

## ELECTION 2008

### Revealed...



www.agoravox.com



www.911truth.org

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## Letter from the Editors

As Election Day draws near, we present this special fall issue of *Women Unite!*. The issues we chose to cover—women's issues, economy, LGBTQI, environment and energy, war, health care, education, foreign policy, and gun control—are only some of the topics, so we encourage our readers to visit the campaign websites of the candidates. Our focus is to talk about the issues that impact our lives, rather than the personal lives of the candidates.

One thing you will notice in this issue is the addition of Cynthia McKinney as a covered candidate. She is the Green Party candidate and is on 70.5% of ballots (Connecticut is not one of them). We chose to feature this former Democrat Congresswoman from Georgia because she is a progressive African-American woman. Voting doesn't have to be a choice of two parties!

We are also proud to announce that we are now a part of the Campus Progress' Campus Publication Network. Campus Progress is a non-partisan project of the Center of American Progress that promotes progressive activism on college campuses. More information on Campus Progress can be found on the last page of the publication. We hope you enjoy our election issue and we hope you vote to let your voice be heard!



*Elizabeth Stannard Gramisch is the senior co-editor of Women Unite! She's a senior majoring in neuroscience with minors in classical tradition and Japanese language. She's a SART member and a representative for Campus*



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## Letter from the Director

Vote on November 4<sup>th</sup>! Why?! It's likely two Supreme Court Justices will step down. Decisions on reproductive rights, affirmative action, sex discrimination, presidential power, and separation of church & state, could ride on your vote. 26 states could ban abortion if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned.

Raise your voice after Jan. 20! Why? \$10 billion is spent monthly on the occupation/war in Iraq/Afghanistan, while student loans, jobs, mortgages, and future financial security are uncertain. Neither major-party candidate will bring home all combat/non-combat troops before 2011. Not only have countless innocent people lost their life in both wars, U.S. women are being victimized as well. U.S. Congresswoman Jane Harman reports 41% of women seen recently at a LA veteran hospital report being sexually abused in the military. Not anti-war? Both major-party candidates support NSA wiretapping of American citizens; neither discusses how the economic crisis affects the poor: majority - women; neither supports same-sex marriage; and, neither will end the death penalty. Address global warming? Create universal health care coverage? Not going to happen during a deep recession without pressure from you. Use your voice on or off-campus – demand accountability from your President and representatives!



*Laura Lockwood is the Director of the Women & Gender Resource Action Center.*

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/US/07/31/military.sexabuse/>



## Women's Issues\*

### Obama

- Supporter of Roe v. Wade and abortion rights
- Introduced the Microbicide Development Act—development of a topical product to prevent the transmission of HIV
- Original co-sponsor of the Prevention First Act—funding for family planning, comprehensive sex ed, and compassionate care for rape victims
- Co-sponsored of the Violence Against Women Act—aids groups dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking
- Co-sponsored the Fair Pay Restoration Act—reasonable time to file a pay discrimination claim

\* Information in 3-columned pages taken from candidate's web sites

### McCain

- Believes Roe v. Wade is a flawed decision that must be overturned; wants to return abortion laws to individual states
- Promotes adoption as a first option for women struggling with a crisis pregnancy
- Supported the Family Medical Leave Act in 1993 to ensure men and women were able to take leave (care for a newborn child, adopt a child or care for an immediate family member) and return to a position that is equal in pay, benefits, and responsibility
- Co-sponsored the Family Friendly Workplace Act—flexible work schedules to balance family life

### McKinney

- Consistent supporter of women's reproductive rights
- Against the Global Gag Rule—prevents family planning funding to be used overseas if abortion is offered as an option
- Against the ban on partial-birth abortions
- Against the Unborn Victims Protection Act—makes it a federal crime if a fetus is harmed during another crime
- Against restricting or preventing minors from crossing state lines to get an abortion



## Economy

### Obama

- \$50 billion to help economy—\$25 b for State Growth Fund (health, education, housing) & \$25 b for Jobs & Growth Fund (maintenance of roads & schools)
- Supports tax credit of \$500 per person or \$1,000 per working family
- Introduced Patriot Employer Act of 2007—rewards companies that keep jobs and have good benefits for workers in the U.S.
- Proposes the STOP FRAUD Act—1st federal definition of mortgage fraud with new criminal penalties
- Supports payday loan caps at 36% interest with accurate information provided at time of loan

### McCain

- Keep the top tax rate at 35%, maintain the 15% rates on dividends and capital gains, and phase-out the Alternative Minimum Tax
- Lower barriers to trade, increase the value of the dollar and thus reduce the price of oil
- Repeal the 54 cents per gallon tax on imported sugar-based ethanol, increasing competition, and lowering prices of gasoline at the pump
- Roll back on corn-based ethanol mandates
- Eliminate broken government programs, reform our civil service system to promote accountability and performance, and cut wasteful spending

### McKinney

- Against keeping reduced taxes on capital gains and dividends
- Would require all outsourced jobs to be reported
- Believes that money that can be used for different programs are available, just misallocated



