

NORTH SHORE VISIONS

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FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

By Beth Bartlett

Such a year we have had -- a year of upheaval and uncertainty about our future, as well as a year of amazing speakers and events, and of course, our wonderful students. You can read more about our students and our time with Vandana Shiva inside this newsletter.

The campus went through a prioritization process this year, which for a time threatened to put our status as a department in jeopardy. The good news is that through collaborative efforts and advice of our department, our board, our colleagues in Women and Gender programs nationwide, and the administration, we are feeling optimistic about creative new possibilities. (More on that in next year's newsletter.)

I will be going on sabbatical next year, returning in the fall of 2015. I will be completing the study the department began many years ago on the history of feminist organizations in the Twin Ports, as well as other projects that I've been eager to work on for some time.

Also, at the end of this academic year, I will be stepping down as department head. It is a position I have held off and on, mostly on, for the past fifteen years, and it is time for new leadership and vision. It has been a privilege to work with my faculty colleagues, four wonderful administrative assistants, and many generations of Women's Studies students. I am grateful as well for all the energy, collaboration, and support from the Women's Resource and Action Center, the Alworth Institute, the Women's Studies Advisory Board, our alumni, and our community partners. You have all been such a circle of friendship and collaboration for me.

Every year, we take a photo of the Women's Studies senior seminar students. They line the walls of our meeting room. Often when I am in that space I look up at the familiar faces with such gratitude and love and appreciation that I have been able to share part of their journey with them. What an incredible privilege and delight to participate so deeply and meaningfully in the lives of these students at such a time in their lives of openness and personal and intellectual growth. They inspire me, and when I look at them, I know that the work we do here is good.

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JANE MADDY SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Aprill Emig is the 2014 recipient of the Jane Maddy Scholarship. Aprill is a committed student, a dedicated community servant, and a strong advocate for ending domestic and sexual abuse. Aprill is the first in her family to graduate high school and attend college. As her letter of support stated, “To give you an example of her ambition and dedication to her studies, Aprill has the habit of reading all the books for her courses before the beginning of the semester, so she gets to read them again, with greater understanding, for her homework assignments”. Aprill received a degree in creative writing at Anoka-Ramsey College before transferring to UMD where she double majors in Women’s Studies and Economics. To quote Aprill, “both majors allow me to pursue and apply my passion for social justice. Women’s studies has given me the tools to recognize and combat injustice in the world, and economics has taught me how such disparities form”. Despite her busy academic schedule, Aprill has been editor at the Statesman, a volunteer for WRAC and QSU and is training to be an advocate for PAVSA. Aprill plans to enter law school and pursue a public policy degree. We are very proud and honored to have Aprill among our students

and pleased to award her dedication and hard work with a Jane Maddy Scholarship.

Aprill was also recently announced as the winner of the CLA Board of Advisors Scholarship. This scholarship was established to encourage and support outstanding students in CLA. Congratulations Aprill—you ARE outstanding!!

WGSS MAJOR KATE MENSING WINS THE *SIEUR DU LUTH* AWARD

Graduating senior, Kate Mensing, is the recipient of this year’s *Sieur du Luth Award*. It is the highest award given to a UMD graduating senior “who has provided exemplary service of three years or more to student organizations, the University, and community.” Kate has certainly provided such service. She is the co-chair of the UMD chapter of MPIRG, for which she has also served as the leader of the Gender Justice Task Force. She now serves on the MPIRG State Board of Directors and is the co-leader for the Social Justice Task Force. Kate has also been active and a leader on campus on the issue of gender justice, as evidenced through her involvement in and leadership of V-Day UMD, Queer and Allied Student Union, and the Trans*formation Club. Kate has helped to organize the V-Cafes and has performed both in the “Vagina Monologues” and the “Memory, Monologue, Rant, and a Prayer” performance, and also serves as the NARAL Pro-Choice Representative. Kate is also very engaged in the community. She is an active member of the Loaves and Fishes community dedicated to providing shelter for the homeless and to ending the causes and conditions of homelessness. She also is a Girl Power and a Mind2Mind Volunteer. Kate lives her life very deliberately in ways that are consistent with her dedication to inclusivity, sustainability, and peace and justice in the world.



BE THE CHANGE YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR.- WGSS AS A BRIDGE TO KENYA

By Njoki Kamau

Pursuant to the UMD stated goal of Internationalizing the curriculum, I travelled back to my native country in June, 2013, to explore possibilities for collaborations between Kenyan Universities and Women's Organizations with the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department at UMD.

While in Kenya, I visited Nairobi University, Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Engineering, United States International University (USIU), and Chuka University. In these universities I inquired about their Gender Studies programs and what it would take for our students to study or use their facilities if we decided on a WGSS study Abroad in Kenya. These institutions were open to establishing formal agreements for internships, or student/faculty exchange, and research collaborations. I also learned that no student could graduate from USIU without community service and internship. Similar to the mission of the WGSS program, USIU maintained that community service is key at developing core values and attitudes.

