

The Monthly Rag

Brought to you by the Feminist and Gender Studies Student Advisory Council

Block III, 2012

Ashley Johnson, Political Science and FGS double major, Class of 2014: Sorority Sisterhood

Think of a sorority girl. Did your mind conjure Elle Woods? Perhaps drunken participants in a wet t-shirt contest on a beach over spring break?

Now think of a feminist. Did any of the same images pop into mind? Thought not.

Unbelievable as it may seem, I am both a proud feminist and member of a CC sorority. Not only am I able to reconcile these two identities, I believe that they go hand in hand. I cannot presume to speak for all Greek women on campus, nor am I able to speak on behalf of my sorority on a national level, but I can say with conviction, that the CC chapter of my organization is a feminist one. I cannot say that the women in my sorority are all feminists, but I do believe that our CC chapter upholds the feminist ideal of sisterhood.

For those of you that don't know, sororities came into existence in the 1800's when women entering universities were

ostracized by men. In response to the push back women received from male students, they formed their own women's fraternities. In fact, each of the sororities on our campus are not sororities at all - they're women's fraternities. The term "sorority" wasn't even coined until 1874. Women's fraternities were created in response to the sexism women felt from men - pretty feminist, am I right?

Similarly to other fraternities, my organization was founded on the pillars of scholarship, leadership and philanthropy. Although some sororities elsewhere have shifted from these honorable tenants, I believe that they are alive and well at Colorado College. We value scholarship and academic success - our average GPA is a 3.56. Our women are active both on and off campus; we are involved in nearly every facet of the CC community. But most importantly, we value friendship and sis-

terhood.

In a recent discussion in my latest Feminist and Gender Studies course, we discussed the party culture at CC. One senior commented that senior girls laugh at, and make fun of the freshmen who stumble in after midnight. I realized that I had never had that experience and that I had sisterhood to thank for it. I understand how important my identity as a sorority girl had been for me as a vulnerable, freshman girl. I had older, wiser women constantly looking out for me, mentoring me, and providing me with guidance.

The common critique of the feminist movement is our lack of a collective consciousness - sororities provide one. On a campus of 2,000 people, a group of 50 women who will be there for each other without question, champion each other's successes and forgive each other's faults, is feminist.

"And if I have to listen to one more grey-faced man with a \$2.00 haircut explain to me what rape is... I'm going to lose my mind" -Tina Fey

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"Just so we're clear about this, you did not take my virginity—I gave it to you willingly."

Kenzie Mulligan-Buckmiller, FGS Major, Class of 2015

My life was shaped with the love not only of my mother, father, and sister but also the care of my "other mothers," elder women who I know as friends of my mother, or mothers of my own friends. My "other mothers" treat me as their own, spend time with me, raising me with various perspectives to learn from. These incredible women instilled in me some nameless value. Only upon arriving at Colorado College and taking my Feminist and Gender Studies FYE did I realize what this value was - undying and unconditional respect. It was the respect of these women who have inspired me, and it is a respect that has grown to include women as a group. I honor women by fighting for tomorrow's women in the way past feminists fought for me. My feminism is based on a respect of the past feminists and is one that calls for equality of all identifications.

I was, am, and will always be awed by the lives these women have led, and I have learned so much from them. It is safe to say that without these women, I would be in a completely different place. I am who these women have inspired me to be. The interesting thing is that I had acquired this dedication to women without knowing how it was defined. "Feminism" carries with it the stigmatism of societal stereotypes and I wonder if I had understood my personal feminism earlier, would I have resisted it based on these often derogatory stereotypes?

Still, that was not the case, and I am not only proud, but I am honored to be a feminist. The theories of past and present feminism have opened my eyes and allowed me to perceive societal norms comprised of stereotypes and ideals. I have become more aware of my own actions and the actions that I partake in - creating a world that is better fit to my own person. Feminism gave me respect for all sexualities, genders, and identifications and provided me with the terms and research to communicate my respect. I love being a feminist.

Carmen Rodi, Sociology major, Class of 2013: What Economic Security Really Means

As a recent article by Deepak Bhargava in The Nation points out, Obama's reelection will mean either further movement or a complete reversal of the progressive movement and its platform. "Should Obama lose this election," writes Bhargava, "we can expect a ruthless effort to dismantle the social contract." He continues to explain that the importance of movement building cannot be overlooked; in terms of job security, working-class people especially need to build power through unions and other outlets. Americans have increasingly lost trust in outside institutions for economic security, building an economic landscape that today is very individualistic.

I have found the political discourse surrounding economic policy to be rather troubling. First

and foremost, it fails to question past incidents tied to a lack of corporate accountability (ie: the BP oil spill that has been described as the "worst environmental disaster the US has faced", by White House energy adviser Carol Browner; the thousands of Americans who lost their homes through the mortgage crisis.)

The discourse also separates "economic issues" from "social issues" when the two are very intertwined. "Creating jobs" seems to be a tagline for both candidates, but to me, what is more important is that we probe deeper, and ask questions - what types of jobs these will be, how much they will pay and what benefits will these jobs offer? It could be creating a minimum wage job with a company that does not allow collective bargaining, or in a

dangerous work environment that puts both the worker's health and the local community at risk.

This barely seems to be a step in the right direction, if we are looking at the health of the society, as well as the economy.

As a feminist, I see the social contract as a vital piece to improving conditions, mobility and opportunities for a wide range of marginalized people in the country. Because of the existing inequality and realities faced by many, it is necessary to offer and fund solutions that will produce long-term sustainability and success. It is also necessary to step back and take a look at our economic landscape through a lens that analyzes the entire picture and reality faced by many, rather than just the numbers.

Looking for a new place to study?

The Interdisciplinary Studies (ID) House is now open later on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays - until at least 9:30. You are cordially invited to hangout and study at 1115 N. Cascade, catty-corner from Boetcher. For your convenience the ID House makes available: a computer lab with printing, comfortable seating, a large flat screen TV equipped with VCR/DVD/Blue Ray, a private conference room for quiet studying (also equipped with viewing technology), snacks, and beverages. Call (719) 389-6081 to inquire about hours.

Do you have a question, want more info or resources, don't understand something, or want to contribute to our publication?

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