## LGBTQI Issues

Obama	McCain	McKinney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen federal legislation and protection of hate crimes by passing Matthew Shepard Act</li><li>• Supports laws to outlaw discrimination due to sexual orientation &amp; gender identity</li><li>• Supports full adoption rights for same sex couples</li><li>• Supports repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act</li><li>• Supports civil unions with equal legal rights, but not marriage for gay couples</li><li>• Supports repealing the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy in the armed forces</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Believes the institution of marriage is a union between one man and one woman</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports gay couples adopting children</li><li>• Supports a constitutional amendment that would provide equal rights for all</li></ul>
<p><b><u>*Connecticut Did It!*</u></b></p> <p>Connecticut is now the third state (behind Massachusetts and California) to legalize same-sex marriage. The CT Supreme Court decision gives every couple equal rights when applying for a marriage license, regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p>The ruling stated that "to decide otherwise would require us to apply one set of constitutional principles to gay persons and another to all others. The guarantee of equal protection under the law, and our obligation to uphold that command, forbids us from doing so. In accordance with these state constitutional requirements, same sex couples cannot be denied the freedom to marry."</p> <p>Connecticut allowed civil unions for gay couples starting in 2005. Two years later, eight same-sex couples sued the state for marriage rights, stating that the civil unions didn't offer equal rights, which contradicted the state's constitution.</p> <p>Same sex marriage is still not recognized on a federal level.</p> <p><small>source: <a href="http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/10/10/connecticut.gay.marriage/">http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/10/10/connecticut.gay.marriage/</a></small></p>		



## Environment and Energy

### Obama

- Short-term relief by giving \$1,000 rebate to families from a windfall tax on oil companies
- Limited swap of light oil for heavy crude
- Establish a National Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)—10% decrease of carbon in fuels by 2020
- Electricity from renewable sources: 10% by 2012, & 25% by 2025—electricity demand down by 15% (2020)
- Supports construction of Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline - incredibly important
- Reduce 80% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 through cap-&-trade policy of pollution credits

### McCain

- Construct 45 new nuclear power plants by 2030 with the ultimate goal of eventually constructing 100 new plants
- Create roughly 700,000 jobs in construction, engineering, operation and maintenance
- Commit \$2 billion annually to advancing clean coal technologies
- Develop oil and gas reserves in the US to reduce foreign dependency
- Preserve our national parks, national seashores, wildlife refuges and national monuments

### McKinney

- Against drilling for oil in the Alaska Natural Wildlife Reserve
- Against the construction and permitting of new oil refineries and off-shore drilling
- Against changing critical habitats that house endangered species to non-critical habitats
- Supports the addition of organic farming and sustainability to the Farm Bill
- Supports the effort to make the U.S. carbon-free and nuclear-free
- Sponsored a bill that would prohibit commercial logging on publicly owned land



## War

### Obama

- Remove combat brigades (phased) from Iraq in 16 months, but have some remain to target al-Qaeda
- Increase size of the military by
  - Army—65,000
  - Marines—27,000
- Better review of major defense programs for better protection
- Invest in aircraft, such as the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
- Supports Missile Defense but believes it should not divert resources from other national security priorities
- Need to focus efforts back to Afghanistan—2007 was the most violent year since the invasion in 2001

### McCain

- Strongly supports the development and deployment of theater and national missile defenses
- Wants to increase the size of the American military
- Supports reform in defense acquisition
- Supports sending reinforcements to Iraq to implement a classic counterinsurgency strategy of securing the population
- Wants to finish the job of securing our land borders, ports and airports

### McKinney

- Supports bringing all troops stationed abroad home
- Supports ending the use of anti-personnel mines in combat
- Would cut funding for both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan



## Health Care

Obama	McCain	McKinney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-sponsored the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007—embryos donated from in vitro fertilization clinics &amp; only if deemed in excess</li><li>• Insure uninsured Americans via a plan that is similar to the one offered to Congress</li><li>• Require all children to have health care coverage</li><li>• Hospitals and providers will need to collect and report: health care costs &amp; quality, disparities in care, nurse-staffing ratio, and hospital-acquired infections</li><li>• Allow purchase of medications from other developed countries if safe and lower price</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look to bring affordability and competition to our drug markets through safe re-importation of drugs and faster introduction of generic drugs</li><li>• Fight for medical liability reform that eliminates lawsuits directed at doctors who follow clinical guidelines and adhere to proven safety protocols</li><li>• Give every family a refundable tax credit (cash towards insurance) of \$5,000 (\$2,500 for individuals)</li><li>• Supports funding for promising research programs, including amniotic fluid and adult stem cell research and other types of scientific study that do not involve the use of human embryos</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports the creation a single-payer universal health care program</li><li>• Against denying non-emergency treatment for Medicare patients who don't have the co-pay</li><li>• Would increase the amount of funding for prescription benefits and for community-based health programs</li><li>• Supports the use of human embryos in stem cell research</li></ul>





## Education

Obama	McCain	McKinney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$4,000 refundable credit to cover part of a public college or university tuition—recipients would complete 100 hours of community service per year</li><li>• Reform <i>No Child Left Behind</i>—improve assessments and accountability system so schools are not punished</li><li>• Increase AP or college-level classes taken by 50% (2016)</li><li>• Create easier financial aid application—check box on tax form for financial aid &amp; eliminate separate application</li><li>• Create teaching scholarships to cover 4 years of undergraduate or 2 years of graduate in exchange for working in a high-need field or location</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Propose a student loan continuity plan that would anticipate loan problems and expand the last resort capabilities for each state's guarantee agency</li><li>• Build on the lessons of <i>No Child Left Behind</i></li><li>• Devote 5% of Title II to recruit teachers who graduate in the top 25% of their class or who participate in alternative teacher recruitments</li><li>• Low-income students would be eligible to receive up to \$4,000 to enroll in an online courses or college prep courses</li><li>• Simplify federal financial aid and higher education tax benefits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Believes that the <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> is unfair for public schools</li><li>• Against vouchers for children to attend private or parochial schools</li><li>• Supports funding for teaching programs and other initiatives that would increase the number of teachers in high-need fields or locations</li></ul>



## Foreign Policy

### Obama

- Opposes Kyl-Lieberman amendment (use military presence in Iraq to counter threat from Iran)
- Will meet with leaders of all nations, but not without careful planning beforehand
- Will implement laws that will detect and stop the smuggling of weapons of mass destruction
- Will work with the Israelis and Palestinians to create a time of peace and security
- Will negotiate a global ban on new nuclear weapons
- Will secure global loose nuclear material within four years
- Will work to stop the genocide in Darfur

