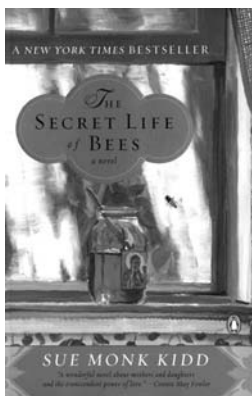




Releasing the Stereotypes!

Come join the Diversity Action Task Force in the "Releasing of Stereotypes" Mass Balloon "Release" at 3:30 pm during Spring Fling April 23, 2004

Student Speakers: 2004 Mr MTU, Godwin Iduma and A Royal Surprise Speaker



Forgive But Don't Forget

Book Review by Mandie Rose Danielski

on *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd. Penguin Books, 2002, 302 pages, \$14.00 paperback

Forgiveness. It's complicated. Especially when you're an adolescent needing forgiveness from your mother, and from yourself. Lily Owens is one such adolescent – the narrator of Sue Monk Kidd's spiritual and extraordinarily honest novel *The Secret Life of Bees*. This novel makes **tbt's** recommended must-read list for summer.

The story of this female 14-year-old's runaway journey with her "stand-in-mother," Rosaleen, is set in 1964 South Carolina. Through Lily's friendly and candid narration, we follow these two outcasts as they escape peaches and Baptist churches, escape Lily's father, T. Ray, and escape the three deepest racists in town who threaten Rosaleen's life. They walk and hitchhike, headed to the only place and people with details about Lily's mother. They end up at the doors of a grand pink house the smell of okra. The house is inhabited by the three Boatwright sisters, beekeepers who teach Lily about love and honey, about the Black Madonna and about Lily's mother. Without a typical, bland, predictable melodrama of a plot, this story reveals deep and sincere emotions of sadness, happiness, mourning, joy, confusion and clarity.

Lily's journey reaches out to all women, not only those who consider themselves the queen bee of the home. We all search and struggle for love from others and love from ourselves; Lily shows readers how to let go and where to find love. Through her close and complicated relationships with Rosalee, August, June, and May, she learns to love and to forgive. And through her narration, Lily's readers learn the strength in letting go and starting over. We learn to forgive but never forget.

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The Momentum Behind the Revolution

Katrina Keteri

Two weeks from the March to Save Women's Lives, I found myself asking what my efforts were going to accomplish; sure, I can write an amazingly profound message on my poster-board picket sign because I am angry about the myriad of rights we are losing hourly these days, but why bother? Why preach to the ones who already understand and agree with me? How is my sign and my anger going to help the cause?

Every conscientious feminist has probably heard similar queries from skeptics who think in overgeneralizations, such as the notion that feminism and other -isms are "unproductive" and only serve to further create gaps between people and issues. This is an easy argument to make for the person who thinks that watching a few minutes of the news to keep up with issues is an acceptable equivalent to participating in his/her government, or doesn't "like to talk about politics because it just makes people angry," or they're "not political," or even the people who only skim the surface of issues but still think they can make fully informed statements about what actions are "useful" and what are not. How does one counteract this kind of ignorance, and what is something of great value that we are achieving by marching? Simple – we explain the importance of the momentum generated by the energy of group dynamics.

What are we demoralized about in the first place that makes passion via group dynamics necessary? The Bush administration has taken

women's rights in reproductive care (and no, I'm not just talking about abortion here, for those of you that are pro-lifers) back over a century with no signs of stopping. Money has been wasted profusely on abstinence-only sex ed programs and a fierce war has been waged on organizations that even mention abortion as an option (even if they do not support it or perform it – the "gag" rule, if you are familiar with it, which was overturned by Clinton and reinstated by Bush and also affects the free speech capacities of those organizations). What do we do about this kind of thing? We feel helpless and demoralized by the religious right that seems to be overtaking a country that we were led to believe was founded on an appreciation for diverse religious beliefs (or at least, that's what they write in 4th grade history textbooks these days).

