Welcome to this first spring issue of the newsletter. To begin with the good news: Inside you will find a wonderfully rich and interesting International Women's History Month 2009 calendar of events. We thank the Women's Resource and Action Center, the UMD Commission on Women and participating organizations from the Duluth region for all their contributions. We hope that you find the offerings diverse and inspiring.

Now some of the bad news: Women's Studies has already suffered some dramatic cuts due to the first round of mandated budget cuts from the so-called un-allotment. We have had to cut four courses from next year’s schedule, due to loss of Continuing Education and College of Liberal Arts access funding. This of course means that some members of the Women’s Studies non-regular faculty will lose a major source of their income which is heart breaking to all of us.

And then the mixed news: fortunately, a lay-off notice for Laura Stolle Schmidt, our trusted and ever so competent secretary in WS, per March 1, could be rescinded. How exactly this reversal came about we don’t know, but we do know that letters full of moving beautiful testimony and arguments from students, faculty and allies were sent to UMD administrators. Conclusions are yours to draw. Of course we feel happy and relieved that Laura will keep her job at least until June 7, but the feeling remains bittersweet as no promises could be made beyond this fiscal year. For reasons none of us understand, the secretarial position in WS has the only such (AFSCME) position in CLA that is not funded with so-called hard dollars but with soft dollars from non-recurring carry over pots of money. All other department secretaries are funded on recurring dollars. Of course, now is the time to try and reason with the UMD administration that a conversion of Laura's position into hard dollars would be in its own best interest, not just Women’s Studies. Through the efforts of a skilled staff person, Women’s Studies, with WRAC and the Commission on Women, is able to improve and help keep the climate for women at UMD from deteriorating. When women still make 78 cents on the dollar compared to men, and national reports still show high levels of sexual harassment on campuses, there is an urgent need to keep Women’s Studies programs funded. I encourage all of you to let your standpoint on this matter be known to the UMD administration and to your state representatives and governor. Sadly, we already know that this is just the beginning and are bracing for still worse news to come our way due to the projected Minnesota State Budget un-allotments that our Governor has prom-

(Continued on page 3)
National News

Just days after his inauguration, President Obama removed some roadblocks to women’s health and well-being, allowing the work of thousands of activists to come to fruition. We look forward to future milestones in pay equity, human rights, and economic justice for women. To date, President Obama reversed the Global Gag Rule and restrictions on funding for the UN women’s health agency (1/23/2009), signed the Children’s Health Insurance Program (1/28/2009) and signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (1/29/2009). To celebrate, and to help promote awareness of women’s resources at UMD, Women’s Studies made this flyer borrowing from Ms. Magazine.

What?

You haven’t heard of Women’s Studies?
494 Humanities Bldg
www.d.umn.edu/ws

You haven’t heard of UMD’s Women’s Resource and Action Center?
266 Kirby Student Center
www.d.umn.edu/mlrc/wrac

You haven’t heard of the UMD Commission on Women?
www.d.umn.edu/comwomen/main/index.php

PS: Did you know that President Barack Obama is a self-declared feminist?
www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/women

Election Night Thoughts by Cindy Christian

As the election results were announced on the evening of November 4, 2008, I was overcome with pride and joy – there is no other way to put it – I was overcome. I am not ashamed to say that at that moment, I have never felt more proud to be an American!

We simply can’t underestimate what Barak Obama and we, as Americans, accomplished on that day. Through the night, as we watched the results come in, my daughter Isabel had to make a timeline of historical dates that changed the scope of and expanded suffrage in this country - from the Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 (a place that she and I and my mother visited this summer) to the 1920 ratification of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote; and, from the end of slavery to the 1870 ratification of the 15th Amendment granting suffrage to black men, on to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that outlawed the discriminatory acts that had disenfranchised blacks despite their right to vote. As I looked at that timeline I was struck by how significant Obama’s victory is in a country that has been held up as a beacon of democracy but has often fallen so short of delivering its promises to all its citizens. More importantly, I was reminded that this is MY history and Isabel’s history. It is a tainted history, but also one of triumph. The election of Obama is one of those triumphs - a victory that has the promise, for Isabel, of a country that can begin to own its history - both the shameful and the prideful - if we work at it together as we did to elect Obama.

