A compelling voice in American feminism, writer Susan Faludi is one of the most astute chroniclers of the changing roles and expectations of men and women. After winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1991 as an investigative reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, Faludi “set off firecrackers across the political landscape” (*Time*) with her groundbreaking book *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*. An eloquent examination of the issues facing women today, the book was an international best-seller and winner of the 1991 National Book Critics Circle Award.

Considered a “groundbreaker” in terms of redefining gender perceptions, Susan’s thought provoking presentations challenge modern stereotypes and force people to re-evaluate their views and convictions in order to better understand and relate within the social structures of a modern society.
Bystander Intervention: What if you witnessed some form of violence? What would you do? What could you do?

A crucial element in the prevention of sexual violence is bystander intervention. We believe it is the responsibility of all people to intervene in situations where sexual violence may occur and in situations where sexual violence is being condoned.

Alan Berkowitz, one of the researchers in the field of bystander intervention, identifies four stages that are necessary for a person to intervene in any situation. First, the individual must observe and notice the situation. Second, the person must identify the situation as a problem. Third, the person must feel a sense of responsibility or obligation to do something about the problem. Finally, the individual must feel that he/she possesses the skills necessary to intervene in the situation effectively and safely.

To examine different ways to intervene, it is best to look at situations where bystander intervention would be helpful. For example, if you see a drunk student being led up to another student’s room, you could intervene and say, “It’s time for us to go now. I’m going to walk you home.” In a situation where you believe that sexual violence may occur, you can intervene directly to prevent the violence from happening by stopping the potential perpetrator and getting the potential victim out of harm’s way. Another way to intervene is to change what the perpetrator is doing by drawing attention to something else, away from a potential victim. Finally, you could talk to the perpetrator about what he or she may be doing, and the harmful consequences of his or her actions.

Bystander intervention is crucial for situations where people are expressing attitudes that help support sexual violence. You may be hanging out with a group of friends when one of them starts telling jokes about sexual assault, which may make you uncomfortable. You could intervene by talking about a different topic to draw the attention away from the jokes, or by talking with your friends about telling these jokes and why you are uncomfortable. Finally, you could also talk with your friends about why these jokes are harmful to sexual assault victims.

These types of interventions are not always easy. It takes courage to stand up to friends and family and to intervene in harmful situations. However, bystander intervention is essential to ending sexual violence. I encourage all of you to take a look at what you can do to help create a safer campus by utilizing these intervention techniques. Opportunities arise everyday to help create a safer campus by using effective responsible bystander intervention. Interventions can be very simple acts from choosing not to buy products that sexualize children to letting someone know that you do not appreciate their sexist comments or even talking with friends and family about how we can all help to create a world with less sexual violence. Go to www.alanberkowitz.com to learn more about Dr. Alan Berkowitz’ work on responsible bystander intervention.

If you have any questions, comments or other ideas about how we can all work together to end sexual violence on our campus, please feel free to email Terri DeWalt at dewa5534@stthomas.edu

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 either location and join in the fun. Members of the group are always happy to teach others the skills they know.

Each year the St. Paul group works on a service project with materials funded by a small grant from the Women’s Center. During the Fall 08 semester they crocheted and knitted squares that were sewn into seven afghans. Six of these afghans were donated to Alexandra House in Blaine which provides a shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Another afghan was given to UST’s University Relations Office to include with their donations for a family they adopted for the holidays.

Yarn Tamers – MPLS meets on Thursdays from noon - 1 p.m. in Food for Thought and Yarn Tamers – St. Paul 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. Contacts: pmalexander@stthomas.edu for St. Paul group and mkwimer@stthomas.edu for MPLS group.
Does Feminism Really Matter Any More?

No matter what our politics, many of us were moved by the inauguration of Barak Obama as the first African-American President of the United States. It represents the change we continue to experience as a nation, a society, a culture. Given that change, it seems right to ask, does feminism really matter any more? Are we in a “post-feminist” world, where questions of gender oppression ring hollow, just one more claim for special treatment? Was the disappointment some women experienced over the failure of Hilary Clinton to garner the nomination from the Democratic party simply a symptom of feminism’s essentially narrow-minded identity politics? (That’s what the McCain camp seemed to hope.) Or does a feminist critique transcend its caricatures so that it remains as relevant today as it did when our foremothers and forefathers fought for women’s right to participate in this very vote we celebrate?