So maybe the CEOs that put money in the administration's pocket can't see my sign from the top of their building, but the energy created by our group is necessary to keep us motivated to push and fight for the things we believe in – our protesting is a necessary tool for us to keep from sinking back into being completely demoralized about all of the rights we are losing. It keeps the momentum flowing, and people in groups feed each other their own experiences and their own knowledge, which contributes to an overall greater understanding of the situation and the issues, and a greater passion for finding a way to help us participate.

Pregnancy Test Ponderings

Ariana Jo Jeske

I am sitting curled inward on the toilet, watching that little plastic stick turn colors. I am wanting only to see red, reassuring blood. I remember that kind smile of the Wal-Mart clerk who sold me this test in the late hours of the night. I am thinking that all the choices I have made may have not been enough. I used condoms and birth control. These five minutes are some of the hardest I have ever experienced. I realize that no matter how old I may feel, I'm still not old enough to raise another person. I realize that what I think is love isn't. That I know I am alone in this.

The voice above is my own. Just one voice of the millions of women in the United States. I have been avoiding writing about the topic of abortion for three years now as a Technobabe. I didn't want to be another rehashed opinion in a sea of words.

I am spurred to write by the news of Norma McCormick's, the original Jane Roe, lawsuit to overturn Roe v. Wade. I am wondering what makes her voice more valid than my own. She is a woman, she was part of the first lawsuit, yet she never uttered words in front of the Supreme Court to make abortion legal. I realize that my voice is just as valid and should be heard.

Abortion tends to be an idea that happens far away from our realm of being. Among us walk the women who have made informed decisions about their lives. They are not dead skeletons of people grieving for tissue lost. Think about all the women you know, how they have influenced your life. You know someone who has had an abortion. Abortion has affected everyone's life. Of the women I know who have had abortions, it was for the best. They continued on to college, got out of abusive relationships, and regained control of their lives. They made choices for themselves and no one else,

a basic right.

Opposing abortion is about opposing the equality of women. Pro life touts the idea of equality as giving women the opportunity to accept their decisions. Pregnancy is not an equal burden to the sexes. There is no way to give four and a half months of carrying a child to a man. There is no way to split 18 years of raising a child to a delinquent father. A woman alone must carry that weight, that burden on herself. Yes, she made that decision to have sex. However, the act of sex itself is an equal sharing between the sexes. Pregnancy is not.

I sat there on the toilet uncertain of my future. However, I knew that I would have a choice, a grave and serious decision to make about my body and my life. I was never handed a decision by a law written by men. As an equal citizen of this country I was given the right to make my own choices and accept the ramifications of all decisions. The test didn't come out positive, but the entire experience gave me a deeper sense of the right I have as a woman to protect the right to a safe abortion for that 19 year old girl whose pregnancy test does come out blue.



image from http://www.child.com/pregnancy_baby/pregnancy/pregnancy_test.jp

TBT would like to announce a new column, Herstory. This column will be a short biography of a woman we think you should know about. Enjoy!

Herstory: Edith Clarke

Allison Thiel



<http://www.es.t.edu/~museum/women/clarke/index.html>

Born in 1883 and raised on a farm in Maryland, Edith Clarke enjoyed a childhood typical of her time period. She was educated in literature, music, history, math, some science and languages, and enjoyed playing card games, reading, swimming and playing tennis. Self-described as lazy, she was active only in things that interested her. She decided that work would "be alright" if she could find something to do as interesting as her favorite card game, duplicate whist.

She spent her inheritance to attend Vassar, where she majored in mathematics and astronomy. She graduated in 1908 and spent the next three years teaching math and physics. Finding teaching unfulfilling, she went back to school in 1911, this time to the University of Wisconsin (UW) for civil engineering. After her first year at UW, she took a summer job as a "Computer Assistant," a skilled mathematician, under an AT&T research engineer. She so liked the job that she did not return to school but stayed on as a computer from 1912 to 1915. AT&T promoted her in 1915 and she was placed in charge of calculations in their transmission and distribution department.