(Continued on page 3)
ELECTION NIGHT THOUGHTS  

Finally, I was humbled watching the reaction of leaders from the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and the joy of young students at Spelman College, a historically black college, and the excitement of people in Kenya. It is because of people like Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, Martin Luther King, Fannie Lou Hammer, Ella Baker and John Lewis who sacrificed so much for civil rights that Obama has the opportunity to be our President. And it is not just for us but for our young people that we need to work together to help Obama turn this victory into significant change to overcome the national and global consequences of all forms of bigotry.

I felt that I was a part of something really good and right – I hope you did, too. And, I felt that way on inauguration day when many of us sat in the Women’s Studies department watching and celebrating as Obama became President. My elation has been tempered - a bit – because of the economic challenges we face as a university, a community and a nation. We almost lost Laura because of this. But, the one thing that keeps me optimistic is that I know that we, who are a part of this diverse women’s community, will and always have overcome.

- Cindy Christian, Ph.D., teaches for Women’s Studies and also acts as Program Associate for UMD’s Alworth Institute.

CROWD PICTURES

Looking at the pictures, I see millions in the street and I am envious. I want to be there. And I can’t think of why I wasn’t. And I wonder where they are now. Why can’t I see them in the street when I look out the window? When I cry to the picture, why do the people disappear? Why can’t I see them? Why does the riot gear fade to fluorescent lights above my kitchen table? Why are my lights begging me to do my homework? Can’t they see I am learning?

In this chair—my friend—hoping for words. Feeling and tasting my words, a multi-course dinner pouring through my fingers to this page and my eyes devouring as though they have never eaten before. Filling my mind up ‘til fullness is reached. Starving she says so I feed her. More she says so I bow, wanting only her desires and finding only her dreams. She leads me. She would be an intruder were she not mine. Not mind. I am falling in to her, placing my countenance as her own. Reminding myself of papers yet to be written and photographs yet to be answered to.

- Arielle Schnur, WS major

FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD, CONTINUED

Meanwhile, we will try to unite all of our creative energies to keep the WS department thriving. I have heard of endowed chairs but never of an endowed secretary, you? Maybe this is a place to start thinking...

I hope to see many of you at the next community meeting between Women’s Studies and Women’s Organizations in the Twin Ports, February 27, 2009. We meet at noon at the Women’s Community Development Organization. If you would like to attend please RSVP to ws@d.umn.edu or call 218-726-7953 by end of day, Monday, February 23. And of course, we’ll see you during International Women’s History Month!

Stay Tuned (rumor has it that spring is just around the corner),

-Tineke Ritmeester

AAUW

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is pleased to present a program during Women’s History month, Equity Is Still An Issue, and to sponsor the keynote reception. AAUW is the oldest women’s organization in the U.S. It's mission is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research. Headquarters are in Washington, D.C. where AAUW lobbies for issues that promote equity. Locally there is a Duluth Branch with programs and projects that support the mission. Special memberships are available for college men and women.
WOMENS HISTORY MONTH CALENDAR 2009

Friday, February 27th  Bohannon Hall 90, 7 PM &
Saturday, February 28th  Bohannon Hall 90, 7 PM
"The Vagina Monologues"
$8 General, $5 Students – All proceeds go to benefit the Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault.

Monday, March 2nd  Weber Music Hall, 7 PM
"Ain't I a Woman" Theatrical Performance
Sponsored by UMD Black Student Association, UMD Women’s Resource & Action Center & the Duluth YWCA

Monday, March 2nd  Multicultural Center - 232 Old Main, UWS – Superior, 12 Noon
Woman of Color Awards Reception honoring Eri Fujieda, Assistant Professor in Sociology (Department of Social Inquiry)

Tuesday, March 3rd  494 Humanities, 11 AM – 2 PM
Women’s Studies Department Open House

Wednesday, March 4th  KSC 268, 12 Noon
WRAC Brown Bag: A Historical Look at Feminism Women at UMD
Speakers: Jane Maddy, Judy Trolander & Deborah Peterson-Perlman

Thursday, March 5th  Montague 70, 7 PM
Keynote event: “Women Taking the Lead to Save the Planet”
Womens' History Month Keynote Speakers Jacqui Zita and Karen Clark
Jacquelyn Zita, Professor, Women's Studies, U of M Twin Cities, and Karen Clark, State Representative and found-ers of the Women's Environmental Institute. Jacqui and Karen will speak about their work at the Institute to create and share knowledge about environmental issues and policies relevant to women, children and identified communities especially affected by environmental injustices.

