

SPRING 2004

Dear Diary,

We just got back from performing at the "Take Back the Night" rally at Western Washington State University. Take Back the Night rallies happen all over the world on college and university campuses. They're organized to bring awareness about violence against women to local communities and to act as a way to reclaim the night for women in a very inspiring and empowering march through the streets after the rally. What an unforgettable experience this one was! It was by far one of the best tour stops we have ever made. The audience was packed for the rally. Before we went on stage, there were the Raging Grannies, a group of older woman who want to do their part to bring about awareness about violence against women. There were also self-defense workshops and the Radical cheerleaders who also got the audience worked up. My favorite part of the rally was listening to testimonials by both a woman and a man from campus who were working together to end violence against women. The man who spoke referenced his mother's experiences as a reason he was so passionate about the cause. It was so inspiring.

Then we were ready to go on... we ran onto the stage chanting, "Survivors unite! Take back the night!" until the whole audience was up on their feet cheering and chanting. It was awe-inspiring. I got goose bumps! At the end of a shortened gig, we did a skit on boundaries setting which was very well received and ended with us chanting again. Then the audience leapt to their feet and chanted with us until we left the stage. It was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had as a Guerrilla Girl On Tour and one I won't forget to soon. Thank you WWU, Brenna and Holly and the entire Women's Center for being so inspirational! Inspired in Seattle,

Fanny Brice
April 29, 2004

Hey Diary,

Seattle Central CC is located on Broadway on the north side of the city. This area is best known for its influence on the grunge scene in the early 90's. With this in mind I didn't know what to expect. What I found was a group of dedicated, well spoken, and thoughtful students. So thoughtful that when I asked the audience for a tissue, a girl gave me every Kleenex she had (I was sporting a wicked head cold). I was also pleased to know that three girls from SCCC raised the funds to go to the March for Women's Lives In D.C. There was a nice article about them in the school paper on the front page.

It was a really great performance. I love working with Aphra and Fanny. They make it all so much fun and I am inspired by their confidence. It also helps to have such a giving audience. I felt like they were with us the whole way.

But this is the crazy thing that happed. The girls and I traveled down to Pike's Market to see the crazy fish-throwing stand. Instead of handing the fish over the counter to have them wrapped up once they are purchased, the vendors literally throw them over the counter like ball players. We watched the fish fly for a bit and after a few photographs with me in my gorilla mask holding a 20 pound Pacific salmon we were ready to move on. But oh no, the gentleman that worked the stand had me stand by the counter and put a cup on my head. I figured he was going to balance a fish on the cup on my head but he didn't. From about 15 feet away he threw a large salmon right at my head knocking the cup off while not touching a hair on my head! What an arm! There is even a video of all this -- ask Aphra to see it.

Love,
Coco
April 28, 2004

Dear Diary,

From the moment I arrived on the campus of Wells it felt like I was at camp.

The beautiful and intimate campus is set on the shore of the Cayuga Lake, on one of the Finger Lakes, in upstate Aurora, New York. Being an all female campus, we were excited to

arrive at the intimate setting where vaginas rule free. And we were right! The energy that came from the students was crazy. Apparently, everyone had been anticipating our arrival.

The population of students is less than 400, so when we were greeted by a full house for our performance it was impressive. The show was very well received and immediately got the students talking. Daring questions and possibilities were brought up about the show and its issues as well as activism on campus. We were soon told of Wells' recent possibility of turning from an all female college to a co educational campus. Many of the students were disagreeing with this and wanted to take their own stand. You can imagine that this issue followed us around for two days.

Aphra, Coco and I really enjoyed the Wells tradition of afternoon tea. We didn't want to leave. Hope to see you again soon, Wells women!

Love,
Rachel
April 16, 2004

Dear Diary

Today I went to Moravian College and although there were students there who seemed concerned with the fact that their school was lacking in diversity no seemed really interested in doing anything about it. The only students who seemed motivated to take any action were the art students. Why is it that so many young people today seem so uninterested in solving the problems they face? It's not that they don't realize these problems exist because they were the ones who brought up the fact that their school is predominately white. Apathy on campus we deal with it everywhere we go. I would really like to get these college kids to wake up and do something rather than just drink beer and party! That's why the workshop was so rewarding! Three great posters that were instantly printed up in the graphic design department and distributed around campus that afternoon! Kudos to you Moravian students who took action!

Love,
Lupe
March 30, 2004

Dear Diary,

The drive up to Westfield State College with Coco, Rachel and Lupe was a meeting of sorts & the four of us discussed a new poster we'd unveil at the March for Women's Lives on April 25th in Washington, D.C. It turns out that the students at Westfield will also be at the March, arriving via bus that morning. The students in the Women's Studies Department greeted us with warm faces and lots of smiles. The performance was a blast! It always is where there are more Guerrilla Girls On Tour. Since there were four of us, our play within a play was fully cast with all GGOT members. The audience was lively, responsive and had many good questions for us at the end. We stopped for fast food on the way home and reflected on how great it is to meet the young women who are keeping the third wave of feminism alive!

