
LUANN DUMMER CENTER FOR WOMEN 2021-2022 THEME: WOMEN AND THE PANDEMIC

Throughout our fall programs, a common thread consistently returned to our theme *Women and the Pandemic*. From Jeanelle Austin's strong but gentle tending of the George Floyd Memorial to Savannah Ellison's research on the global economy's disproportionate reliance on women caretakers to the various literature explored in our Book Circles, emerged a delicate and interlinking touchstone of *empathy*.

This International Women's Day, we are honored to host our Women's History Month speaker *Leslie Jamison*, author of *The Empathy Exams*.

"Leslie Jamison's visceral and revealing essays ask essential questions about our basic understanding of others. By confronting pain—real and imagined, her own and others'—Jamison uncovers a personal and cultural urgency to *feel*."*

Please join us in March, and throughout the spring, as we continue to honor and explore the intricacies of *Women and the Pandemic*.



A magazine of the University of St. Thomas Luann Dummer Center for Women, the University Advocates for Women and Equity, and the WGSS Program

MAKING WAVES

SEPTEMBER WITH JEANELLE AUSTIN

HEALING THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF PAIN AND HOPE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM CARETAKING THE GEORGE FLOYD MEMORIAL

Jeanelle Austin grew up two blocks from 38th & Chicago Ave in Minneapolis. She was home visiting family over Memorial Day weekend when George Floyd was murdered in her neighborhood. Her caretaking of his Memorial began simply, straightening protest signs and picking up various debris, continued with conversations with neighbors and community members, and grew as she found homes for the many, many offerings brought to honor and mourn the loss of George Floyd.



The George Floyd Memorial is now the longest standing protest in the nation.

As reflected by the standing-room-only crowd, many members of the St. Thomas community were eager to hear about Jeanelle's experience and to learn how to build sustainable community. "Get to know *your* neighbors," Jeanelle advised. **"The people are far more sacred than the memorial itself."**



OCTOBER WITH ANGELA TWO STARS

RIPPLE EFFECTS: RECLAIMING THE NARRATIVE AND HONORING A LEGACY



Gretchen Burau
Executive Fellow
Director of the American
Museum of Asmat Art

Every semester, students in my Explorations in Art History course analyze works made by contemporary Native American artists as we discuss local issues related to the legacy of colonialism, boarding schools, and missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW). Rapanui filmmaker, Sergio Rapu, spoke with my Pacific Arts class last spring and first introduced me to Angela after I learned they were working on a documentary about MMIW. Angela later offered to share her knowledge and experiences with our St. Thomas community. We decided it would be ideal for her to visit in October during my Native American unit and when **her piece, *Okciyapi (Help Each Other)*, was scheduled to be unveiled at the Walker Art Center.**

As news of her visit spread, other departments became involved and I discovered that LDCW grant recipient, Mara Rhoden, was researching MMIW and Line 3. Angela agreed to be interviewed by Mara and take questions from St. Thomas art history students before her presentation.



Angela Two Stars
Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (Dakota Nation),
All My Relations Arts Director,
Public Artist, & Curator

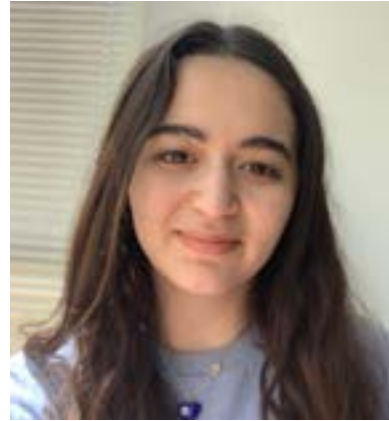
I am still reflecting on Angela's efforts to promote healing and change by elevating Indigenous voices, which is something I hope to do with our Asmat collection at St. Thomas. I was deeply moved by the way she connected people, language, and land. She went beyond her ancestral connections to locations like Bde Maka Ska by noting that this is her spiritual home. It is Mni Sota Mackoce.



LDCW Undergraduate Fellow Mara Rhoden and art history graduate students meet with Angela Two Stars.

