



WOMEN'S CENTER

720 Fourth Avenue South, St. Cloud, MN 56301
320.308.4958 (phone) | 320.308.6408 (fax)

womenscenter@stcloudstate.edu
www.stcloudstate.edu/womenscenter

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Women on Wednesday

What's Our Status? Women, Technology and Social Media

Fall 2011

Wednesdays, Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Atwood Theatre, Atwood Memorial Center

The theme of technology and the impact on women's lives deserves a fresh exploration as more and more women reap the benefits and deal with the challenges of current technologies, including social media. A microcosm of these discussions occur at the Women's Center, in SCSU classrooms and on-line every day. Women are asking important questions about whether, and in what ways there is a digital divide, how relationships are affected by social media, how technology compromises women's safety, and the ways that individuals and organizations use technology to further social justice causes. Join the discussion to gain insight, learn new information and meet knowledgeable speakers as we explore the status of women in relationship to technology.

September 21

Technology Detox

Young women spend countless hours online – checking facebook, watching YouTube, chatting and searching for information. In the process, women are bombarded with negative media images: weight-loss ads, objectified women, digitally modified pictures of models, degrading pictures and offensive pornography, to name a few. With one of these images for nearly every click, how do women cope with all of the toxicity? Do we unplug... can we even unplug? Are there websites free of offensive messages? How can we portray ourselves on facebook in a way that both reflects who we are and is self-respecting? Our presenter will discuss these questions and more based on her research and experiences with hundreds of past students.

Presenter: Dr. Heather LaMarre is a faculty member in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota with an affiliation with the Center for the Study of Political Psychology. Her research lies at the crossroads of strategic communication, politics, and social-psychology. Dr. LaMarre investigates questions of social influence and persuasion, with a focus of the uses and effects of media on attitudes, behaviors, and opinions regarding social and political issues. She also researches public relations, public opinion, and public communications, with an interest in how social and entertainment media influences one's attitudes, emotions, behaviors, and opinions about such topics. LaMarre holds a PhD in Journalism and Mass Communication from The Ohio State University in Columbus, OH.

September 28

The Second Wave Women's Movement and Social Media: Is there really a generation gap ?

"You didn't have the internet, cell phones, facebook, Twitter or blogs back then?!" The use of technology and social media has drastically changed the landscape and strategies employed by the Women's Movement over the past 40 years. Traditional-aged students are both in awe and horror when they hear about the ways that women in the 1970s, 80s and even 90s organized for feminist causes. Join us for rich discussion that will get at both the ways that technology has changed the way we fight for change for women, plus the ways that the second wave views the joys and challenges of technology and feminism.

Presenters: **Kathleen Hagen** received her law degree from William Mitchell College of Law and passed the bar in 1988. She worked as a Human Rights investigator for the State Human Rights Department from 1981 to 1994 investigating cases of discrimination. In 1994, Hagen joined the staff at the Minnesota Disability Law Center at Legal Aid of Minneapolis, where she worked on issues specific to persons with disabilities until she retired on June 30, 2011. She has been an activist throughout her adult life, including being a charter member of Women's Braille Press, which existed from 1980 until 1993 to provide taped and braille books and periodicals for feminists and lesbians who could not read print.

Bonnie Watkins is the Executive Director of the Minnesota Women's Consortium, a membership organization of 155+ organizations across the state serving as a clearinghouse for leadership, information, and action to enhance equality and justice for women and children. She has a varied and rich background focused on feminist progress and change both in formal systems and out. Past positions include the assistant director of the legislature's Council on the Economic Status of Women, state manager of pay equity compliance for 1,600 Minnesota cities and counties, director of a neighborhood nurse program, and free-lance writer. Watkins was a co-founder of Women In State Employment in 1975 and the Pay Equity Coalition of Minnesota in 1990, belongs to many feminist organizations, and is vice president of US Women Connect. Watkins is the co-author of "In the Company of Women: Voices from the Women's Movement" (Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1996), as well as "Toward a Universal Family Allowance" published by the Child Care Workers Alliance in 1994, and pay equity consulting studies for the State of West Virginia and American Library Association.

October 5

Organizations for Justice: Models for Activism & Outreach Online

Technology allows activists from around the world to make a difference in little and big ways including, fundraising, network building and showing the ways that organizations create visibility using various technological tools. What tools exist for activist organizations, and how do you get started moving your organization online? Panelists will offer valuable insight into how to make a difference, and how your student or community organization can have a stronger impact on-line.

Presenters: **Mary Ellingen** is a Staff Attorney with the Women's Human Rights Program at The Advocates for Human Rights. She is a 2002 recipient of The Advocates for Human Rights' Volunteer Award and the first recipient, in 2006, of the Tom Oye Human Rights Award. Ellingen has worked in private practice in family law and in the Trust Department of the former Northwestern Bank. She received her law degree from the University of Michigan Law School and her B.A. from Michigan State University. She is admitted to practice in Minnesota.

