NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Carol Perkins

I am writing this on Thursday morning, March 20, 2003, just 12 hours after President Bush announced that the first air strikes in Baghdad had taken place. These are “controlled” air strikes, not a massive onslaught across the entire nation, we are told. Therefore, I suppose, the “collateral damage” from these directed bombings won’t stupefy us. It is simply unimaginable that our President is convinced that a clear and present danger warrants these preemptive strikes on this day. Imaginable or not, however, he has ordered our troops into war, and we have begun the daily watch, the daily count of war dead, of reports from the field.

I have just returned from Mexico. Winnie Mitchell (professor of Anthropology and Women’s Studies program committee member) and I coordinated a spring break class that enrolled 14 students; eight other participants joined us for the program of trekking to ancient sacred sites—the pyramids of Teotihuacan, Tenochtitlan, Xochitecatl, Cholula and Cuicuilco—and cultural resources (the Museo de Antropologia is judged to be the finest museum of its kind in the world). On the last day of our visit, we took a bus to the barrio of San Pedro Martin high in the hills in the southwest corner of Mexico City. We met with three long-time activists of that community, women who are peasants, Indian, and poor. They fight for piped water in poor villages, for health care and social services and for social justice in their communities. They talked with us at a community health clinic they have built over the past two decades, and after they told us about their activism, they spoke to us passionately, begging us to DO something to avoid war in Iraq. We met lots of people throughout that week who were terrified that our U.S. government is leading us all into a world-wide catastrophe greater than any catastrophe known to humankind. Their concern sobered us all.

As I reflect back over the past decade, I know how hard we have worked to create good curriculum, to support student growth, and to participate in the community that nurtures our work. Our Women’s Studies community has been acutely visible on this

Continued on page 2

FAREWELL TO CAROL...

WOMEN’S STUDIES

BANQUET 2003

By Paige Petersen

The Department of Women’s Studies will be holding its annual potluck banquet Saturday, April 26, at the Mankato Armory, from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. (for potluck sign-up sheet call Cindy @ 507-389-2077). Women’s Studies graduate students and friends are diligently preparing for a fun-filled evening honoring Carol Perkins’s retirement. After chairing the department for 10 years, Carol is retiring from MSU and returning to San Diego, California, where she and her spouse, Cy, lived from 1967-89. She is not retiring completely for she expects to work with a foundation that operates extensive community and school-based programs for new immigrants in San Diego County. A silent auction will also be held during the banquet that will help raise money to ensure that current and future students have adequate funding to attend conferences, which will assist in fostering the importance of connections with others throughout the world. We look forward to an evening filled with celebration. Alumni and friends are welcome to attend!
1ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY
By Joshua Cruz

The Department of Women’s Studies graduate students (in conjunction with WS 640) invites you to attend the first annual Conference for Feminist Research in the 21st Century. Organizers are working diligently to bring a quality forum for feminist research to the MSU and Mankato communities. The conference will be held on Thursday, April 24, 2003 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. in the Centennial Student Union Room 256.

We invite graduate/undergraduate students from all disciplines and departments along with faculty, staff, and community members to submit proposals from a variety of disciplines that focus on issues of women, gender, and sexuality in their academic and creative work.

Fields of interest include but are not limited to: identity; discrimination in the media and women in the media; militarization and sexual violence; marriage and the family; feminism in art and the family; global feminisms and international women’s issues; pre-adolescent female development; feminism and colonialism; folklore and the history of the occult; women’s culture; women and spirituality; and transition and border issues.

For further information on registration or attendance please contact us via e-mail, fax or phone at: fax 507-389-6377; phone 507-389-2077, or e-mail at: MSUWOSWEB@YAHOO.COM

V-DAY AND THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
By Dr. Maria Bevacqua

MSU’s 2003 production of the Vagina Monologues was a huge success by any measure. Together, a dedicated group of committed feminists (and pre/profeminists) managed to raise funds and raise consciousness in three spectacular evenings.

For some of us, it all started way back in October. That’s when Brigette Marty, the graduate student intern in charge of the project, convened a meeting of anyone who was interested in being a part of the production. The folks who showed up that day – Deirdre Rosenfeld, Kellian Clink, Jessica Giordani, Lauren Rekonen, Cesia Kearns, Krista Chapman, Maria Bevacqua, and Brigette Marty – formed the Vagina Monologues production committee that followed the project right through to the end. We divided up the work, each of us with a job to do (social activities diva, director divas, fundraising diva, and so on) and a plan to get it done. What a committed bunch of vaginas!

