



A New Look at Feminism and Islamophobia

*By Nina Denny &
Andrea Lawrence*

The Women's Center staff with Dalia Mogahed

On Wednesday, September 13th, Dalia Mogahed lectured at MSU on the current state of Islamophobia in the United States. Her visit to MSU was widely appreciated by a large audience of students, faculty, and community members. Mogahed, an Egyptian-American, received her Bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and a minor in Arabic from the University of Wisconsin. She then went on to receive her MBA from the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh. In 2009 she was appointed by President Obama to the President's Advisory Council of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. She now works as the Director of Research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding in Washington D.C. and is the President and C.E.O. of Mogahed Consulting.

Mogahed's mission is to educate the American population about Muslim people, culture, and communities by researching and presenting facts. She explained in her 2016 TED Talk that, "[w]hen you meet people who seem like an exception to the rule, often times it is that the rule is broken, not that they are the exception to it." The rule in this case is the assumption that Muslims are terrorists--Mogahed is trying to change that rule. When asked if she was the exception to this perceived rule, Mogahed pointed out that though not all Muslims are like her, she considers herself to be the rule while Muslim terrorists are obviously the exception.

Similarly, her choice to wear hijab everyday as a representation of her faith does not make her the exception to feminist rules. In her 2016 TED Talk she spoke about her decision to wear hijab as a feminist declaration—she indeed was “coming out” about her faith. Yet she is often called “oppressed” because of this choice. In her Master Class at MSU, Mogahed addressed this topic from two perspectives. She defined oppression as the taking away of a person's power, and when asked about her thoughts on a woman needing to privatize her sexuality by covering her body, Mogahed explained that if this is seen as oppression, then we are placing a woman's power solely in her sexuality and appearance. However, some will argue that in parts of the world, women are forced (by society, and /or male family members) to wear hijab. Mogahed notes the distinction between a free woman who chooses to wear hijab versus a woman who has no choice in the matter. The oppression exists when women do not have a say in how their bodies are treated which comes from force and a lack of choice, not from the spiritual act of wearing hijab.

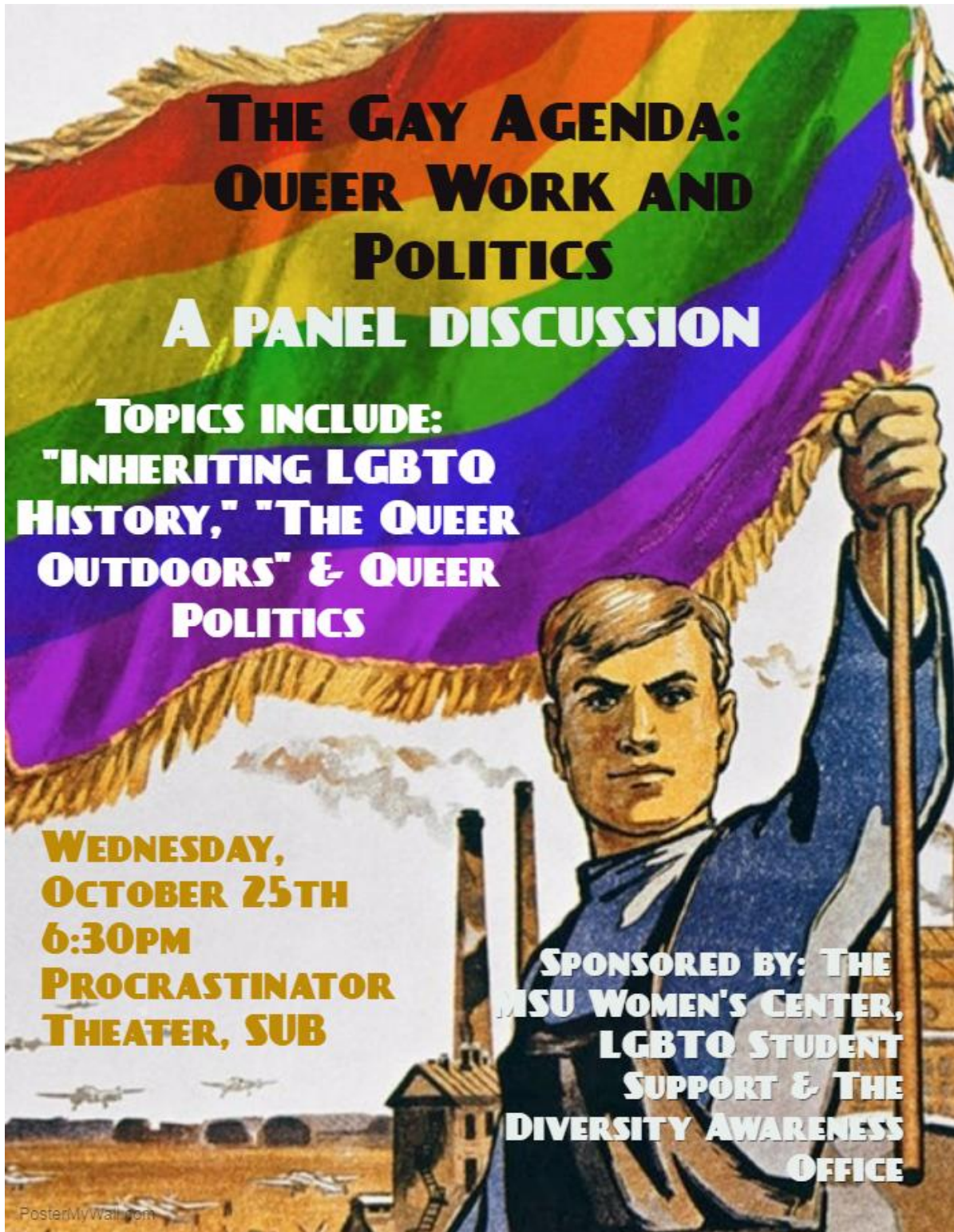
When asked by students how to make Bozeman a more inclusive community, Mogahed explained the best way is to not only “fight against fear with facts,” but to also embrace one's “female power by truly support[ing] each other.” We must start by challenging bigotry in our day-to-day lives. When we hear racist or sexist comments at school, at work, with our friends, or in the media, we must acknowledge the insensitivity, and carefully consider the source and the myths being perpetuated. Ideally, we will have the courage to confront the source of bigotry with convincing facts. We must vote in local and national elections as ambassadors for the truth, and we must “build coalitions for a stronger, more pluralistic America” that recognize the contributions made by all races and religions. When disputing falsehoods armed with facts, we all have the opportunity to “feel limitless,” and do our part to help change the world for the better.

