) of rhetorics of reproductive rights, linking them to movements for gender equality. A program could include a critical analysis of the language of "choice," a topic that might surprise and confound "pro-life" groups. As some have argued (see Luna, 2009), the framing of reproductive rights as an issue of individual choice has limitations. Many poor women, especially women of color, have limited access to abortion services because of financial constraints, federal funding bans, a shortage of abortion providers, mandatory waiting periods, and parental notification laws. Moreover, poor women of color often lack prenatal care, and those who become parents are demonized and pathologized in ways that middle-class white women are not.

Programs on reproductive justice could include, for instance: a panel discussion on women's health at the local, national, and global levels; a panel on rhetorics of social control, specifically as they relate to reproductive justice; a panel on the history of abortion laws and legal, social, and economic restrictions on access to services; teach-ins on international reproductive justice, the global gag rule, and immigration and reproductive health; and, conferences addressing women's rights as human rights, with particular sessions devoted to discussion and analyses of reproductive justice.

If women's centers move toward programming centered on analyses of systematic inequalities rather than "debate," it is essential to get buy-in, collaboration, and active support from other campus units and groups—notably women's and gender studies programs (Freedman & Parker, 1999, p. 120–121). Collaborating with other campus centers and programs (e.g., Black cultural centers, Latina/o studies, sexuality studies, LGBTIQ centers, poverty centers) is also crucial because the rhetoric of "balance" and "sides" has implications beyond the scope of women's centers. Well-funded, right-leaning organizations are watchdogs for "liberal bias" in education and have the money to establish conservative curricula and academic centers (see, AAUP, 2010; Cohen, 2008; Warren, 2004). Recently, for

example, "a conservative billionaire who opposes government meddling in business has bought a rare commodity: the right to interfere in faculty hiring at a publicly funded university" (Hundley, 2011, para 1; see also Jaschik, 2011).

Controversializing abortion as well as abstract calls for "balance" extend beyond the classroom. In April of 2011 the U.S. Congress narrowly avoided a federal government shutdown following weeks of disagreement about the budget for the rest of the year. At issue were Republican demands to defund Planned Parenthood. Abortions constitute only 3% of the services provided by Planned Parenthood, and no federal monies can be used to fund the procedure; but mainstream journalists repeatedly framed the budget impasse as a debate over abortion funding. As Katha Pollitt (2011, para 3) observed, this "lazy shorthand" found in the conventional mass media "tacitly accepts" the right's frame.

Pushing a conservative ideology in the name of "both sides" has also occurred in high school curricula (see Waldron, 2011) and public art (Mistler, 2011) in the U.S. In journalism, Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) argue that "balance" in reporting creates information bias. When it comes to climate change, evolution versus intelligent design (Rosenhouse & Branch, 2006), or abortion's (non-existent) link to breast cancer (Mooney, 2004), journalists who give equal space to competing "sides" send the message that the views covered are morally, politically, and scientifically equivalent. At the very least, such coverage creates doubt in the minds of some readers, regardless of overwhelming evidence and agreement among scientists (Oreskes & Conway, 2010).

In a conservative and controversialized context, progressive programming is likely to meet with administrative control. According to Jane Gould (1997, p. 12), the director and founding member of Barnard's women's center, Barnard did not show "its commitment to women...in any way that might offend donors." At the same time, the College "undeniably made use of the women's center, on occasion, to demonstrate its commitment, open-mindedness, and good faith." A women's center can symbolically legitimate administrators' good will, but only if its mission statement, programming, and actions do not cross a line.

Terri Ann Bengiveno wrote in 2000 (para 42) that "women's centers across the [U.S.] will have to continue to fight for the right to act as political change agents." One way to continue that fight is by challenging the rhetoric of "both sides." This paper is part of that struggle.

## Acknowledgments

## Endnotes

[1] Rhetoric is "a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols" (Burke, 1962, p. 567).

[2] In the case we examine, several conservative "think tanks" and policy organizations not only monitor the university and university system, but are connected to efforts to influence funding and curricular decisions in public education (see, e.g., Geary, 2011; Mayer, 2011; Warren, 2004). These organizations have criticized women's centers and women's and gender studies programs, including the UWC (see, e.g., Vickers, 2005).

[3] Board members (voting and non-voting) included faculty, students, and staff.

[4] The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is part of the Bill of Rights, the collective name given to the first ten amendments that guarantee individual freedoms, limit some governmental powers, and reserve some powers to the states and to the public. The First Amendment covers individuals' right to freedom from governmental suppression of speech, in addition to individuals' freedom of religion, the press, and petition and assembly. The full text reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (U.S. Const. amend. I).

[5] Frames provide a "[broad], interpretive answer or definition to 'what is going on' or 'should be going on'" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). They also "tell an audience what is at issue and outline the boundaries of a debate" (Rohlinger, 2002, p. 480).

[6] A few women of color served on the board, but this view fit the public perception and framing of feminism as a movement for middle- and upper-middle-class white women (see Baker Beck, 1998; Dow, 1996; Lind & Salo, 2002).

[7] A year earlier, a student group, backed by a conservative "think tank," took out a full-page ad in the state's largest newspaper attacking the university for selecting Barbara Ehrenreich's (2001) Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America as an optional summer-reading selection for incoming first-year students. The ad described the book as a "classic Marxist rant" and "intellectual pornography with no redeeming characteristics" (Ehrenreich, 2003, para 4).

[8] A review of Crisis Pregnancy Centers by the U.S. House of Representatives (2006, p. 7) found that they provide "false and misleading information" about links between abortion and breast cancer, the effect of abortion on future fertility, and the psychological effects of the procedure (see also Lin & Dailard, 2002).

[9] Michael Schwalbe (2006) and others (notably, Judith Jarvis Thomson, 1971) argue that even if one thinks of the fetus as a human being, one can still maintain that "the state has no legitimate right to force a woman—at risk to her physical and mental health, and with potentially life-altering consequences—to use her body to provide someone else with nine months of life support" (Schwalbe, 2006, para 3). Rosalind Petchesky adds (1990, p. 331): "Philosophers and moralists who assume that the 'humanity of the fetus' is the bottom line issue in the 'abortion dilemma' close their eyes to the fact that in many cultures and historical periods this way of framing the abortion question (fetus versus woman) was unknown."

[10] Feminist faculty and students "made trouble" by raising our voices, asking questions and demanding answers, and creating counter-programs that openly and directly challenged the UWC director and the actions of the provost's office. When several prominent speakers reversed their decision to speak at the UWC's Women's Week and instead joined Pro-Women's Week, this made some waves on and off of campus.

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