The election is just one sign that we are at a point of historic change, both nationally and locally. Between the economic crisis, challenges to energy consumption, and a changing international scene, I suspect that the world our students will lead ten years from now will look quite different from the one I faced in my twenties.

I suspect St. Thomas will look quite different too. The economy will take a toll on enrollments as well as endowments. Rising health care and energy costs will continue to affect our whole community. The implementation of the revision of the core curriculum, while minor on one scale, will probably result in more curricular changes than faculty had at first anticipated. The changes in our archdiocese and in the structure of the Board of Trustees could have effects yet unanticipated. We have or will have new administrators at key positions, including the Chief Academic Officer and the Vice President of Mission. And the change in our Carnegie classification that happened several years ago still pushes us toward increased research and national prominence in order to improve our ranking. What kind of a university will we be in ten years?

As I think about these “opportunities,” I wonder what impact feminism can have on what we will become, both as a nation and as a university. Are we convinced that we are so fully post-feminist that we can trust that the world for women will be better in ten years? Or do we still need to do the heavy lifting of being vigilant for all of the ways patriarchal thinking still shapes our worlds?

Our March Women’s History Month Speaker, Susan Faludi, will help us think through these issues. Her works survey media representation of gender roles in ways that are both eye-opening and disturbing. Her ground-breaking book was *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, a book that the Women’s Center Advisory Board felt is still relevant for women’s experiences today. Her newest book, *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America*, which we have picked for our on-campus book discussions, documents the various ways that political and media response to 9/11 reinforced gender stereo-types.

Most recently, Susan Faludi remarked on the similarities between the collapse of feminism’s first wave with the backlash women still experience after the second wave in an op-ed piece that appeared in the *New York Times* following Obama’s nomination (8/26/1008):

> During the presidential race of 1924, newspapers ran headlines like “Woman Suffrage Declared a Failure.” “Ex-feminists” proclaimed their boredom with “feminist pother” and their enthusiasm for cosmetics, shopping and matrimony. The daughters of the suffrage generation were so beyond the “zealotry” of their elders, Harper’s declared in its 1927 article “Feminist — New Style,” that they could only pity those ranting women who were “still throwing hand grenades” and making an issue of “little things.”

> Those “little things” included employment equity, as a steady increase in the proportion of women in the labor force ground to a halt and stagnated throughout the ’20s. Women barely improved their representation in male professions; the number of female doctors actually declined.

> “The feminist crash of the ’20s came as a painful shock, so painful that it took history several decades to face up to it,” the literary critic Elaine Showalter wrote in 1978. Facing it now is like peering into a painful mirror. For all the talk of Hillary Clinton’s “break-
The University Advocates for Women and Equity (formerly University Committee on Women) will close Women’s History Month with a meeting and reception on Tuesday, March 31, at 3:30 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 staff member who has distinguished herself through her work on women’s issues. The Women’s Leadership Award is dedicated to the 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.

Our other programming for the semester should reinforce the need for continued “heavy lifting.” A couple of our programs will look at global women’s experience, including a panel by international women students on dating and family (Feb. 13), a Feminist in Faith session on the effects of climate change on women and children (Feb. 20), and a report on women in German history by Dr. Paul Schons (April 3). Some of our programs will be more local, including the discussion of the book Faith Club, that chronicles the interfaith dialogues of a Christian, Jewish, and Muslim women in New York after 9/11 (March 20), as well as our Take Back the Night event on April 27.

We will once again co-sponsor Challenge Day with Multicultural Student Services and Campus and Residence Life. This year our speaker will be journalist and television reporter, Lisa Ling. We will also co-sponsor with Catholic Studies Chaunie Brusie from Feminists for Life who will talk about the challenges college women face on campuses when they are pregnant.

