



VOICES

MARCH 2018

LETTER FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND FORMER WRITING INTERN

To have a voice is one of the most powerful things one can have in this world. The ability to convey our thoughts and opinions to others is how revolutions start, how stereotypes are torn down, and how equity is pushed to the forefront of everyone's mind. Our society is in the middle of a cultural revolution. For the first-time people are being honest about their experiences, sexism is being combated, sexual assault is being acknowledged, and most importantly, *talked about*. Talked about by people who may not have even considered it as a prevalent issue. The world is changing, seeds have been planted by women that came before us, and now those seeds are growing roots, and those roots are growing flowers. As a Center, we stand by this change with the hope that equity will win, and equality will prosper.

By: Katie DePalma and Jackie Nappo

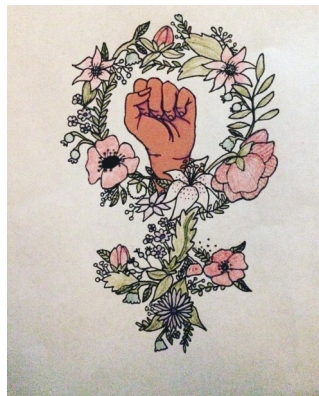


Photo One

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

By: Kathleen Holgerson

Katie and Jackie lead off this edition with their comments on the power of our voices and the metaphor we use a lot at the Center about education as planting seeds. Nationally, there has been an outpouring of people using their voice (#MeToo, [the Crowd Counting Consortium's recording of more than 8,700 protest in the U.S. through the end of 2017](#), and more recently the wave of students who walked out of class to honor the victims of the mass shooting in Parkland, Florida and to protest gun violence.) And yet, in many one-on-one conversations, I've been struck by the various ways in which silencing or minimizing one's voice shows up. It starts as simply as the "I'm sorry" habit many women display. The tendency to apologize for everything—sometimes even apologizing for apologizing. I've often joked about setting up a jar for a quarter for every time someone at the Center offers an extraneous apology. I'm convinced we could build an entire wing on the building with the proceeds.

Making this visible to our staff and colleagues actually takes up more time than you would expect. And while noting when this happens is a start, we need to ground that in the literature that explains concepts of internalized sexism. Some recent examples include the discussion we had at a student staff meeting in early February and a workshop for women student athletes we co-developed with the Student-Athlete Success Program (SASP) for National Women and Girls in Sports Day entitled *Claim Your Game*.

I've also noticed the self-silencing that happens when we are struggling with difficult conversations. Common themes include not wanting to hurt the person's feelings; being afraid of offending someone; or feeling inadequate to participate or ask for help. For each one of these folks it seems personal—as if they are the only ones. Part of the work of the Center is to give our community language and experience to deal with the personal and to understand what is happening in the context of the institutional. What on face value appears as one person's internal dialogue can, and should, be grounded in concepts such as gendered socialization, privilege, and internalized oppression.

(Continued on p. 3)

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Continued from page 2

While planting seeds is a start—as an amateur gardener I know—it doesn’t end there. In order to cultivate strong roots and flowers, it takes more. Plants can’t grow without both the sun and the rain. Their health depends on the health of the ecosystem of insects, soil, and animals around them. Simple and complex technologies are used to enhance and sustain plants during their growth cycle. If we are committed to education as a means of social change, we must tend to the whole enterprise. How do we ensure that we leverage support and challenge; understand how our community is the sum of its parts; and give people the tools to needed for the practice of education and change?

In this edition, you can read about many of the programs and people affiliated with the Center. Consider it a peek through the window of the gender equity tool shed that’s working to tend to our patch of seeds here at UConn.



Women’s Center Associate Director, Kathy Fischer, Graduate Assistant, Alex Dutro-Maeda, and former Women’s Center staff member, Mary Olmsted at the Women’s March in Hartford/Photo Two

THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

By: Jackie Nappo



Photo Three

Photo Four

Last semester, the Women's Center set up the Clothesline Project on Fairfield Way. The Clothesline Project is a non-governmental organization founded in 1990. It started when a group of women in Cape Cod, Massachusetts realized the number of women who were killed by men who claimed to love them was almost as high as the number of soldiers killed in the Vietnam War.