The work stepped up in November, when we had two open readings/auditions of the Vagina Monologues. Many of us found the traditional theatrical audition – with a single terrified auditioner on stage, under a spotlight, while the powerful casting directors look on in judgment – an alienating experience at best. We planned the audition, to quote cast member Lisa Coons, in a “real women’s studies way”: all participants sat in a large circle, and each had a section of the script to read in turn. Women were invited to participate in the reading/audition even if they didn’t want to be considered for a part because just sitting through the reading was an empowering experience. Warm greetings
and refreshments helped to create an atmosphere that was more inviting than alienating.

Once the cast was selected, and the spring semester began, the real work was underway. Publicity divas organized the making of posters and banners and found ways to spread the word (the word being vagina). Co-director divas held individual rehearsals with each cast member and full cast rehearsals in Ostrander. The Women's Center carried out a Vagina Carnival, and participants created arts and crafts that would be sold at the performances – V-themed boxer shorts, vulva pops and soaps, and Rape Free Zone kits. These and other vagina-themed products helped raise awareness and money for prevention of violence against women.

The big nights were February 5, 6, and 7, 2003. Outside Ostrander Auditorium, volunteers sold tickets and merchandise and ushered people to their seats (one night, a group ushers wore matching T-shirts reading “Delta Chi is vagina-friendly”). A cast of 22 beautiful women read the angry, sorrowful, and hilarious monologues based on interviews by playwright Eve Ensler. There was hardly an empty seat or a dry eye in the house by the end of each performance.

The production provided something for everyone who attended, including men and women, young and old, and people of various sexual orientations and ethnicities. We even included a “Mankato monologue” written and performed by a group of MSU women.

All in all, ticket and merchandise sales raised over $6,000 to benefit the Sexual Violence Resource Center of Blue Earth County; the MSU Women’s Center; and V-Day, the national organization that oversees the campus and community productions of the Vagina Monologues. If you missed the show, don’t worry: we’ve already started planning for next year.

2003 WOMEN & SPIRITUALITY

By Lana Gertsen

The Twenty-Second Annual Women and Spirituality Conference will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 11 and 12, 2003. The keynote speaker will be Charlene Spretnak, one of the founding mothers of the Women’s Spirituality Movement. Drawing on surprising new research in female physiology and the workings of the female body-mind, she will discuss implications for our continuing explorations of women’s authentic spiritual experience. Her discussion will contribute new insights to the ongoing emergence of multifaceted, multivalent, authentic female spirituality, which the Women’s Spirituality Movement has been pioneering for more than 25 years.

Charlene Spretnak is currently a professor in the Philosophy and Religion program at the California Institute of Integral Studies, a graduate institute in San Francisco. She is the author of Lost Goddesses of Early Greece (1978), The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics (1986), States of Grace (1991), and The Resurgence of the Real (1997). She is also editor of the anthology, The Politics of Women’s Spirituality (1982).

For further information about the 2003 Women & Spirituality Conference, and to be included on the mailing list, contact Cindy at: cynthia.veldhuisen@mnsu.edu.
ANTI-WAR ON IRAQ TEACH-IN  
By Dr. Anne Lacsamana

Joyce Barry (English), Jeffrey Langstraat (Sociology/Ethnic Studies), Leah Rogne (Sociology) and I organized an anti-war on Iraq teach-in March 5 from 8:00 A.M.-9:00 P.M. in the CSU Ballroom. Our event coincided with the national student day of protest: Books Not Bombs. As members of the university community, we felt that a teach-in would be an effective way to convey and disseminate information about the war on Iraq.

We had a tremendous response from both the MSU and Mankato community. For thirteen hours we had speakers discuss a range of topics (conscientious objection, environmental concerns, history of social protest in the past and lessons for the future, impact of sanctions and war on women and children in Iraq, etc). I believe we had an estimated 600-700 people drop in throughout the day – and we received positive media coverage from the local stations. As first year faculty members of the university, we feel incredibly grateful for the support shown to us by students, colleagues, and the MSU and Mankato communities.