Monday, March 9th  Kirby Lounge, 11 AM – 1 PM
International Women's Day Celebration

Monday, March 9th  Library Rotunda, 7 PM
“Equity is Still an Issue: Pay Gap, Sexual Harassment and Gender Equity in Education”
Presentation and discussion of this report is by American Association of University Women member and faculty emeritus, Dr. Jane Maddy.

Tuesday, March 10th  Sky Lounge Rothwell Student Center (UWS - Superior), 7 PM
Reception featuring editor Kathryn Kysar & memoirist Ka Vang, reading from Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers

Wednesday, March 11th  KSC 273B, 1 PM
Panel Presentation: International Women at UMD
Panelists: Tineke Ritmeester (Netherlands), Jacqueline Onchwari (Kenya), & Tamara Miskovic (Bosnia)

Thursday, March 12th  KSC 273B, 2 PM
Film: “The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo”

Tuesday, March 24th  Location TBA, 6-8 PM
Self Defense Workshop with Kim Mattevi of On-Alert Self Defense
Open and free to Female Students
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CALENDAR 2009 CONT.

Wednesday, March 25th  KSC 268  12 Noon
WRAC Brown Bag: “Merry Meet! We’moons Spirituality Talk” with Priestess Analya
An introduction and discussion of a local New Moon ritual involving, grounding, meditation, song, sacred speaking and sacred listening.

Wednesday, March 25th  Multicultural Center - 232 Old Main, UWS - Superior, 7 PM
Book Signing by UW-Superior student Terra Pitre, author of the recently published fantasy novel Isla’s Redemption, her first book.

Thursday, March 26th  Location TBA, College of St. Scholastica, 3:30 PM
Jocelyn Fenton-Stitt, Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at Minnesota State University-Mankato – “Feminist Activism: Women's Rights Are Human Rights”

Friday, March 27th  Bohannon Hall 90, 6 PM
“Education of Shelby Knox” followed by a discussion with the film’s very own Shelby Knox.
A self-described “good Southern Baptist girl,” 15-year-old Shelby Knox of Lubbock, Texas, has pledged abstinence until marriage. But she becomes an unlikely advocate for comprehensive sex education when she finds that Lubbock, where high schools teach abstinence as the only safe sex, has some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and STIs in the state.

Monday, March 30th  Multicultural Center 232 Old Main, UWS – Superior, 12 PM
Words on Women reception - open reading of original & other notable writing about women

Monday, March 30th  Kirby Ballroom, 4 PM
Beverly Tatum, President of Spelman College, speaks on Racism & Education.

Note: Unless otherwise specified, all events are at UMD. For Sponsorship information please see our website or posters at www.d.umn.edu/ws.

ALUMNAE NEWS

Sarah Fries writes,

“While I was at VAWA day I ran into Steph, Taryn and Lilah! We are all still active and connected after a few years of being away! ...Steph is working for a domestic violence program, Taryn is working with a restorative justice program and Lilah is with a joint DV/SA program (and about to pop with her third baby!!!). It was WONDERFUL to see them all and when I said I was going to be in touch with you soon they all sent their love.”

Sarah is currently collaborating with WS Professor Beth Bartlett on the service-learning component of Beth’s Introduction to Women’s Studies class. Students will volunteer at Duluth’s Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault, where Sarah is currently working as PAVSA’s Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program Coordinator. Thanks, Sarah for the pics and the news!

Left to right: Women’s Studies graduates Lila Kahmann, Taryn Runck, Sarah Fries, and Steph Morrison at a lobby day at the Minnesota State Capitol.
UMD WELCOMES JOYCE ZONANA: BORDER CROSSINGS, EXPLORING SELF IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

Joyce Zonana, English professor at the Borough of Manhattan Community College and author of "Dream Homes: From Cairo to Katrina, An Exile's Journey," is an Egyptian Jew by birth. In two public events at UMD, she will explore issues of gender, cultural, and racial identity in the context of a multicultural, international, and ever-changing world.

"Everything is transitory," Zonana said. "We can lose everything in an instant, and we do lose everything in an instant. We have to find home in ourselves. That's really the theme of the book."

The writing workshop, (free to the public) to be held from noon-2 pm on Tuesday, April 14 in Kirby 333 is entitled, "Discovering a Sense of Self." To register, call 218-726-8996. Zonana will also offer a presentation and public reading entitled, "Border Crossing," at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, April 15 in the Weber Music Hall. The presentation will be re-broadcast at 7 pm on Monday, April 20 on UMD's radio station, KUMD 103.3FM, kumd.org.