Does feminism still matter? With pay discrepancies still documented in this country, with women and children experiencing the brunt of climate change, with elections that think women only vote on identity politics and female candidates facing undue scrutiny for their clothing, looks and tone, with a new round of the “mommy wars” in the wake of 9/11, with pressures on the university regarding our curriculum and public speakers, with undue challenges pregnant women face completing their college education, etc., etc., etc., I think the days of post-feminism are still a goal to be achieved. Feminism, that envisions a world where no one is judged by their conformity to gender categories but by the content of their character, still should matter to all of us in our post-Obama world.

— Corrine Carvalho

News from the UAWE

The University Advocates for Women and Equity (formerly University Committee on Women) will close Women’s History Month with a meeting and reception on Tuesday, March 31, at 3:30 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 staff member who has distinguished herself through her work on women’s issues. The Women’s Leadership Award is dedicated to the 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.
What's Happening at the Center

Our calendar is already filling up here at the center. 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.

March Women's History Month Speaker
Susan Faludi, “Why Feminism Still Matters”
March 3, 7 p.m. OEC Auditorium

Feminist Fridays
February 13 Love, Marriage and Dating, Panel of International Women Students
April 3 Influential German Women on the Web, Dr. Paul Schons, Modern and Classical Languages

Feminists in Faith
February 20 The Spirituality of Sustainability
March 20 A discussion of the book Faith Club
April 21 Feminism and Islam, with Dr. Fatma Reda

On-going Activities
• Yarn Tamers meets every Monday at noon. Beginners welcome!
• Lunch at Luann’s (aka Yarn Tamers without the Yarn) meets every Wednesday for brown bag lunch and informal conversation. Book club dates and readings:
  – February 25: The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America by Susan Faludi
  – March 18: “The Wife of Bath” from The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer
  – April 29: The Mists of Avalon by Marion Zimmer Bradley

Co-sponsored Events
March 19 Challenge Day with guest speaker, Lisa Ling, co-sponsored with Multicultural Student Services and Campus and Residence Life
April 15 Feminist for Life speaker, Chaunie Brusie, co-sponsored with Catholic Studies, JRC 126
April 27 Take Back the Night, co-sponsored with the Sexual Violence Prevention Programming Committee and Women’s Circle

Events of Interest
March 31 New Women Faculty/Staff Reception, 3:30 - 5 p.m., McNeely 100, UAWE
April 17 ACTC Women’s Studies Conference, to be held at the University of St. Thomas
Women's Studies Program: Upcoming Events

Women's Studies Coffee Bene discussions are back this spring! Join us for informal conversation over coffees 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 from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. February 18 and March 18. 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. On the afternoon of Friday, April 17, UST will host the third annual ACTC Women's Studies Student Conference. Come support Women's Studies students as they showcase their research and activism. With a free dinner and no registration, 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). 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.

We will also have a Women's Studies Open House in the Luann Dummer Center for Women on Friday, April 24 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.

Questions about any of these events or the Women's Studies program? Please feel free to contact me. Thanks.

Angela High-Pippert
Director of Women's Studies
405 JRC
651-962-5725
ahighpippe@stthomas.edu

Lunch (and a Book) at Luann’s

This past fall, we started a new tradition at the Center: Lunch at Luann's. This brown bag gathering initially started when Karen Badtorf noted that she wanted more time to talk about issues related to women following our discussion of Eleanor Clift's book, Madame President.

Although the group began because of discussions about national politics, we have always viewed this as an informal gathering open to faculty, staff and students. I know that Dr. Luann Dummer had hoped that the Center would become a space where people could gather for conversation, strategizing and mutual support.

Last semester some people thought this was only a group about politics. That’s not true. It is really meant to build community in all of its forms. Although Pat and I are there with our lunches from 12-1 on Wednesdays, you don’t have to be on time. Just show up, with or without lunch.

Last semester the conversation turned to the book clubs that some of us belonged to. As the conversation evolved, we decided to try our own on-campus book club. We suspect there are people on campus who find it difficult to join an evening book club because of other obligations. So once a month, lunch will focus on a different book somehow related to women.

To get us started, we have picked the first three books, but after that, the group will decide what to read. We will start off with our March Women's History Month book. That will be followed by two pieces that were dear to Luann. In March we will start with a shorter piece, “The Wife of Bath” from The Canterbury Tales. In April, we will read a longer piece of fiction, The Mists of Avalon, a novel that adds a feminist twist to the Arthurian legends. This book was the subject of one of the last papers that Dr. Dummer gave at a conference.

