



Many Voices

Spring 2010

A newsletter of the University of St. Thomas
Luann Dummer Center for Women, the
University Advocate for Women and Equity,
and the Women's Studies Program

Women's History Month Lecture

The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Women and Children

Mary Robinson

First Female President of Ireland

Monday, March 1, 2010

7 p.m.

OEC Auditorium

Reception following lecture



Mary Robinson, the first woman President of Ireland and formerly the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has spent most of her life as a human rights advocate and is a world leader who puts her humanity very much at the forefront of her politics. She now chairs the Council of Women World Leaders and is President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative. She has been named a "Hero and Icon" as one of Time magazine's 2005 top 100 men and women whose "power, talent or moral example is transforming the world." In 2006, President Robinson received Spain's prestigious Prince of Asturias Award in Social Sciences prize for her work as a global human rights campaigner, singled out for her "moral strength," her defense of "ethics in the field of politics and academic research," and her "tireless efforts to bring about a world without borders."



Women's Studies Program: Upcoming Events

Women's Studies Coffee Bene discussions are back this spring! Join us for informal conversation over coffee or smoothies – our treat. A Women's Studies faculty member will start us off by talking about her/his own specific teaching or research within Women's Studies, and then we'll open up the discussion. The more we know about each other and our courses, the better we can spread the word about all of the great opportunities for students within our program. I have reserved the meeting room at Coffee Bene on the following Wednesday afternoons: 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. on **February 24** and 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. on **March 24**. Coffee Bene is located on the corner of Grand and Cleveland, and the meeting room is the connection between the coffee shop and Davanni's. Any faculty member or student who is interested in learning about Women's Studies is welcome to attend.

April will be a busy month for the Women's Studies program, so you'll want to mark your calendars now. The ACTC Women's Studies Student Conference will be held on the afternoon of **Friday, April 9** at St. Catherine University. Come support Women's Studies students as they showcase their research and activism. With a free dinner and no registration costs, why wouldn't you attend? Students: If you'd like to participate in the conference, e-mail a short paragraph describing your proposed presentation to me (ahighpippe@stthomas.edu). Include your name, title of presentation, phone number, university, and major/minor. Faculty: Please encourage students to submit proposals. We're looking for posters and presentations on research or activism related to Women's

Studies. Students do not need to be Women's Studies majors or minors to present at the conference. Feel free to contact me with any questions about the conference. Watch for more information on proposal deadlines and conference details.

We will also have a Women's Studies Open House in the Luann Dummer Center for Women on **Friday, April 30** from 3:30 – 5 p.m. Come wish our graduating Women's Studies majors and minors well, and enjoy time with colleagues and friends. As with all of our events, any faculty member or student who is interested in learning about Women's Studies is welcome to attend.

Women's Studies Majors and Minors: The Luann Dummer Center for Women is pleased to provide an annual scholarship in the amount of \$2,000 to a qualified Women's Studies major or minor. Deadline for applications is **Friday, March 5**. See www.stthomas.edu/womensstudies/scholarship/default.html for scholarship requirements.

As always, feel free to contact me with any Women's Studies questions, concerns, or suggestions. Stop by my office for a "Changing Lives — Changing the World — Women's Studies" button!

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International Women's Day Celebration

The 15th Annual International Women's Day Celebration will take place on March 6, 2010, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Coffman Memorial Union, University of Minnesota, and this year, the Luann Dummer Center for Women is one of their co-sponsors. The theme this year is "Inspire. Act. Change!". Organized by The Advocates and the Human Rights Program in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota, this day-long event is expected to

draw between 500-700 participants for an exciting day of workshops, plenary sessions, and performances. It is an occasion to highlight advancements in women's rights and equality, to encourage activism, and to educate participants about human rights issues that affect girls and women locally, nationally and internationally. The event is free, and a light lunch is also provided free of charge for all participants.



Notes from the Director



The Elder

In the social world of ancient Israel, the elders held a place of respect and honor. Given that life expectancy for women was a mere 30 years old, any woman who reached the ancient age of 50 had

obviously been blessed by God. In addition, within a culture that was primarily oral, the elders held the lore of ancient ages. Their experience gave them a kind of wisdom that was necessary for the community.

I do not need to bemoan the fact that in today's world of rapidly changing technology, "old" has a new meaning. For our students, a cell phone that is two years old is "outdated" and worthy only of disposal. We forget how important memory and experience are for any institution or organization.