Published in August 2008 by The Feminist Press, "Dream Homes" has been described as a classic immigrant coming-of-age narrative with a few distinctive differences. The third in the Reuben/Rifkin Jewish Women Writers Series, a joint project of the Feminist Press and the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, the memoir recounts the struggles of Zonana, an Egyptian-Jewish American as she forges an identity that bridges a number of apparent divides--Muslim and Jewish, gay and straight, Eastern and Western, urban and suburban, dutiful daughter and independent woman. As she lives and then tells her own story, Zonana also comes to terms with and tells the stories of her family of displaced Arab-Jews.

Joyce Zonana is an Associate Professor of English at Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York. She has taught at the University of Oklahoma, the University of New Orleans, Rowan University, and Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science. Her essays and articles have appeared in numerous scholarly and literary journals, including Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature, Signs, Meridians, Victorian Poetry, and the Hudson Review. She currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

These events are supported by UMD's Library, the Commission on Women, Women's Studies Department, Women's Resource and Action Committee, Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Services, Psychology Department, and Sociology/Anthropology Department. For information contact 218-726-8996.
LIBRARY NEWS

Some New materials available at the UMD Library
We will be heard: women’s struggles for political power in the United States by Jo Freeman. 
HQ 1236.5 .U6 F746 2008
Just methods: an interdisciplinary feminist reader edited by Alison M. Jaggar. 
HQ1180 .J87 2008
The subject of gender: daughters and mothers in urban China by Harriet Evans
HQ 1767 .E83 2008
The making of Our bodies, ourselves: how feminism travels across borders by Kathy Davis.
HQ 1154 .D34 2007
The lesbian and gay movements: assimilation or liberation by Craig A. Rimmerman.
HQ 76.8 .U6 R58 2008

On Order....
Proving woman: female spirituality and inquisitional culture in the later Middle Ages --by Dyan Elliott
Body evidence: intimate violence against South Asian women in America edited by Shamita Das Dasgupta
Fertile matters: the politics of Mexican-origin women’s reproduction by Elena R. Gutierrez

DVDs
Yes -- DVD 1725
Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo—on Order

COMMUNITY MEETING

Friday, February 27, at noon, Women’s Studies will host the third in a series of meetings with organizations in the Twin Ports that serve women or the interests of women. We have met twice for conversation about how we can best collaborate and to learn about what each organization is doing. It’s been a great time for feminist activists to visit with each other and the staff, faculty and students of the Women’s Studies Department. As a result, Women’s Studies has been able to post more community events on our website, provide volunteers for community events and invite a wider range of guest speakers to our classes. It has been a privilege to be in the same room with so many people who have given their lives and their work to advocating for women in the Twin Ports. It’s really inspiring to look around the room and realize how much the women from each organization has accomplished and know that she has numerous co-workers and friends who are doing the same.

Some of the attendees at these meetings have included the YWCA, the Building for Women, the Women’s Health Center, PAWSA, AICHO, Dabinoo Igan, HOTDISH militia, Women in Black, Grandmothers for Peace, Men As Peacemakers, New Moon Girl Media, DAIP, Aurora: A Northland Lesbian Center, Northcountry Women’s Coffeehouse, CASDA, Safehaven Shelter, Family Justice Center and more. The website at www.d.umn.edu/ws has links to most of these organizations websites. Click on the “community” link. Check it out!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING UMD’S DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES

I/We would like to make a gift to Women’s Studies: $__________
Name: ________________________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip: _______________________________________________________
Phone:_________________ E-mail: ______________________________
Graduation year if alumna/alumnus: ________________________________
__ My/our employer will match this gift. Enclosed is the company’s matching gift form.

Payment Options:  __ Check enclosed (Payable to UMD)
Credit Card: __ Visa __ American Express __ MasterCard __ Discover Card
Account #: ________________________ Exp. Date: ______________
Name on Card: ___________________________________________
Signature: _______________________________________________

Gifts to UMD/Women’s Studies are tax deductible.
Mail pledge form to:
UMD Department of Women’s Studies
494 Humanities Building
1201 Ordean Court
Duluth, MN 55812
Action Alerts
As the state continues to deal with the realities of the economic downturn and budget issues, cuts are necessary and inevitable. Let your voice be heard in support of women and girls. Nationally, there is already a trend to cut Women’s Studies programs first. Watch our website at www.d.umn.edu/ws for opportunities for action, and for links to other organization’s websites and events.

March is Women’s History Month
Events Throughout the Twin Ports—Listed Inside!