

# WO—manifesto

NEWSLETTER OF THE MSU WOMEN'S CENTER

March, 2010

Celebrating....

## Women's History Month!

### *Why Women's History?*

*By Alessandra Pollock, Betsy Danforth and Krystal Fischer*

*We've updated this article originally written by Women's Center student assistant Alessandra Pollock in 1998. The theme for this year's WHM celebration is: "Writing Women Back Into History," so we decided to look back to 1998 to see how far we've come (or not!)*

While statistics are sometimes compelling, it is, as Rory Dicker notes in her 2008 book, *A History of U.S. Feminisms*, not necessarily always current feminist activism that helps to open our eyes, but instead, examining women's history that serves to highlight the need for a "women's movement." Dicker points out how, while taking courses in women's history in graduate school, she: "pieced together some crucial details of American women's history. Sad as it may be, my appreciation of these women's lives pushed me toward feminism more directly than did any engagement with current events or 'real life.'" (pg. ix) This helps to explain the crucial importance of Women's History Month. We cannot forget that the organized struggle for suffrage lasted more than 70 years and we therefore must continue to appreciate all that this struggle entailed. We cannot forget that the rights our foremothers fought for were not easily won, and cannot be taken for granted by contemporary women. We cannot forget that women were not always allowed to hold public office, to own property, or to voice opinions that differed from their husbands'. We cannot forget that in our very recent history, rape was not recognized as a crime between husbands and wives, or that illegal and self induced abortions killed thousands of women, or that sexual harassment in the work place was not recognized as a criminal offense. Indeed, we need to understand that there are many lessons to learn from the women's movement, past and present. If our goal is for society to continue its progressive evolution, we must constantly remind younger and future generations of these stories. As Dicker points out, it is more often the personal accounts, the realities and details of individual struggles and activism that Women's History Month reveals that teach us more than statistics and generalized histories ever could.

Feminist historians still struggle to reconstruct the study of history to include women's perspectives. Though we now have Women's and Gender Studies programs available at many colleges and universities across the country, mainstream academia still often does not recognize that in order to have a complete understanding of the economic, social, or political history of a certain era or culture, one must have knowledge of how *all* groups participate in and are effected by those entities. Recognizing individual women and their contributions affirms the important roles that women play in all aspects of society. We need to articulate the past because there is still much work to be done. As importantly, staying in touch with women's lives today ensures that our voices will continue to be heard and carries on the tradition of improving the status of women everywhere. Focusing on current women's history and women's issues gives us hope for the future as well as providing us with a way to mark and evaluate our progress. Women's History Month is a celebration, a deliberate recognition of challenges and accomplishments, and a way to honor all women. But beware--because it is also a call to action!

**The following is some fodder for you statistics fans out there:**

**"The Good"**—Some change has come in the move towards equality...

The United States now has a female Secretary of State, House Speaker, and Director of Homeland Security. \* Though women are still a much smaller portion of people holding public offices (especially nationally,) the numbers are rising. \* All states have now had women serving in their state legislatures. \* Montana State University has hired its first woman president after 117 years of history. \* While at MSU, women are still a minority of the student body, BUT this is not typically the case at most institutions of higher learning. CARPE DIEM, Mark J. Perry's blog for Economics and Finance, reports that women earn more degrees than men at every level of higher learning. \* For all levels of higher education combined, women have earned more college degrees than men every year since 1982 \* Women's and Gender Studies Programs are much more common than they were twenty years ago.

**"The Bad"** —Gender discrimination and discrepancies still remain...

We still have three states that have never elected a female congressional delegate, and half of our states have never elected a woman governor. \* Only 16.9% of our Congress is made up of women. \* A study commissioned by Congress and carried out by the National Academies of Science shows that in 2005, women received nearly 38% of the doctorate degrees in science and engineering, but only between six and 29% of associate and full professors in the fields were women. \* Salaries earned by female full professors were on average eight percent less than their male counterparts, but evened out at the assistant and associate professor levels. --Matt Ford (arstechnica.com website) \* In most fields, women still earn less than men-- and according to the 2008 Census Bureau report--the average woman earns 77 cents to every dollar the average man makes. \* Though we have more Women's and Gender Studies programs, very few offer Master's and Doctorate level degrees. \* U.S. women remain a small minority of those employed in high-status and high-paying positions.