### McCain

- Strongly supports Israel
- Will welcome a larger UN role in supporting the Iraqi elections
- Will exert international pressure on Syria and Iran through regional military posture
- Will work with allies to find and disrupt terrorist organizations and their financing and ensure that weapons of mass destruction do not fall into terrorists' hands
- Proposes applying sanctions to restrict Iran's ability to import refined petroleum products

### McKinney

- Against deterring the transfer of weapons to China
- Against reforming the United Nations through restricting funding from the U.S.
- Supports keeping the travel ban in Cuba until political prisoners are released
- Continue a multiple year commitment to Africa to supply food and medicine
- Aims to make the U.S. a partner for peace in the global community



## Gun Control

Obama	McCain	McKinney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wants to repeal the Tiahrt Amendment—restricts local law enforcement's access to gun trace information</li><li>• Respects Second Amendment, but wants to keep guns away from children and criminals</li><li>• Supports making gun childproof</li><li>• Supports making the federal Assault Weapons Ban (currently expired) a permanent law</li><li>• Flip-flop stance on the D.C. handgun ban—originally in favor of the ban, but then against it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opposes attempts to restrict Second Amendment rights by holding gun manufacturers liable for crimes committed by third parties</li><li>• Opposes restrictions on assault rifles</li><li>• Opposes bans on the importation of certain types of ammunition</li><li>• Supported legislation requiring gun manufacturers to include gun safety devices</li><li>• Supports instant criminal background checks to help prohibit criminals from buying firearms</li><li>• Opposes waiting periods for law-abiding citizens' purchases</li><li>• Opposes the confiscation of firearms from private citizens</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Against prohibiting lawsuits on gun manufacturers for product misuse</li><li>• Against lessening the current waiting period to buy a gun from three days to one day</li></ul>



## A Step Backward for Women, and for All Americans

By Ashley Mitchell



*Ashley is a sophomore at Princeton University majoring in politics. She writes and edits for the Princeton Progressive Nation.*

In June, after one of the longest, most bitter primary seasons in history, Senator Hillary Clinton ended her bid for the Democratic nomination for President. Although her campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, record numbers of voters came out in support of her candidacy, and she will forever be remembered in the annals of history as the first serious female contender for our nation's highest office. In her concession speech, Clinton stated, "Although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling this time, thanks to you, it's got about 18 million cracks in it. And the light is shining through like never before, filling us all with the hope and the sure knowledge that the path will be a little easier next time." "Next time" came even sooner than expected: less than three months after Clinton's concession speech, Republican John McCain announced his pick for Vice President, Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska, the first female vice presidential candidate of a major party since Geraldine Ferraro ran with Walter Mondale in 1984. Unlike the 1984 election, this current presidential contest is very close, and Sarah Palin could become the first female Vice President. While

many women may not agree with the positions of the McCain/Palin ticket, the fact that the first female Vice President could be inaugurated in January should be cause for celebration. Her ascension to the White House would usher in a new era of politics in America, one where a woman's success in public life would be as commonplace as a man's. However, women—and all Americans—should be wary of both Governor Palin and her meteoric rise to the national stage. In every possible way—from her background to her positions on women's rights and government ethics to her role in the Republican Party's right wing—Sarah Palin has shown she is not the woman America should want to blaze a trail to the White House.

Since McCain chose her as his running mate, the media has covered Sarah Palin and her family as if they were detailing the latest episode of *Gossip Girl*: from Governor Palin's days competing in beauty pageants to the pregnancy and engagement of her seventeen-year-old daughter, no stone has been left unturned in the media's search for juicy tidbits about the Palins. Sarah Palin's hairstyle and attractiveness have also garnered a lot of atten-

tion, much of it inappropriate. For example, upon

hearing that Palin was the Republican VP nominee, Rush Limbaugh remarked that she is "a woman I'd like to see age in office." He said the exact opposite about Senator Clinton. The sexist treatment of Palin is unfortunate, and it has exposed the hypocrisy of liberals and women's organizations that decried the sexist treatment of Hillary Clinton during her campaign. Sexism should never be tolerated, regardless of the political affiliation of the candidate. However, the initial frivolous and dismissive reporting of Sarah Palin cannot be attributed entirely to sexism. Sarah Palin has not been taken seriously by many in the media because she has not proven she should be taken seriously as a national leader.

After her speech before the nation at the Republican National Convention, Sarah Palin received a lot of positive press. She was hailed as a tough politician and a strong speaker to whom 'average Americans' could

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## Palin and Feminism

By Jessica Ross



Jessica is a junior at Trinity College and is the secretary for Zeta Omega Eta

Senator McCain has called Sarah Palin a maverick multiple times.

*Feminists for Life's agenda.*

According to a 2005 article in the *Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman*, rape victims in Wasilla, Alaska (Palin's hometown which she led as Mayor), have to pay for their own "rape kits." In the article the Chief of Police stated,

women earned 75.5 cents for each dollar earned by men. Despite this evidence, Palin's running mate, John McCain, doesn't believe in pay equity; his voting record has proven this with his opposition to pay equity legislation brought before the Senate.

However, does this "maverick" represent her gender and the rights women have fought for? She claims to be a feminist, but her past decisions deeply negate women's reproductive rights, as well as the rights of victims of rape and incest—issues feminists worldwide have been promoting for decades.

*Feminists for Life* is a legitimate organization that provides resources for pregnant women. Although the organization seeks to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the fact that it gathers and makes known resources for pregnant women is invaluable. Sarah Palin has identified herself as a member of *Feminists for Life*. She is against abortion, even in cases of rape and incest, but does support it in cases where the mother's life is in danger. On the other hand, Palin supports cutting funding for teenage mothers, which runs counter to the



"Palin's Rise to Power" by Cahlie Brocato

"In the past we've charged the cost of exams to the victims' insurance company when possible. I just don't want to see any more burden put on the taxpayer."