BROWN BAG LUNCH  
By Sara Stoltenburg

The Brown Bag Lunch Feminist Discussion series, sponsored by the Women’s Center, continues to evolve into a forum where both students and faculty can come together and share ideas, thoughts, feelings, and knowledge about issues important to them. Some of our topics throughout the year thus far have included: Critical Thinking, Butch/Femme Identity, Chicana Transitions, Celebrating International Women’s Day, and Men and Masculinity. It is also clear to me, as coordinator of the series, that providing an open, honest, intellectual, and safe environment for students and faculty to attend is one of the most important aspects of feminist activism we do. The students and faculty who join our discussion come from all disciplines and backgrounds and give a variety of perspectives that enrich our conversations more and more each week.

As our feminist/activist community at MSU continues to grow, I hope the Brown Bag Lunch will continue to be one of many avenues by which students can come together and communicate on a new level while at the same time continuing to learn more about what it means to them to be a feminist or practice feminist goals. For more information on this series, please contact Sara Stoltenburg in the Women’s Center Monday-Friday at 389-6146 or by e-mail at sara.stoltenburg@mnsu.edu.

CAROL ORTMAN PERKINS LECTURESHIP: IN HONOR OF LONGTIME CHAIR OF MSU’S DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES

The Department of Women’s Studies at Minnesota State University is pleased to announce a campaign to create an annual Carol Ortman Perkins Lectureship in Women’s Studies. The aim of this lectureship is to invite a distinguished feminist scholar/activist to visit campus each fall to meet with students and to deliver an address to the Women’s Studies, MSU, and Mankato communities.

Lecturers will be selected based on their contributions to feminist scholarship and their ability to forge connections between theory and practice. The lectureship will fulfill the mission of the Department of Women’s Studies to promote feminist scholarship and activism and to encourage the exchange of ideas.

The Perkins Lecture will commemorate Professor Perkins’ retirement from MSU in June 2003. Dr. Perkins has chaired the Department of Women’s Studies since 1993. She earned her BA in English from the University of Missouri in 1963, her MA in English from Washington University (St. Louis) in 1965, and her Ph.D. in Multicultural Education and the History of Philosophy of Higher Education in a unique joint doctoral program at Claremont State University at San Diego State University. Dr. Perkins taught English and Women’s Studies at Grossmont Community College in El Cajon, California from 1968-1981, and Women’s Studies at San Diego State University form 1975-1989, where she also directed the joint doctoral program in education and was special assistant to the Dean of the College of Education for two years. She was director of the Women’s Studies Program at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri from 1989-1993. Dr. Perkins served two years on the Governing Council of the National Women’s Studies Association.

Dr. Perkins has published articles in the fields of Black women’s educational history, bilingual learners, femi-
nist theater, and ethnically diverse gifted women. She was a founding member of Sisters On Stage, a feminist theater troupe in San Diego, California, which performed throughout Southern California from 1976-1981. Throughout her career she combined her interdisciplinary training in English, multicultural education, and history to teach courses ranging from English composition and literature to feminist film studies, women’s educational history and feminist theory. Her recent research interests lead in two directions: women’s spirituality, especially in the context of pre-Columbian goddess traditions of Mexico; and cookbooks and foodways in the United States.

KUDOS TO DR. ANNE LACSAMANA FOR WOMEN AND GLOBALIZATION

I am co-editing a collection of 14 essays concerning the impact global capitalist expansion is having on “Third World” women’s lives with my friend and colleague, Delia D. Aguilar (University of Connecticut). We are pleased to announce that Humanity Books has agreed to publish our manuscript. The book is tentatively scheduled to be released next October and it’s our hope that it will reach a wide audience. By placing “Third World” women squarely within the context of the international division of labor, we hope this collection will add to the growing body of knowledge on the subject.

FEMINISTS UNDER CONSTRUCTIONS: CALL FOR ‘ZINE SUBMISSIONS

by Hara Bastas

Feminists Under Construction is a MSU, recognized student organization whose goal is to provide awareness about feminist issues within the community. F.U.C.’s zine is a forum for students to express thoughts and ideas that may not have a conventional forum.

In various artistic formats, the zine deals with, but is not included to, the issues of: empowerment, ableism, heterosexism, revolution, racism, identity, classism, homophobia, and sizeism to name a few…

Submissions may be dropped off in an envelope labeled “F.U.C. Zine” in the Women’s Center (CSU 218) or the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center (CSU 242). Deadline for submissions is Friday, April 18, 2003 at 5:00 P.M.

