

SPECIAL REPORT

Dear Diary,

As soon as we hit town various faculty members greeted us and they were wonderful! We were scheduled to perform in a real theatre, which was a treat since we have been performing in ballrooms, classrooms and multi-purpose spaces all year. The audience was as pumped up as ever! almost like they were waiting for us all semester.

We visited a women's studies class where there were a few pro-war students. They posed the question Can you be a feminist and be pro-war? Lots of great discussion around that subject as well as how we structure our group, how we collaborate, how many we are, etc. Then on to the art department to lead our "from attitude to activism" workshop. Three groups made posters on hot issues that needed to be addressed in their community and on campus. I am always inspired by the posters that come out of our workshops. The next day came the big moment-meeting Gloria Steinem. I am a big fan of Gloria's and was so glad to hear her say that she is a fan of mine! Meeting her and hearing her speak on the same night our country attacked IRAQ was an amazing dichotomy of events! She made me realize life is short and the fight will be ongoing for the rest of my life-but, it is worth it!

Love-Hallie, Edwardsville, IL, March 20, 2003

Dear Diary,

I just got back into town from Southern Illinois University where I had the thrill of a lifetime. I think I've died and gone to heaven. The Guerrilla Girls On Tour met Gloria Steinem. She was the guest speaker in SIU's Arts and Issues Lecture Series. I felt like I was in the presence of one of the truly great leaders of the planet- like a Ghandi or a Martin Luther King. I was fascinated to look at her bio and see that she actually did study the non-violent protest movement in India for several years. And when I told her that I was Diana Sands, she let out a heartfelt "Ohhhhh", squeezed me on the arm and then said "Ohh it's so sad", because Diana had died of cancer at the age of 39. I got the distinct impression that Gloria had known Diana Sands. She then asked us if we would be willing to come up on stage with her during the question and answer period and say a few words about our current tour.

Ms. Steinem began her lecture by saying how happy she was to have us in the audience because she could think of no group that better epitomized the humor and humanity of the feminist movement. It was then that I realized for the first time just how big an impact we have had over the years. I mean to receive that kind of accolade from Gloria Steinem! Well, it just doesn't get any better than that! And later, when she did call us up on stage and I found myself speaking extemporaneously about our upcoming trip to Paris and Poland in front of a sold-out crowd of 800, I thought to myself..."Wow, being a Guerrilla Girl On Tour is really something!"

Love, Diana Sands Edwardsville, IL, March 20, 2003

Dear Diary,

What a gracious and kind woman Gloria Steinem is. She has the quiet strength, grace and power that can galvanize an audience made up of women and men with many different view points. And that is why I felt that it was so important for us to be meeting up with her now – when the women's movement seems to be at odds with itself at times and with feminism being the C word wherever we seemed to travel to this touring season. And how cool was it that she invited us up to share her stage with her (as well as calling for announcements from the crowd)! She is truly an inspiration. It was really a perfect end to our US 2002/03 tour. I can't help but reflect on how blessed we have been this year – traveling to places that we don't usually get to go to; meeting people of different backgrounds; engaging in dialogue via workshops with those we haven't had access to in the past. Onwards to France and Poland!

Love, Aphra Behn, Edwardsville, IL, March 21, 2003