In 1918 she left AT&T to attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to pursue a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering. The following year she graduated, becoming the first woman to receive an Electrical Engineering degree from MIT. From there she took a job as a computer at General Electric (GE). In 1921 she took a leave of absence to teach at a US women's college in Constantinople, Turkey. She returned to GE as a salaried electrical engineer the following year and remained there for the next 23 years.

During her career she published many papers dealing with power transmission lines and related calculations, an extremely important topic during her time period. As a throwback to her childhood "laziness," almost every paper included charts allowing the reader to find required values instead of performing the complex calculations themselves. In 1954, the Society for Women Engineers (SWE) presented

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Balancing Act: The Role of Forgiveness in Feminist Relationships

Michelle E. Jarvie

Like many of my feminist friends, I find myself constantly struggling to maintain a balance of assertiveness in my personal relationships. It feels as if I am walking a tightrope, where if I lean too far to one side, I will fall into the realm of the women who are doormats; and if I lean too far the other way, I will plummet into the abyss of the ball-bashing-bitches. The thin line I walk is the path of standing up for me while still feeling empathy and compassion for others. I must constantly monitor and adjust my position to ensure I maintain my center of gravity solidly below me.

It is especially hard to assertively handle situations where we have been wronged. Every feminist knows this routine. It includes feeling justifiable anger towards our offender, and putting that energy to positive work standing up for ourselves. However, the difficult part often comes in identifying when anger has become self destructive or vindictive, rather than a motivating cause for change. Although our anger may be justifiable, even against the most horrible offenses, by refusing to let go of anger towards an offender, we are choosing to be miserable.

We all know, or have been at one time, the “angry young feminist.” There is so much for women to be legitimately angry about in today’s society: rape, child abuse, gender discrimination in work and school, the emphasis of women’s value based on their looks. For a feminist, facing the expected role of a woman who is considered liberated because she can now bring home the bacon – as long as she still fries it up in a pan, feeds it to the kids, cleans up after everyone; there is also a lot to be angry about. When we are faced with the traditional role of the nice, meek woman who forgives and turns the other cheek, doesn’t raise her voice when wronged, and is compas-

sionate and nurturing to all...Well, it is easy to find voicing our anger as liberating. As feminists, we believe that women can get angry and should express their anger. Most of my activist efforts, from writing my congressman to marching on Washington, have evolved from me being pissed off and fed up. Anger as a motivator for positive actions is a good thing. However, if we cling to anger longer than necessary, it becomes a mode of self-torment.

According to *A Campaign for Forgiveness Research*, the work of Roy F. Baumeister, Julie Juola Exline, and Krisin L. Sommer, found that: There is an emotional cost of refusing to forgive. If the perpetrator is someone the injured party must continue to see, each contact with the offender will cause the victim to feel upset again. In addition, continuing to feel angry toward distant or dead perpetrators, over transgressions that cannot be changed, does nothing but make the injured party miserable. Forgiveness would release the victim, and would be a welcome relief.

Thus, once anger has served a useful purpose in motivating us for positive action, it has no role in our lives. We must acknowledge the hurt, feel it, honor it, and let it go. Forgiveness does not imply forgetting, erasing the past, condoning another’s actions, or even trust. Forgiveness does release us from the emotional baggage we are carrying as a result of being hurt by another. Forgiveness gives us the ability to choose not to let another’s past actions cause us emotional torment in the present.

When we are freed from anger, we can discuss events calmly. Then we can do the real work of addressing relationships. Some relationships we may choose to let go. In other relationships, we may choose to commit to the healing work of transformation, molding them

into safe, respectful, and mutually beneficial relationships. Regardless of the role a past offender may play in our future lives, forgiveness is the key to being able to move on, and to stop allowing past wrongs to hurt us in the present.