These startlingly high statistics motivated the women to create an unprecedented way to educate others on the crimes against women that take place daily in the United States. One of the women, Rachel Carey-Harper, a visual artist, decided that a unique way to draw attention to their cause would be to hang shirts on a clothesline in a public place. Each woman decorated the shirt with words and art that expressed their experiences. (Continued on p. 5)



Photo Five

THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

Continued from page 4

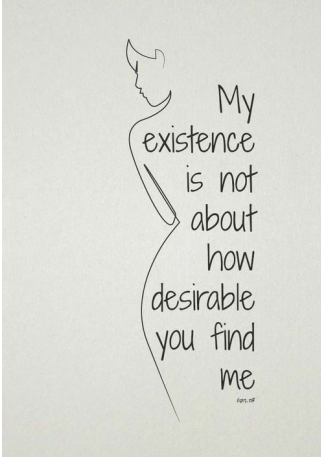


Photo Six



Photo Seven

“I am passionate about raising awareness about domestic violence because I feel that college students are in a vulnerable time in their life where they can enter emotionally and physically violent relationships without fully understanding what is happening to them,” says Banu Bayraktar, a facilitator for the Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) at the Women’s Center.

Bayraktar and other Women’s Center staff tabled on Fairfield Way in front of the clothesline, which was full of t-shirts that were decorated by UConn students to raise awareness of relationship and domestic violence.

“It is a passive event,” says Alyssa Marini, another VAWPP Facilitator. “People can walk by and view the shirts at their own pace.”

There are currently Clothesline Projects in 41 states and five countries, ranging from its origin home in Massachusetts, all the way to Tanzania.



Photo Eight

**“DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS
THE FRONT LINE OF THE
WAR AGAINST WOMEN,”
PEARL CLEAGE**

BETWEEN WOMEN

By: Jackie Nappo

Between Women has been a Women's Center staple since our herstory began in the 1970s. It has, however, evolved quite a bit to become the force it is today. It started out as a group for gay men only, called Gay Raps. Eventually, it turned into Gay and Lesbian Raps before turning into the Lesbian Alliance, and eventually, Between Women.

Currently, Between Women is a group that meets on Thursdays from 6 to 8 pm and is open to anybody who identifies as a woman on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum. Each week has a different theme that guides the discussion and activity of the night. Not to mention-there is almost always free food!

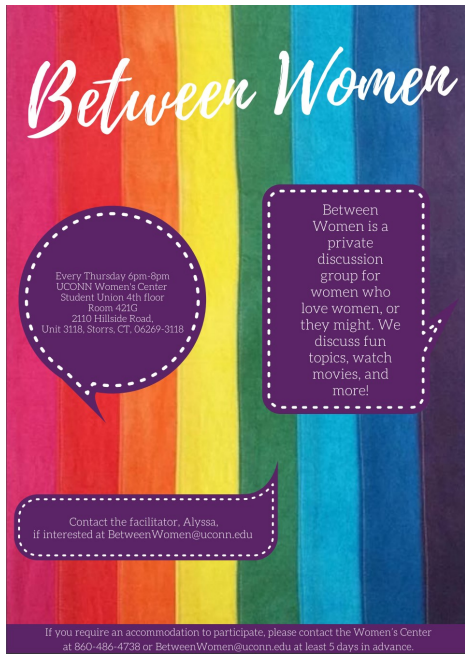


Photo Nine

"I hope that the things we talk about make people feel more confident about themselves in the moment, but also look back at the group and see how it opened their eyes about representation and how to react to homophobia," comments Between Women facilitator, Alyssa Marini. (Continued on p. 7)

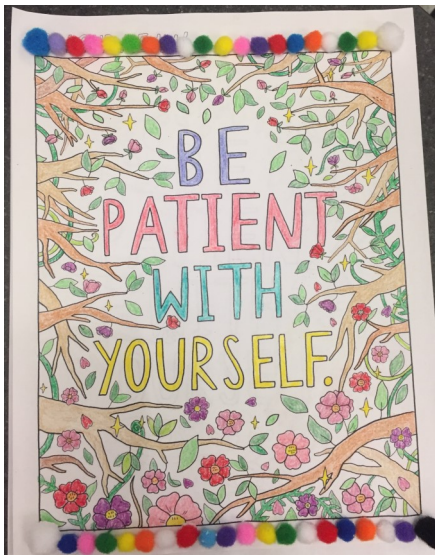


Photo Ten



Photo Eleven

BETWEEN WOMEN

Continued from page 6

Marini's goal in planning and organizing the meetings is that queer and questioning women will find a sense of community and self in the group. "A lot of people who come to this group and don't know anyone else who they can relate to. They may not know anyone else who is asexual, but they come and find people they can relate to."