Interested in how our WGSS students could internationalize their service and internships, I visited several Women's Organizations in Kenya. Among others I visited Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), The African Center for Women, Information and Communication Technology (ACWIT), United Nations entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment (UN Women) and The Green Belt Movement (GBM). All these organizations stated that they regularly host international students interning or for community service. I am excited at the possibility of our collaborations and what we can create together with Kenyan Universities and Women's Organizations. I am hopeful that as The University of Minnesota, and WGSS in particular, advances Internationalization, and pursues an inclusionary global agenda, Africa will not be forgot-



SABBATICAL HIGHLIGHTS



By Andrea Sande

This spring I had the opportunity to sit down with Tineke Ritmeester to discuss her sabbatical during the 2012-2013 year. She had an amazing year filled with travel, activism, learning, research and inspiration while traveling through Europe and The America's. In London she spoke at the WAVE conference (Women Against Violence Europe) and joined a mobilization protesting the government's austerity policies and to call for economic strategies that put people first. In Montevideo, where she spent two months studying Spanish at the Academia Uruguay, she was particularly moved to walk the "Marcha De Silencio," in memory of the disappeared under the military dictatorship in Uruguay (1973-1985). In Brussels she attended the final session of *The Russell Tribunal on Palestine* which found Israel in violation of international law and guilty of apartheid and sociocide, as well as finding the USA guilty of assisting Israel in violating International law. Tineke also went to Cuba, where she spent a month in Havana, including 10 days with a Witness for Peace delegation. Amazingly, these are just a few of the highlights.

Tineke shared that she feels there is a common thread and a solidarity that connect all the manifestations she witnessed or participated in during her sabbatical year. In her opinion and witness, these movements share a common foe at their core. Best named as neoliberalism, or the support of ideals such as free trade, open markets, privatization and commercialism. Neoliberalism threatens the commons across the globe by supporting the privatization and commercialization of things like water, food, intellect and the continuation of the land grab. From each country she visited Tineke met and found likeminded people, many feminists among them, who wanted to stop the spread of neoliberal globalization and fight for justice and equality. Tineke continues to move forward with her work and research. In April she presented a "brown bag" discussion on her year, and hopes to do more study related to these issues. In particular, she hopes to focus on the *Free Palestine* movement and create awareness of the Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) movement.

SENIOR SEMINAR STUDENTS



Sandy Zimmer

Being a Women's Studies major has been an eye-opening, life-changing experience. Sitting in a circle in my first Women's Studies course, *Intro to Women's Studies* with Tineke, I knew that the courses in this discipline were going to be unlike any I'd encounter during my college career.

The heart of my coursework centered around *Women and Love*, *Women's Autobiographies*, *Ecofeminist Theories*, *Women and Religion*, *Women and Spirituality*, *Feminist Theory* and *Women Writers*.

These courses forced me to grow, sometimes painfully. They had a tremendous impact on my life. Four years ago, while taking *Ecofeminist Theories*, I switched to a plant-based diet. This spring my research project for *Senior Seminar* addresses the role of a patriarchal system in addictions.



Samantha Bisogno

My Women's Studies major means that I am equipped to stand up for women's rights. During my time in the UMD Women's Studies department, I have gained the experience and tools that I need in order to have a positive impact and make meaningful change for women. After graduation, I am moving to Washington DC to intern in the U.S. House of Representatives with Congressman Rick Nolan.



Sara Anderson

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies has changed my life in more ways than I can count. The friendships, knowledge, courage, and love that I have experienced over the past three years has helped me through difficult times and led me through new and exciting challenges. I can wholeheartedly say that I owe these things to my educators, friends, professors and acquaintances.

You have all changed my life for the better and I would not be leaving UMD with the necessary skills to pursue the rest of my life with love and excitement, without you. Because of you, I am changed and I thank you.



Kate O'Connor

What I don't know will hurt me. This is what Women's Studies has meant to me throughout my college education. Through courses pertaining to equality, and my related experiences with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, I cannot see violence against women in any other way than power and control. Without a feminist perspective on the world, oppression will go unlooked. Women's Studies has validated and valued my own experiences, and I cannot express my gratitude enough. After graduation, I plan to work in the non-profit sphere of human services, primarily in an interweaving web related to offenders, victims and secondary-victims of crime against women.



Sarah Grotte

These past four years at UMD have been a journey towards finding who I am. My Women's Studies major has provided me with the knowledge and self-awareness I needed to be confident in the person I am today. Post-graduation I plan on moving back to the Brainerd Lakes area where I can pursue a career working with children.

SENIOR SEMINAR STUDENTS

Geneva Wychor

Women's Studies has inspired me to reach my true potential as a student. The subject matter is deeply applicable to my life and what I want to do with it. The passionate women's studies teachers have helped and encouraged me so much on my journey and I cannot thank them enough. The WGSS department feels like home to me and helps me to have confidence in my work. I love taking WS classes because they teach you about the real world and help strip biases from the ways we look at the world. Women's Studies has lit a fire within me that burns to change the world.