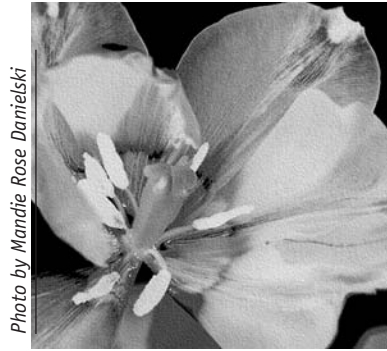


Photo by Mandie Rose Danielski

Forgive But Don't Forget

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Throughout the novel, Kidd includes facts about beekeeping and in every chapter illuminates the unseen and surprising connections between the secret lives of bees and humans. Kidd offers a true 1960s Southern culture, and a respectable, important journey to understanding one self. For her first novel, Kidd amazes readers with her details and voice. Readers—mothers and daughters especially—will find themselves missing Lily once they’ve turned the last page of the book.

Make this young woman’s spiritual summer part of yours. Available at your local library in print or on cassette.

(For more about forgiveness, see Michelle E. Jarvie’s “Balancing Act” on this page.)

Resources

Barbara Kettle Gundlach Shelter 337-5623 <i>domestic violence shelter; 24-hour crisis line</i>	Legal Services of Northern Michigan..... 482-3908
Career Counseling 487-2313	Office of Student Affairs..... 487-2212; 487-2465
Counseling Services 487-2538	Office of Residence Life..... 487-3404
Dial HELP 482-4357 <i>Crisis intervention: a gentle, helpful voice, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week</i>	On-campus emergencies 123
Employee Assistance Program 482-2299	Society of Intellectual Sisters (SIS)..... http://www.sos.mtu.edu/sis/ <i>Promoting sisterhood primarily amongst African-American women and scholarship among members</i>
Houghton Community Health Center 483-1860	Society of Women Engineers msmasucc@mtu.edu
Keweenaw Pride..... pride@mtu.edu <i>an MTU group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning Students, Staff, Faculty, Community Members, Friends, and Allies</i>	Western UP District Health Department .482-7382 <i>AIDS testing, family planning, immunization, pregnancy testing</i>

Pulp Addiction

m@hill

“So you’ve been to school for a year or two, and you know you’ve seen it all”

Holiday in Cambodia —Dead Kennedys

This issue of **tbt** comes out on or near April 16, the release date of Quentin Tarantino’s *Kill Bill Vol. 2*. As a whole, *Kill Bill* is one of the most eagerly anticipated American films in recent years, as Tarantino so carefully reminds us in the title credits: *Kill Bill Vol. 1* is “The fourth film from Quentin Tarantino.” Because “the fifth film” comes out soon, I’m writing a brief take on *Kill Bill*, and I’m left with a tricky question: (How) Does *Kill Bill* work as an example of feminist filmmaking?

Gender is explicitly invoked in any of Tarantino’s films. For example, *Reservoir Dogs* displays a culture of masculinity on the edge of eruption. The male characters (there are no female characters save for extras and the fodder for jokes and pop cultural references) show exhaustion with the societal roles available to them (my thanks to Pauline Kael for her incisive criticism leading to this view) and end up destroying each other as they grasp whatever their view of masculinity is. This view tends to leave out any “other,” especially women, culminating in what the end of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* must have looked like.

In *Kill Bill*, Uma Thurman’s character is nameless, known simply as “The Bride.” It is tempting, then, to think of her quest for revenge as her desire to create a name for herself, to stitch together any identity that provides her closure. To set up this search, Tarantino constructs—through his preferred method of film sampling—a story of pervasive violence towards women. Women enact most of this violence, but the tutelage of Bill is behind this woman-on-woman violence. Bill supports the wiping out of the deadly women assassin squad who have posed mortal threats to powerful men, and he does so under the guise of a lover/father figure.

As with all of Tarantino’s films, critics



Image from www.latinoreview.com

repeatedly point to the postmodern (pomo) nature of *Kill Bill*. If you buy into pomo aesthetic sensibilities, everything that makes up pomo art is already available. Originality is a myth we tell children so they can dream. The violence and misogynistic language (chiefly exhibited by the hospital pimp and Texas sheriff) is already a part of film language as ready-made dialogue and action. I’m not sure it is necessarily comforting to acknowledge this, but it is telling that the images Tarantino creates in *Kill Bill* (and they are beautiful images) have been enacted before.