If you'd like to learn more about Islamophobia or Mogahed check out MSU's livestream on our Women's Center Facebook page, her statistics on American Muslim Poll 2017: Muslims at The Crossroads, her TED Talks, and her interview with Trevor Noah on the Daily Show.

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Fall 2017



**THE GAY AGENDA:
QUEER WORK AND
POLITICS**

A PANEL DISCUSSION

**TOPICS INCLUDE:
"INHERITING LGBTQ
HISTORY," "THE QUEER
OUTDOORS" & QUEER
POLITICS**

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6:30PM
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Living the DREAM?

by Michelle Lopez



In light of the Trump administration's decision to rescind The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, there have been numerous discussions as to its nature. On June 15, 2012 President Obama's administration announced this new immigration policy which allowed qualified and undocumented youth (known as "DREAMers") brought into the U.S. as children to apply for a renewable two-year deportation deferment and work permits. In order to qualify as a DACA recipient, one must have entered the U.S before their 16th birthday, and lived here since June of 2007. DREAMers cannot have criminal records, must have received a GED or diploma, be enrolled in school or college, or serving in the military. Today, as many as 800,000 DREAMers are at risk of being deported from the country they have lived in for most of their lives.

Unfortunately there has been support for the repeal of DACA from those who don't understand this thoughtful and practical legislation. Conservative critics have called it a way of rewarding bad behavior. They believe that by allowing deportation deferments, the government is serving to encourage more people to cross our borders illegally. However, requirements for DACA only apply to those who arrived here before 2007, and do not apply to those currently migrating into the country. Job scarcity and unemployment are also given as reasons for rescinding DACA-- it has been argued that allowing more immigrants into the workforce will take jobs away from current U.S. citizens-- yet our jobless and unemployment rates are at record lows. If competition in the workplace is an issue for DACA critics, they may perhaps examine the shortcomings of the capitalist concept of competition rather than destroy the lives of people who have lived in this country, and been contributing members of our society, for ten or more years.

Much support for DACA has been in the form of economic benefits that DACA recipients bring to the United States. It is estimated that over the next ten years, DREAMers will contribute 460.3 billion dollars to the U.S. gross domestic product. Although the economic benefits are great for the U.S. economy, a person's right to live in this country should not be justified simply because of their monetary value. DREAMers' worth as citizens extends far beyond their contributions to the economy. Those who are unable to contribute to our economy due to disabilities have the right to be here too; as much as any other citizen, DREAMers are contributing members of communities. They are parents, children, friends, students, workers, and neighbors, and should clearly be given an equal opportunity to find happiness and safety regardless of where they were born.