Contact information: Hara at itshara@aol.com

BUSY AS BEES...
WOMEN’S STUDIES GRAD STUDENTS IN THE WOMEN’S CENTER

by Sarah Wegner

The Women’s Center has been the catalyst for many on issues that affect all people. It has been overflowing with students, faculty and staff looking for ways to get involved. One such project that was headed by graduate students Sara Stoltenburg and Sara Wegner was the Women in Prison Book Project. The campus community was able to gather 200+ books for this drive. The books were then transported to the cities where they were sent out to women’s prisons across the nation.

Another project that gathered students on a local and national level was the National Girls and Women in Sports Day. On February 6, 2003 female athletes were recognized for their many talents and abilities. The Women’s Center and Intercollegiate Athletics brought this national campaign here. MSU female student athletes were honored and recognized at a reception were they were able to share with others their talent not only as athletes, but also as students. This past year has provided students at MSU with a variety of activities to move beyond the halls of campus and get active in local, state, national and global issues.
NARAL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES GET BUSY

By Erin King-Luce

Members of the Minnesota State University campus chapter of Minnesota NARAL (National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League) have been very busy this spring semester participating in a number of activities to raise awareness about reproductive rights. Kicking off the semester with a bang MSU NARAL coordinated a week of activities during the week of January 21-23 commemorating the 30th anniversary of the 1973 landmark decision by the Supreme Court legalizing abortion in the United States.

Beginning with a brown bag lunch hosted by the Women’s Center and facilitated by Joann Quinones-Perdomo, professor of Ethnic Studies, students and faculty candidly and sometimes emotionally discussed reproductive rights issues. On Wednesday, January 22, a remembrance vigil was held to commemorate those who have fought for choice, who have benefited from Roe vs. Wade, and those women who have lost their lives before Roe vs. Wade. To conclude the week of activities MSU NARAL, along with the Women’s Center, co-sponsored the presentation of special guest speaker Krista Jacob, an alumnus of the Women’s Studies MS program. Krista Jacob is the founder and editor of the online journal Sexing the Political: A Journal of Third Wave Feminists on Sexuality (www.sexingthepolitical.com) and editor of the recently published book Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion. After a brief presentation Krista held audience members spellbound with her poignant recitation of two poems that appear in her book. After her talk Krista answered questions and signed copies of her book.

On February 24th members of MSU NARAL along with students from Gustavus Adolphus traveled to St. Paul to attend a student day of action sponsored by the state chapter of Minnesota NARAL. Students visited local women’s clinics, took part in a legislative briefing with Tim Stanley, executive director of MN NARAL, and participated in a press conference speaking out against proposed anti-choice legislation that would “prohibit a wide variety of state family planning funds from going to any organization that provides, counsels, or refers for abortions, or any organization that even considers abortion to be ‘part of a continuum of reproductive health services’. Members of MSU NARAL continued to follow up their success by hosting a workshop on working with the media to communicate clearly and effectively for maximum impact.

Currently members are working on getting approval to become a recognized student organization and discussing plans for recruitment of new members and activities for next fall. Members of MSU NARAL include women’s studies graduate students Hara Bastas and Erin King-Luce, and undergraduate Krista Chapman. Jess Crary is the MSU NARAL campus representative, and can be reached at msunaral@yahoo.com.

Dr. Maria Bevacqua, Asst. Professor of Women’s Studies has recently been selected as the new interim Chair of the Department of Women’s Studies here at Minnesota State University, Mankato! All of the Women’s Studies faculty, staff, and students wish you the best of luck and look forward to working with you in the very near future!
KUDOS

to the following graduate student for successfully defending their theses…Fall 2002

Debra Pexa

Advisor: Maria Bevacqua (December 2002)

Fertile Ground: Minnesota Battered Women’s Programs as a Philosophical and Practical Foundation for Progressive Change

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH BUSY FOR DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES STUDENTS

By Erin King-Luce

March is Women’s History Month and women’s studies graduate students Hara Bastas, Signe Brunner, Breezy Bryant, Erin King-Luce, and Sara Stoltenburg, along with undergraduate students Jenny Kalvik (senior, women’s studies major) and Heather Gay (junior, construction management major) planned over a month of activities sponsored by the Women’s Center; the Commission on the Status of Women; the Panhellenic Student Association; and the department of Women’s Studies to celebrate this year’s Women’s History Month theme: “Women Pioneering the Future.” Beginning the month long series of events was a brown bag lunch devoted to celebrating International Women’s Day facilitated by Maria Consuelo Ortega Yustre.

