



michigan tech's

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"Feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings." —Cheris Kramer

from the editor

You now have the March issue of **tbt** in your hands (albeit a bit later in the month than we hoped...blame Spring Break and flu bugs). **tbt** prides itself on being composed of strong women who recognize that while we are paving the way for those after us, many have paved the way before us. To honor **Women's History Month**, this issue includes biographies of women whose lives have inspired us all. Melissa, as you'll read below, also asked a few of our members to discuss influential women in their lives. Along with these pieces, you will find articles that highlight the ways that women at MTU continue to be powerful forces in our community — whether it be by winning gold medals or celebrating Earth Week. We hope that you can take some time this month to honor those who have come before you.

A Good Influence

Melissa Masucci

I think it's important for every woman to not only have a role model, but to have a female role model. There's nothing wrong with having a male idol, necessarily, but the same gender is just different. It's kind of like when your boss is the same gender as you, you tend to listen to them more without feeling bitterness toward them, and if they give you advice you tend to take it to heart more because you feel they're really relating to you.

For this issue I asked several of the other writers to tell about the woman/women in their lives that have served as their role models. What is it about these women that helped inspire us? Here's a story about the woman that's inspired me my entire life, my cousin.

I am from a relatively large extended family of people that never educated themselves past high school. Aside from my uncle, who failed out of Michigan Tech and joined the military, my generation was the first on my mom's side to go to college — let alone graduate from it. I have 15 cousins, and I fall toward the middle of the age range, which means I spent my life watching and learning from the mistakes of my older cousins.

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Interview with Lianna Miller, National Mountain-Cross Champion

Conducted by Michelle Jarvie

You may not have heard of her, but if you've been biking on the MTU trails you may have seen her blaze by you. Lianna Miller, a Master's student in Mechanical Engineering, recently won gold at the 2005 USA Cycling Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships. We recently had a chance to talk to her about biking and her win.

tbt: Tell us a bit about yourself

LM: My name is Lianna Miller. I'm 24 years old, grew up in Petoskey, MI, did my undergrad here in Biomed, and am now pursuing my Master's in Mechanical Engineering. I don't intend to ever grow up, but when I graduate I'd like to work as a biomedical engineer at an international medical devices company. And since Nationals went so well, I'm now looking to see how far I can go with biking. Who knows?

tbt: What was your first bike?

LM: My first bike was a Haro 5.0, a basic cross-country hardtail, which I named Hamish. Not many bells and whistles, but a solid bike, and the lack of rear suspension made me learn to ride smooth. In fact, I used that bike at Nationals — a few modifications on parts and it became my Mountain Cross rig.

tbt: What do you currently ride?

LM: After two years on the hardtail it was time for me to step it up a notch. I now ride a dedicated race bike, a prototype Trek Top Fuel—full suspension, full carbon fiber, incredibly fast bike.

tbt: Tell us about riding on the Tech Mountain Bike Team.

LM: I've been riding for three years. I began racing just a few months after I bought my bike when my friend and riding mentor convinced me to enter a race near my hometown as a beginner. I did a few more local races, moved up to the Sport class, and when we started Tech's mountain bike team last year, I



jumped on the train.

We compete as a Division II school and I personally compete in the women's A class, what would be called "Expert" class in a non-collegiate race. Our regular season runs from late-August to early-October, and we ride all over the Midwest, as far as Kentucky and Missouri. Both years we've done well enough to qualify for Nationals.

I am the only woman on the team, but I don't mind. The guys are fun travel and riding companions and incredibly supportive, though we're looking for more females to develop the team.

I started out as a cross-country rider, but this year I've been working on my descending skills, so I entered a couple downhill races at the collegiate level. I entered the Mountain Cross at Nationals this year mostly because I wanted to complete the Omnium (where you compete in all four events, Downhill, Cross Country, Short Track and Mountain Cross). I'm glad I went, because although I always considered it to be my weakest event, the muddy (and snowy!) conditions favored a smooth rider over a fast rider, and to my surprise, I won the Mountain Cross. I owe my teammates a big hand for advising me on the best lines to take, which tires to run, and for all the cheers. It was quite a sensation to put on the winning Stars-and-Bars jersey. Like the Yellow Jersey in the Tour de France, it has more meaning than just a piece of clothing: Only a National Champion gets the Stars-and-Bars, it's pretty wild to see it hanging up in my room.

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Curling: the Universal Game of Goodwill, Ice and Insanity

Casey J. Rudkin

Frankly, I blame Canada.

When we lived in the Detroit area, my husband, Jim, and I watched curling on CBC Channel 9 out of Windsor. Who else but Canadians would throw a stone down a sheet of ice and actually SWEEP in front of it, yelling maniacally as it careened toward the end? I later found out the answer to that question was “nearly everyone,” and Scots actually invented the sport, but I digress.