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WC Supporters Who Paved the Way to Justice: Four Great Losses of 2017

by Betsy Danforth

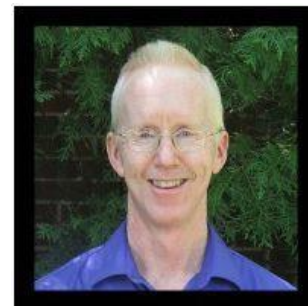
The Women's Center has lost four great advocates in 2017. These individuals made enormous impacts on equity, diversity, human rights, leadership and education. We wanted to thank them for their impact, and memorialize them here in our Womanifesto pages.



One of these wonderful citizens happens to also be my “mother-out-law,” **Nancy O’Neil**. Nancy left us in April, and though we were great friends, I learned much about her life after her passing. Like many feminists of her generation, she was an incredible leader and role model, a bit of an anomaly, and a very interesting, engaging, and admirable individual. In addition to raising seven children, Nancy received an MBA from Simmons College in Boston, and went on to blaze a path of numerous progressive changes in institutional and policy in mental health hospitals in Massachusetts. Her passion for reproductive justice and equality drove her to serve as the president of Montana Pro Choice NARAL, and news of the war Afghanistan in 2001 encouraged her to found the non-profit, Montana Connection for Afghan Women.

Nancy donated regularly to our fundraisers, attended many of our programs, and co-presented a program in honor of Roe v. Wade’s anniversary.

Scott Nicholson: We were incredibly sad to hear the news of Scott Nicholson’s untimely passing in June. Scott was one of the most selfless and gentle people I have known. We started working with him when he contacted us to let us know about a women’s activist organization in Arauca, Colombia to see if we might be interested in hosting a conversation with one of their leaders. Maria Ruth, along with her colleagues, was fighting for human rights and environmental justice. Of course, we said yes, and the rest is history. This began an eight year collaboration of co-hosting numerous speakers from Columbia. In 2013, we learned about Scott’s work on the U.S. Mexican border with Global Ministries. In addition to helping create Community Action for Justice in the Americas (CAJA), Scott taught at U of M in Missoula and was an organizer with the Montana Human Rights Network (MHRN).



Darlene Siedschlaw: Though I never personally met Darlene, she was a constant supporter of the MSU Women’s Center and our work here. When I saw her obituary on August 22nd, I was sad to hear that the world had lost another great warrior. Her life and work were indeed impressive, and as her obituary notes: “She was taught that it was the role of women to vote and give back to society because it was an honor, privilege and duty.” Darlene served as the Montana President of the League of Women Voters, on the board of the Special Olympics, and with Montana Pro Choice NARAL. She was a successful businesswoman who fought for affirmative action and employment equity.

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And last, but most certainly not least, Montana State's own **Melody Zajdel** passed away earlier this month. Melody was one of the first faculty members I met on campus back in 1989 when I started volunteering at the Women's Center. I met her because she helped start the MSU Women's Center, still served on our Board of Advisors, and was leading meetings on campus about creating a Women's Studies minor program at MSU (currently Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies). As my volunteer position morphed into a "real" job, I worked even more closely with Melody. Her sharp intellect, inclusive spirit, wonderful sense of humor, sense of justice, advocacy and sincere warmth always made working with Mel an educational experience and immense pleasure. Her success as a scholar and educator were renowned, and Melody served as a member of MSU's Faculty Council, Faculty Affairs Committee, University Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the Presidential Scholars Selection Committee. She eventually became an Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science and retired only a couple of short years ago. Melody was an enormous presence At MSU, and her laugh and wit will certainly be missed in the halls of Wilson!



We are so sad to lose these four great warriors, justice advocates, and activists; goodbye dear friends!

No Mercy, No Justice

By Betsy Danforth

We would like to think those wrongly accused, tried, and imprisoned for crimes they have not committed are indicted because of one of a few reasons. Perhaps because of a case of mistaken identity, or a suspect's past some sort of death penalty is a doubt-- violent, motives and execution.