Now with the above pomo made clear, Tarantino is able to craft something new. The women kick much ass in this movie. Uma, O Ren-Ishi (Lucy Liu), and Vernita Green (Vivica Fox) show off their impressive moves, though most of Liu’s moves come from the animated sequence. Unlike most female-based action movies, the characters are not just performing gender role reversal. The Bride is an action figure with enough different layers to make her more complex than, say, Geena Davis in *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, who seemed to be just a female version of any male character from any of *Long Kiss* director Renny Harlin’s films.

I suppose now I should conclude if *Kill Bill* works as a feminist film or not. It doesn’t seem to matter. This might appear dismissive, but it isn’t. The film is not about Thurman’s character moving in and out of proscribed gender roles. Sure, she kicks a lot of ass and shows us how to will a “dead” body part to wiggle. But *Kill Bill* boils down to a revenge film, constructed from

Herstory: Edith Clarke

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her with their Achievement Award, citing her contributions to the field of Electrical Engineering in the form of these simplified charts as well as her work in system instability.

In 1926 Edith became the first woman to present a paper before the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE, which later became IEEE). She also later became the first woman elected a fellow of AIEE. Other notable accomplishments include writing a comprehensive electrical engineering textbook, *Circuit Analysis of AC Power Systems*, and holding two patents related to electrical power transmission.

In 1947 she became a professor of electrical engineering at the University of Texas—Austin, the first female engineering professor employed there, and the first female electrical engineering professor in the country. She remained a professor there until retiring in 1956 at which time she returned to Maryland where she remained until her death in 1959.

She commented on the future prospects for women in engineering in an interview for the *Daily Texan* in March of 1948: “There is no demand for women engineers, as such, as there are for women doctors; but there’s always a demand for anyone who can do a good piece of work.”

Compiled with information from these sources:

<http://www.cs.yale.edu/homes/tap/past-women-cs.html>

<http://www.ee.vt.edu/~museum/women/clarke/index.html>

<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/2000-2001/memorials/AMR/Clarke/clarke.html>

WHAT IS tbt POLICY?

The TechnoBabe Times is dedicated to the empowerment of women in all aspects of technology.

We want **tbt** to be a place where voices not usually heard or seen on campus or in the community can be seen & heard. We want to be a publication that encourages new and different voices. And so: we solicit thoughtful, reflective, critical writings (or drawings or mixed media pieces or poems or...) that offer us all positive views and smart actions...

If you have any ideas, questions or comments—or wish to advertise in **tbt**—please contact our staff at tbt@mtu.edu. You may also write the list to submit a piece of work or to become part of the **tbt** staff (all girls and boys interested in the cause are welcome!).

THANK YOU to the CCLI for help on this issue.

STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE: **president:** Kristin Arola **staff:** Lindsey Worden, Matt Hill, Michelle Edith Jarvie, Ariana Jo Jeske, Diane Koskela, Hannah Mongiat, Noah John, Katrina Keteri, Mandie Danielski, Allison Thiel, Cheryl E. Ball **layout:** Ashley Parks **faculty advisor:** Anne Frances Wysocki

the myriad Hong Kong and Japanese action films Tarantino lovingly steals from. And he did put the film on hold for over a year while Thurman delivered her baby and recuperated. Now that’s family leave.

Trailer: For a truly offensive movie, check out *Hidalgo*. The film is essentially a western, in that Western guy (Viggo Mortensen) races his prize Mustang, an appropriated symbol of Sioux “freedom,” in a race against “Arabians.” I suppose the audience is meant to stop at the word “Arabians” and not think past the horses in this metaphor. Most telling about the film

is that the director and cinematographer could not create a wonderfully photographed film, which any western director should be able to do given generic western scenery. The atrocious cinematography is equivalent to the care, creativity, and critical eye the filmmakers give to any of the roles (female or male, Westerner or Othered) in the film. All films depend on stereotypes as a structuring device. What separates strong films from weak ones is their ability to move out of those stereotypes in productive and interesting ways. *Hidalgo* regresses in this capacity and should be avoided.