Flash forward almost 15 years. Jim and I now live in Calumet, and we’re both in graduate school at Michigan Tech. I was reading the *Daily Mining Gazette* in January and saw a short blurb for a curling openhouse. “Hey Jim,” I asked innocently, “you wanna go learn how to curl? Yes, seriously.” A few days later, I was an addict. After enjoying the hospitality of the Copper Country Curling Club at the openhouse, Jim and I joined, along with our daughters, Boudicca, 10, and Zobeida, 9. We’ve been on a league ever since.

What really draws me to the sport is the grand spirit of the thing. Nevermind that we’re standing around on a sheet of ice in a mining-era building with no heat, we’re having a good time. It takes awhile to get the hang of walking on ice (as I assiduously avoid it in parking lots), but it’s surprising how fast you get used to it. Now I feel like I understand a little of what drives the broomballers. You begin and end each game with a firm handshake and a hearty “Good curling!” to everyone on the opposing team. It’s civil, and it’s fun.

Curling is the first real team sport I’ve taken to since volleyball and softball pre-high school. I am a natural cousin to the tree sloth and never move much faster than an amble. Neither am I fiercely competitive by nature. Team sports usually don’t accommodate these traits. Although I still have to hustle down the ice when sweeping, I can handle the short sprints. Sue Mickus, a fine lady who continues to give me pointers on curling, told me that



curlers average around 2 miles of walking during a game. She also taught me that civility and having a good time are intricately woven into the fabric of curling. Really, I was hooked.

Curling is neither a guy sport nor a girl sport; it’s a *people* sport (although I suspect my cousin sloths would have a more graceful stone delivery than I do). I love that our league’s teams are mixed by gender, age and ability. I praise Mike Mickus, our team’s Skip, or captain, weekly for his ongoing patience with Jim and I. When the Canadian men won the gold medal in curling at Torino this year, their team captain became the oldest ever Olympic champion. I cried I was so happy. Curling truly is universal.

The Copper Country Curling Club also opened their facilities to students and visitors from Michigan Tech’s Winter Carnival this year. Proving the old adage, “Try it, you’ll like it,” Pete Reno began a student curling club immediately afterward. I think he recruited nearly 60 members over a weekend! Now Tech students can try curling, form teams and get those all-important carpools going to Calumet. Sadly, the curling year is running out, as the facilities in Calumet are all-natural and melt with the coming spring, but there’s always next year. If you haven’t thrown a stone, swept an icy sheet or screamed incoherently as your stone slides to the house, you’re missing all the fun.

I’ll see you there, and you’ll be hooked, too.

Damn Canadians.

Interview with Lianna Miller

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As excited as I was to win an event, I was prouder to win second in the Omnium. I think that is the higher honor, because it tested all of my mountain biking skills. But my favorite medal from Nationals — 5th place, Michigan Tech, in the team standings. I’ve been getting a lot of attention for winning an event, and sometimes it overshadows what we did as a team. That medal serves to remind me that the people I ride with are all phenomenal bikers, who rode so well that we placed against teams with coaches, scholarships, and varsity funding (none of which we have).

tbt: What do you love most about riding?

LM: I love the lifestyle: traveling to races, being outside, seeing people let go of their everyday lives when they’re on a bike. It’s exciting. I also love feeling my body transform itself into a well-designed machine at the start of each bike season. Knowing that I can trust my body to go rocketing down a sketchy downhill or through a rock garden is a great self-confidence booster. It’s like a little secret that I share with myself when I’m going through my normal day.

tbt: What advice do you have for beginner riders?

LM: My advice for beginner riders is to find a person or group to ride with. It may be intimidating your first time you ride with them, since often you’re not feeling confident about your skills yet, but I promise that you’ll do fine. Having company while you ride will spur you to ride more often, learn new skills, and keep your confidence up. Also a group can be a valuable resource when learning to fix your bike (yes, parts will eventually break) and when buying new equipment.

tbt: What equipment does someone need to start riding?

LM: You can borrow just about anything you need to ride for the first time, even a bike, but I recommend buying your own helmet first thing. It’s difficult to borrow a helmet that fits correctly, and a helmet that doesn’t fit is practically useless. Other items that I invested in early on were gloves (a must!), riding shorts, and bike shoes. But even those I borrowed first (except the shorts) so I knew what I wanted when I bought my own.

tbt: What is your most important piece of equipment?

LM: A helmet and a willingness to try new things.