Bryan Fall Convocation this not the case. People motive or intent, or because of state indolence or mistakes.



criminal record rife with a history of violence, or administrative mistake. We'd like to think that the reserved for cases that are proven beyond a shadow of heinous crimes that leave no doubt about identity,

Stevenson's book, *Just Mercy*, assigned for MSU's year, very thoroughly explains that this indeed is often imprisoned who are innocent of crimes, innocent of simply not criminals at all, are often imprisoned politics, unbridled racism and classism, or attorney

The numerous stories described by Stevenson are nothing less than tragic. The ways in which politics and racism factor into the imprisonment of a shocking number of individuals is a problem addressed by Stevenson's organization, the Equal Justice Initiative. EJI's staff has an unyielding sense of justice and works tirelessly to help those who have been wrongly imprisoned--their efforts are often nothing less than heroic. The majority of cases Stevenson describes have been tried in Alabama, and one gets a clear sense of the existing racist politics which work to imprison many (typically African American) people. Some of the most heartbreaking stories

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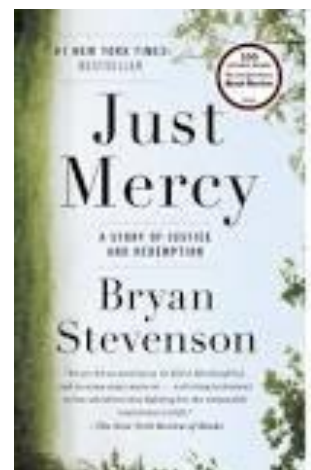
outlined in *Just Mercy* are those of the many children who have been tried and imprisoned as adults (which is allowed in a surprising number of states), often for crimes in which there was no motive or intent, but that are, instead, the results of horrible mistakes or understandable human reactions to years of domestic abuse and violence.

The book centers around the case of Walter McMillian who was tried, convicted, and put on death row largely due to the DA's need for a "win" in the murder of a local woman, and to the absurdly inaccurate testimony of a renowned criminal and liar. It eventually becomes clear that the witness was coerced and threatened with his life by law enforcement. The state had no motive, no evidence, and no incriminating forensics that implicated McMillian, or put him near the scene of the crime. In fact, he interacted with dozens of witnesses at a completely different location at the exact time of the crime!

Law enforcement officers, attorneys and judges are, by societal standards, given the benefit of the doubt, and are not viewed as having personal or political motives when arresting, trying, and prosecuting suspected criminals. Yet, circumstances surrounding several renowned cases in recent news about the shootings, arrests, and/or murders of (typically) African American men and women (many of whom turn out to be completely innocent of any crime at all), is providing an updated look at the role of racism and the law enforcement community's implicit and explicit prejudices and biases. This racism and lack of objectivity of our judicial system can result in devastating consequences for those at the wrong end of a police officer's gun, those who are given the wrong court-appointed attorney, or those who end up in the wrong courtroom with the wrong judge and/or jury of "peers".

Stevenson also schools us in some alarming statistics: the U.S. prison population has grown almost eight times since 1970—from 300,000 prisoners to 2.3 million today. There are also another nearly 6,000,000 people currently on probation or parole. Conditions in prisons are often horrifying, and the torture of prisoners in many forms is rampant. The implementation of private prisons in the early 1980's is problematic on many levels-- most notably because of the fact that when these prisons are built, local communities often have to guarantee a minimal number of occupants (prisoners). Many states try, convict, and jail children as young as 13 as adults, incarcerating them with grownups who are hardened criminals. Hundreds of thousands of nonviolent offenders have been forced to spend decades in prison. And, several private companies now offer products (phone, "video-visitation," and health care services, as well as basic commissary items) to prisoners at insanely inflated prices (\$15 for a three minute phone call, anyone?) so that shareholders may benefit financially from this modern form of enslavement.

Dr. Angela Davis, who visited Bozeman last year, spoke about the prison system as a logical conclusion to slavery. She and many others argue that the same traditions of racism, classism, sexism and homophobia fuel the "need" for and exist in, our prison system today. Our prisoners are forgotten by society, while we are supposed to feel safe knowing that "criminals" are jailed and kept away from the "good" citizens. Stevenson argues that we need to, in fact, familiarize ourselves with the prison system; that "we need to get closer to mass incarceration and extreme punishment in America." Clearly, we need to be advocates for institutional change, for a system that makes sense, for a system that is truly based on the "burden of proof" and "justice for all."



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Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships and Bystander Intervention

SEPTEMBER 27 · SUB 168

If you've witnessed an incident of abuse, finding a supportive way to get involved may seem overwhelming. Join Livingston's ASPEN staff members to learn about the early warning signs of an unhealthy relationship and how to intervene and/or support survivors.

Neighborhood Triage: Inequalities in Development Spending in St. Louis

OCTOBER 18 · SUB 168

Join Susan Cowan, MSU Assistant Professor of Architecture, for this discussion of an example of the misuse of Community Development Block Grants and the way these federal funds were used in city planning in St. Louis to gentrify white neighborhoods and increase racial inequality.