However, abortion is not the only feminist issue that the McCain-Palin camp opposes. The issue of equal pay (for women), a main topic for *Feminists for Life*, is an important one for all feminists. In the 2004 U.S. Census Bureau release,

Palin's own stance on pay equity was in question during an interview with NBC's Katie Couric. Palin stated that she believes women deserve equal pay and that nothing should stand in the way of a woman gaining that right. However, she told Couric that she opposed the *Ledbetter Act*, as do most Republicans.

*The Fair Pay Restoration Act* (S. 1843), like its counterpart passed by the House, the *Ledbetter Fair Pay Act* (H.R. 2831), eliminates the 180 days time limit, allowing victims of pay discrimination to seek back pay and damages when they become aware of the injustice. Palin's reasoning against this? That "it would have turned into a boon for trial lawyers."

Palin has been quoted in

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## Why I Vote Republican

By Sarah Schoenhut

It's hard being a college Republican—as a minority amongst my peers, it's difficult discussing my opinions without being harshly criticized. I consider myself to be a moderate conservative with socially liberal views, which doesn't always match the platform of Republican candidates. While I don't always agree with McCain, I believe we need a president who has the experience to lead our country in these unstable times. McCain is the real advocate for change, and he is experienced enough to accomplish what's best for our nation.

The most pertinent topic of the campaign is the economy. Understandably, Obama's promise to lower taxes for 95% of the population seems quite alluring, but what I find troubling is the proposed small business tax increase on businesses making more than \$250,000 a year to make up for the shortfall caused by not collecting taxes from the lower-income class. U.S. businesses are already dealing with high oil prices; many have already laid off thousands of employees. Increasing business taxes at this time will create additional stress on their bottom line, and could further damage the fragile economy. With the way our economy has

been, this is the last thing our country needs.

The U.S. currently has a very tenuous relationship with the international community. We have many allies, but also many opponents. I believe that our country, in the midst of two wars, needs a strong leader with a vast array of foreign policy and war experience. I do not believe the expertise needed to run the country can be found in a first-term Senator. I want to have a president that has been to the frontlines, who can use his knowledge to lead our country during these difficult times.

I believe a woman should always have the right to decide what is best for her, her body and her future. The government in no way should prevent her from exercising this right; I do not agree with McCain and Palin on this critical issue. However, there is a point where abortion rights are a bit extreme. I believe that third-trimester abortions are a crime and to kill a baby that could live outside the uterus is infanticide. Not only did Obama oppose a ban on this heinous crime, but he also opposed a bill similar to the *Born-Alive Infants Protection Act*. The *Born-Alive Infants Protection Act* provides legal status and rights for a child who is breathing or has a

beating heart, regardless of



Sarah is a senior at Bucknell University and is majoring in psychology.

"whether the expulsion or extraction occurs as a result of natural or induced labor, cesarean section or induced abortion." Is he serious? How could a candidate with such radically liberal views work effectively with conservatives?

The bottom line is: I believe McCain has the political experience to lead our country as the commander-in-chief, especially during these turbulent times. He has an excellent record of foreign policy that Obama can't match. He is a true bipartisan senator who has worked effectively with his adversaries, and promises to continue by having members of both parties in his cabinet. Hands down the best candidate, from my point of view, is John McCain.





## Why I Vote Democrat

By Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch,

with research contributions by M.J. Geier

Over the past eight years, women's rights have been under fire. Our rights to our bodies, our rights to equality—each have faced devastating blows under the Bush administration. As a Democrat and a feminist, I feel the current Republican platform is detrimental to the rights of all women. A true feminist must vote for Barack Obama for President of the United States in November. He is the only candidate that can represent the people without stripping away some of their rights.

As a reflection of his voting record, McCain's stance is that women not only have all the rights they need, they have a few more than necessary. On his website, Senator McCain mentions women's rights only once, stating that he supports overturning *Roe v. Wade*. How can women not be afraid? According to NARAL (National Abortion & Reproductive Rights Action League), McCain has a 0% voting record on women's choice issues. His anti-choice platform also includes voting no on apportioning \$100 million to **reduce abortion numbers** and reduce unwanted/teen pregnancies by increasing precautionary health care services. So, by voting for McCain, will I not only be denied the choice to have an

abortion, but access to preventative health care services as well?

Obama, on the other hand, is a candidate that feminists can stand behind. His website cites **twenty-five** examples of what he will do to aid women, including: supporting choice and equal pay; investing money in women-owned businesses; increasing early childhood education; supporting women's health research; and, providing health care coverage to the 19+ million uninsured women by the end of his first term. These promises are not all talk: in the same NARAL report, Obama has a 100% voting record on pro-choice issues. He was also a co-sponsor of the *Prevention First Act*, which calls for teaching abstinence as well as safe sex, and the provision of contraception to reduce unwanted pregnancies, and consequentially, abortions. In addition, his running mate, Joe Biden, is a huge advocate for survivors of domestic violence.

However, reproductive choices aren't the only issue that feminists should be wary of in this election. Don't let McCain's choice of a female running mate sway you—his voting record negates important rights for women! One of the most infuriating is his

stance on pay equity. After decades since the passage of the Pay Equity Act of 1963, women still earn a fraction of what men earn in the same position. This became apparent after the Supreme Court decision of *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company*, which stated that employers were protected from pay discrimination lawsuits based on race or gender if the discrimination occurred 180 days ago or longer from the time the claim was filed. The Senate responded with the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*, which would have made sure that women could recover pay if they discovered discrimination. McCain didn't vote on the Act: he said that would have voted no on it, stating that women "need education and training" instead of equal pay. Does that sound like a candidate who will fairly represent women?