Beyond finding people they can identify with, Marini hopes that the group will provide a platform for women to work through how it felt for them to get to the point in their life that they are currently at. Discussions about coming out, gender roles, and safety in the LGBTQIA+ community are prevalent during meetings. The goal is to give people the opportunity to be honestly and candidly themselves.

"It's interesting to work through how people feel and how society wants them to pick a label. 'Why do you feel like you label yourself?'" Marini asks. "Definitely people who are questioning themselves should come, or just people who want more friends in the queer community," Marini concludes.

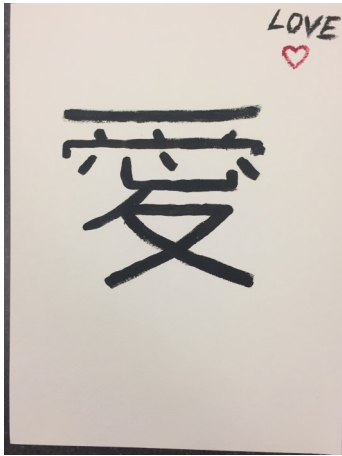


Photo Twelve



Photo Thirteen

Artwork in photos ten-
thirteen courtesy of
Between Women members

GIRLS

COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER

WOMEN

EMPOWER ONE ANOTHER

Photo Fourteen

THE MEN'S PROJECT

By: Katie DePalma

MEN'S PROJECT

Photo Fifteen

The Men's Project is an ongoing group sponsored by the Women's Center and the Asian American Cultural Center. It is an eleven week discussion group facilitated by Women's Center staff members Craig Alejos and Rhys Hall. The program is held in each spring semester and is open to anyone who identifies as a man. The focus of the Men's Project is socialized masculinity, how men interact with women, and perceptions of one's masculinity.

"We have many intersections regarding race, gender roles, sexuality and how this relates. We also focus on gender-based violence, what it means to be a bystander, things that we can do to combat gender-based violence, but more so what we can do as men in STEM or other highly dominating fields on campus to be different. To say, 'hey we do not have to be like that,'" comments Craig Alejos.

2018 marks the tenth anniversary of the Men's Project. During the spring semester, film screenings and collaborations with other programs will be held to view projects that pertain to masculinity. Debriefing sessions will be held afterwards to discuss and process the films. Movies for the this semester include, "The Mask You Live In" and "Tough Guise." (Continued on p. 9)



Photo Sixteen

THE MEN'S PROJECT

Continued from page 8

According to Alejos, the purpose of the Men's Project is, "Trying to educate men about their own masculinity. As men we do not question the birthright we have been given with our identity. We talk about the bird cage of oppression. A sub goal is becoming an ally to feminists. This is something we want them to come to on their own after our comprehensive discussion. Often times we see men become more active after the program because they are able to come to their own understanding with time."

The goal of the Men's Project is teaching men skills and providing them with knowledge about their own masculinity. It is about teaching them feminist literature and encouraging them to use this knowledge in their own lives.

"Through the Men's Project, we hope participants can take the experiences, observations, and knowledge shared within the space to develop new ways of thinking, methods, and practices to eliminate the disproportionate power balance men possess in this country, from a structural to an interpersonal level," says Rhys Hall co-facilitator of the Men's Project.

What is masculinity? Why does it matter? Come join us at...