The keynote event took place Tuesday, March 4 at 7:30 P.M. in Ostrander Auditorium. Guest speaker Maggie Hadleigh-West enthralled the packed auditorium by first showing her award winning documentary film “War Zone: Sexual Harassment on the Streets of America.” In her film Maggie confronts men who sexually harass women as they walk down the streets of cities all over the U.S. Also included in the film are poignant interviews with women who share their feelings about being sexually harassed. Afterwards, Hadleigh-West answered questions from an enthusiastic audience for more than two hours.

The third annual Women of Courage and Vision Recognition Reception took place Tuesday, March 25 from 4:00-6:00 P.M. in the North Ballroom. Over one hundred women attended the reception to honor each other, sharing in laughter, tears of joy and sadness, friendship and camaraderie. Special guest speaker Carol Perkins gave an inspiring lecture about the legacy of the women’s movement and the importance of remembering, rediscovering, and uncovering women’s history.

On Thursday March 27, Kellian Clink gave a short presentation about the history of women and art highlighting the work of feminist artist Barbara Krueger, after which participants were encouraged to participate in a workshop on collage making. The final event of Women’s History Month 2003 was the Commission on the Status of Women’s research colloquium forum held Thursday, April 3 from 4:00-6:00 P.M. in the Johnson Alumni Room in the recently completed Taylor Center.
INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN’S STUDIES
WOST-110-01, 02, 03, 04, 05 3 credits
110-01 - MWF Freeman 9:00 A.M. - 9:50 A.M.
110-02 - MWF Surkan 10:00 A.M. - 10:50 A.M.
110-03 - TH Staff 9:30 A.M. - 10:45 A.M.
110-04 - TH Staff 11:00 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.
110-05 - T Surkan 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M.

GENDER AND VIOLENCE
WOST-120-01
TH / 12:30 P.M. - 1:45 P.M. / Bevacqua
3 credits

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN AND CHANGE
WOST-220-01
TH / 11:00 A.M. - 12:15 P.M. / Lacsamana
3 credits

WOST-220-02
MWF / 11:00 A.M. - 11:50 A.M. / Freeman
3 credits

COMING OF AGE
WOST 251-01
MWF / 12:00 P.M. - 12:50 P.M. / Surkan
3 credits

INDIVIDUAL STUDY
WOST-277-00* / WOST-477-00* / WOST-677-00*
1-6 credits

Topic: TBA
WOST 260
H / 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Staff
3 credits

PERSPECTIVES ON FEMINIST THOUGHT
WOST 310
MW/ 2:00 P.M. - 3:15 P.M. / Freeman
3 credits

FEMINIST PEDAGOGY
WOST 440/ WOST 540
M/ 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Surkan
3 credits

GLOBAL FEMINISM
WOST 460/ WOST 560
H/ 3:00 P.M. - 5:45 P.M. / Lacsamana
3 credits

INDIVIDUAL STUDY
WOST-277-00* / WOST-477-00* / WOST-677-00*
1-6 credits

INTERNSHIP: COLLEGE TEACHING
WOST-497-00* / WOST-697-00* / Staff
1-6 credits

INTERNSHIP
WOST-498* / WOST-698*
1-6 credits / Bevacqua

COLLECTIVE ACTION/ ANALYSIS
WOST-600-01
W / 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Lacsamana
3 credits

FEMINIST THEORIES
WOST-640-01
T / 3:00 P.M. - 5:45 P.M. / Bevacqua
3 credits

ALTERNATE PLAN PAPER
WOST-694-00*
1-2 credits

THESIS
WOST-699-00*

*PERMISSION REQUIRED

GENDER IN ART
ART 4/519-01
W / 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Germundson
3 credits

TOPIC: WOMEN, CRIME, AND SOCIAL CONTROL
CORR 4/585-01
M / 3:00 P.M. - 5:45 P.M. / Greer
3 credits

FAMILY VIOLENCE
SOC 4 / 509-01 3 credits
M / 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Keating
SOC 4/509-02 3 credits
MW / 2:00 P.M. - 3:15 P.M. / Keating

GENDER AND COMMUNICATION
THEA 285-01 (general ed course)
MWF / 2:00 P.M. - 2:45 P.M. / LeNoir
3 credits

TOPICS IN CREATIVE WRITING: AUTOBIOGRAPHY
ENG 649-02
M / 6:00 P.M. - 8:45 P.M. / Bunkers
3 credits

ATTENTION ALL WOMEN'S STUDIES ALUMNAE!!!