Women's History Month Fact: Geek Goddess

If there's anyone more underappreciated in this world than a computer programmer, it's a female computer programmer—specifically this forgotten woman, mathematician (and naval Rear Admiral) Grace Murray Hopper. In 1943, Hooper started to work programming the MARK 1, a 51-foot long, 8-foot-high, 5-ton computing machine. Her most influential invention was a software package known as COBOL (Common Business-Oriented Language), which allowed computer code to be written out in English instead of binary. In application, COBOL provided a set of universal programming rules that enabled companies to easily compile computerized payroll, billing, and other records. But those of you more familiar with pop culture than *Popular Science* can also thank Hopper for popularizing the term “debugging the system.” While working on the Mark II computer, she discovered that a wayward moth had gotten into the system's housing, shorting an electrical relay. Hopper removed the bug and taped it to her logbook. Today, both logbook and moth carcass are housed in the Smithsonian Institute.

from “American Genius” *Mental Floss* 5.2 (March/April 2006): 41-51.

What You Don't Know Will Hurt Us All: The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative

Lindsay Worden

On the ballot this November there will be an initiative for the state of Michigan that, while appearing progressive and just, could actually have disastrous consequences for possibly millions of Michiganders. The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) will actually be a proposed amendment to the state constitution, with the seemingly harmless aim of eliminating discrimination in public sectors and programs that receive public funding. Sounds pretty good, right? We can always use more equality between genders, races, ethnicities and socioeconomic classes.

It's quite ironic, then, that this amendment would most likely *increase* the gaps that women and minorities try to combat every day. The MCRI would prohibit discriminating or granting preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin. While it sounds perfectly reasonable, the effects of this initiative would span to any program receiving government funding targeting a specific minority group, for example programs for domestic and sexual abuse victims or encouraging minority ethnic groups to enter college or skilled trades. If the law passed, even health programs like free breast or prostate cancer screenings for women and men, respectively, could become illegal because they target a single gender.

While cutting funding for programs such as those sounds extreme and unlikely, it's actually already happened in California. In 1996 a similar initiative was passed there, and since then government-sponsored opportunities for women and minorities to overcome centuries-long discrimination in education, business and employment have disappeared. Some examples, out of numerous others: scholarships, fellowships and grants for all levels of education that take into account sex, race, national origin or ethnicity have been cut, as well as summer or after-school programs for children of specific races, ethnicities and even gender.

Since the passing of this initiative, California has seen a sharp drop in the number of women and minorities attending school for medical, technological or computer science-related programs, and a subsequent drop in those entering the workforce, which experts chalk up to lack of recruiting, outreach, counseling, etc. to these groups. Furthermore, there have been lawsuits even questioning the legality of shelters specifically for women who have suffered domestic and sexual assault, since they do not admit men.

While I can see the argument for and against things like Affirmative Action, the proposed initiative in Michigan is preposterous and will set civil rights back at least 20 years. The MCRI would be extremely detrimental for women and minorities. I'm totally, 100 percent behind the concept that nobody should rely on handouts and should get ahead with their skill and hard work, not using an uncontrollable and irrelevant factor such as race or gender. You should get where you are in life because you legitimately earned it. However, women and minorities still do not have all of the available opportunities that white men do yet; that's just the facts. Women are statistically more likely than men to be single parents, become impoverished by divorce and experience domestic violence or sexual assault, just to name a few. All of these contribute to less educational, employment and business opportunities.

For example, full-time employed women in Michigan make less than \$0.70 to every dollar that comparably employed men make, pitifully ranking us 49th in the country for equality. And that's not just feminist propaganda, I promise. Even taking into account education, job classification, union membership and experience, there is still a wage gap that experts in multiple national studies say can only be explained by gender discrimination. To me, that seems like one big red flag that we still desperately need programs specifically to help encourage women to enter the workforce.

Things like the MCRI must not take effect exactly for this reason. We may like to think that gender and race equality have been fixed in the past century, but the truth is the fight is far from over. When initiatives like the MCRI are passed in an attempt to be über-PC and not show a bias towards anyone, the reality is that they actually push true equal opportunity further and further away. Opposing the MCRI isn't a super liberal or militant feminist stance; it's the opinion of someone who thinks that we should give every human the opportunity to excel, no matter the circumstances that have befallen them in life.



Sisu, Cocktails and New Beginnings

Kristin L. Arola

When I think about women's history month, I think about the history of women in my life. While great

national figures like Rosa Parks and Betty Freidan have changed the landscape of our society for the better, our great-grandmothers and grandmothers and mothers have paved the way for what it means for us to be women today. I am greatly indebted to the women in my family who have come before me, who have all shown me what it means to have sisu, to do a job well, to not be afraid of new beginnings and to walk through the world with a quiet confidence and a respect for others all the while enjoying the heck out of life.