President Mary Robynson, our March Women's History Month speaker, is an "elder," and I mean that in more than the metaphorical sense. She is a member of a group called "The Elders" founded by Nelson Mandela. According to their website (www.theelders.org), "The Elders are an independent group of eminent global leaders ... who offer their collective influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity." We are honored to host such an elder this spring.

Just this past December, Pres. Robynson co-authored a statement on the effects of climate change on women and children with fellow elder, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, calling for increased government regulations world-wide. They state:

Many of those already suffering the effects of climate change are women, and most of them live in the poorest countries on earth — the nations that have contributed least to global warming. These people have told us of changing rainfall patterns, droughts, floods, cyclones and fires that defy any of their previous experience. For them, the changing climate makes living at the margins of the world economy even more precarious.

However, we should not be tempted to look upon these afflictions with the artificial distance of relative wealth, nor from the arrogant sanctuary of denial, because we are all in this together; no one will escape the consequences of climate change. Wealth will be no barrier, nor will technology be the panacea, even if we can afford it. Climate change cannot be stopped unless we act together.

(www.theelders.org/media/news/legacy-our-children; accessed on 1/17/10)

The Advisory Board of the Women's Center chose to invite President Robynson last year as the world found itself in the midst of a global economic crisis. The first woman President of Ireland (1990-1997) and former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1997-2002), she has spent most of her life as a human rights advocate.

In fact, it is her tireless work on behalf of women's rights that leaves me awe-struck. The recipient of numerous honors and awards throughout the world, Mary Robynson is a co-founder and former Chair of the Council of Women World Leaders and Vice President of the Club of Madrid. She is chair of the GAVI Alliance Board. She is Honorary President of Oxfam International, and Patron of the International Community of Women Living with AIDS (ICW). She is President of the International Commission of Jurists. She serves on several boards including the Global Compact, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and the American Philosophical Society. Now based in New York, Mary Robynson is currently the President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative. Its mission is to make human rights the compass which charts a course for globalization that is fair, just and benefits all. I cannot think of a better speaker in light of the horrifying pictures coming out of Haiti every day which reveals to us all the real human cost of gross economic disparities.

In years past, we have prepared for our March speaker with book discussions. This year the Advisory Board decided to try something different. Instead of a book group, we asked President Robynson to recommend a film related to women's global rights. The film she picked, "Pray the Devil Back to Hell," is an uplifting account of the role



women played in bringing peace to Liberia. These women became activists, working across cultural and religious divides in order affect change for the sake of their children. Their story is truly inspiring. We will be hosting two separate showings of the film; we hope you are able to attend one of these showings.

In light of President Robinson's visit, we continue with our focus on women's global rights. We were presented with the opportunity to host the play "Daughters of Africa" by Mixed Blood Theatre on Feb. 8 to celebrate Black History Month. Jewish scholar Dr. Beth Kissileff will speak at our Feminist Friday in March on subversive readings of biblical traditions in support of women's rights. We are a co-sponsor of International Women's Day in March on the University of Minnesota campus. We will also be hosting Dr. Nada Shabout, an Art Historian from the University of North Texas in April, on the role art has played for Arabic

women who wish to address social inequities. We will end our year once again by co-sponsoring Take Back the Night here on our own campus in opposition to sexual violence in all of its forms. This annual event has proven to be a moving opportunity for our students to speak out against sexual violence. Please consult our calendar for a list of all of our events.

President Robinson's record on human rights often leaves me feeling ineffectual, insignificant, too steeped in my privilege. Just this past week, I was speaking to two of my board members who, like me, wake up each day thinking we should do more. It is easy to dismiss what we are attempting to do, i.e. to educate *against* unearned privilege, and educate *for* a socially just global community. This semester we will do this by listening to our elder. We invite you to join us in that effort.

— Corrine Carvalho



Holocaust Survivors to Speak on Campus

The Jay Phillips Center for Interfaith Learning will be sponsoring an evening lecture of two women reflecting on Holocaust survivors. "Stories of Serving and Surviving the Nazis: A Dialogue between Ursula Mahlendorf and Maria Segal" will be held on Wednesday, April 21, 7:30 - 9 p.m. in the Owens Science Hall Auditorium.

Ursula Mahlendorf, professor emerita of German, Slavic, and Semitic Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara drew on her own experiences and on research in teaching undergraduate and graduate students about how Germans, including German writers, deal with their Nazi past. Maria Segal, a docent for the Portraits of Survival Exhibit and one of the 37 Santa Barbara Holocaust survivors profiled in the permanent exhibit, was a small child when the Nazis invaded her home country of Poland in 1939. The only member of her family to survive the Holocaust, she speaks to many groups about her experiences during and after World War II.