Have some news you're dying to share?
Do you want to make sure you are on our mailing list?
Have you relocated?

Contact Cindy at cynthia.vellehuizen@mwsu.edu
BOOKIN’ IT:  GOOD READS IN WOMEN’S STUDIES, LITERATURE, AND SUCH…

I Am Madame X by Gioia Diliberto (Scribner Publishing, 2003) Review by Lana Gertsen, 1st year graduate student in Women’s Studies

I like a good scandal.  Like a good novel, a scandal is juicy with just the right mixture of fact and fiction. In a debut historical novel, I Am Madame X, Gioia Diliberto attempts to unravel the details of a late nineteenth century scandal that ruffled Parisian art and the reputations of two famous (and perhaps, somewhat, infamous) Americans. In 1884, American painter John Singer Sargent revealed his painting “Madame X” at an art exhibition at the Salon in Paris. The painting instantly became the subject of much denouncement and criticism for the appearance of its model, the Parisian socialite Madame Virginie Avegno Gautreau, herself a former American citizen.

Throughout Diliberto’s novel, she reconstructs a diary that Mdme. Gautreau (Madame X) may have written recounting the events of her life and her rise to social prominence and eventual disgrace. The book is filled with interesting details about antebellum South and nineteenth century Paris, not to mention the enticing tidbits about rebellion against the conventions of marriage, female sexuality, and female artistry. Diliberto’s imagination is rich with ideas about the life that Mdme. Gautreau may have led. Though there are few factual records that detail her life, Diliberto has composed a story that urges the reader to study this painting and these lives for what they may have truly been and not merely for what they were presumed to be by the press and art critics. Major criticism of the painting stemmed from the way in which Mdme. Gautreau was dressed. The black dress she wore, with strap falling from one shoulder, was deemed indecent. Also, the very pale, corpse-like coloring of her skin was much criticized. (To see the painting, visit: http://www.cini.it/palazzocini/testi/sargent.html).

I Am Madame X would make a great summer read. However, if it’s fluffy reading you desire, don’t pick this one up, it will provoke you to think. It may even provoke you to do some research...ahhh....scandalous!

Bad Girls and Sick Boys: Fantasies in Contemporary Art and Culture by Linda S. Kauffman (Univ. of California Press, 1998) Review by Paige Petersen, 1st year graduate student in Women’s Studies

Author Linda Kauffman reflects on her experience with Annie Sprinkle who refers to herself as a “post-post porn modernist.” “At highways, under her direction, we all got an anatomy lesson, repeating after her and spelling out U-T-E-R-U-S, like happy children on Sesame Street.”

For those of you who appreciate the cutting edge and have an appetite for or an appreciation of aesthetics, this particular gem is a satisfying read. Linda Kauffman goes beyond scratching at the surface and gives an in-depth look at contemporary art and popular culture, as well as some of the current and historical feminist and Right-wing controversies surrounding them. By examining what fantasy means and how it is perceived and played out in everyday visual images, art, and written literature, Kauffman exposes how culture is saturated with pornographic underpinnings that largely go unnoticed. Kauffman skillfully analyzes the impossible to ignore reasons as to why art is considered art and why it is not, who has the power to decide, and alludes to why feminist art is so condemned.

Disturbing and challenging at times, one is hard-pressed to dismiss the deliciously subversive message Kauffman has so plainly spelled out. From Orlan, a plastic surgery victim “artist,” Bob Flanagan, sadomasochistic performance artist, David Cronenberg’s “visceral cinema,” to Jenny Jones, Kauffman asks the questions that are imperative and in dire need of being answered.

If you have a specific interest in pornography and aesthetics, this book is a highly delectable choice much recommended by me for your reading entrée.
After a lengthy and exhaustive search the Women’s Studies Department is pleased to announce the arrival of two new faculty members! Beginning Fall 2003 Dr. Susan Freeman and Kim Surkan will call the Department of Women’s Studies at MSU home.

Susan Freeman will soon be Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies here at MSU. Freeman is currently completing her Postdoctoral fellowship in Women’s Studies and History at Florida International University. She has served as managing editor for the Journal of Women’s History from 1999-2001. Her Ph.D. dissertation was completed at Ohio State University and is entitled “Making Sense of Sex: Adolescent Girls and Sex Education in the United States, 1940-1960” which is currently under contract with the University of Illinois Press. Freeman’s work as a historian has led her to research the history of lesbian communities in the U.S., sex education, sexual politics, and feminist theory and practice.