My paternal great-grandmother, who lived to age 90, was a tough old Finlander, with an unbelievable sense of fashion (every time I wear a piece of her costume jewelry I am bound to get a compliment). At age 88, still living independently, she told me what kept her so young was a cocktail and a dish of ice cream every night. From her I learned the value of having a personal sense of style, the confidence of making due with what God gave you (she was a large woman, but didn't let that stop her from dressing to the nines), and

the joys of gathering friends together for celebrations. The woman knew how to celebrate. She shows up in my dreams sometimes, and I'm never quite sure what she's doing there but she always looks really put together, and I imagine enjoying an eternal cocktail party.

My maternal grandmother is going to turn 85 this May and has an exuberance I can only aspire to. She tells me what keeps her so young is that she keeps her mind active by learning new things. She writes a bi-weekly column in the Daily Mining Gazette, she paints, she knits, she crochets, she teaches piano lessons, she is constantly learning new things on the computer, she emails, she plays online scrabble with friends, in fact I think she might do more than me. She has lived, and continues to live, a rich life filled with new experiences. From her I have learned that life is about participating, that humor will keep you young, and that despite any hardships we may face in life, what matters is how we get through and beyond them.

My mother, who many mistake for my sister (does she look young or do I look old?) has taught me to listen, to care deeply for others, and to realize that sometimes new beginnings, while scary, will help us grow. She was a devoted stay-at-home mom for a

number of years, and slowly returned to the work force and eventually went back to school. On Mother's Day 2001, I received my Master's degree and she received her Bachelor's degree. She has gone on to get her MS and is now working on a PhD. From her I have learned so many things, most importantly that it is never too late to start over.

So many other women in my life have impacted me today. My paternal grandmother taught me that it's ok to be a little unusual (we used to watch Cyndi Lauper videos together in the 1980s, she loved her), and that you need to live life according to your hopes and dreams, not someone else's. My older cousin was the first woman relative I saw go to college, and this act alone taught me how to go after my goals.

Women's history month for me isn't just a time to think about our national history, but also to think about how the acts of the everyday women in our lives mean so much to those who come after. While historical figures have given me the right to own property, to vote, to play sports, and to make decisions about my body (well...for now at least), my family has given me the ability to love, laugh, listen, and make the best out of the life I've been given.

A Good Influence

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And mistakes they made. Failed marriages, birthing children before they were ready, drugs, legal troubles... you name it, I watched it happen. From using them all as role models growing up, I fully understood how one decision can change the course of the rest of your life, whether that be drunk driving or when to start having sex or even simply which people to befriend.

One of my oldest cousins, Julie, was always one of my favorite people in the world. She's about six years older than me, but always treated me like an equal. She would hang out with me on Saturday mornings and take me biking on the side roads between our houses. I saw her grow from an insecure girl to the strong wonderful woman she is today. One of the first lessons I ever learned from Julie happened when I was in sixth grade — she overcame a rough battle with anorexia. It taught me a lot about the strengths and weaknesses of human beings, and how easily it can all fall away.

Julie went to NMU and got her Bachelor's degree before I even finished high school. She invited me to visit a couple times while she lived in Marquette, taking me to concerts and showing me what college life was like. While I finished high school, she got a Master's degree in Chemistry, and a job with a chemical company out of state. She prepared me for what would become my adult life, always there to answer questions about college, about living in houses with people you didn't really know, and just about life. I won't say I wasn't sheltered growing up in the small UP town that I grew up in, but I will say I wasn't sheltered anymore by the time I was out of high school. Julie prepared me well.

Definitely the most successful woman I'm related to, I've always thought of Julie as my one role model in life. Other than my high school teachers, who I was never all that close to, I didn't have any other females actively involved in my life that had gone to college and made something of themselves. It is her

example that has motivated me throughout college — to finish my degree, to go to Graduate

School and to continue going after my goals.

I very much attribute her with the reason I've stuck it out for five years at MTU, changing majors many times because I wasn't happy with what I was doing, and finding my niche in the world and finally feeling like I'm living up to my full potential. It will be Julie that I'll probably call first when I get accepted to Graduate School to celebrate. And no matter where I live in the country and how far apart we'll likely end up living, it'll be Julie whose opinions and advice will matter most to me for likely the rest of my life.



Strong Women

Cassandra Thiel

In honor of Women's History Month, there have been so many strong women in my life that I must pay tribute to each. The first woman, my strength, is my mother. To write every detail of what she has done for me would be too much for this piece, but I will say she has been a great motivator for both my career and personal goals. She went back to school to get her master's in public health administration while I was in grade school. She has always been the greatest, most loving mom. She's shown me that women can have a very strong love in their life (my father) and be devoted to that love, while still being independent. In this way, she actually gives more strength to that relationship and the two are inter-dependent. She taught me to live for myself. She taught me that women should love a man because they want to be with him, not because they have to be, and that their relationship should be founded on love, friendship, and trust. A true relationship is two-sided, and no one person always "wears the pants."