In conjunction with this event, the Jay Phillips Center is teaming up with the Luann Dummer Center for Women to sponsor a book study of their two recently published memoirs—*The Shame of Survival: Working Through a Nazi Childhood* by Ursula Mahlendorf and *Maria's Story: Childhood Memories of the Holocaust* by Maria Segal—which convey two extremely different experiences of childhood during World War II.

The Jay Phillips Center will provide books for the first 12 people who commit to the book study. The study group will meet on April 7 and 14 at the Women's Center, noon – 1 p.m. The group will then have dinner with the authors and attend their public program on April 21, 7:30 p.m. in the Owens Science Hall Auditorium. The evening event is free and open to the public.



Calendar of Events

We welcome you to any or all of our programs and co-sponsored events. See the LDCW website for information on additional events and activities. (All events held at the Luann Dummer Center for Women, OEC 103, unless otherwise noted.)

March Women's History Month Lecture

President Mary Robinson

"The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Women and Children"

March 1, 7 p.m. OEC Auditorium

Other Spring Events:

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|-------------------|--|--------------|--|
| Feb. 3 | Readings of Mary Daly: A Time to Reflect, 3 - 4:30 p.m. | March 24 | Women's Studies coffee discussions, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Coffee Bené |
| Feb. 6-
Apr. 1 | "Breaking the Veils: Women Artists from the Islamic World," University of St. Catherine | March 25 | UAWE Reception for New female faculty, 3 - 5 p.m., McNeely 100 |
| Feb. 8 | "Daughters of Africa," play by Mixed Blood Theater to celebrate Black History Month, 7 p.m. OEC Auditorium | April 7 & 14 | Book discussion of Holocaust survivals, noon - 1 p.m. |
| Feb. 18 | "Pray the Devil Back to Hell," film (60 minute version) and discussion, noon - 1 p.m., OWS 150 | April 9 | ACTC Women's Studies Conference, University of St. Catherine, time TBA |
| Feb. 22 | "Pray the Devil Back to Hell," film (72 minute version) and discussion, 3 - 5 p.m. | April 16 | "The Right to Be: Arab Women Artists' Conflicts" by Nada Shabout, lecture given in conjunction with "Sabeel: Artistic Journeys from Arab Lands to America," 7 - 9 p.m., OEC Auditorium |
| Feb. 24 | Lunch at Luann's Book Club: <i>Infidel</i> by A. H. Ali, noon - 1 p.m. | April 19-23 | The Clothesline Project, Lower Quad |
| Feb. 24 | Women's Studies coffee discussions, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Coffee Bené | April 21 | Lunch at Luann's Book Club: <i>Handle with Care</i> by Jodi Picoult, noon - 1 p.m. |
| March 6 | International Women's Day: "Inspire, Act, Change!" 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Coffman Memorial Union, University of Minnesota | April 21 | "Stories of Serving and Surviving the Nazis: A Dialogue between Ursula Mahlendorf and Maria Segal" 7:30 - 9 p.m. in the Owens Science Hall Auditorium. |
| March 8-24 | Sabeel: Artistic Journeys from Arab Lands to America," Art History, OEC lobby | April 26, | Take Back the Night, 7 p.m., meet at the arches |
| March 19 | Feminist Friday: "The Way of Women is Upon Me': Underhanded Means of Addressing Marginalization in Genesis" by Beth Kissileff, scholar in residence, noon - 1 p.m. | April 30 | Women's Studies Open House and Women's Center Grant Recipients Celebration, 3:30 - 5 p.m. |
| March 24 | Lunch at Luann's Book Club: <i>Haunted Ground</i> by Erin Hart | May 19 | Lunch at Luann's Book Club: <i>Evensong</i> by Gail Godwin, noon - 1 p.m. |



Art Historian to Speak on Arab Women Artists

The Luann Dummer Center for Women is proud to sponsor a lecture by Dr. Nada Shabout on April 16 at 7 p.m. in the OEC Auditorium. Dr. Shabout's talk, "The Right to Be: Arab Women Artists' Conflicts" will explore the way that art is one avenue women have used to address human rights issues. Dr. Shabout has been a professor of Art History at the University of North Texas since 2002, teaching Arab visual culture and Islamic art. She has an impressive record of publications on modern Arab art, including the 2007 book, *Modern Arab Art: Formation of an Arab Aesthetic* (University of Florida Press). She has been working on the documentation of modern Iraqi heritage, particularly the collection previously held at the Iraqi Museum of Modern Art since her visit to Baghdad in June 2003. She has been organizing panels and presenting around the world on the state of Iraq's modern heritage following 2003, the relationship of identity and visual representations in modern and contemporary Iraqi art, and exhibitions of Middle Eastern arts in the West since 911.