NOVEMBER WITH SAVANNAH ELLISON

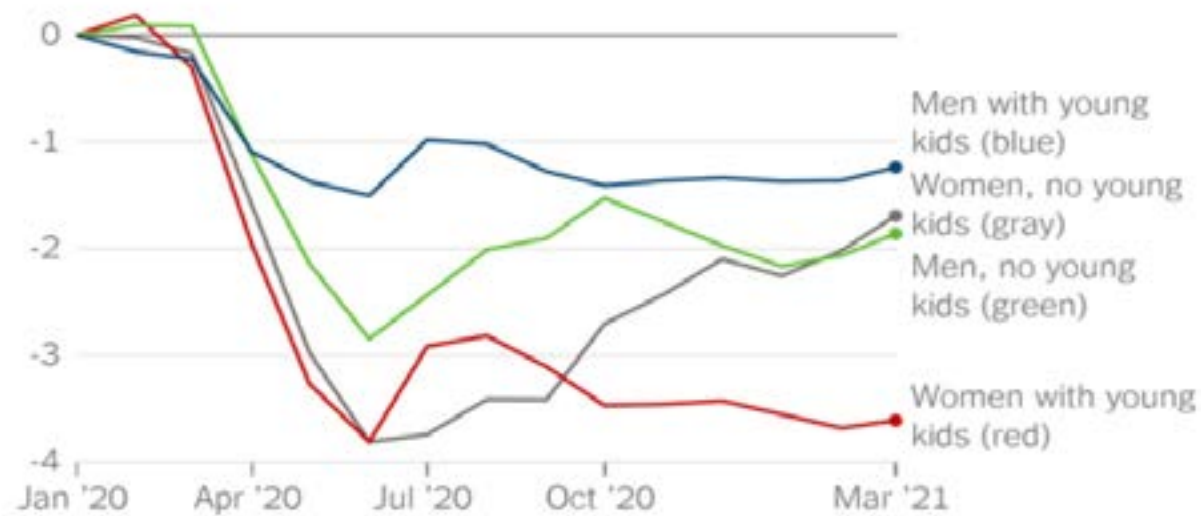
THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE CARE ECONOMY



Savannah Ellison
Mathematical Economics Major
American Culture & Difference
Minor, 2022

For our November Making Waves event, I presented on the impact of covid-19 on the care economy. The care economy relates to both care-intensive professions, like childcare, healthcare, and eldercare, and unpaid care work provided by families and communities. **Disruptions to the care economy caused by the pandemic have disproportionately affected women.** This is largely because women are both overrepresented in care-intensive frontline jobs and have had to take on more unpaid care responsibilities as things like school, childcare, and home healthcare have adjusted to the pandemic.

The care economy is a relatively new topic to me, but it combines a lot of my interests, such as economics, feminism, and interdisciplinary research. It was interesting to discuss the ways that each attendee had personally experienced or witnessed disruptions to the care economy since the onset of the pandemic and realize that this is an extremely relevant topic that has impacted everyone.



Young children defined as those 13 and under. Chart shows three-month moving averages.

Percent change in labor force participation since January 2020 Source: Moody's Analytics

CARE FOR CAREGIVERS

SUPPORTIVE GROUP FOR STAFF, FACULTY, STUDENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS



Dr. Emily James
Director of Luann Dummer Center For Women
Department of English

Beginning in September of 2020 and continuing into this academic year, I've had the pleasure of co-facilitating, with Drs. Paola Ehrmantraut and Lorina Quartarone, "Care for Caregivers": a Faculty Learning Community focused on the needs and experiences of caregivers. In forming and facilitating this group, we've aimed to provide **solidarity and support for caregivers across the university community**, with special attention to women, people of color, and queer and non-binary people navigating care demands during the COVID-19 pandemic. As many of us have observed and experienced firsthand, the pandemic has heightened the strain

and stress of caregiving. Across a series of group discussions, held on Zoom, we've been sharing and discussing our caregiving experiences. Our discussion topics have ranged from emotional labor to remote learning. We also share and swap suggestions for readings, strategies, and resources.

While this group is generously sponsored by Faculty Development, it is not at all limited to faculty members; the **participants include staff members, students, and community members.** The group's participants speak from a wide range of caregiving situations and contexts, including care for children, parents and elders, neighbors, and more. Our objective is to create a welcoming and inclusive space for conversation, solidarity, and community. The group will remain open to new members in Spring 2022. If you're interested in joining or simply learning more, please reach out to Emily James: emilymjames@stthomas.edu.