MEN'S PROJECT

Open to (but not limited):
All UConn Students Who Identify As Men

Topics Include:
Socialized Masculinity (The Bro Code) •
Influences of Media • Masculine Intersectionality •
Emotional Openness • Sexuality & Homophobia •
Interpersonal Violence • Continuum of Harm •
Gender-Based Violence • Bystander Intervention

When & How Long:
Spring Semester
Weekly 2-Hour Meetings
Date & Time TBD

Important Dates:
12/1/17 – Applications Due
12/15/17 – Notification of Acceptance
Week of 1/29/18 – Program Begins

For More Information:
Rhys Hall or Craig Alejos
mensproject@uconn.edu
860-486-4738
womenscenter.uconn.edu

If you require an accommodation to participate in this program, please contact the Women's Center at 860-486-4738 or womenscenter@uconn.edu at least 5 days in advance.




Photo Seventeen

IN FULL COLOR

By: Jackie Nappo



Photo Eighteen



Photo Nineteen



Photo Twenty

On November 13th, the Women's Center brought the theatrical performance, "In Full Color," to UConn this semester. "In Full Color" celebrates women of color through monologues and poetry by writers from New York to California.

The event was held in Konover Auditorium in the Dodd Center on campus. It is described as similar to *The Vagina Monologues*, but focused on the experiences of women of color existing within white culture.

"It's this cool concept of using theatre to portray the human experience and helps people understand where others are coming from by telling their story," says Stephanie Goebel, Outreach Committee Chair for the Women's Center.

In addition to the monologue performances, there was a half hour set aside at the end for discussion and questions. Here, the audience was able to share how they related to certain parts of the stories and share some of their stories, as well.

"I think it's important to hold these events because it communicates inequality on a more human level," says Goebel. "People are able to empathize with a cause when they can see injustice, and that's what makes theatre so compelling."

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE A REMARKABLE FEMINIST?

By: Katie DePalma

By the Newsletter Editor and the Writing Intern's definition, a remarkable feminist is defined as someone who upholds women's rights to equality, education, employment, and power. A remarkable feminist is someone who understands the patriarchy and actively works to combat it by furthering themselves and in turn influencing others. These young people are actively working to change the world in which we live. To Jackie and me, this section is specifically important as a new addition to the newsletter because identifying these individuals will allow others to learn how they too can promote empowerment and strength within the feminist community. In addition, this section focuses exclusively on Women's Center staff so as to show the importance our Center places on hiring people who promote feminist values in and out of the workplace. For the February issue of the newsletter, we have selected our Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) Administrative Assistant, Feny Rasanía and our co-Men's Project Facilitator, Rhys Hall. (Continued on p. 12)



Photo Twenty-one

REMARKABLE FEMINIST FENY RASANIA

Continued from page 11



Photo Twenty-two

Feny Rasania is a senior Pathobiology major with a minor in Molecular and Cell Biology at UConn. She aspires to be an Immunologist or Oncologist and recently got into New York Institute of Technology (NIYT) Medical School. Rasania is the Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) Administrative Assistant at the Women's Center. She exemplifies what it means to be a remarkable feminist through her activism and experience as a UConn student in STEM .

At UConn, Rasania took action against the lack of emphasis of the STEM field on campus and proposed the UConn *STEMTalk Magazine*. She proposed this idea and was awarded a \$4,000 IDEA grant to start the magazine, which is student run, and aims to promote research, news, and opportunities on campus, specifically targeted towards women in the STEM field.

For this feature, Rasania took part in a loosely structured interview with our Newsletter Editor. The interview aimed to show how Rasania actively furthers women's rights through her involvement outside of the Women's Center. In addition, it shows how she has succeeded as a women in the STEM field and how her empowerment and perseverance can be used as an example to all women aspiring towards a career in the STEM field.

(1) What is your future career plan?

"I want to work as an Immunologist or Oncologist. This past summer I worked at UConn Health Center as a Research Assistant in a lab working on cancer T cell based immunotherapy and also released my first publication. As a physician, I want to focus on educating patients regarding what is actually going on in their bodies, as opposed to simply formulating a diagnosis. I hope to empower my patients to learn to take care of their physical and mental health through education." (Continued on p. 13)

REMARKABLE FEMINIST FENY RASANIA

Continued from page 12

(2) What advice do you have for Women in STEM majors?