Ying Lee partners with Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council as a Hmong Youth Support Specialist in the Southeast Asians Living Chemically Free program. Currently her work supports bridging cultural barriers to support substance use prevention and sobriety of many youth. Lee has a Bachelors of Human Services degree from Metropolitan State University, and she has over 10 years of direct service work with children and adolescents, particularly Hmong



students in development and intervention services. She is also the founder of the Hmong Youth Development Conference, which focuses on heritage, leadership development and college access.

October 12

Marriage Equality and LGBT Activism: Reaching OUT Through Technology

A state ballot initiative to make gay marriage unconstitutional made it through the MN Legislature during the 2011 session, but not without resistance from others including OutFront MN, a leading LGBT rights organization. They played a highly visible leadership role through the use of their website, facebook and other social media tools that reached out to populations throughout the state, in addition to a national audience. Join us for a look at this initiative and the media tools used by this social justice organization to get the word out--quickly and effectively.

Presenters: Maria De La Cruz: OutFront Minnesota's Development Director, Maria De La Cruz, recently joined the organization in May 2011. She started her nonprofit career as the Marketing Specialist at Casa de Esperanza in 2008, and started working on progressive causes in 2009 through her work in development at TakeAction Minnesota. De La Cruz cultivates major donors, works with organizers to recruit and retain members, writes grants and manages

relationships with foundation grantmakers and organizes special events. She received her master's degree in nonprofit management from Hamline University School of Business and is currently working toward her law degree at Hamline University School of Law.

Monica Meyer: OutFront Minnesota Executive Director Monica Meyer has been engaged in grassroots organizing and policy advocacy on behalf of progressive causes since 1992 and began serving as Public Policy Director at OutFront Minnesota in 2001. In 2010 she was named Executive Director. Meyer coordinates political strategy and grassroots organizing; conducts education and training seminars about politics, grassroots organizing and LGBT issues; undertakes coalition-building with research and provides materials for lawmakers, community members, and other interested groups; and travels the state to meet and work with local community activists. She received her master's degree in public policy from the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota, and her undergraduate degree from Hamline University.

October 19

Blogging as Resistance to Fat Oppression in the US

The “Blogosphere” has become the place for opinions, witty commentary and addressing the uncomfortable or controversial. The Internet is a place to proudly, and discreetly (if you so wish), portray your passions, your aspirations, or simply

what you think about a particular issue. The beauty of blogging is that if you have something to say, you can say it.

Although not everyone is guaranteed readers or followers, our speaker took the risk to speak about the subject of fat politics and fat acceptance in a culture of thin worship. She gained many readers and supporters on her Shapely Prose blog, but surely some who disagreed as well. Our presenter will discuss blogging as a form of resistance, the importance of body acceptance, the politics of fat oppression and more.

Speaker: Kate Harding is co-author of *Lessons from the Fat-o-Sphere: Quit Dieting and Declare a Truce with Your Body* and founder of, what was for a time the internet's most popular body acceptance blog, Shapely Prose. She has contributed to numerous online publications, including Salon, Jezebel, The Guardian, and the L.A. Times, and published essays in the anthologies "Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World Without Rape" (a Publishers Weekly Best Book of 2009), and "Feed Me: Writers Dish About Food, Eating, Weight and Body Image."

Harding is currently at work on a memoir about how her life was not, in fact, changed by reading classic literature (at least, not when she was supposed to). She's also contributing to *The Book of Jezebel*, forthcoming from Grand Central Publishing. She teaches fiction and nonfiction writing at Story Studio Chicago. A graduate of the University of Toronto and the MFA in writing program at Vermont College of Fine Arts, she lives in Chicago with her husband and an old mutt.

October 26

Privacy and Safety/Stalking Technologies

The age of privacy is a thing of the past, with unfortunate and even dangerous consequences for, especially, women. Stalkers are now using technologies such as gps trackers, cell phones, Internet services and wireless video cameras to track their victims. These technologies are difficult to detect – even by police detectives. Our speakers will discuss and describe ways to protect you and/or someone you know from stalkers and their various technological tools.

Presenters: **Sheila Johnson** MSW, LSW is a licensed social worker with the State of Minnesota who received her MSW (2011) and Bachelors of Science Degree from Saint Cloud State University (2007) with a major in Social Work and a Minor in Human Relations. Johnson's experience includes victim advocacy and prevention education at the Central Minnesota Sexual Assault Center, Anna Marie's Alliance, SCSU Women's Center and the Benton County Attorney's Office in the Victim Assistance Program. She has worked with victims of sexual assault, stalking and dating/domestic violence and is passionate about serving victims of crime.