WOMEN, GENDER, & SEXUALITY STUDIES NEWS



Once again, Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies had an event-packed fall!

Through opportunities hosted at the beautiful WEI farm in North Branch, Minnesota, as well as knowledge sharing and community building with members of the St. Thomas community, WGSS pushes on toward equity, inclusivity, and socially-conscious action.

Dr. Paola Ehrmantraut

Director of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Associate Professor of Spanish

WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE



WGSS is thankful for its community partnership with the Women's Environmental Institute, whose farm provides opportunities for environmental research and individual renewal while building and sharing knowledge to affectively bring environmental justice to all populations.

October 30 Volunteering at WEI. Community members were invited to join Dr. Liz Wilkinson and her Native American Literature and the Environment class for a day of volunteering and enjoying the outdoors. Co-sponsored by The Center for the Common Good.

November 13 Poetry Workshop at WEI "Walking in the Woods with Poets"
Poetry has the power to restore and heal, both within our lives and in our relations with land and neighbors. In this one-day workshop, attendees reflected on poems by Mary Oliver, Joy Harjo, Wendell Berry and Alice Walker, whose wise words invite us to see anew our place in Earth-community, a place of humility, gratitude, wonder and care. Led by Dr. Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, University Chaplain, Hamline University. *WGSS sponsored 5 students to attend.*

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



November 22

**Lavender Institute:
Unpacking Queer Linguistics**

MCL-JPST alumna **Kella Allen** led a conversation about the [Lavender Languages Institute](#) experience, the field of queer linguistics and inclusive language use. Event co-sponsored with MCL.

December 6

**Breaking out of the Binary:
A Brainstorming Session**

This discussion sought ideas on how the St. Thomas community can recognize and support the multiple expressions of gender present on our campus and establish action steps. Co-sponsored by SDIS and STEM Inclusive Excellence.

**Breaking out of the Binary:
A Brainstorming Session**

Dec. 6, 2021, 3:15-4:15pm
ASC 340 (Iverson Hearth Room)
Treats, drinks and bling provided!



How can St. Thomas students, faculty, and staff recognize and support the multiple expressions of gender present on our campus, and in our world? Join us for a discussion and brainstorming session to generate understanding and action steps.

Design: genderqueer flag, designed by Marilyn Rhee



Throughout November and December, WGSS addressed period poverty on campus by collecting menstrual products for Tommie Shelf.

FEMINIST COMMUNITY (FEMCOM)

Feminist Community (FemCom) is an activist-based club that strives to create respect, equality, and diversity within the St. Thomas community. Supported and guided by the Luann Dummer Center for Women, FemCom is led by and composed of students.

We are passionate about issues of race, sexuality, gender, socioeconomic ability, etc. and our work reflects that. Our traditions include **Take Back the Night**, a march where we honor the victim-survivors of sexual assault and rape, and the **Clothesline Project**. **This year, our goal is to diversify our community and amplify all voices.**

We welcome everyone to our meetings and events! Contact any of our Co-Facilitators with questions:



Carli Lund (she/her/hers) is a junior from Appleton, WI majoring in Elementary Education and minoring in Spanish. She says, "feminism is important to me because everyone regardless of gender identity, sexuality, and ability should have a space to feel loved, heard, and accepted for their truest self. I am very passionate about promoting body positivity and fostering a community of inclusivity and respect."



Ruth Moder (she/her/hers) is a senior from Superior, WI majoring in Strategic Communications and minoring in Psychology. She says, "feminism is important to me because it's a movement that helps educate women, men and non-binary friends about respect. I want to help create a safe and inclusive space where all intersectional pals feel heard, understood, and accepted."



Skye Schultz (she/her/hers) is a sophomore from Winona, MN double majoring in Social Work and Psychology. She says "Feminism to me means appreciating the work feminist advocates in the past have done to give me the opportunities I have, but also understanding the fight isn't even close to being over. Feminism is a movement that is growing to become more intersectional and inclusive."