Love,
Aphra
March 10, 2004

Dear Diary,

I must say that I was a bit hesitant about the UNCW gig. Before we had arrived there was response to our presence by a very vocal conservative voice on campus. Asst. Prof. Mike Adams made an attempt to discredit the Guerrilla Girls On Tour in his online column and there was talk of a possible protest during the performance. There was an arrangement for Campus Security escort if things got a little "hairy" (pun intended). However, the performance went smoothly and the audience was wonderfully supportive to the cause of equality. They laughed a lot too. Although, during the question and answer period, one woman who was believed to be the partner of a conservative male professor on campus made the comment that if we are pro-choice then we, "...should have pregnant women check the gender of their baby and only save the girl babies." Just when the Q & A was being wrapped up a female audience member posed a question to the previous comment, "If pro-choice is done away with, will you take care of all of those babies?" I looked in the conservative woman's direction and noticed how

she suddenly became dumb, her partner's arm appeared to be the most fascinating object in the room and she could not exit the hall fast enough.

Sincerely,
Nella Larsen
March 16, 2004

Diary,

It was a gorgeous spring day when we arrived on the Duke campus. Cherry blossoms and daffodils filled the quad where we took pictures of ourselves standing in front of the statue of Washington Duke. The Womens Center and Safe Haven is housed in a spacious old building and as we entered we were greeted by a student wearing one of our downloadable masks. After a quick tour we enlisted the help of another student, the director of their recent production of Vagina Monologues, who decided to take the name Georgia O'Keefe & Georgia was to play Chavinista in our scene from the GGOT Show included in our Gig.

We had read about the recent study of Duke female students who feel pressured to strive for effortless perfection in grades, wardrobe and physical appearance. As we walked to the Griffin Theatre where we were to perform we noticed quite a few women in fashionable boots carrying designer bags. This was in stark contrast to the hordes of students with their heads crammed into books in the union. No time for socializing during class hours, there was plenty of work to be done by both women and men on campus.

Our promoter, Anna, had all of the elements of our performance organized to the minute and we sped through an hour-long tech. The performance itself was full of energy and fun and the audience seemed to welcome our antics as a much-needed break from the pressures of academics. The Q and A was one of the best ever with loaded questions coming from each corner of the room. As we departed for home we Fanny, Nella and I reflected on the difference in the two colleges in North Carolina that we had just visited. Duke had pro Kerry signs and a more reflective audience. UNCW appeared to be conservative on the outside but the audience was boisterous and clearly liberal. As always we agreed that it was important to visit both sides of the fence.

Love,
Aphra
March 18, 2004

Dear Diary,

Today I went to the John Carroll University as a Guerrilla Girl On Tour. Living in NY I've forgotten how close-minded and ignorant some people could be. My heart really went out to the students there. Women are denied help or advice in regard to rape or sexual assault. It was as if the school didn't want to acknowledge the possibility of such a thing and that by not acknowledging it, it would not exist. The administration seems to be going through life with blinders on, accusing us of being there to "brainwash" them when really they're the ones doing the brainwashing! I was disgusted with the fact that the gay/lesbian/straight alliance got censored in the paper as the expletive deleted/straight alliance. What are these people afraid of? Do they honestly think that seeing the words gay and lesbian in print will make people switch the sexual preference! I mean come on!!

Sincerely,
Lupe Velez
March 2, 2004

Dear Diary,

Today I went to Dennison and I was very discouraged. I seemed to have been surrounded by students who had become apathetic to the world around them. I saw women fighting one another about how feminists should behave and present themselves. I met a female student who thought that because she was in college and saw a rise in the number of women in college and a rise in the number of women graduating from college the everything was fine in the world. She doesn't see the need to continue to fight and that's just so sad. Can't she look beyond her own backyard and see that there are problems next door that effect her whether

she realizes it or not? If more and more women begin to think like that we'll never gain equality and we may even lose some of the freedoms we've fought so hard to get.

Sincerely,
Lupe Velez
March 4, 2004

Dear Diary,

Denison was a lovely campus to visit nestled in the hills of Granville, Ohio. It was a school where the main issue appeared to be that people were so involved in different organizations, it was hard to enlist a large membership in just one. We did encounter an interesting problem among the female students. How to agree to disagree. Where do you find the commonalities in two seemingly different types of feminist? Here we had a group of women who wanted to focus a poster on the issue of public/body image. One side pointed out that women are oppressed by the designer clothing and cosmetics one feels forced to wear to be empowered. The other side pointed out that they felt empowered despite their fashion savvy and did not necessarily feel oppressed. They asked me to mediate. And I pointed out that this tends to be a common problem with feminism today. That we as women have a tendency through the way we are socialized to rip each other apart. If we are divided we cannot conquer. And so we must find the common purpose. They decided to make a poster that shows a bridge over the gap of disaccord, which focused on what they all felt. One, that they were intelligent, bold, empowered, self confident and two, pro women's rights. We spoke of this at the Gig as well. And I made sure to wear the softest, floweriest outfit in my wardrobe.

Love,
Alice Childress
March 5, 2004

PS Looking forward to student filmed documentary on the GGOT's, complete with the interview from the viewpoint of our feet. Really hoping footage of Alice Childress' wig flying off during the dance number hits the editing room floor.