“There is one thing women in STEM have in common: we are able to observe the world around us in a way that most people can't see. We have the ability to look at another person and embrace all the chemical and biological processes happening within; we can see the impact of technology all over campus on computers, laptops, and iPads and be able to comprehend the intricate details of how they work. With our knowledge of STEM, the world around us comes alive. My advice for women in STEM majors is to never lose the inquisitiveness, passion, and curiosity, which are the core reasons for why students choose these fields. If you feel disheartened about a grade, understand that a number does not define your dedication to STEM. The best thing I did is to look for a female mentor excelling in their career or path, either a professor or an elder student. I joined the WiMSE Learning Community in which two empowering, powerful, confident UConn female professors helped me in my personal and academic issues, guiding me towards the right path for me. I joined the WiSTEM Program of the Women's Center, which introduced me to a senior UConn student. Hearing about her achievements and hardships made me realize that I could do the same. These women taught me that nothing is impossible. They also gave me the confidence to take scraps of a loose idea and turn it into something of worth that benefits the community, which is *STEMTalk Magazine*.”

(3) What do you think we can do as a society to encourage young women towards pursuing a high powered career?

“As a society, we can encourage young women towards pursuing a high powered career by building strong leaders, teachers, and mentors who would encourage the younger generation to reach high for their dreams. Educational programs regarding the gender gap in the STEM fields for teachers and professors and plans of action should be discussed. In grades K-12, programs should be integrated into the curriculum which encourages all students to entice their curious minds through developing a hypothesis, conducting experiments, and formulating an analysis. For many students, it seems overwhelming and they shy away from research or coming up with their own questions/ideas because they believe that what they think can't make a difference. Actually, it does. With a rough idea or proposal, all it requires is more thinking and more research. If our teachers encouraged us to think beyond the textbook, it would benefit society in tremendous ways.” (Continued on p. 14)

REMARKABLE FEMINIST RHYS HALL

Continued from page 13

Rhys Hall is a UConn graduate student in the Master's/Ph.D. program with a concentration in Sociology. This semester he is a Teaching Assistant for Sociology of Health 3451, as well as a new addition to the Women's Center as co-facilitator for the Men's Project.

Hall first got involved with the Women's Center through previous facilitation opportunities. These opportunities included question and answer facilitation for UConn's Jessie Lauder and Wade Davis talks. During the Wade Davis talk, Hall met Lauren Donais, our Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) Coordinator, who told him about the aim of the Men's Project. He saw this as a good fit for himself and applied, and the rest, as they say, is history.



Photo Twenty-three

For this feature Hall took part in a loosely structured interview with our Newsletter Editor. The goal of this interview was to show Hall as an example of a Remarkable Feminist, who is working towards making a difference in the UConn community, through not only the Men's Project, but in his own daily life. Hall represents an ally, a feminist, and a human being with the power to make his voice heard.

(1) What is feminism to you?

"On a very widespread level, it is anti-sexist work, centered around working to prevent violence towards women and the silencing of female voices. For me personally, as a cis-heteronormative man, it is taking feminist literature, specifically the words I have learned, and putting them into practice. It is checking my words and my literature and being held accountable for all levels of misogyny across the spectrum, going from violence to talking-talking to other men and not talking above other women." (Continued on p. 15)

REMARKABLE FEMINIST
RHYS HALL

Continued from page 14

(2) How do you work to instill feminist values and equality in young men today?

“Personal dialogue. Perhaps the place I see the most change is through subtle checks based off the place and the setting I am in. I am also an instructor; I have been a facilitator; I have run clubs; and this is where I can teach what I have learned to others based off of who I learned it from.”

(3) What do you think is the benefit of the label ‘feminist’?”

“It puts a name on the action. It distinguishes, but it also can make groups and can bring people together.”

(4) In your opinion, why is the patriarchy so ingrained within society? What strategies can we use to change that?

“It is so ingrained because for as long as there has been recorded time men have posited their strengths to dominate society, dominate women and privilege men. When civilization (colonialism) came about and we ‘colonized’ the patriarchy was established. Men must step aside, maybe do not volunteer in class 100 times, listen more, and speak on what you have heard.”

WOMEN’S ADVANCE CONFERENCE:
SAVE THE DATE

The UConn Women’s Advance Conference is taking place May 9, 2018 at the Greater Hartford Campus, Infinity Hall from 8:30-4:30 PM.

