

# WOMANifesto

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CENTER

March 2016



The MSU Women's Center, along with co-sponsoring campus colleges and departments, is very excited to announce that **Anita Sarkeesian**, prominent feminist video blogger and public speaker, will visit our campus as the 2016 presenter for the Shannon and Frances Weatherly Memorial Lecture. Join us on **March 2<sup>nd</sup>**—doors open at **6:00 p.m.** and lecture will begin at **6:30**, in **SUB Ballroom A on the MSU campus for this free event brought to you by the Shannon and Frances Weatherly Memorial Lecture Fund**, as well as the following Montana State University entities: Department of Computer Science; Jake Jabbs College of Business and Entrepreneurship; College of Engineering; College of Agriculture; College of Letters and Science; College of Nursing; College of Education, Health and Human Development; Office of Activities and Engagement; Diversity Awareness Office; VOICE Center, and The Leadership Institute.

Ms. Sarkeesian's lecture: **"I'll Make a Man Out of You: Redefining Strong Female**

**Characters,"** will give the audience an exciting opportunity to learn about and question gender roles in videogames and popular media.

Ms. Sarkeesian is a distinguished speaker and writer--her accomplishments include:

- One of *Time Magazine's* 100 most important people for 2015
- Founder of Feminist Frequency, a website examining women's roles in pop culture. Most recently, Feminist Frequency has partnered with Intel to help create more positive representations of women in gaming.
- Creator of "Tropes vs. Women in Video Games," a video blog series examining women's portrayal in gaming.
- Guest on *The Colbert Report* in 2014
- Recipient of the Ambassador Award at the 14th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards
- Master's degree in Social and Political Thought from Canada's York University

**This lecture is free and open to the public. For further information, please contact the Women's Center @ 994-3836 or [danforth@montana.edu](mailto:danforth@montana.edu).**

SHANNON  
WEATHERLY  
LECTURE  
SERIES

**I'll Make a Man Out of You:**  
Redefining Strong Female Characters

A lecture by

**Anita Sarkeesian**

Executive Director of the video web series "Feminist Frequency,"  
media critic, blogger and creator of "Tropes vs. Women in Video Games."

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**

Doors open 6 P.M. · Lecture 6:30 P.M.  
SUB Ballroom A, Montana State University

This program is brought to you by the Shannon and Frances Weatherly Memorial Lecture Fund and the following Montana State University entities: The Women's Center  
Department of Computer Science · Lake Labs College of Business & Entrepreneurship  
College of Engineering · College of Agriculture · College of Letters & Science · College of Nursing  
College of Education, Health & Human Development · Office of Activities & Engagement  
Diversity Awareness Office · VOICE Center · The Leadership Institute

## **An Exploration of Anita Sarkeesian** **By Nina Denny**

After watching dozens of Anita Sarkeesian's YouTube videos, TedTalks, and interviews along with reading and watching her opponent's arguments, I found myself more curious about who she is and her cause. For those of you who do not know who Sarkeesian is, she is a feminist YouTuber, blogger and activist who evaluates the representations of women in pop culture with an emphasis on video games; her website is called "Feminist Frequency." She talks about controversial topics and often offends gamers, which has made her a target of an online gaming community that goes by "Gamergate."

I knew I was entering new territory when I chose to write about Sarkeesian. With this in mind, I carefully began dipping my toes into the realm of video games, attempting to understand the many arguments while remaining objective. What I found was that most of the people participating in this discussion had strong biases, which caused them to look at the situation from very different perspectives and target each other about semantics, debating less about the underlying issues.

What I've found to be the core of Sarkeesian's argument is that the portrayal of women in video games is harmful because they are often sexualized, which she claims effects how people perceive and interact with females in the real world. It also restricts women from being able to relate to the playable characters, which may keep them

from playing the games. For the most part, Sarkeesian and her supporters want to see women portrayed more realistically and equally to males.

Gamers seem to be more scattered in their criticisms, but have a few prominent objections. Sarkeesian is often accused of not being a "real gamer;" many think this makes her less qualified to report about the way people perceive games and characters. Her wording and facts are sometimes accused as inaccurate, or selective. People mostly object to the way Sarkeesian portrays video games and the lengths that she will go to in order to support her case.

Sarkeesian said she "wanted to create a space where feminism was easy to engage with in an accessible way" in her YouTube video, *Feminism in Focus*. However, since then, she has been met with brutal online attacks and received many death threats. Because of the harsh responses Sarkeesian has been met with, there has been a lack of dialogue between her and her opponents. This is a problem for people who find discrepancies in her arguments because they are not able to debate her. This has created a polar environment where it is rare to see compromise because the two sides do not interact in peaceful ways.

Come see Anita speak at MSU to get a first-hand experience with one of the current leading feminist voices and a better understanding of the issues she addresses.

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March 2016

The 2016  
*Bozeman Monologues*

Stories, written by Bozeman for Bozeman, of gender, sexuality, relationships, and everything in between.

March 8th  
at 7 pm  
@ the Emerson  
Center Theatre

\$3 for students  
\$5 for adults

All proceeds & donations benefit  
the Survivor Fund.



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March 2016

## women's history month 2016

### part 1: the limits of gender roles

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>** : I'll Make a Man Out of You:  
Redefining Strong Female Characters  
An evening lecture by  
**Anita Sarkeesian**  
Ballroom A, MSU SUB. 6:30 pm



#### March 9<sup>th</sup>:

##### Reproductive Rights in Romania

Join Prof. Cristina Pop for this exploration of gender roles in 1970's-1980's Romania when men were conspicuously absent from the realm of reproduction.

**SUB 168. Noon – 1 p.m.**

#### March 9<sup>th</sup>:

##### 100 % Talent: How Equity Pays for Montana

Join Jen Euell and Kelsey Mahoney-Women's Foundation of Montana-for this discussion of the economic status of women in our state.

**SUB Ballroom B. 6:00 pm**

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*Events are sponsored by the MSU Women's Center and are free and open to the public*



For more details:

**MSU Women's Center • SUB 372 • 994-3836**  
[www.montana.edu/~wwwwomen/](http://www.montana.edu/~wwwwomen/)

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## F-Word and Students for Choice Updates

The F-Word feminist discussion student group is having a terrific semester! The size of the group has grown this year, and we have been meeting every week at 7PM on Tuesday nights. Our Fight for Choice Forum which we co-sponsored with Students for Choice, Montana Advocates for Sexual Health, and Planned Parenthood of Montana to commemorate the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision was a great success.

We are excited for Women's History Month, and are especially excited about the upcoming Shannon Weatherly lecture featuring media critic, blogger and Executive Director of the website Feminist Frequency, **Anita Sarkeesian** on **Wednesday, March 2 at 6:00 p.m. in SUB Ballroom A (see details and editorials inside)**! Also during Women's History Month, we will be working with the Women's Center to coordinate an event around a Ted Talk called "Everyday Sexisms." We plan to hold a discussion about behavior modification and de-escalating sexist language and actions. This event, called "Talking Back to Sexism" will be held on **Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. in the Procrastinator**. We hope to help folks navigate sexist interactions with calm, thoughtful responses to de-escalate oppression and misogyny and turn these behaviors into valuable teaching moments.

If you'd like to work with the F-Word or Students for Choice, contact Fran at: [msufword@gmail.com](mailto:msufword@gmail.com) . Thanks **and Happy Women's History Month!**

Return Service Requested

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Women's Center

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