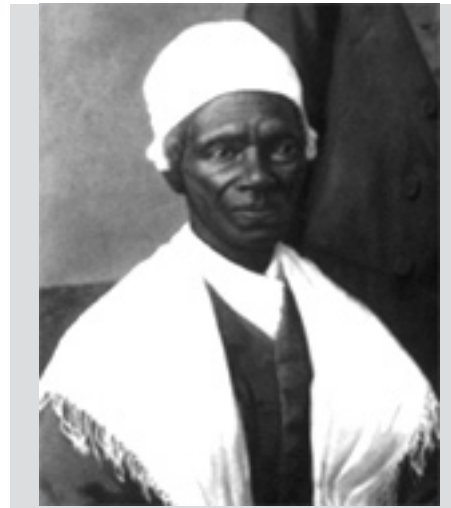
I had three grandmothers growing up. Grandma Dee Dee didn't have a lot of money, but I didn't notice or care. While she didn't have as much to give us in toys, she taught us how to make do with our surroundings. I remember gluing little toy soldiers and such onto rocks and knowing that it was the best thing ever. She also taught us to appreciate music with her skills playing the organ. She played cards with me every day, and I was the one she'd turn to for any type of yard work. She didn't allow the perpetuation of male/female stereotypes, and she helped me become an independent woman.

Grandma Fayne was always sweet and caring. She and my grandfather were very much in love and she showed me the importance of strong relationships. She was always there to talk with, and she taught me things like knitting. While I was still very young, she was diagnosed with an awful degenerative disease which took her life during my junior year in high school. She had watched her own sister die early from this disease and made up her mind to live life positively and not give in to self-pity. She showed me strength of mind and heart... even when the body deteriorates.

My third grandmother was actually my

godmother. "Grandma Jonelle" was an amazing woman with an incredible life history. She was a large black woman who not only raised two generations of her family and tended a pig and soybean farm, but also headed the Diabetic's Department at the hospital where my mother worked during the 1980s. She definitely did not let others judge her by her color or gender, and she helped show us to fight for things that are right. One of my favorite stories of Grandma Jonelle and myself was when Grandma had just gotten back from a long trip to New Zealand; we went to the airport to pick her up. Keep in mind that I was an incredibly white child — very pale and platinum blonde — and Jonelle was a very dark skinned woman. We saw Jonelle from across the terminal (in the days before strict security) and I ran the distance to her, frantically shouting, "Grandma! Grandma! Grandma!" My mother loved the confused faces on those present when they watched me run to her arms and give her a great big hug.

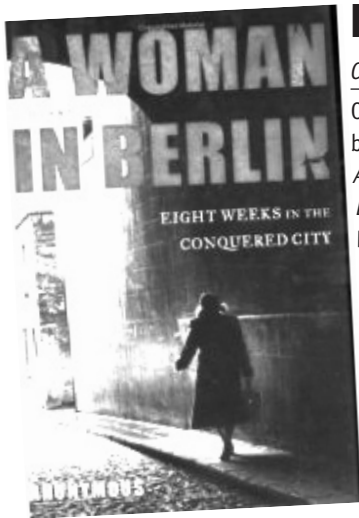
The remaining most impacting woman in my life is my sister Allison. She is 3.5 years older than me, to the day, and she has always been my idol. There is no one else I wanted to be like more. I watched her fight through things before I reached them —both in school and with our parents. Through her mistakes and triumphs, I was able to judge the path I wished to take. She, as the oldest child, had the unsought duty of paving the way, making my passage so much easier. I may have done better in school than she, at least in obtaining better grades, but she now appears to be on the path to a wonderful life — finishing up her senior design credits for ME at Tech in a study abroad program in Denmark. She's also set to marry a great man next March and they both have wonderful jobs lined up for them in Arizona. Allison has kept me more tied in reality. She's helped me realize that any failure I might endure cannot be so bad and, in fact, life is more than school and work. She is not only my idol and sister, but a great friend and guide. She helps me see the hopes and dreams for my future, along with the afore-mentioned women who provided a strong footing for my first steps into the world.



Women's History Month Fact: Rebel With a Cause

Isabella Bomefree couldn't have been average if she'd tried. In the early 19th century, when women were expected to be dainty, quiet, and polite, Isabella was a 6-foot-tall, outspoken, unrelenting female force to be reckoned with. Emancipated with the rest of New York's slaves in 1827, the 30-year-old Bomefree's first act as a free woman was to wage a court battle to free her son, who'd been illegally sold to an Alabama plantation owner. She won. With that checked off her list, she changed her name to the more memorable Sojourner Truth, became a traveling preacher, and spent the next 40 years advocating African-American rights and women's suffrage. She took on struggles that wouldn't be popular until a century later, such as leading a successful fight to desegregate Washington, D.C. streetcars in 1865. She also never shied away from getting her hands dirty, personally hauling supplies to black volunteer regiments during the Civil War. In fact, Truth was so outside the realm of stereotypical weak femininity that, in 1858, critics at a lecture accused her of being a man in disguise. In response, Truth bared her breasts to the audience.

from "American Genius" *Mental Floss* 5.2 (March/April 2006): 41-51.