## “The Ugly” – The truth about violence, abortion rights, and poverty...

According to the U.S Department of Justice in the *National Crime Victimization Survey* cited on the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network’s website, in 2007, there were a total of 248,300 victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault (victims were at least 13 years of age) --nine tenths of those victims reported were female. This translates into a woman being raped every two minutes in the U.S., and though the rates of sexual assault are thought to be decreasing, these numbers are still alarming. \* Relationship violence still affects many women—a woman is beaten by her partner every 9 seconds, according to FBI statistics. \* Thirty-six years after *Roe vs. Wade* was decided in the Supreme Court, restrictions have been heaped on abortion rights including waiting periods, parental consent, and reduced federal funding, as well as limited access to abortion providers \* Abortion providers continue to be murdered by vigilantes who feel justified in their heinous crimes, and many others are constantly terrorized by extremists at their homes and places of work. \* Poverty remains a reality for more women than men in the U.S. According to the Center for American Progress’ website, in 2007, 13.8% of females were poor compared to 11.1% of men. \* Women are poorer than men in all racial and ethnic groups, with single women without children making up the largest percentage of women living under the poverty level. \* Older women are far more likely to be living below the poverty level than older men— among those who are 75 and older, 13% of women are below poverty level compared to 6% of men--the gap between women and men living below the poverty level is wider in the U.S than anywhere else in the Western world.



## LUNAFEST™ BRINGS AWARD-WINNING FILMS TO BOZEMAN

Team LUNA Chix announces the Bozeman screening of LUNAFEST, the only national touring festival featuring films by, for, and about women. **The event will take place at the Emerson Crawford Theater on Thursday February 25 at 7:30 p.m. A reception with no-host beverages and appetizers takes place at 6:30 p.m. in the Emerson lobby.**

Tickets are \$10.00 and \$8.00 for students. Tickets are available in advance at Chalet Sports in Bozeman or at the door.

The program will include ten winning films selected from more than 200 national submissions, as well as a local film, “Montana Fare”, by Jaime Jelenchick of Bozeman. “Montana Fare” tells the story of two women based in rural Montana – farmer and rancher Jenny Sabo and Native American tribal elder Minerva Allen. Along with inspiring local scenery and down-to-earth, poignant discussions with both women, Montana Fare captures how two people with distinct pasts and different futures decide what food to put on the table.

LUNAFEST provides a national platform for emerging women filmmakers to share their stories. The films range from animated shorts to fictional drama, and cover topics such as health, body image, spirituality, relationships and cultural diversity.

# Women's History Month 2010

*All events sponsored by the MSU Women's Center unless otherwise noted*

**Wednesday, March 3: Noon – 1p.m.**

**SUB 168**

***Sack Lunch Seminar: Most Admired Women from Around the Globe***

As we all know, heroes and role models are very important to each of us and can be an inspiration to help us accomplish our goals and live our dreams. In honor of International Women's Day, a panel of women from diverse countries will each speak about a woman from their country from either history or present day that has inspired them personally. This program is co-sponsored by the Office of International Programs.

**Thursday, March 4: 7:00 p.m.**

**SUB Ballroom B**

***Iris Garden Fundraiser: Celebrate Danforth Park's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday!***

Kick off National Women's History Month by joining us for a grand celebration of the 80th birthday of a women-powered movement to create MSU's Iris Garden. We will be screening the Iris Garden slide show: past, present and future; hold a raffle for "Spirit of Bison" –a painting created by Collette Brooks-Hops; and hold a silent auction of Fraternity and Sorority theme baskets filled with terrific items! Please join us for this delightful evening celebrating Danforth Park's 80th Birthday! Presented by Students for Danforth Park.