GRADUATE FEMCOM



Maria Helena Buitrago Cohoon
Graduate School of Professional Psychology
MA, Counseling Psychology (2020)
Psy.D., Counseling Psychology (2024).
Graduate Rep, LDCW Advisory Board

Graduate Feminist Community, or Grad FemCom, is a feminist community geared toward graduate students whose members represent a wide variety of academics.

Inspired by the work of the undergraduate Feminist Community (FemCom), **Grad FemCom focuses on the ways we can grow as feminists personally AND professionally.** From our Kickoff on November 4th, the members of Grad FemCom decided the group would be a combination of two elements: education and professional development, as well as support and community building.

For the education/professional development part, Maria Helena, as LDCW graduate representative, prepares information to disseminate about feminism or women's issues in the workplace. Some proposed topics for this year include: salary negotiations, emotional vulnerability, and balancing career and family goals.

Support includes the opportunity to share experiences and be validated by the group, as well as getting to know each other and informally networking. Additionally, meetings end with members sharing articles, books, and other media related to the topics discussed that other members may enjoy. Meeting summaries and suggested media are then shared through the listserv to members who could not attend.

Grad FemCom meetings are open to all interested graduate students at St. Thomas and are currently occurring monthly on zoom. Due to members' complex schedules, a poll is sent out monthly to determine best dates/times for the upcoming month. **If you are interested in being added to the Grad FemCom list serv, or want to learn more, please email Maria Helena at buit1395@stthomas.edu.**

GREETINGS FROM QSA!

QUEER STRAIGHT ALLIANCE OF ST. THOMAS

While QSA was hit hard by the pandemic, we are back to thriving and having lots of events!

This year, with the help of SDIS and DAB, we wanted to bring QSA and queer-centered events to the forefront with monthly craft days, music, and more in the works. We are also learning to **center not just queer voices, but all the identities that coincide with what makes someone them** such as disabilities, race, and gender identity and expression.

We hope to be able to uplift all voices within our community, and work towards a truly equitable campus community.



All are welcome!
Every other Thursday
5:30 - 6:30 pm | OEC 207
More info on [TommieLink](#)

SPOTLIGHT: A [SPACE] OF ONE'S OWN

Join us as we learn about different groups on campus supporting women/women-identifying individuals!



Lexi M. Tekippe
English & Catholic Studies Major
2023

Catholic Women's Leadership is not just a club at the University of St. Thomas: we are a community. Born of the Catholic Studies Department at St. Thomas back in 2011, the Catholic Studies Leadership Interns Program saw a need for strong men's and women's communities to be leaders in the Catholic faith on campus. Thus, Catholic Women's Leadership and Catholic Men's Leadership were born. We at Catholic Women's Leadership are a community of women committed to being formed in the faith and striving after God together. To fulfill this mission, we hear from different speakers each and every week about various topics regarding the Catholic faith, how to live as

women of faith in the contemporary world, and how to build up the Church with our gifts, talents and vocations. We have had religious sisters, youth ministers, doctors, and missionaries join our circle in the Luann Dummer Center for Women this fall semester alone. As young women in the Church, we strive to understand how we fit into the whole of the Body of Christ and take it as our mission to make this university a place of encounter, community, and growth to further be able to enter the rest of our lives with clarity of mission and doctrine. Through pouring our gifts into CWL, we hope to grow and expand our community. In a society isolated and constantly being told who they are and what they ought to do, **we strive to welcome women in a way that allows them to see that they are seen, known, and loved here on this campus, as well as the Catholic Church.**

Is there a woman-supportive group on campus that you'd like to see in the Spotlight? Let us know!

LDCW 2021-2022 BOOK CIRCLE

"WOMEN AND THE PANDEMIC"



SEPTEMBER

The Carrying by Ada Limón

Vulnerable, tender, acute, these are serious poems, brave poems, exploring with honesty the ambiguous moment between the rapture of youth and the grace of acceptance. Limón shows us, as ever, the persistence of hunger, love, and joy, the dizzying fullness of our too-short lives.

OCTOBER

Missing & Murdered
Podcast by Connie Walker

Connie Walker is an investigative journalist with CBC news whose podcast "Missing & Murdered" seeks to uncover the truth behind unsolved cases of missing Indigenous women and girls. This discussion examined the series "Who Killed Alberta Williams?" Episode Four "The Brothers."