From Supply Train to Major: The Terrible Realities of War

Cassandra Thiel

Over winter break, I read *A Woman in Berlin, Eight Weeks in the Conquered City*, the diary of a German woman from the World War II era. First published in the 1950s

and later translated to English, this story captures an anonymous author's life just before and during the Russian occupation. *A Woman in Berlin* presents a snapshot of life in Berlin — how the Berliners got by with little or no food, water, gas, or electricity, as well as how their lives were affected by the coming of the Russians: "She tells of the shameful indignities to which women in a conquered city are always subject: the mass rape suffered by all, regardless of age or infirmity" (Forward). However, this narrative also contains some lessons that can be applied in any era; it speaks to our vulnerabilities, as well as our need to stay aware of the world around us.

The observations that seem central to the narrative are those dealing with the Russian invasion and its effects on the people of Berlin. With righteous indignation, the author records a military order issued to retreating German soldiers to leave all liquor stores untouched for the oncoming enemy. The reasoning being that alcohol would impair the enemy's strength and speed. However, she and many of her female peers feared the Russians even more when they had been supplied alcohol. "I'm convinced that if the Russians hadn't found so much alcohol all over, half as many rapes would have taken place... Next time there's a war fought in the presence of women and children (for whose protection men supposedly used to do their fighting out on the battlefield, away from the home), every last drop of drink should be poured into the gutter, wine stores destroyed, beer cellars blown up" (173-4).

Amidst all the rape, a crude humor emerges amongst the women of Berlin; they are drawn together by the common experience of their suffering: "I was again embracing a woman with whom I had previously shaken hands at

most... Ilse and I hastily exchange the first sentences: 'How many times were you raped, Ilse?' 'Four, and you?' 'No idea, I had to work my way up the ranks from supply train to major'" (204).

The fact that the men did not endure this kind of suffering leads to a rift once the men return home. They expect everything to be as it had been, and fail to see that things have changed drastically. "If I was in a good mood and told stories about our experiences over the past few weeks, then [my former boyfriend, Gerd] really got angry. Gerd: 'You've all turned into a bunch of shameless bitches, every one of you in the building. Don't you realize?' He grimaced in disgust. 'It's horrible being around you. You've lost all sense of measure.'" (259). This, combined with the sufferings of the men and the thousands of unwanted pregnancies due to rape, makes the repair of Germany, and truly all places touched by war, that much more difficult. The most important rebuilding must occur within the individual and what remains of the family.

The author also discusses the differences between the pre-Russian Berlin of meager rations and bomb-shelter 'governments,' and the new Berlin run by the Russians. Once the Russians swept through Berlin and life returned to some semblance of order in the form of new rations, the author noted a change in the citizens of Berlin, "In some cases the rations are more generous than we had lately under Adolf. This information is making a profound impact. I hear people saying things like. 'There's another example of how our propaganda made fools of us all.'" (177). Here the author points out the ways in which governments can take advantage of their citizens and warns us all to be wary.

The author is level headed and objective in documenting the plight of her neighbors and herself, as well as the onslaught of war. Unexpectedly, she also observes some interesting differences in the German and Soviet cultures of the 1940s in relation to women and education. "My schooling makes me desirable in his [Russian] eyes. That's a far cry from our German men, for whom being well read does little to enhance a woman's appeal, at least in my experience. In fact, my instinct has always been to play down my intelligence for them, to make a pretense of ignorance- or at least to keep quiet until I know them better." The author cites the differences in the views

of a household and the roles of the individuals within it. She also makes notes about the value that Russians place on education, a rare commodity for the fortunate.

The author makes clear and valid points on the wealth of society before the war and the poverty existing afterwards, and how we, as humans, adjust to drastic changes and learn to live in new conditions. "...[I]n every nation, no matter what flag or system of government, no matter which gods are worshiped or what the average income is, the sum total of tears, pain, and fear that every person must pay for his existence is a constant. And so the balance is maintained: well-fed nations wallow in neurosis and excesses, while people plagued with suffering, as we are now, may rely on numbness and apathy to help see them through- if not for that I'd be weeping morning, noon, and night. But I'm not crying and neither is anyone else, and the fact that we aren't is all part of natural law" (174). It is truly inspiring to think that these women, and ultimately the entire country of Germany, lifted themselves up from the trenches, with the scars of the past were remembered as unforgettable lessons, and mended their country whilst maintaining a semblance of their pre-World War culture.