It seems like McCain is against any legislation that would give women the rights we deserve. McCain voted against the extension of Title X, which provides uninsured or low-income women with devices, like cancer screening and birth control. Yet on his campaign website, he states that he wants to improve the quality of health care. How

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## The Palin Effect

By Arielle Levin Becker

(Higher Education reporter from the *Hartford Courant*)

*As printed in the Hartford Courant on October 13, 2008*

The three dozen students clustered around the TV set in the Women's Center of Connecticut College were fairly subdued as they watched Gov. Sarah Palin and Sen. Joseph Biden face off earlier this month. Until the Alaska governor hit a nerve.

"Some of these dictators who hate America and hate what we stand for," Palin said, "with our freedoms, our democracy, our tolerance, our respect for women's rights —"

"What?" junior Dani Murphy called out, her palm held up toward the ceiling in a physical "Huh?" Others in the room echoed her outrage with a yell or a "What?"

For Murphy, the center's co-director, the women's rights comment stung because she sees Palin as antithetical to the stances that matter to her.

Like Murphy, many female college students have been grappling with how to respond to Palin since she was added to the Republican presidential ticket. Some say she has given them a new sense of angst about the

election, getting under their skin in a way that her running mate, Sen. John McCain, never did.

Although she has fans on college campuses, for some left-leaning students, Palin



"Vice-President Clampet" by Melissa Pulito

doesn't fit their notion of what a feminist should be. She holds views on abortion and other issues that they say undermine causes women have fought for.

Yet Palin has led a successful political career in Alaska, achieved what no woman has before — running on a Republican presidential ticket — and could become the highest-ranking woman elected to office in the United States.

Does that make her a feminist icon?

Or do the issues she espouses mean she's a threat to feminism?

Was her selection a step forward for women?

Or a setback?

For Rachel Kipnis, a Connecticut College senior who is active in Republican politics, the answer is easy: feminist.

Judging the governor by her position on abortion — Palin opposes abortion under any circumstance — or other specific issues is an outdated notion of feminism, said Kipnis, who is from Florida.

Instead, she and other Palin supporters say the Alaska governor represents a role model who has managed to balance career and family.

"She really stands up for herself in a really strong way. I think that's a really positive image and role model to have as a young female Republican," Kipnis said.

Jennifer Flynn, a Yale freshman who describes

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David is a senior at Trinity College majoring in Public Policy & Law.

## On the Trail

By David Kimball-Stanley

It's no secret that Barack Obama's campaign has a large lead among young voters. In Iowa, a staggering 57% of voters aged 17-24 voted for Obama, with John Edwards and Hillary Clinton getting only 14 and 10 percent of that demographic, respectively. Even today, according to poll data from "Rock the Vote," Obama leads McCain among voters aged 18-29 by almost 30 points (56% to McCain's 29%).

I spent this past summer working for the Obama campaign, through their Organizing Fellows Program (OFA). The OFA was created by the Obama campaign to train young people in field organizing for a campaign. It sent over 3,600 volunteers to open and run campaign offices in swing states around the country. The Obama campaign is keenly aware of its appeal among young voters and has been eager to tap their excitement.

Field offices across the country are looking for volunteers and college students who can walk to lots of doors are a prime target. In swing states that are especially close, campaigns' hopes of victory rest on their abil-

ity to Get Out The Vote (GOTV). GOTV campaigns could decide toss-up states like Virginia, New Hampshire, Colorado, Ohio, and a number of others. Winning these states will be a result of whichever campaign gets its voters to the polls most effectively. That means they have to identify who is voting for whom, so that they can run a targeted operation come Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. Offices all across the country are focused on their data: they are constantly getting more and organizing what they already have.

These past Trinity Days I took a group of 30 Trinity students to help out the campaign in New Hampshire. We were there helping another Trinity student, Jonny Asen '09, who has taken this semester off to work as a Obama Campaign Field Organizer. We canvassed the towns of Exeter and Portsmouth, knocking on over 850 doors in total.

This is how a campaign prepares for GOTV: volunteers across the country go door to door asking their fellow citizens how they feel about the election, who they plan to vote for, and what issues are most important to them. The campaign sends information on these issues to people who are undecided. On Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, campaign offices throughout the

country will have their supporters mapped out. Volunteers from the campaign will call supporters to remind them to vote and will also provide transportation to the polls for those in need.

Obama's campaign has been known for its organization, and it is that organization that allowed him to overcome great odds and win the nomination. Lots of this work is not glamorous, but it is what will decide the election. They need as many volunteers as possible to do the grunt work. If you go online now, you can find a campaign office in a swing state that is nearby (I would suggest Pennsylvania or New Hampshire), and you can drive over for an afternoon of work. If you go to Trinity but are from a swing state, you can even organize your own phone bank using the Neighbor to Neighbor tool.

Neighbor to Neighbor is an exciting new grassroots tool that the Democratic National Committee has launched in some states. You can type into the online tool where you are from, and it will give you a list of voters to call.

*Continued on page 19*

*A Step Backwards for Women**Continued from Page 12*

relate. Given that her speech often sounded like a diatribe from the mouth of a vicious right-wing radio host, I found this surprising. I could almost see the right wing pulling the strings as Sarah Palin launched into sharp personal attacks on Senator Obama and his career as a community organizer. (Interestingly, nowhere in her speech did she mention the economy, terrorism, or anything at all relevant to improving the country—was this by choice, or did she simply have nothing to say about those topics?). Senator McCain's acceptance speech the following night was noticeably gentler, and this served only to highlight Sarah Palin's role as the 'attack dog' of the Republican ticket. Although most presidential candidates choose running mates for reasons other than their qualifications and experience—like their regional affiliation, their age, etc.—Sarah Palin is the only candidate in recent memory who offers nothing to her ticket but her gender and fierce personality. She was chosen to fulfill a predetermined role rather than for her unique leadership abilities or policy experience.