Reclaim Your Life: The Power of the Mind to Heal the Body

OCTOBER 25 · SUB 168

Join Angela Patnode, Transformational Coach and Spiritual Teacher, for this discussion about her illness from technology sensitivity and her discovery of the power of neuroplasticity which she employed as a tool to heal her body and mind.

Magic and Mystery: The Power of Women's Space

NOVEMBER 8 · SUB 168

Join Shaun Phoenix, MS, LCPC, for this discussion about the power of women-only spaces and what they offer us today. As women are included and welcomed more commonly into the public sphere, is there still a need for "women's space"?

A Path to Gender Equality: CEDAW

NOVEMBER 15 · SUB 168

Come engage in a conversation with organizers Jan Strout and Lauren Gette-King of the CEDAW (Cities for the Elimination of Discrimination Against All Women) campaign, an exciting and inclusive movement to encourage local governments, organizations, and communities to join the fight against gender discrimination.

Early Midwifery Laws and Maternal Mortality

NOVEMBER 29 · SUB 168

MSU professor of Agricultural Economics, Dr. Mark Anderson, will present this talk about the potential results of occupational licensing on consumer welfare as exemplified in the case of midwifery licensing in early 20th century America and the effects it had on maternal mortality.

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MSU Students Can Get Involved to Protect Critical Gallatin Front Wildlife Habitat & Corridor

By: Kate for saveourgallatinfront.org

There is a good opportunity for MSU students to get involved with a Bozeman coalition dedicated to preserving the last roadless wildlife habitat and corridor on the Gallatin front just south of town. *Save Our Gallatin*

Front is a coalition of concerned Bozeman and Gallatin County citizens seeking to find an alternative to the Montana DNRC's planned logging of the area.

The DNRC's proposed Limestone West logging calls for cutting timber on about 600 acres in the Gallatin front in the area surrounding the Triple Tree trail and to the east toward Mt. Ellis along Limestone Creek. 84% of the trees in the targeted area are lodge pole pine and they would be clear cut. The remaining 16% of trees are Douglas fir and 50% of those trees would be cut. About 10 miles of new roads would be built and approximately 5 miles of these roads would remain open after the harvest, including the planned roads alongside the steep and unstable terrain along both sides of Limestone Creek. The DNRC plans to release a letter this fall to update the public on the expected timing of its Environmental Impact Study on the project.

The coalition commissioned biologist Steve Gehman of *Wild Things Unlimited* to do a wildlife study the Limestone West area and the results of his study concluded that a very low level of human activity in the Limestone West translates "to a high level of habitat security for wildlife." He believes this finding is highly significant because "the Limestone Creek and Nichols Creek drainages are the only significant drainages on the eastern portion (i.e., east of Hyalite Creek) of the Gallatin Face that do not contain roads, easy public access, and high levels of human activity" thus providing an crucial corridor for animals traveling from the Yellowstone ecosystem north using the Gallatin-Bridger-Big Belt Corridor.

The full wildlife study and video presentation, along with comprehensive information and maps regarding the proposed clear-cutting are available at www.saveourgallatinfront.org.

The Save Our Gallatin Front coalition encourages MSU students to join them by signing up on the website and to make their views known to the DNRC, as well as to their state, county and city officials.



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Fall 2017

A Very Feminist Halloween

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ASTROLOGY
BEYONCE
CARRIE
DIANAPRINCE
FRIDA KAHLO
GODDESS
GYPSY
JEANNETTE RANKIN
LUNA
MANEATER

MARINA MARU
MOON
MORTICIA ADDAMS
PRIESTESS
PUSSYCAT
ROSIE RIVETER
RUTH BADER GINSBURG
SLUTSHAME
VENUS
WEDNESDAY ADDAMS
WICCAN
WITCH
WONDER WOMAN

feminist costume idea check list:

- *Amelia Earhart*
- *Rosie the Riveter*
- *Birth control methods*
- *Wonder Woman*
- *A suffragette*
- *Female ninja warrior*
- *Uma Thurman in Kill Bill*
- *Frida Kahlo*
- *A pink-pussy-hat-wearing
protester*
- *A goddess*
- *The E.R.A....PASSED!*

**SEE YOU ON
HALLOWEEN! ☺**

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Fall 2017

A Big Thank You to Our 2017 Donors!

Thank you all so much for your donations to our "35 Dollars for 35 Years" campaign. It is hard to believe that we have been open for 35 years, and we are constantly overwhelmed by the generous support shown by all our friends. It warms our hearts to know that you are out there rooting for the Women's Center! With your generosity, we have raised a record-breaking \$1,400 towards new library resources, programming, and educational efforts!

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