The theme of this year's conference is Collective Persistence and Resistance. Our keynote speaker will be Susan Campbell, distinguished lecturer at the University of New Haven’s Department of Communication, Film and Media Studies, columnist for the *Hartford Courant*, and award winning author.

We invite all UConn staff, faculty and graduate students to attend the conference as it will be a great opportunity to learn skills that will help provide a more inclusive university community, where people of all races, genders, and ethnicities feel welcome and supported.

For more information visit <https://womenscenter.uconn.edu>. Registration for the event will be opening April 2nd.

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK (NEDA)

By: Katie DePalma

Eating disorders are an unspoken killer. As a society, we are not taught to recognize what an eating disorder is and surround young men and women with images of unrealistic, thin ideals depicted in the media. Due to the pressure to be thin, 30 million Americans will struggle with eating disorders throughout their lives and millions more suffer from body dissatisfaction and negative body image.

2018 National Eating Disorders Awareness Week (NEDA) was February 26th to March 2nd. To show our support for the millions suffering from eating disorders and spread awareness, the UConn Women's Center co-sponsored a panel with Active Minds on February 26 at the UConn Women's Center.

We invited Walden Behavioral Care to participate and speak at the panel. They led a discussion and Q&A regarding eating disorders. The panel included several mental health counselors that shared their experiences and knowledge of eating disorders, prevention, and recovery.

According to the Women's Center's Programming Committee Co-Chair, Kiana Akhundzadeh, "Through this panel, we hope to educate others and begin to reduce the stigma that exists around eating disorders. Many are afraid to openly discuss these disorders and the harsh realities that surround them and that is a major problem! There are too many people experiencing this, which is why it's necessary to have this conversation." (Continued on p. 17)



Photo Twenty-four



Photo Twenty-five

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK (NEDA)

Continued from page 16

This statement shows the importance of educating people regarding eating disorders and raising awareness about the commonality of eating disorders and how, by talking about them, we can start to combat them.

Akhundzadeh highlights this through her assertion, “We want to ensure that everyone is comfortable discussing eating disorders, and that we are helping bring informed education to UConn's campus for anyone that wants to learn.”



Photo Twenty-six

ELECT HER

By: Katie DePalma

Elect Her

UConn WOMEN WIN

U.S. Congress in 2017:

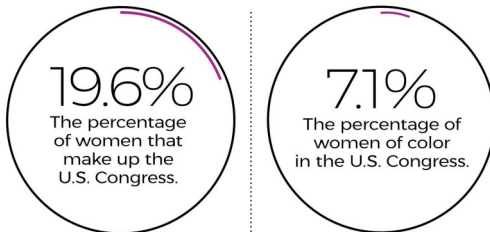
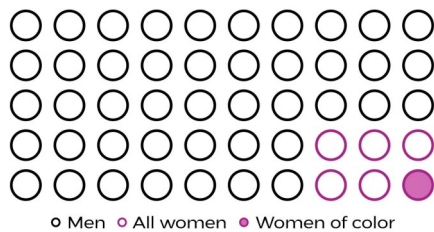


Photo Twenty-seven

Elect Her is a program sponsored by Running Start that is implemented across United States' college campuses. It is geared towards educating young women on how to successfully run for student government at their university. The overarching goal of the program is to encourage young women to pursue positions in government office after they graduate college. This is specifically salient for young college aged women because research has shown that women who run for student body elections in college are in turn more likely to run for United States government positions.

U.S. Governors in 2017:



○ Men ○ All women ● Women of color

Photo Twenty-eight

This year on the UConn campus, Elect Her was held on Friday, February 9 at the UConn Women's Center. The four hour long workshop aimed to teach women how to challenge a campaign sphere, that is dominated by men; produce an effective, well received message pertaining to their own future campaigns; and how to ultimately win their campaign. The specific focus of the training is to increase the amount of women of color who serve on the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and other higher level executive positions both on and off campus.