Republicans have argued that—as mayor, city council member, and governor—Sarah Palin has shown determination in the face of opposition and has enacted sensi-

ble policy measures. However, many of the most highly-touted praises of Palin have been misrepresented by the right-wing. For instance, while she did indeed stop the 'bridge to nowhere' in Alaska, she stated when she ran for governor that she supported the bridge. While it is not uncommon for politicians to switch their positions or pander to certain supporters, this is strange behavior for a woman who claims she is unafraid of opposition within her own party. Additionally, Palin's so-called "experience" leading Alaska's National Guard has been minimal; she plays no command role, and most National Guard Operations are handled by Maj. Gen. Craig, a member of her cabinet. Furthermore, she is currently under investigation for allegedly firing the Alaska Public Safety Commissioner because he would not fire a state trooper who was divorcing Palin's sister. This is not the first time she has purportedly concerned herself with petty matters—as mayor of Wasilla, she asked her local library if books containing offensive language could be banned. In short, her experience in executive roles has been greatly exaggerated. If her dearth of experience is not enough of a turn-off, then consider the eerie similarities that can be drawn between her and President George W. Bush. Both served as governors; both have capitalized on their affable personalities and

close-knit families. Unfortunately, the parallels do not end there: both President Bush and Sarah Palin are known to surround themselves solely with yes-men. In the Bush White House, anyone who did not tow the line was dismissed or forced from their position, as evidenced by the number of 'tell-alls' from top officials that have surfaced in recent years. According to a *New York Times* article published on September 13, 2008, Governor Palin is cut from the same cloth. The article states that, "Throughout her political career, she has pursued vendettas, fired officials who crossed her and sometimes blurred the line between government and personal grievance." The article then goes on to detail the numerous run-ins she has had with local officials, lawyers, members of the media (many of whom she called 'haters'), and others over the course of her career. Anyone who dared to question her decisions faced the wrath of Sarah Palin. After eight years of the close-minded and dogmatic Bush administration, Palin's past should give the American people pause.

If Sarah Palin was a man, her candidacy for the vice presidency would be mercilessly scoffed at. Instead, anyone who has dared to question her qualifications has been labeled sexist by the GOP. (It should be



noted, however, that the Republicans have not shied away from publicizing Palin's ability to hunt, skin, and prepare moose for her family. How this could be considered a "qualification" for office remains to be seen, unless John McCain decides to send his VP out to find Osama bin Laden). But just as it is wrong to discount someone solely because of his or her gender, it is also abhorrent to insinuate that a person's gender should protect him or her from valid criticism. Nor should the standards to which we hold our political candidates be lowered, which is what occurred after last week's Vice Presidential debate. The debate was considered a "success" for Governor Palin because she spoke in complete sentences and did not embarrass herself as she did

in her interviews with Charlie Gibson and Katie Couric. The media's standards were set so low that they largely gave her a pass for her inconsistent policy positions, her repeated refusal to address the questions at hand, and her sneering condescension toward Senator Biden.

Perhaps the most disheartening aspect of John McCain's VP pick is that it undermines the achievements of female politicians on both sides of the aisle. Women in office are no longer a novelty, but they still constitute a fairly small group of our nation's lawmakers—the current Congress is comprised of 16.3% women. They have dedicated their professional lives to furthering their policy goals and working to better their communities. However, John

McCain did not choose Governor Palin because she is a policy wonk or a champion of the causes she stands for (just what these causes are remains to be seen, but based on early reports about her positions on abortion, censorship, and government ethics, it does not look promising). Senator McCain chose Sarah Palin to be his running mate because she is everything he is not: young, attractive, and female. He chose someone who would add charm and polish to his campaign rather than someone who would complement his policy goals. Americans would not accept this choice if Palin was a man, and they should not lower their standards because she is a woman.

#### *Why I Vote Democrat*

*Continued from Page 15*

can you improve health care when you deny a specific group the resources they need? Obama has rallied for women's health, an example of which is his co-sponsorship of Johanna's Law, which would educate

women about ovarian cancer.

As a female voter, I feel a vote for McCain equals a forfeit of all the rights generations before us fought for. McCain-Palin is anything **but** change, unless you mean a step back to the time before women had the right to

vote. The feminist choice is the only candidate that will keep our rights and treat women as equals—Barack Obama.

#### *On the Trail*

*Continued from Page 16*

Then you can start your own remote phone bank — making calls and finding out how people feel about the election. Once you've finished, you can input all the data online and send it back

to the campaign.

The Obama campaign's stress on grassroots activism and has been the path to victory from the very beginning. This will be a very close election, and it is not just being played out by surrogates and pundits on

Fox News and MSNBC. Ordinary citizens taking personal responsibility for the direction of their country will decide this election.

*Sources:*

<http://www.futuremajority.com/node/2928>

<http://www.ihf.com/articles/2008/01/08/feminist/youth.php>

*Palin and Feminism**Continued from Page 13*

the media with other viewpoints that starkly contrast with the ideals of feminism. One of the most blatant was in the Katie Couric interview when she stated homosexuality was "a choice." This point of view correlates with her stance against gay marriage and civil unions; though she says she wouldn't judge someone based on their sexual identity. Palin is also a strong supporter of abstinence-only sex education programs, which, according to the Mathematica Policy Research group\*, do not decrease the number of

pregnancy or prevent teenagers from having sex. These views appear to be in opposition to her purported "feminism," not to mention she is aligned with John McCain - who is opposed to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the bill written by Joe Biden.