This lecture is offered in connection with the spring art show offered by the Art History department. "Sabeel: Artistic Journeys from Arab Lands to America" is a juried art show of various American artists whose routes are in the Middle East (March 8-May 24). A reception with music will follow Shabout's lecture, giving attendees time to view the exhibit.

These events were developed to compliment a major art display at the University of St. Catherine, "Breaking the Veils: Women Artists from the Islamic World" (February 6-April 1). This traveling display features 51 women artists from 21 countries, including Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia and Iraq. It strives to promote mutual respect, understanding and tolerance, and to help build a culture of peace and non-violence. This is the only venue in the upper Midwest for this unique collection.

We hope you can find time to view both art exhibits, and please join us on April 16 to hear the perspective of Dr. Shabout. All events are free and open to the public.



Lunch at Luann's Book Club

The Lunch at Luann's Book Club continues this spring with a nice variety of books. Please feel free to join us for any or all of these discussions, even if you have not read the book. And remember, Lunch at Luann's happens every Wednesday, rain, sleet, snow or shine. We now have a microwave, so bring your lunch and join us for casual conversation!

February 24: *Infidel* by A. H. Ali

In this profoundly affecting memoir from the internationally renowned author of *The Caged Virgin*, Ayaan Hirsi Ali tells her astonishing life story, from her traditional Muslim childhood in Somalia, Saudi Arabia, and Kenya, to her intellectual awakening and activism in the Netherlands, and her current life under armed guard in the West. Raised in a strict Muslim family and extended clan, Hirsi Ali survived civil war, female mutilation, brutal beatings, adolescence as a devout believer during the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, and life in four troubled, unstable countries largely ruled by despots. In her early twenties, she escaped from a forced marriage and sought asylum in the Netherlands, where she earned a college degree in political science, tried to help her tragically depressed sister adjust to the West, and fought for the rights of Muslim immigrant women and the reform of Islam as a member of Parliament.

March 24: *Haunted Ground* by Erin Hart

Erin Hart brings the beauty, poignancy, mystery, and romance of the Irish countryside to her richly nuanced first novel.

Meticulously crafted and resonating with traditional music and folklore, *Haunted Ground* celebrates Ireland's turbulent history, revealing the eternal, subliminal connections between past and present in a riveting novel that heralds the arrival of a bright new crime-writing star.

April 21: *Handle with Care* by Jodi Picoult

Emotionally riveting and profoundly moving, *Handle with Care* brings us into the heart of a family bound by an incredible burden, a desperate will to keep their ties from breaking, and, ultimately, a powerful capacity for love.

May 19: *Evensong* by Gail Godwin

In a satisfying sequel to *Father Melancholy's Daughter* (1990), Godwin contemplates family ties, the prickly bonds of marriage, and the varieties of religious faith. Walter and Ruth Gower's daughter is now Margaret Bonner, 33, an Episcopal minister like her father, married to his former helpmeet Adrian Bonner. As usual with Godwin, all the characters are superbly drawn, particularly the irritating but lovable Adrian and ruthlessly manipulative Grace, who nonetheless arouses feelings of emotional kinship in Margaret. The young minister herself is a thoroughly engaging heroine whose struggles with spiritual and domestic commitment are convincingly and unpretentiously depicted.



Everyone invited to Yarn Tamers get-togethers

Yarn Tamers is an opportunity for faculty, staff, students and outside community members to spend a relaxing hour working on yarn projects, meeting new friends and colleagues and socializing. Newcomers are encouraged to stop by and join in the fun.

Each year the group works on a service project with materials funded by a small grant from the Women's Center. During the Fall 09 semester they crocheted and knitted squares that were sewn into three afghans which were donated to

Alexandra House in Blaine which provides shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

Yarn Tamers meets on Mondays from noon - 1 p.m. in Room 103, OEC in the Luann Dummer Center for Women.