This is truly an incredibly moving book. Not only is it a good read and highly intriguing historically, but it also provides strength and timeless warnings for living life today. Rape is violence and domination of women, and a tool of war. We must all understand that and stand together to prevent the ravages of war and hatred upon ourselves and all women of the world. I recommend *A Woman in Berlin* to anyone interested in WWII and/or women's issues.

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

- Maya Angelou

Marie Curie: Woman, Scientist and Nobel Laureate

Casey J. Rudkin

Women always have been, and continue to be, underappreciated and undervalued in the field of science. One woman, however, blazed a trail in science that literally glowed. Many people have heard of Marie Curie, but I would venture that few of those know her whole story.

This famous scientist was born Maria Skłodowska in Warsaw, Poland on November 7, 1867. Known as Manya to her friends and family, she was one of five children. Her parents were both teachers. The family appears to have been quite happy, although their Polish patriotism kept them in trouble with the Tsarist police once their country was appropriated by Russia. The family suffered tragedies when Manya's mother and oldest sister died while she was nearing her teens.

When Manya grew older, she and her older sister, Bronya, became interested in the sciences, and they learned about chemistry in secret. They resolved to travel to Western Europe for an education, first working as nannies to earn the money for university. Manya traveled to France just before she turned 24 in 1891 and registered at the Sorbonne University as Marie, adopting the French form of her given name.

While at the Sorbonne, Marie won a scholarship for her work in physics, married Pierre Curie (in 1895) and completed research on magnetism just before giving birth to her first daughter, Irène, in 1897. She also began her search for a doctorate-worthy science topic.

Soon, Marie was interested in a new, glowing substance that was receiving scientific attention and began working with radiation. Her husband worked on the project with her. She finally completed her doctoral thesis in 1903, the same year she and her husband shared the Nobel Prize for their work (interestingly, the Curie, a unit of radioactivity, is named for him). Her husband received a professorship from the Sorbonne, and Marie was promoted to "laboratory chief," a radical step, as no woman had ever held such a position.

The Curies enjoyed the financial and social benefits of the first apex of their professional lives. They were like turn-of-the-century rock-stars, with the press and the public hounding them about their personal and professional lives. By then, they had two daughters, new laboratory facilities and promising careers, but in 1906, tragedy struck the family. Pierre was killed in a carriage accident. In her diaries, Marie wrote, "The death of my husband, coming immediately

after the general knowledge of the discoveries with which his name is associated, was felt by the public, and especially by the scientific circles, to be a national misfortune. It was largely under the influence of this emotion that the Faculty of Sciences of Paris decided to offer me the chair, as professor, which my husband had occupied only one year and a half in the Sorbonne. It was an exceptional decision, as up to then no woman had held such a position.... The honor that now came to me was deeply painful under the cruel circumstances of its coming." (*Autobiography* 191-192)

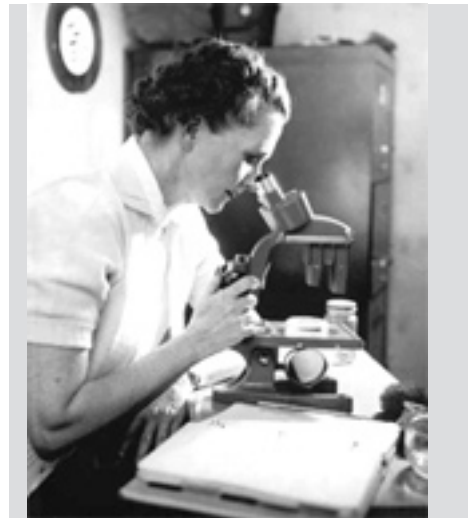
Marie continued the research she and her husband began, and in 1911, she won her second Nobel Prize, this time in Chemistry for her discoveries of radium and polonium. She was also embroiled in a scandal during this time, in which she was accused of wrecking the marriage of a fellow scientist. While she was in Belgium accepting her prize, the press obtained some steamy letters of correspondence between

her and her admirer. Distraught, she focused all of her now waning energies on running the Radium Institute. She used radiation to treat French troops during World War I and worked on medical uses for radiation.

Marie spent her life believing that radiation was purely benign, and she paid for that belief with her life. Although she suffered from symptoms common associated with radiation poisoning for many years, they intensified in the early 1920s. In 1934, she died of aplastic anemia, a side-effect of radiation exposure, not living to see her daughter and son-in-law receive their own Nobel Prize in 1935 for the discovery of artificial radioactivity.

