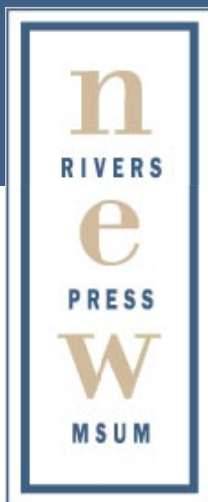


# New Rivers Press: Newsletter

The voice of the students for the press

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## Anthology lets Minnesota women sing

by Ashley Taborsky

On Feb. 3, 2007, "To Sing Along the Way," a new anthology of Minnesota women poets, was launched.

In a collective voice, you have all these voices, which form a chorus. They might get lost again if they were only heard individually," said Thom Tamaro, one of the anthology's editors.

The anthology's three editors are award-winning Minnesota poets themselves: Tamaro, Joyce Sutphen and Connie Wanek. Their mission was to dig up and recover the poetic works of many previously popular Minnesotan women who seem to have been forgotten over time. "History can be cruel," Tamaro said. "It's quick to bury people. It's important as contemporary writers to go back and look at the writers who came before us. We're not the first, so we need to honor that past."

The editors and other team members spent countless hours recovering works that began in the early 1800s. Once the poem was found, however, their job was not done. There were still the copyright issues and task of contacting the present-day representatives of the work. "I think all of us spent many hours making inquiries that yielded no results," Sutphen said.

Tamaro is an English professor at MSUM and has previous editing experience with published books.

Unlike Tamaro, Sutphen and Wanek were not always able to be in the head office of the MSUM's New Rivers Press during the anthology's birth.

Sutphen is a professor at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn., teaching literature and creative writing. Wanek is a librarian for the Duluth Public Library.

Although the three editors weren't able to physically work together, they had remarkable e-mail and phone correspondence, sometimes

e-mailing back and forth four to five times a day.

I found that some of the research we needed to do was a lot harder than one would imagine. It's trickier than I thought to find old records and attempt to trace a poet's descendants, Sutphen said. "On the other hand, it was wonderful to find a connection and get a note back saying how happy the poet would have been to have her work back in print!"

After three years of stressful situations and trying times, Wanek was grateful for her experience. My favorite part of working on the anthology (besides the pure joy of working with Joyce and Thom) was the research into the "venerables," as we came to call them; that is, the poets of the past.

I was so ignorant in that regard when we began: Who were our poetic forebears in Minnesota?

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# NRP author Richard Hoffman speaks about writing the truth

New Rivers Press

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by Michael Johnson

"Memory is tricky, Dad. Sometimes you have to forget. To go on. I know that. But other times, to go on, you have to remember."

These lines from the memoir "Half the House," explain the feelings that the narrator is having while trying to explain to his father the events that destroyed his childhood. Richard Hoffman, author of *Half the House*, visited MSUM on April 12 and spoke about writing a memoir during the Glasrud lecture series.

"Half the House" was first published in 1995 but after going out of print, was republished in 2005. Al Davis, senior editor of New Rivers Press, said, "This is a beautifully written literary memoir that deserves to be around for a long time." Hoffman said, "In my view, *Half the House* is about parents and children, children and parents, violence, and remembering."

The memoir did more than just show a memory, it helped lead to the arrest of the pedophile that attacked Hoffman as a child.

Hoffman's lecture focused mainly on his memoir and who is represented by "I." Speaking to a large group of students as well as professors, Hoffman explained first of all that the memoir is a made thing that exists between the writer and the reader, no different from a poem or novel. In writing a memoir the truth is just the truth and in order to grab the reader the work must manipulate the reader. This seemed like a hard way to think about a piece of non-fiction but he was able to manipulate the audience into

believing him.

Hoffman came up with six literary terms that give a new perspective to writing non-fiction and he says are really "horse manure." All of these work to get the reader on board and keep them there. "When you are telling the truth you have to take the same pains you would take to convince people of a lie. The truth has no literary value: the truth is just the truth and nobody cares but your mama." Hoffman's memoir showed the imagination at work and how the truth is relayed through that.

Since the memoir, Hoffman has written a new book of poetry called "Gold Star Road," which will be available in May.

Hoffman read several of his poems and his true self and emotion came out in full swing just as it did in the memoir. Topics of his poetry range from parents and

children, war, an elegy to his brother and even child prostitutes. One poem titled *Messengers* repeated the line, "We say what we know because we must. Like rain on dust."