NOVEMBER

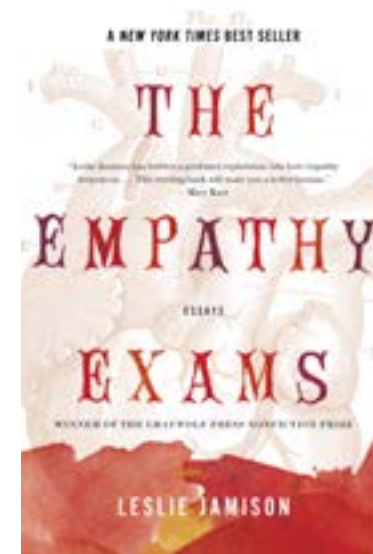
The Selected Works of Audre Lorde
Edited and with an Introduction by Roxane Gay

Self-described black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet Audre Lorde is an unforgettable voice in twentieth-century literature, and one of the first to center the experiences of black, queer women. This essential reader showcases her indelible contributions to intersectional feminism, queer theory, and critical race studies in twelve landmark essays and more than sixty poems--selected and introduced by one of our most powerful contemporary voices on race and gender, and 2016 LDCW Women's History Month Speaker, Roxane Gay.



FEBRUARY

The Empathy Exams by Leslie Jamison
LDCW 2022 Women's History Month Speaker

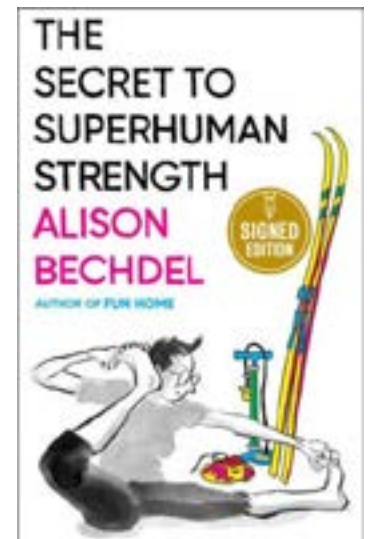


Leslie Jamison's visceral and revealing essays ask essential questions about our basic understanding of others. By confronting pain—real and imagined, her own and others'—Jamison uncovers a personal and cultural urgency to *feel*. A *New York Times* Best Seller and Winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize, *The Empathy Exams* is a brilliant and forceful book written by one of this country's most vital young writers.

MARCH

The Secret to Superhuman Strength
by Alison Bechdel

Comics and cultural superstar Alison Bechdel delivers a deeply layered story of her fascination, from childhood to adulthood, with every fitness craze to come down the pike, all told through her signature genre, the graphic memoir.



APRIL

Afterland by Mai Der Vang

Afterland is a powerful and imperative collection of poetry that recounts with devastating detail the Hmong exodus from Laos and the fate of thousands of refugees seeking asylum. Mai Der Vang is telling the story of her own family and, by doing so, provides an essential history of the Hmong culture's ongoing resilience in exile.



STAY TUNED THIS SPRING:

**A Tribute to Transgression:
A Celebration of bell hooks**

TRI-ING FOR THE JOY OF SPORT



Dr. Liz Wilkinson
Associate Professor
of English

triathlon who are willing to meet with us and answer questions about their experience. We are focusing in on **the joy of being a female athlete** (though we know plenty of women—even those who've done a tri—aren't 100% comfortable calling themselves athletes).

If you've done the YWCA Women's Triathlon and would like to be in our pool of interviewees, please email wilk9056@stthomas.edu. And, if you haven't done the tri but think you'd like to, email and let us know that, too. We'd love to help you get started.

Cheers to moving our bods and finding more joy!



Roxanne Prichard, Amy Finnegan, & Liz Wilkinson
celebrate completing the YWCA Triathlon!