According to Wikipedia, Marie's notes on radiation and its effects were radioactive until recently, when one of her granddaughters had them decontaminated. Not exactly your grandma's recipe book, is it? Unusual and brilliant to the end, Marie Curie changed the face of the physical sciences and helped open the way for every woman who wanted an education, a career and a family.

I created much of this article with information from the American Institute for Physics site at <www.aip.org/history/curie/> and <www.wikipedia.org>. The AIP used Marie's quotes from *Marie Curie, Pierre Curie with Autobiographical Notes*, translated by Charlotte and Vernon Kellogg (New York: Macmillan, 1923). For more information on Marie Curie, including photographs, scientific notes and more biographical data, visit the AIP website.



Women's History Month Fact: Environmental Leader

Rachel Carson was a master biologist with degrees from Pennsylvania College for Women and Johns Hopkins University. Carson secured her place in history in 1962, when she published *Silent Spring*—a compelling argument against the American pesticide industry. The concept might seem elementary today, but Carson was the first person to wake the world up to the fact that all life is connected by the food chain. Thus, if you poison insects, you're also poisoning the animals that eat insects and, ultimately, the humans who eat those animals. Despite her meticulous research, Carson soon became a target for chemical companies. Monsanto, Velisicol, American Cyanamid, and even the Agriculture Department were quick to label her both a hack and a hysteric. But her environmental research stood up to the criticism, and before long, her lyrical writing had shifting an entire nation's way of thinking.

from "American Genius" *Mental Floss* 5.2 (March/April 2006): 41-51.

Earth Week at Michigan Tech

Rachael Sturtevant

Students for Environmental Sustainability (SfES) present Earth Week 2006, coming **March 27-31**. Earth Week is a series of events held annually to celebrate the international Earth Day and raise awareness of environmental sustainability issues.

Although Earth Day has been celebrated in the U.S. since 1971 on April 22, the birthday of the founder of Arbor Day, the date has never had ties to the natural world. In contrast, the rest of the world began celebrating Earth Day in 1970 on the vernal equinox. This date marks the precise moment that spring begins in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. At this global moment, night and day are of equal length everywhere on Earth. So Earth Day is a day of equilibrium when differences are forgotten and nature's renewal is celebrated by all.

In 2006, the international Earth Day will be on March 20. This year's Earth Week theme at Michigan Tech is "Green Building Design." Green building is a process that focuses on two major components. It is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which building and their sites use and harvest energy, water, and materials. Green building also practices reducing building impacts on human health and the environment, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance and removal – the complete building life cycle.

Earth Week events are designed to fit students' schedules. Events during the week of March 27-31 include:

-Lunch & Learn: several lunchtime events will be held during Earth Week on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in the MUB Ballrooms. Lunch & Learn events will consist of discussions on various topics such as light pollution and air quality, how sustainability is approached in different cultures, and how different MTU departments view sustainability. Discussions will be lead by individuals or groups with some expertise in the area, many of whom are women. In addition, students from Diane Miller's Organizational Communication class will be presenting from 1:00-2:00 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

-Evening films: movies with an environmental theme will be shown on the last few Thursdays in March. The feature film will be shown during Earth Week. All of the movies will start at 7:00 pm and will be screened in G002 of the Forestry Building.

-Environmental Photography Contest: The theme is Our Ecological Footprint. ALL students are invited to enter the contest and awards will be given to the winner

and runners up. Possible prizes include items such as a tripod, photo frames, and certificates to places that sell photo-related equipment and supplies. Entries can be submitted on March 21 & 22, from 10:00 am-2:00 pm in DOW 840. The judging will be held on Monday, during Earth Week. Photographs will be on display on March 27 in the Fisher commons from 9 am – 4 pm.

-About SfES: SfES is a subcommittee of the Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC, www.esc.mtu.edu). Our mission is to raise awareness of and commitment to environmental sustainability on campus and in the surrounding community.

For more information about Earth Week or SfES, e-mail Tim at tlwong@mtu.edu or visit the ESC website at www.esc.mtu.edu. For any questions on this information, please e-mail Rachael Sturtevant at rasturte@mtu.edu.



image from <http://brian.gotoes.org/thought.gif>



The Technobabe Times is sponsoring a writing contest as part of The Wild Women of the North charity fundraiser for the Baraga Women's Shelter. The event will be held on April 21 featuring music by Erin Smith, Jen Wilke, Melissa Davis, and Jon Soper. The top pieces from the writing contest will be read at the event. You are invited to submit an original piece of writing celebrating women. All genres are welcome. Authors may elect to read pieces during the event or to have pieces read by event staff. Authors who wish to remain anonymous are still eligible to receive prizes. Prizes will be given to top entries and include gifts from the Einerlei, Pilgrim River Steak House, Downwind Sports, and Riverstone Massage.

**Submit Entries by Friday
APRIL 7 to tbt@mtu.edu**

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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!).

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