At the end of the readings Hoffman was more than happy to sign books and get personal with the audience members. It is no wonder he was chosen by NRP to be published and will likely have no trouble being published after his latest works of art.

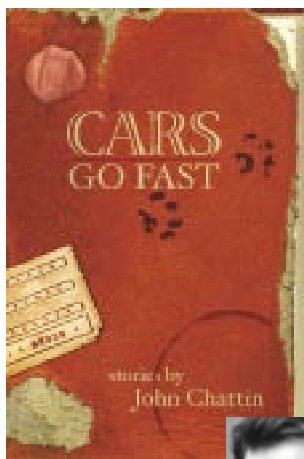


Richard Hoffman and Al Davis



*"The truth is just the truth and nobody cares but your momma."*





"In Cars Go Fast, characters leave: they hunker into cars that have run none too well in years and head out of town, they book flights and hit the skies, some leave by drink or drugs or acts of violence. But they're all going, speeding not so much away from something though some most certainly are but to something. A flight instinct kicks in and these characters are obliged to heed it. They're loners by default. They're lost in their relationships, their families, their uneasy pasts. Then there is the moment. The easiest thing to do; the hardest thing to do. Run, flee, get away." John Chattin



"It is a great privilege to have a full length book published in America at this time when so many fine poets are working and emerging. It allows for the opportunity to enter a conversation of great subtly and scope with others writers I am honored to be listening to. It is a deep satisfaction and humbles me." Holaday Mason

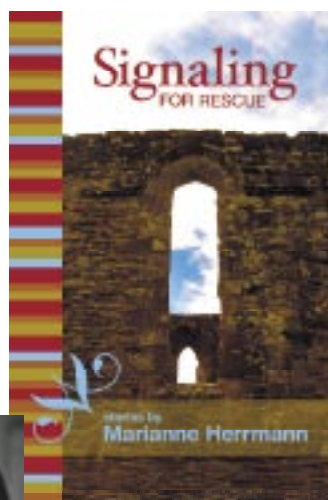


"I might describe my book as a chronicle of how we all walk the earth as tender, wild things. And how our relationships with nature, with each other, with our personal histories, our ethnicity, our illness/death journeys and our family-making can be tender, wild rides." -Diane Jarvenpa



"The stories in Signaling for Rescue describe the triumph over grief and pain between couples and among children. They explore the depth and difficulties of adult sibling relationships, as well as the powerful bond young children share in a family, especially in the face of abuse. These stories reveal how love acts to heal and enlighten relationships rife with pain and sadness."

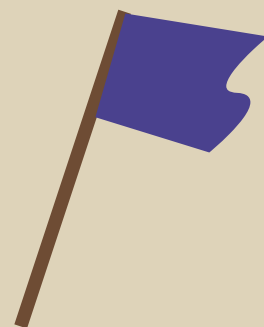
Marianne Herrmann



## Fall releases 2007

## 2007 Fall Literary Festival

**The 2007 Fall Literary Festival will take place this Oct. 24 to 25. Authors who will read there stories will include John Chattin, Cars Go Fast, Holaday Mason, Towards the Forest and Marianne Herrmann, Signaling for Rescue. Diane Jarvenpa, The Tender Wild Things will read her poetry as well as perform a musical concert.**



Continued from page 1

What did they write about? The process of seeking out the answers to those questions was deeply fascinating to me. "There is no other book like this that exists. It takes a historical examination of women's poetry in Minnesota," Tammaro said.

## Coming Soon

New Rivers Press Book Club

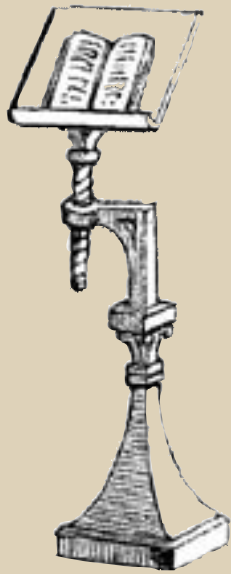
Where: Moorhead Public Library

When: Fall 2007

Hosted by Kellie Meehlhause

To get involved, contact Kellie at:

[meehlhke@mnstate.edu](mailto:meehlhke@mnstate.edu)



Cassie Tweten, a student in the Intro to Publishing course, organized a book sale to sell New Rivers Press backstocked books. The event was held April 16 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the CMU. Books were sold for \$1 each, with a profit of \$96. The top sellers were *The Growers*, *Along with the Owl*, and *The Talking of Hands*. Tweten felt that the sale went well, but thought that there would have been a better turnout with a longer selling time. Great job Cassie!