One of the not-so-hidden secrets of the Twin Cities is that the Minneapolis YWCA hosts the largest all-women's triathlon in the contiguous United States (<https://www.ywcampls.org/event/womens-triathlon/>). Although the YWCA tri has been on hiatus for the past two years due to the corona virus, thousands of us are hopeful that we'll get to race again in the summer of 2022. Among those many who have competed in the YWCA triathlons are a handful of St. Thomas faculty, staff, and students. Some have competed individually, and some have competed in three-women relay teams. As someone who has joyfully done the swim-bike-run myself, a time or ten, I know how tough and how empowering this race can be. I've teamed up with undergraduate researcher, Jessica Seal, and together we are seeking women who have competed in the YWCA

PROGRESS REPORTS FROM 2021-2022 LDCW GRANTS

Trans*forming College Classrooms into Gender-Inclusive Spaces:

A Case Study Amplifying Transgender Student Voices



Carley R. Stieg
Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership
and Learning
Graduate Fellowship Recipient

I am so grateful to the LDCW for supporting my dissertation research through a Graduate Fellowship. For this project, I worked with 20 trans*-identifying students across the nation pursuing associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees during the Spring 2021 semester. I interviewed each of them at the beginning of the semester, collected individual reflections throughout the term, and then interviewed each of them again at the end of the semester. The purpose of the study was to learn about their course experiences through the

lens of gender identity, specifically examining students' perceptions of curriculum, faculty instruction, and learning environments. **Through this research, I've learned that to make classrooms gender-inclusive, educators need to be open to learning and must break down existing constructions of and assumptions about gender itself.** Including pronouns in introductions at the beginning of class can certainly be a welcoming signal for some students, but it is not enough to create a sense of belonging for students of all genders.

As one of my participants, G (which is a pseudonym), stated, many people are trying to follow a new set of rules to achieve inclusion, when really, "It's like, **'No. Throw the rules out the window.'**"

Instructors should critically examine their course content, delivery, and environment to ensure gender diversity is both acknowledged and celebrated.

PROGRESS REPORTS FROM 2021-2022 LDCW GRANTS

Bessie Harvey and Alternative Legacies in Black Feminist Art

Frederica Simmons

Doctoral Student, Educational Leadership and Learning
Graduate Fellowship Recipient

Despite the evident connections between her work and feminist thought, **the marginalization and outright exclusion of Black autodidact artists from the feminist art historical record has diminished and devalued the contributions of Bessie Harvey (1929-1994), who produced a body of work that rivals that of any widely proclaimed and praised feminist artist.**

Although the rise of fourth wave feminism in the late 1980s brought about greater awareness regarding the concepts of privilege and intersectionality, the early failures of white feminists to fully embrace Black women in the Suffrage Movement set the tone for future decades of exclusion that continue to permeate the movement today. Feminist art historical approaches establish barriers of their own

through the manner in which the art deemed to be “feminist” is identified, failing to challenge the favoring of academic and formally trained artists, thus creating exclusionary boundaries. This deeply flawed methodology reinforces sentiments established against autodidact artists, often given



Bessie Harvey, 1929-1994



God's Gift to Man, Bessie Harvey, 1987. Wood, paint, textile, paper, plastics, hair, metal, Brooklyn Museum

the misnomer “vernacular,” who have been excluded from art historical record and deemed to be outside academic tradition.

Although not considered to be amongst Black feminist artists in the art historical record, through the act of reclaiming her life after her child-rearing years through her artistic practice, Harvey became an unconventional and wholly unrecognized parallel figure to the feminist art movement of the 1970s.

Fiercely proud of her ancestral heritage, Harvey sought often to

inculcate her diasporic legacy into her artworks while maintaining her contemporary identity and challenging the limitations of the white patriarchy.

The prejudices against “vernacular” artists, alongside the limitations of feminist art history, have resulted in a failure to see the full complexity and sophistication of her work.



Birthing, Bessie Harvey, ca. 1986. Painted wood, beads, rhinestones, sequins, glitter and nail, Smithsonian American Art Museum

YARN TAMERS

TUESDAYS | NOON - 1 PM

Yarn Tamers is an opportunity for students, staff, faculty, and community members to spend a relaxing hour working on yarn projects and meeting new friends. Not yet a knitter? Come learn from other crafters!

Throughout the fall, Yarn Tamers were so happy to meet back in person! Stay tuned as we continue navigating the pandemic and doing our best to keep our community safe.

Everyone is welcome!



Whether in-person or via zoom, we meet every Tuesday from noon to 1 pm!

If you would like to receive weekly reminders and updates for Yarn Tamers, please email Christine Balsley at christine.balsley@stthomas.edu, and she'll add you to the list!