The event also allows UConn students to meet successful women politicians and advocates. This year the event's keynote speaker was Connecticut State Senator Mae Flexer. Flexer was sworn into the state senate in January 2015, and prior to this she served three terms in the Connecticut House of Representatives, representing Killingly and Plainfield. In 2017, Flexer was appointed Deputy President Pro Tempore and Federal Relations Liaison. (Continued on p. 19)

ELECT HER

Continued from page 18

Senator Flexer is a well known advocate for violence against women. She specifically supported *An Act Concerning Sexual Assault, Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus*. This act mandated college campuses provide services to sexual assault victims, organize sexual assault policies, and report incidents to the state General Assembly and was made effective in July 2014. In 2017, Flexer worked with Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence to try to combat dual arrests in sexual assault cases by instituting policy changes and mandating a dual arrest/self defense training for all officers, who train incoming officers on domestic violence laws.

Elect Her is working towards changing the negative stigma associated with women in positions of political power and empowering college age women to have the confidence to run for office and win. UConn senior, Esther Yoon attended the 2018 Elect Her event and commented, "I attended the event because I'm interested in running for office someday in the future, and I learned the power of networking and empowering women to help build each other up."

Elect Her allows women to successfully enter the political sphere and win, it speaks to the empowerment of women for current and future generations.



Photo Twenty-nine

WORKS WE RECOMMEND:
FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY

By: Jackie Nappo

Today, there is an endless amount of literature online about what feminism is. Every celebrity, every movement, and every action is accompanied by thousands of people drawing their own conclusions about whether or not he/she/they embodies true feminism.

It was this same issue that motivated Gloria Jean Watkins, better known by her pen name of bell hooks, to write *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* in 2000. She describes her motive early on by saying she had for “so long” wished there could be one manual that discusses the ins and the outs of what feminism means and what it is and how to practice it. Luckily for us, she did just that.

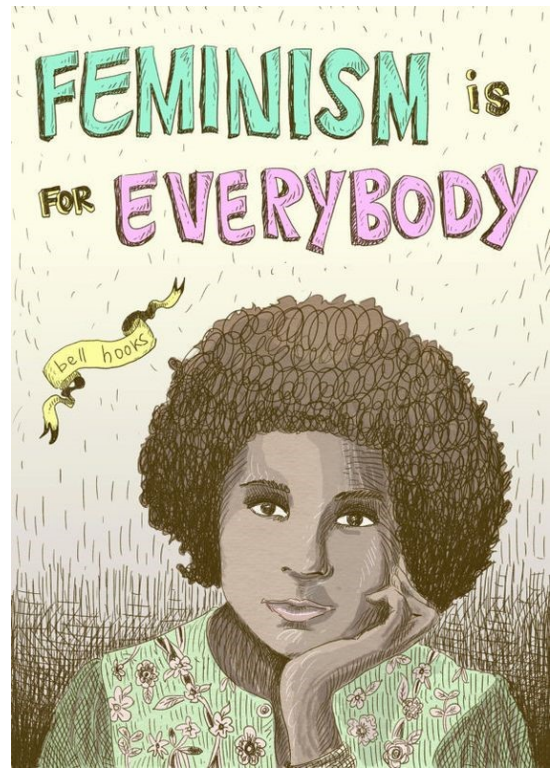


Photo Thirty

Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics is an expansive and *all* inclusive dive into the world of the feminist movement. While it sounds like it may be complicated and full of stipulations, it all boils down to one point: feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.

hooks addresses stigmas associated with feminism from *all* societal lenses. She talks about the problems of “white feminism” and how the movement began by bringing issues to white, cisgender, heterosexual women to the forefront of societal conversation. She shows us how black women and lesbians helped the movement prosper, and how we can and must make sure their voices are heard in the movement as well.

The book approaches an entire yarn ball of thought and leaves the reader with one untangled thread. She promotes the concepts of sisterhood, intersectionality and self serving feminism. It was a mandatory read for all Women’s Center staff, and it is a must-read for all people who have ever identified as “anti-sexist.”

WORKS WE RECOMMEND:
THE NOT-RAPE EPIDEMIC

By: Katie DePalma

Have you ever had an experience with someone that wasn't necessarily rape, but was something you didn't ask for and something you definitely didn't want? Have you ever sat with your friends and in hushed, almost whispers told them how you were taken advantage of? Have you blamed yourself for what happened to you and thought of every excuse and reason in the book for why it was your fault? Have some of you even considered what happened to you was a form of sexual assault, or is sexual violence against women so normalized in our day and age that we don't even notice when it is perpetuated against us? If you can answer yes to some or all of these questions, you are a victim of "not rape."