How have other feminists reacted to Palin calling herself a feminist? Gloria Steinem, a prominent feminist figure, wrote an op-ed piece for the *Los Angeles Times* on September 4, 2008. In her editorial she discussed how Palin opposes important feminist ideas, like reproductive rights and equal pay, and

how voting for a woman does not always constitute voting for a feminist. As Steinem puts it, "Palin shares nothing but a chromosome with [Hillary] Clinton...she opposes just about every issue that women support by a majority or plurality."

Is Sarah Palin a true feminist? Does she and her party believe that being a woman automatically makes one a feminist? It's up to our generation to be the judge.

\*Source: <http://www.cfw.org/Document.Doc?id=237>

*Palin Effect**Continued from Page 16*

herself as a political independent and feminist who opposes abortion, said Palin has shown that women can succeed in politics without sacrificing femininity or giving up family for a career.

"Palin is the right woman to make a step towards a more measured and logical view of feminism and what it means to be a powerful woman," Flynn, from Washington state, wrote in an e-mail.

But Palin supporters acknowledge that they're in the minority on many of Connecticut's campuses, where most of their classmates are decidedly less comfortable with the vice presidential candidate.

"A lot of students at Yale have been energized afresh," said Yale sophomore Kathryn Olivarius, who calls Palin's nomination "an insult to women in America."

Olivarius said many female students are troubled by Palin because she does not support issues that have traditionally been considered feminist causes. McCain doesn't, either, but to Olivarius, hearing opposition to abortion and other traditionally women's issues from a 72-year-old man is different from hearing it from a 44-year-old, driven woman.

"If I were to have one Republican man telling me that he's pro-life, he wants to lower taxes and do all these things, it would kind of seem like the same old," she said. "Hearing it from a

woman herself, it's really disturbing. I think that makes people really nervous."

Olivarius, who is active in the Yale women's center, recalled a conversation in which someone asked whether, if Palin were elected, it would at least show young girls that they could become vice president or president.

There's some truth to that, said Olivarius, an American citizen whose family lives in London. But she added, "I would like a role model who represents women's voices."

Several students said they saw Palin's selection as a form of tokenism, a pick based on her gender, not her record.



"It's great that she's there, but at the same time, why is she there?" asked Krystal Ramirez, a Trinity College junior from Houston, who called Palin unqualified.

Hannah Ewing, a Connecticut College senior who co-directs the women's center, said she would oppose any candidate with Palin's background and views, man or woman.

But Ewing, from upstate New York, finds it particularly difficult to understand how a woman could take such a strong position against abortion or preside over a town where sexual assault victims were reportedly charged for rape exams. It's one thing to see men who hold those views — a man can't know what it's like to be pregnant and would be statistically less likely to be sexually assaulted, she said. But with a woman, Ewing said, wouldn't she be more likely to empathize?

Some students said that they respect Palin's opposition to abortion, but could not stomach the idea of her translating it to public policy.

And some struggled with reconciling Palin's views on abortion with their notions of feminism. Cristina Conti, a Trinity College sophomore from New Jersey, co-edits a newsletter called "Women Unite."

Conti sees Palin's anti-abortion stance as contradictory to feminism, but she

considers Palin's position in politics, a career that women don't traditionally pick, admirable. Does that make Palin a feminist? "I believe that feminism is believing in women's rights and equality," she said. "I don't know." Palin has drawn a following nationally, a gap several students said makes them nervous.

"We see someone who's really electrified big parts of the nation, and it can be a little strange feeling such a disconnect from the heartland," said Stacey Fitzgerald, a Yale senior from Los Angeles.

Fitzgerald sees something else in her fellow students' anxieties about the election. She and her classmates were high school freshmen on Sept. 11, 2001, and their whole high school and college careers have taken place in a time of war and global uncertainty, under the watch of a polarizing president.

"My year of friends are genuinely scared. We've sort of grown up in a really weird period of time," she said. "People are really desperate for change and terrified of Palin."

But Fitzgerald also said she's troubled by the way Palin has been treated. Classmates see her as a punch line and reacted to her teenage daughter's pregnancy with glee. Conservative commentators describe how good Palin looked during the debate. The McCain campaign limits Palin's availability to

the media. To Fitzgerald, they're signs that Palin is not being treated as a male candidate would be and that both sides of the political spectrum can be unfair to women.

Fitzgerald was glad for the sake of women that Palin "did OK" in the debate. As much as Fitzgerald opposes her, she believes that the Alaska governor will shape how some people see female candidates, how they think of powerful women in the future.

"She is a feminist icon to some people," Fitzgerald said.

*To view video and photos and to read more articles about John McCain and Sarah Palin, visit [courant.com/gopticket](http://courant.com/gopticket).*



**Yodalis Moran '11** is majoring in Anthropology. She is currently co-social chair of La Voz Latina and a member of Habitat for Humanity.

## Food for Thought

By Yodalis Moran and Channon Miller



**Channon Miller '11** is an American Studies major with a double minor in African American Studies and Women, Gender & Sexuality. She holds the position of Vice President on the IMANI (Black Student Union) and the Trinity College Black Women's Organization, executive boards and is also a residential assistant in Frohman-Robb.

Senator Barack Obama. Attendees of Republican rallies often refer to Obama as a communist, a terrorist and a traitor among other derogatory terms. Upon watching the angry, stern faces of the Republican followers and hearing their cruel remarks towards Obama, we were outraged. Does the Republican campaign have to resort to an imitation of the 1950's and 60s? Are we going to have to relive the assassinations of black leaders such as Medgar

Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, whose progressive agendas were halted by people unable to accept diversity? Black leaders should be able to progress without having to fear for their lives. As if the preconceived notions of McCain's campaign supporters aren't enough, the language used in the speeches delivered by John McCain and Sarah Palin create racial animosity. The negative terms used by McCain and Palin provoke negative responses from the audience. For example, in a number of instances, Palin suggests that Obama supports and fraternizes with terrorists. Because Palin's implications questioned the credibility of Obama, the crowd quickly took the same stand. Also, at a recent McCain Rally, the presidential candidate questions "Who is the real Barack Obama?" This question argues that the character

Obama portrays is bogus—that there is a negative side to Obama that the American people are unaware of. Like Palin, McCain is criticizing Obama's integrity, and as expected the attendees began shouting "Terrorist!" and "Kill him" (CNN). This has got to stop! If McCain and Palin continue to lead a campaign deeply rooted in violence, America will soon see another tragedy of a black leader.