Anyone can come to Yarn Tamers, even if they don't have knitting or crocheting experience. There is no formal registration; interested people can just show up to a meeting. Contact: pmalexander@stthomas.edu.



Feminist Friday in March Co-Sponsored with Jay Phillips Center

Our March Feminist Friday lecture, offered in conjunction with the Jay Phillips Center for Interfaith Learning, will be given by Dr. Beth Kissileff, scholar in residence. Her presentation is titled, "The Way of Women is Upon Me': Underhanded Means of Addressing Marginalization in Genesis."

The title of this address quotes the matriarch Rachel's challenge to her father to find the idols she has taken from his house. Dr. Kissileff will speak about how Rachel and other females in the Book of Genesis use their marginalized status to create means of acquiring alternate paths to power in a society where women are not able to access power in an official capacity.

Beth Kissileff is the author of the forthcoming novel *Questioning Return*. She is the recipient of a fellowship from the Corporation of Yaddo for work on her second novel and is editing an anthology of academic writings on the Book of Genesis. She holds a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Pennsylvania and has taught Hebrew Bible, Jewish Studies, and English literature at Carleton College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, St. Catherine University, and the University of Minnesota.



News from Triota and Women's Circle

This spring, Iota Iota Iota (also known as "Triota"), the Women's Studies Undergraduate Honor Society, and Women's Circle will be organizing the Clothesline Project and the Take Back the Night rally this April for Sexual Assault Awareness month. The Clothesline Project and the Take Back the Night rally offer a voice for survivors of violence, supporters of survivors, and advocates wishing to eliminate violence from our communities to speak out against acts of violence and assault. Any students who are interested in these events are welcome to join the planning committee.

Triota will be honoring UST's first-ever award recipients at the end of the spring semester in May. Triota honors any

student at the University of Saint Thomas having a strong interest in Women's Studies, having achieved third semester standing with at least 6 hours of Women's Studies courses, and earning a GPA of at least 3.0 in these courses. Triota is also looking for students interested in forming a team for the 2010 Susan G. Komen Twin Cities Race for the Cure in May.

Any students interested in learning more about these events or interested in joining Triota or Women's Circle should contact Amanda Sesker at aasesker@stthomas.edu for more information.



"Pray the Devil Back to Hell" - Part of March Women's History Month Events

This February, in preparation for the March Women's History Month Speaker, the Luann Dummer Center for Women will host two showings of the uplifting film, "Pray the Devil Back to Hell." This film was recommended by President Mary Robinson as a good example of global women's rights in lieu of a book discussion.

Pray the Devil Back to Hell is the gripping account of a group of brave and visionary women who demanded peace for Liberia, a nation torn to shreds by a decades-old civil war. Thousands of women — ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim — came together to pray for peace and then staged a silent protest outside of the Presidential Palace. Armed only with white T-shirts and the courage of their convictions, they demanded a resolution to the country's civil war. Their actions were a

critical element in bringing about a agreement during the stalled peace talks.

The women's historic yet unsung achievement finds voice in a narrative that intersperses contemporary interviews, archival images, and scenes of present-day Liberia together to recount the experiences and memories of the women who were instrumental in bringing lasting peace to their country.

The film will be shown twice on campus, followed by time for discussion. The first showing will be on Feb. 18, (60 minute version) from noon - 1 p.m. in the 3M auditorium on south campus (OWS 150). The second showing will be on Feb. 22 (72 minute version) from 3 - 5 p.m. in the Luann Dummer Center for Women. Both events are free and open to the public.



News from the University Advocates for Women and Equity

The University Advocates for Women and Equity (formerly University Committee on Women) will close Women's History Month with a meeting and reception on Thursday, March 325, from 3-4:30 p.m. in McNeely 100 on the St. Paul campus. This annual reception welcomes women employees new to UST in the past year. At the reception, UAWE will also present the Sister Pat Kowalski Women's Leadership Award to a UST student who has distinguished herself through her work on women's issues. The Women's

Leadership Award is dedicated in memory of Sister Pat Kowalski's spirit and work, and is given annually to a woman in the UST community. Kowalski was director of community partnerships at St. Thomas for seven years, and also initiated and facilitated programs and contacts with the broader community.

In April, UAWE will also be supporting students who wish to attend the annual Leaders of Today and Tomorrow conference sponsored by the MN League of Women Voters.

LUANN DUMMER CENTER FOR WOMEN

Hours: M - F 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Staff: Corrine L. Carvalho, Director
Pat Alexander, Administrative Assistant
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