Please join us for lunch any Wednesday, even on book club Wednesday. See you soon!
**Feminists in Faith**

“Feminists in Faith” is a group that embraces inter-religious dialogue as a way for women to explore the relationship of their identity as women with their lives of faith. We meet once a month at the noon hour, and each session is devoted to a different topic. The group developed in partnership with WomenSpirit as well as staff at WisdomWays, the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Center and the Jay Phillips Center for Jewish-Christian Learning.

Last semester we examined feminism and Christianity as well as feminism and Judaism. The Minnesota Women’s Press featured the group in their November 25, 2008 issue.

This semester we will run three programs. The first, on Feb. 20, we will look at “The Spirituality of Sustainability.” We will view a short DVD from Oxfam that tells the stories of 4 women around the globe affected disproportionately by climate change. This will be followed by a discussion of what we can do in our own lives to live in solidarity with these women as a kind of spiritual exercise.

The second meeting will take place on March 20. At this gathering, we invite people to have read the popular book, *The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew – Three Women Search for Understanding* by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver, and Priscilla Warner. This book chronicles the conversations of these three women living in New York City after the attacks on 9/11.

For our third meeting, Dr. Fatma Reda will talk about Feminism and Islam, a talk we had to postpone from the Fall semester. She will join us on April 21.

All of these events are open to the public. They are held at the Women’s Center from noon - 1 p.m. Parking vouchers are available for those coming from off campus. If you would like to be on the email list for this group, please contact Pat Alexander (pmalexander@stthomas.edu).

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**The Clothesline Project and Take Back the Night**

For the third year in a row, students are working with the Women’s Center to host Take Back the Night on the last Monday night in April. This event is designed to raise awareness of sexual assault by asking people to imagine a world where everyone would be safe on the streets, even at night. The event includes a march, rally and “speak-out,” followed by fun snacks and a time to reflect.

Each year our crowd grows, and, each year, participants remark what a powerful experience it has been for them. This event is not just for survivors of sexual assault, but for all of us whose lives are impacted daily by the prevalence of gender-based violence in our society. It is a time for empowerment and activism in the face of this violence.

One of the things that makes UST’s celebration of the night has been the number of men who have participated in the march. We continue to recognize that men’s lives, as well as women’s, are impacted by this violence, and that men play a key role in working for social change.

This year, our student committee will host “The Clothesline Project” in the week leading up to Take Back the Night. The Clothesline Project is a program started on Cape Cod, MA, in 1990 to address the issue of violence against women. It is a vehicle for women affected by violence to express their emotions by decorating a shirt. They then hang the shirt on a clothesline to be viewed by others as testimony to the problem of violence against women.

The students will have shirts available for decoration before the event, so that they can be hung in a public space before Take Back the Night. Shirts can be decorated by survivors of violence, but also by those of us who have a loved one, friend, or family member affected by violence.

For more information, visit the website at www.clotheslineproject.org. If you want to help plan this event, contact Dr. Corrine Carvalho (clcarvalho).
Feminists for Life Speaker Coming to Campus

What would it be like to be a pregnant or parenting student on the St. Thomas campus? That is the question that the organization, Feminists for Life, asks. On April 15, the Women’s Center, with the support of Catholic Studies, is bringing Ms. Chaunie Saelens Brusie to campus to talk about the challenges she faced as a pregnant college student. As the founder and leader of her student activist group, Chaunie worked to create support for pregnant and parenting students like herself on campus.

Feminists for Life, established in 1972, seeks solutions to the challenges that pregnant women, especially students, face. They believe that women should not have to choose between getting an education and having a child, and that often abortion is the result of society failing to meet the needs of women. They base their programs on the feminist principles of justice, nondiscrimination and non-violence.

In recent years, FFL has focused on lobbying at the state and national level for programs that support pregnant and parenting women. In addition, they conduct a college outreach program, helping students work for better university policies to support pregnant and parenting students. FFL points out that many women do not feel that they have a choice to keep their child when faced with unjust policies and economic burdens.

For more information about Feminists for Life, visit their webpage at www.feministsforlife.org.