Kim Surkan will be teaching in a fixed-term position in Women’s Studies. Surkan’s doctoral work was done at the University of Minnesota where her dissertation revolved around gender identity and transgender issues. The dissertation is entitled, “Passing Rhetorics and the Performance of Gender Identity: (Auto)biographical, Visual, and Virtual Representations of Transgender Subjectivity and Embodiment.” Surkan has delivered numerous papers and presentations on queer studies, identity, and women’s fiction and poetry.

From all of the faculty, staff, and students in the MSU Department of Women’s Studies, we welcome you!!!

And special thanks go out to the members of the 2003 Faculty Search Committee from the Search Committee Chair, Dr. Maria Bevacqua. “THANK YOU to all members of this year’s search committee: Avra Johnson, Joshua Cruz, Deirdre Rosenfeld, Lin Hamer, Kellian Clink, Carol Perkins, and Anne Lacsamana. We could not have done this work without you.”

---

**WOMEN’S STUDIES ALUMNI NEWS**

**Tara Tull,** graduate of the MS Program in Women’s Studies (class of 1988), is now serving as the Assistant Dean of Letters, Arts, and Sciences of Metropolitan State College of Denver for the next two years.

**Karmen McQuitty,** graduate of the MS Program in Women’s Studies (class of 2002), will be attending Hamline University School of Law this fall.

**Krista Jacob,** graduate of the MS Program in Women’s Studies (class of 1999), recently visited MSU in support of the release of an anthology she recently edited, *Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion.* Krista Jacob is also the founder and editor of the online journal *Sexing the Political: Journal of Third Wave Feminists on Sexuality* (www.sexingthepolitical.com).
Tea Simpson is your typical, phenomenal fire-cracker of a woman. Armed with red hair, whip-smart intelligence, riot grrrl credibility, explosive charisma, and an endearing commitment to social justice, Tea is shouting it from the rooftops—she is ready to go. Tea Simpson is not short on nerve, hilarity, or originality either. Who would have thought being an undergrad could be so riotous? With all that said I am thrilled to put Tea Simpson in the Women’s Studies Undergraduate Spotlight.

Tea Simpson hails from Northern California and is currently a senior here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Presently Ms. Simpson is working on her Bachelor of Science in Women’s Studies with a minor in Community Health. Simpson’s choice to pursue a B.S. in Women’s Studies is underscored by what she feels to be a “necessary and important personal mission”. Deciding to major in Women’s Studies was a decision that was motivated by Simpson’s impassioned personal politics and a sheer, ferocious dedication to women and social justice. For Simpson (and many feminists) the link between the “personal” and the “political” is undeniable. “If you are part of a minority you cannot afford to be silent about things, otherwise I would be giving into my own oppression.” Simpson is no greenhorn to student organizing and social justice activism. Currently Simpson acts as President to the MSU, Mankato queer student group, SAGE (Sexuality and Gender Equality). SAGE was the recipient of the MSU, Mankato Recognized Student Organizations award for the most excellent student organization on the MSU campus for 2002. Many of SAGE’s activities have helped to organize, foster, and enact social justice for the GLBT community both here in Mankato and in the world at large through her deep involvement with SAGE.

Simpson’s passions within Women’s Studies include Queer women; women who are part of subcultures dominated by men (e.g., punk, hardcore, and rockabilly scenes) and how those women operate within those subcultures; transient women; women in music; the Lesbian Avengers; and vegetarianism and social justice for starters. In her spare (very spare) time Simpson enjoys all the usual humdrum...punk rock, underground “rock”, and rockabilly music, “The best album I’ve heard lately, is the Menz EP by an up and coming group called Gravy Train. Sippin’ 40s is the best song ever. This cd is electro clash and rap rolled all into one and it is very queer and it makes you wanna’ boogie with a whistle. It’s wonderful.” Go Tea Go! Simpson has also amassed a considerable cult following on the MSU campus for her writing and slam poetry performances. Simpson has a vexing hankering for vintage clothing, B-Movie Cinema (especially John Waters, God Bless her), anything affixed with leopard print or skulls, 1950’s pin-up culture, and making musica with her band, the Proleterrorists.

We expect fine things from Ms. Simpson in the future.