Mo Matti

Women's Studies has allowed me to build a confident appreciation for myself as a black educated, independent, open-minded woman. I say this proudly; in the past, I did not feel this way until I entered the discipline of WS. I have always been an opinionated individual and very open-minded; now with my head held high I can say I am a practicing feminist and I will continue to enlighten myself to make myself a better feminist. Using this discipline will allow me to better those around me and my individual self!



Abbie Scheiderer

Over the past three and a half years, the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department has brought more joy to my life than instant viewing on Netflix ever will. The opportunities I have been granted, and the friends I have made are priceless. Applying the knowledge I have gained in my courses to personal relationships has helped me become the person that I am still working on. I am proud to be able to engage myself in conversations about gender equity, sexuality, race, and other intersectional identities and (for the most part) know what I am talking about. The faculty and staff in the WGSS department have spent hours working with me on my academic skills, as well as my interpersonal skills, and I will be forever grateful. Without WGSS, I don't know what my undergraduate life would have been like, and I'm really glad I didn't have to find out. I thank my peers and mentors for all the work we have done for each other, and will miss it all very, very... very much.



Special Goodbye to graduating WGSS minor **Alex Carnes**. Thank you for your dedication to WGS Studies!



The women's studies classes I have taken have contributed to my education in ways that other programs cannot. I have learned so much about the world I live in, how to see connections in everything, and how my lens affects what I see. I know that those things will help me very much while I carve my path through life and they will not be easily forgotten. I have also met very genuine and caring people who have turned into good friends (including teachers). My immediate plans for after graduation are to move to Minneapolis and work for ING in IT as an associate network analyst along with working alongside a few nonprofits doing technical and relational work.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AT UMD

VANDANA SHIVA



Vandana Shiva was our keynote speaker for Women's History Month, and we shared a wonderful day and a half with her. On the way to the hotel from the airport, she mentioned that she was getting together with her friend, Winona (LaDuke!), so we expanded our dinner circle and several of us were able to spend a delightful two hours in conversation with the two of them. They became friends long ago, and have been collaborating over the years, especially on seed projects.

Dr. Shiva spoke with students in Ecofeminism and Transnational Feminism about seeds. What a tremendous opportunity for the students. She later gave her lecture, "Making Peace with the Earth," to a standing-room only audience.

Dr. Shiva, by her own telling, spoke from her heart, but also from an incredible storehouse of knowledge about her concerns for the earth, seeds, water, people she loves, that

are threatened by corporate practices, priorities, and globalization. She moved people by her words and wisdom, but also by her humble and gracious manner, and her smile that warmed the hearts of all who heard and saw her.

The audience was filled with students, faculty and staff from across campus, and many returning alumni, but at least half of the people there came from the community, many of whom mentioned to me how very grateful they were that we had brought Vandana Shiva here. They welcomed her with a standing ovation, which they repeated at the end of her lecture. It was such a wonderful coming-together of feminists, food activists, farmers, environmentalists, and people working for peace (not that any of these are mutually exclusive.) Certainly the highlight of the year, and one of the high points of my thirty plus years at UMD.

Note: For those unable to attend, Vandana Shiva's lecture is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ic6lj0SSew Or search for "Making Peace with the Earth" at UMD on You Tube.



Left: Dinner with Vandana Shiva and Winona LaDuke.

Above: Vandana Shiva speaking to WS3600 Ecofeminism

WGSS EVENTS AT UMD

WOMEN OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT VOICES PAST & PRESENT



In honor of Women's History month, students and faculty from the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department presented dramatic readings from the writings and speeches of women of character, courage, and commitment – from Emma Goldman, Sarah Grimke, Sojourner Truth, to Caitlin Moran. They did an amazing job and made us contemplate, cry, and laugh out loud.



CONGRATULATIONS TO *THE FROZEN FEMINISTS*, a trivia team made up of WGSS students Kate Tusha, Kate O'connor, Kate Mensing, Geneva Wychor, Laura Grotte, Sam Bisogno and WGSS faculty members Susana Pelayo Woodward and Cindy Christian. They came in 4th place out of 22 teams at Alworth Institute's World Quest International Trivia competition!

LOCAL WOMEN OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT PANEL DISCUSSION

Four local activists joined us for Women's History Month to present an amazing panel discussion on living with character, courage & commitment. These local activists certainly embodied the traits of this year's theme and while each questioned their courage specifically, it was obvious to all in attendance that they were indeed courageous women and an inspiration to students and the community on living true to your passion and character. We are grateful and honored that they shared their stories with us.

Pictured from Left to Right:

Donna Howard—Loaves and Fishes, Nonviolent Peace Force, Homeless rights

Shunu Shrestha—PAVSA, Trafficking and Prostitution Task Force

Michele Naar-Obed—Loaves and Fishes, Christian Peacemaker Team, Duluth-Rania Friendship

Reyna Crow—Northwoods Wolf Alliance, Idle no More, and Native Sisters Society



UMD DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN,
GENDER & SEXUALITY STUDIES

494 Humanities Building
1201 Ordean Court
Duluth, MN 55812

Phone: 218-726-7953
Fax: 218-726-7651
E-mail: ws@d.umn.edu
Web: www.d.umn.edu/ws
Facebook: University of Minnesota Duluth
Women's Studies Department



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