**Wednesday, March 10: Noon -1 p.m.**

**SUB 168**

***Sack Lunch Seminar: SuperGirls Becoming SuperWomen: Title IX***

It may be difficult to imagine today, but girls and women were not always encouraged to be athletic and engage in organized sports. Title IX, a crucial ruling for gender equity in education first signed into law by Richard Nixon in 1972, has affected girls' and women's ability to participate in and receive funding for athletics in schools and universities. This presentation will focus on the history and value of Title IX and the implications for females across the U.S. Alanna Sherstad will also discuss the Super- Girls Empowerment Running Program which provides girls ages 7-13 with lessons on self-image, bullying, body awareness, and teamwork while training together to complete a 5K race with their adult mentors.

**Wednesday, March 10: 7:00 p.m.**

**Procrastinator Theater**

***Screening of Iron Jawed Angels***

In 1912 Philadelphia, young suffragist activists Alice Paul (Hilary Swank) and Lucy Burns (Frances O'Connor) hold a meeting with Carrie Chapman Catt (Anjelica Huston) and Anna Howard Shaw (Lois Smith) of NAWSA (National American Woman Suffrage Association, formed in 1890 by Anthony and Stanton) to develop a movement for women's suffrage. This film depicts the enormous struggles these activists and other women faced in order to gain the right for American women to vote. This event is sponsored by the Diversity Awareness Office.

**Wednesday, March 24: 5:30 -7:00 p.m.**

**Great Room, Foundations Bldg, 1501 South 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

***Women's Herstory Reception and Student of Achievement Award Ceremony***

Join us for the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Women's History Month Reception and presentation of our Student of Achievement Awards—an event co-sponsored with our friends in the Alumni Association. We are extremely honored to have President Cruzado as our keynote speaker this year!

**Saturday, March 27: 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

**The Comfort Inn, 1370 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

***Montana Connection for Afghan Women (MCAW) Awareness and Fund Raiser***

Join us for the ninth annual awareness and fundraising event hosted by Montana Connection for Afghan Women (MCAW). Afghan-American Fahima Vorgetts, board member of Women for Afghan Women (WAW) and director of the Afghan Women's Fund, has been involved with the women's rights movement in that country from an early age. A chemist by training, she has made it her life's work to promote and organize educational programs for women in Afghanistan. While traveling to refugee camps in 2002, Vorgetts co-founded the Humanitarian Organization for Orphans and Widows of Afghanistan (HOOWA) in Kabul. Come hear about her work and see a realistic portrait of the lives of women and children in Afghanistan since the beginning of the war. We will be serving Afghan fare and wine, and will hold a bazaar with wares from Afghanistan. Tickets are \$20.00 per person at the door.

**Tuesday, March 30: 7:00 p.m.**

**SUB 233**

***A History of the League of Women Voters—Policy Over Partisanship for Your Community, State, and Nation***

Kathleen Williams from the local chapter of the League of Women Voters will provide an overview of the history of the League including its founding as a result of the women's suffrage movement. Williams will also provide information on the modern League and how it works at the national, state, and local levels.



**Wednesday, March 31: Noon - 1 p.m.**

**SUB 168**

***Sack Lunch Seminar: Women's Roles in Powwows***

A powwow is often viewed as entertainment, however, for many; it is a way of life, a way to make a living, and a crucial way to connect with our ancestors who set the path for us to continue on as Indian people. The songs, dances, and clothing all represent various tribes who each have unique stories that have been handed down through generations. This panel discussion, presented by Lark Real Bird Paz from the Crow Tribe, Maria Russell from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and Wasewi Shawl from the Blackfeet Tribe, will include a brief history of powwows; women's unique roles within the powwow circle; dancing and singing protocol; and traditional and contemporary garments, designs and beading styles.

**GET THAT GRANT: GRANTWRITING  
FROM CONCEPTION TO COMPLETION  
A COMMUNITY SYSTEMS WORKSHOP**

**Monday through Thursday  
April 12-15, 2010**

This internationally acclaimed training program is designed for those who want to develop effective grant proposals, find new funders, and successfully manage the grantseeking process. Workshop participants receive extensive individual assistance and follow-up critiques of their grant proposals.

***Registration deadline: March 12, 2010.***

For more information about this workshop, call the Women's Center  
@ 406.994.3836 or email us at: [danforth@montana.edu](mailto:danforth@montana.edu)

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