Source:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/blog/2008/10/05/politicsfromthetrenches/4502414.shtml>

## Meet the Artists!



**Melissa Pulito** received her Bachelors of Fine Arts at UConn in May 2008 where she concentrated in Illustration. She is currently a graduate student seeking her certification in art education at Southern Connecticut State University. Melissa's interests include art and art history, the environment, early hominids, Batman, UFOs, and Grey Thunder, her 1992 Cutlass Ciera.

Fun Activity! Mad lib:

**Cohlie Brocato '11** is a \_\_\_\_\_ (adjective) cartoonist, who \_\_\_\_\_ (verb) \_\_\_\_\_ (adjective) cartoons. He attends Sarah Lawrence \_\_\_\_\_ (noun). Cohlie loves to \_\_\_\_\_ (verb).





## Mark Your Calendars! WGRAC Events Coming Up:

- **November 12: "Voices Raised in Power" 6:00 pm, Gallows.** Student performances to raise awareness of sexual assault, and empowerment: spoken word, theater, music and song. Sponsored by the Sexual Assault Task Force (SATF). For more information, contact Becky Loeb ([rebecca.loeb@trincoll.edu](mailto:rebecca.loeb@trincoll.edu))
- **November 11: "Safe Zone Workshop" 5pm, WGRAC Lounge.** Halt Homophobia on Campus! Please RSVP, [Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu](mailto:Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu)
- **November 18: Speaker: Carmencita "Chie" Abad on Sweatshop Labor and the Government Industry, 4:15 pm, Rittenberg Lounge:** Ms. Abad will speak on her years as a garment worker for the Gap in Saipan (U.S. Commonwealth), her firing for union activities, & her subsequent lawsuit. Co-sponsored with Campus Progress.
- **November 20: "Killing Us Softly" 5:30pm, Rittenberg Lounge:** Movie and discussion regarding the affects of the advertising industry on women. Dinner will be served. Co-sponsored with the Muslim Student Association (MSA). Please RSVP, [Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu](mailto:Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu); [Marwa.Aly@trincoll.edu](mailto:Marwa.Aly@trincoll.edu)
- **December 4 (tentative): "For The Bible Tells Me So:"** Movie and discussion regarding the experiences of five Christian, American families and their gay and bisexual children. Co-sponsored with the Queer Resource Center (QRC). Please check WGRAC web site for more details. (see below)
- **February 12: "The Vagina Monologues" 7pm, Washington Room:** Fundraiser for Interval House: \$ 5. For more info email: [Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu](mailto:Laura.Lockwood@trincoll.edu).
- **February 16: "Marvelyn Brown" 7pm, Washington Room:** An African-American woman's story about her life as an HIV positive person. Co-sponsored with TCBWO/Imani and Multicultural Affairs
- **February 24: "The Yellow Dress" 7pm, Washington Room.** A powerful play about a college student in a violent relationship.
- **March 2: "I'm Not Your Negro Tour Guide" 7pm, Washington Room.** A one-woman satirical play about sexism, racism, and homophobia. Co-sponsored with TCBWO/Imani and Multicultural Affairs.

Please visit our web site and its Calendar page for up to date details:

<http://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/DiversityGender/WomensC>

## WGRAC Staff & Volunteers

**Director:** Laura Lockwood, M'95

**Assistant to the Director:** Lauren Donais, UConn '08

**Director's Assistant:** Rosalia Abreu, '11

**Violence Prevention Coordinator:** Becky Loeb, '10

**PHAB (Promoting Health Awareness of the Body) Coordinator:** Janice Brea, '12

**Newsletter Editors:** Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch, '09; Cristina Conti, '11

**MAC (Multicultural Affairs Council) Representative:** Nicolette Laume, '11

**"Coming Out" Network:** Nicolette Laume, '11; Lacey Rose, '11; Bryan Wedeen, '12; Kristen Droesch, '12; Isis Irizarry, '10 (abroad)

**Student SART Members:** Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch, '09

**Office Volunteers:** Channon Miller, '11; Yodalis Moran, '11; Rebecca Weintraub, '12; Chau Pham, '12; Dulce Imbo, '09



Some of our fabulous  
WGRAC Warriors!

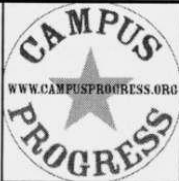
(bottom from left): Laura Lockwood, Cristina Conti, Becky Loeb, Yodalis Moran and Elizabeth Stannard Gromisch

(top from left): Lauren Donais, Nicolette Laume, Rosalia Abreu, and Channon Miller

Not Pictured: Lacey Rose, Bryan Wedeen, Chau Pham, Dulce Imbo, Kristen Droesch, Janice Brea, and Isis Irizarry

### WGRAC Mission Statement

The Women & Gender Resource Action Center is a place of advocacy, support, and welcome for all members of the Trinity and surrounding community. Through educational, social, and cultural programming, it seeks to promote women's self-determination and empowerment; awareness of gender inequalities; understanding among people of different economic classes, cultural backgrounds, religions, and gender identities; and the creation of a campus environment conducive to respectful interaction between women and men.



Women Unite! is a member of  
Campus Progress' Campus Publica-  
tion Network and receives funding  
to put out this publication. Visit  
Campus Progress at  
[www.campusprogress.org](http://www.campusprogress.org)