

## IMAGES OF WOMEN IN UK Publications, 1998 - 1999

The 1990 Report revealed a pervasive visual pattern of stereotypical images of women and their roles in University publications. In 1993, the UK Public Relations Department held workshops for staff and developed a **UK Language Guidelines** publication. In 2000, four internally generated University publications were randomly selected for comparison. The publications examined were:

- 1998 University of Kentucky Strategic Plan
- 1998-99 Arts and Sciences magazine
- 1999 University of Kentucky Viewbook
- 1999 University of Kentucky Annual Report

The 1998 **Strategic Plan** presented the best balance of photographic depictions of academic life. Equal numbers of female and male students, were pictured in small groups or class settings, and were all actively engaged in activities. Both a male and female professor were pictured with mixed gender classes.

Unfortunately, the other three publications, all intended for external as well as internal distribution, fell far short of the standard set by the **Strategic Plan**. The 1999 University of Kentucky **Viewbook**, for example, presented a balanced picture of students, in terms of both race and gender. The representation of teachers and administrators, however, was a different story. The tone was set on the cover, with prominent photos of two male professors and two female students. The publication then highlighted 13 male teachers/administrators with prominent photos. One woman was given prominent space--the Special Assistant to the Athletic Director. In addition, two women professors were mentioned, with very small accompanying photos. The preface to the **Viewbook** suggests that the book presents "success stories". If you are a female student, you must look hard to find a role model for success in this publication.

The 1999 **Annual Report** photographs also received failing grades on gender equity. While the number of students by sex and race is fairly representative of the actual student body, the five people clearly identified as teachers or administrators are all male, and there are no women identified as such. It should be noted, though, that the obligatory "woman with a baby" does appear, just as in the 1990 report. This time, she wears a white coat, but is given neither name nor role. (teacher, student, nurse, doctor?) The only other non-student woman that appears is in a small photo with no identified name or role, but who is clearly engaged in cooking!

Of all the publications reviewed, the **Arts and Sciences** magazine was the most disappointing. It began with the introduction of the new Advisory Board, with accompanying photos of the eleven men and five women. There were then four photos of Board activities, in which 11 men appeared. Two women were included, one listening to a man speak, and the other the actress Ashley Judd.

The **Arts and Sciences** magazine then went on to highlight the college's accomplishments. Nineteen pictures of distinguished male professors and their work were included. The single photo of a woman professor did not really identify her as such, until you read her text that refers to "my students". An article with an international focus pictured 17 men and no women. If the magazine was intended to portray the work and accomplishments of all distinguished staff and faculty in the college, it certainly deserved a failing grade.

Another way that language influences perception is reflected in development activities. Currently the UK Development Office reports 5000 donors, designated as UK "Fellows". The Office does not track how many of these "Fellows" are actually women.