The Not Rape Epidemic is an article by Latoya Peterson that holistically discusses rape culture and how acts of sexual violence may not necessarily be rape, but they are signs of ingrained rape culture. According to Peterson, "Rape was something we could identify, an act with a strict definition and two distinct scenarios. Not rape was something else entirely." The strict definition of rape means sexual penetration, which does not account for other forms of sexual assault that can be equally as damaging- in other words "not rape." "Not rape" is the pressure girls feel to give their virginity away to older boyfriends, it is groping, it is the sexualization of young girls, it is slut shaming, and it is non-consensual sexual activity of any kind.

Almost all women and some men will experience a form of "not rape" throughout their lives. However, it often feels like there is no one for these victims to tell about their experiences. This how rape culture is perpetuated within our society. We teach young girls that it is their fault if they are sexually assaulted, that if they had not put themselves into the situation, if they had worn something different, if they had just said no then they wouldn't have been assaulted. We live in a society where the assumption is always that the woman did something wrong, that she is at fault. In a culture with ideologies like that, women will continue to be oppressed by a system working against them.

However, that does not mean there is nothing we can do about "not rape." We can fight, we can share our stories, we can legitimize our own "not rape" by taking a stand against sexual violence. We can forgive ourselves and use advocacy as an alternative to shame. Our Center works to promote gender equity and ending the violence against women through events like Lunafest, Take Back the Night, and The Clothesline Project. There are allies all around us, we just need to look for them.

TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR STAFF

"I love how we all support each other in the work we do at the Women's Center, in and out of the Center."

-Tahreem Ali, *Marketing Committee Chair*

"I love the Women's Center because I have met so many amazing individuals here who have opened my eyes to so many issues surrounding gender equity that I never would have considered. It is just such an inspiring place to work."

-Katie DePalma, *Newsletter Editor*

"I love working with people who make me laugh and think at the same time, and who I feel so comfortable around!"

-Miranda Garcia, *VAWPP Facilitator*

"I love that I am always learning from the people around me. This group always makes me feel comfortable enough to admit 'I don't know.'"

-Steph Goebel, *Outreach Committee Chair* (Continued on p. 23)



WE RISE
BY LIFTING
OTHERS

Photo Thirty-one

TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR STAFF

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“I love that it’s a place where there is always someone around who shares my values, who I can talk to about anything feminism related or not. Everyone is just so warm and open to conversation and learning.”

-Jenny Giri, *Internal Relations Committee Co-chair and VAWPP Facilitator*

“I love that so many individuals with such different stories and backgrounds come together here to form a family with similar goals for the world we live in.”

-Kavya Katugam, *WiSTEM Program Coordinator*

“I love that we are all able to learn from one another and grow as feminists.”

-Alexa Lugo, *Programming Committee Co-chair*

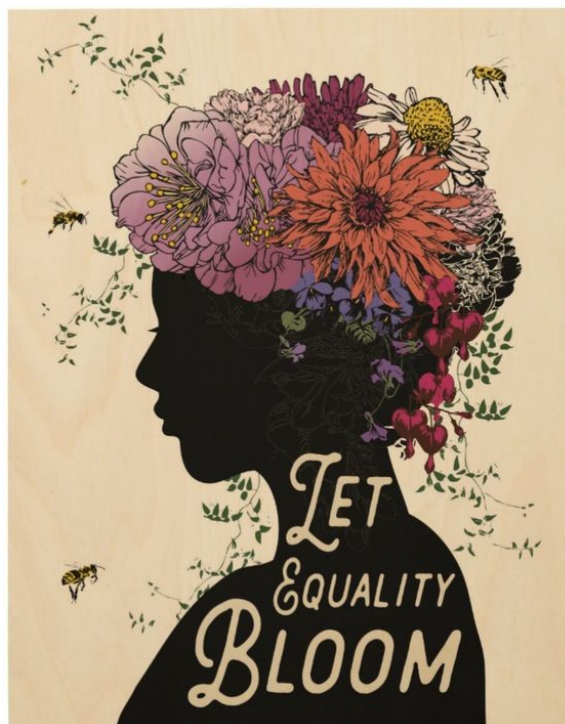


Photo Thirty-two

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