SPRING 2022 EVENTS

Check our website for updates!

Tuesdays: Yarn Tamers, 12-1 pm | Wednesdays: FemCom, 7:30 pm

February 24 LDCW Book Circle, *The Empathy Exams* by 2022 Women's History Month Speaker **Leslie Jamison**, 1:30 -2:30 pm

March 8 International Women's Day
Women's History Month Speaker Leslie Jamison

OEC Auditorium, 7:00 pm

March 17 LDCW Book Circle, *The Secret to Superhuman Strength* by Alison Bechdel, 1:30-2:30 pm

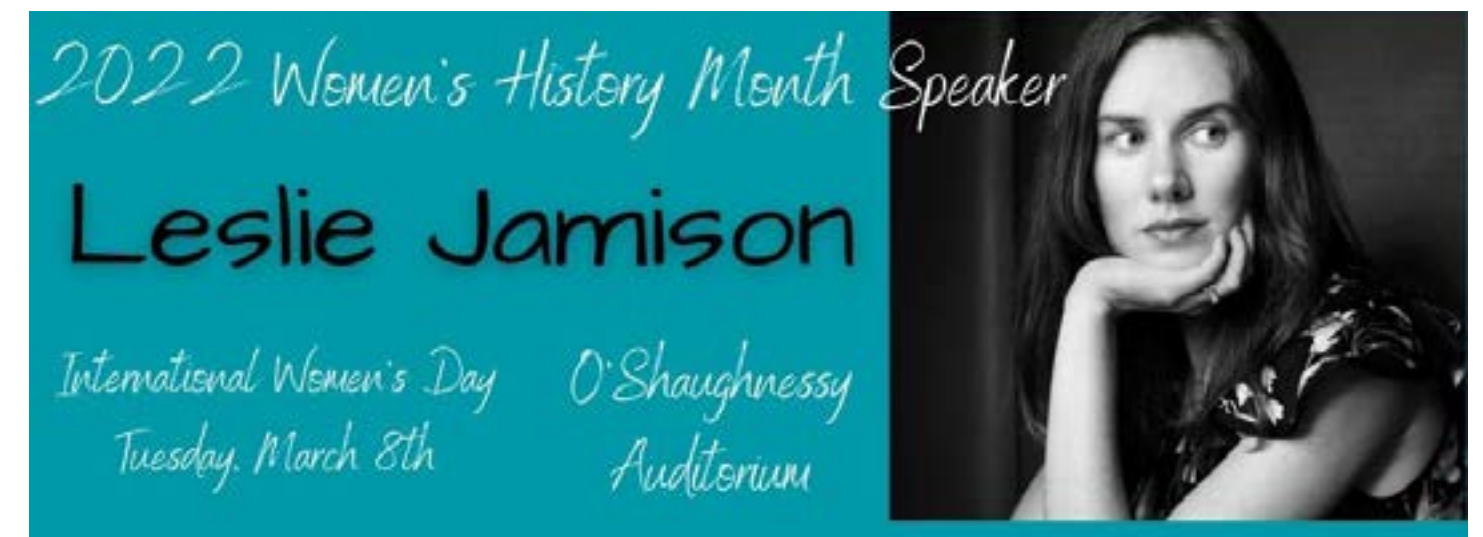
April TBD, LDCW Book Circle, *Afterland* by Mai der Vang

May TBD, Making Waves with Christine Balsley: *A Writing Workshop*

STAY TUNED...!

Check our [website](#) as we continue building our spring programs, including Making Waves, our tribute to bell hooks, and more!

We look forward to seeing you soon!





Luann Dummer Center for Women

2115 Summit Avenue Mail 4075
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105 USA

HOURS:

During the pandemic, we have limited office hours. Please check our [website](#) for updates. If you are unable to stop by during the listed times, simply email us and we can set up an appointment. We'd love to see you!

CONTACT

CenterforWomen@stthomas.edu

STAFF

Christine Balsley
Editor | Designer, *Many Voices*
LDCW Program Coordinator

Dr. Emily James
Editor, *Many Voices*
LDCW Director

Savannah Ellison
Student Worker

For more information on LDCW programs and opportunities, join our mailing list at www.stthomas.edu/lcw