Chris Zabrocki: Officer Zabrocki has worked for the St. Cloud Police Department for over 13 years. For the last 3 years she has been assigned as a school resource officer in the St. Cloud schools. As technology has advanced in the last few years, Zabrocki has had the opportunity to investigate several cases in which the internet was utilized during the commission of the crimes being investigated. She has a master's degree in Human Services/Law Enforcement Leadership and a B.A. in Criminal Justice.



November 2

Living in Pornland

The explosion of access to the internet has only furthered the use of internet porn among all populations. Through multiple forms of media, we are bombarded with more and more sexualized images of women that we're told represent liberation and freedom that don't feel particularly liberating to the vast majority of women. This media presentation offers one feminist analysis of pornography and of the increasingly pornographic culture in which we live, including the impact on our relationships, as well as the status of women overall.

Warning: *Due to the graphic nature of the presentation, no one under 18 will be admitted.*

Presenter: Lucille Guinta-Bates has an M.S. degree in Social Responsibility from St. Cloud State University. She is the Coordinator of Volunteer Services at Anna Maries Alliance, our local battered women's shelter. Guinta-Bates is also an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Human Relations and Multicultural Education. The focus of her work is to encourage both women and men to understand and challenge all forms of oppression in society.

November 9

From Dr. Suess to Porn

Ease of access to pornography and the pornification of mainstream media are having a major impact on our culture from child development to relationships to sexuality. With exposure through various technologies occurring at younger ages, there is a greater health and public health impact on children, youth and adults. From cyber-bullying and stalking to production of child porn and sexting, younger and younger ages are inundated with a tsunami of sexist and abusive media. Studies are just beginning to show how the impact of the normalization of sexual harm is effecting all ages. Learn about the implications on gender socialization, brain development, intimacy and sexual behavior problems as well as ways we can individually and collectively “demand the change” and take back our sexuality.

Presenter: Cordelia Anderson has been working to promote sexual health and to prevent various forms of sexual harm since 1976. Anderson is founder/director of her own business, Sensibilities Prevention Services which is based in Minneapolis. She is President of the National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and consults with programs in Minnesota and nationwide. Anderson has conducted over 2,000 presentations and appeared on a wide variety of media including Oprah Winfrey. Her new booklet “Pornography: The Impact on Children, Youth and Culture” will soon be available through NEIRI publications.

November 16

Pornography's Effect on Men—Impact on Women

Vast numbers of men and boys in this country consume various types of porn, often accessing this material on line and early in their lives. Evidence of this use includes the enormous profits by the porn industry, namely 10 billion annually. Blogger Ben Peterson from Green Left writes, “Men’s porn use is not an isolated and separate part of their lives. You can’t spend a significant amount of time consuming sexist and degrading material without it affecting your view of women.” Males often encounter their first images of pornography at the same time that they are learning about sexuality and relationships. Using, as the turn on, portrayals of rape, abuse, incest, objectification of women and child incest, pornography sends messages about how women and men should act within sexual relationships. Anti-porn men question and challenge these images. Our presenters will discuss effects of porn on boys and men in the context of feminism, culture, technology, violence and social media.

Presenters: **Chuck Derry** has worked to end men’s violence against women since 1983. Since March of 2005, Chuck has contracted with the Minnesota Department of Health to develop strategies for involving Minnesota men and male leaders in the primary prevention of sexual and domestic violence. In collaboration with Men As Peacemakers in Duluth MN, and with the additional support of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, he co-founded the Minnesota Men’s Action Network: Alliance to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence.

Shiyanke R. Andrew Goonetilleke is a graduate student in the College Counseling and Student Development program at SCSU and a second year Graduate Assistant at the LGBT Resource Center. During 2009/10, he served as the Male Peer Education Program Coordinator at the Women's Center. Goonetilleke has a BA from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and is an international student from Colombo, Sri Lanka.



November 30

The Digital Divide

The term digital divide refers to the unequal access to technologies that different populations experience and the resulting social, economic and political consequences. The effects of the digital divide are complex and vary depending on one's country of origin and the intersections of multiple oppressions based on gender, race, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. Gender socialization, along with other oppressive forms of socialization, has resulted in women experiencing lower levels of technology skills, confidence and motivation. Conversely, women are the majority users of social media and exhibit an active presence on line. This closing session will summarize the impact and influence of the on-line world for various populations of people, including women.

Presenter: Catherine Settanni has over 25 years of experience helping Non-Profit Organizations use media and technology to better share their stories with diverse stakeholders. She founded several digital divide initiatives in Minnesota, including the Digital Access Project, and CTEP-The Community Technology Empowerment AmeriCorps Program, now in its 8th year. Settanni's for-profit software company currently provides an online reporting system (OnCorps Reports) used by many AmeriCorps and VISTA programs nationwide.