

Susan B. and RIT

Images by alumnae featured in book honoring the women's rights leader

Susan B. Anthony spent her life fighting for women's rights.

Today, 100 years after her death, women still struggle to live their lives and achieve their goals in a complex world. Their stories are inspirational, humorous, heroic, sad, beautiful, enlightening – and eminently worthy of telling. That is accomplished in *Susan B & me*, a new book of personal writing and photography dedicated to the spirit of the great suffragist.

Patricia Ronsvalle came up with the idea. A clinical social worker and marketing specialist in Rochester, Ronsvalle was the publisher of *Rochestrvia* by her late husband, TV newsman Pete Dobrovitz.

"When we were working on that book, we came across so many references to Susan B. Anthony," says Ronsvalle. "She just reverberated with me. I admired her so incredibly."

Rather than producing a book about Ms. Anthony, Ronsvalle decided to pay tribute to her by sharing the stories of contemporary women of all ages from all over the globe. Her request for submissions went out through several writing circles and Web sites and, to reach young writers, she contacted Fairport (N.Y.) High School. The writers range in age from 12 to 85.

For the images, Ronsvalle turned to Loret Gnivecki Steinberg, RIT associate professor of photojournalism. Steinberg contacted RIT photojournalism alumnae and received more than 350 submissions. Ultimately, almost 100 photos from 20 RIT grads were used in the book. Steinberg also contributed images to the project.

"I know we have a lot of strong women



While traveling in China, Julie Brown '90 captured this photo of women singing in a public park.

photographers," says Steinberg. "They were terrific in so many ways. They really came through for this project."

The photos were not made to illustrate the words. The writing – poetry and short prose – had already been selected by a panel of judges. The challenge was to match the words and the photos, and the editing and production process was intense.

In many cases, the words and images came together naturally: a photo of a bride by Megan Daniels '98 goes perfectly with *As I Watch My Daughter Marry* by Nita Penfold; pictures of women in West Africa by Barbara Lemaire '98 work well with *Eve's Sister*, a poem about Ghana by Jackie Joice.

Sometimes, the pairings surprise: a photo by Jamie Oppenheimer '96 of a pooch in a pink-tiled bathroom is matched with *The Fear of Me*, Farley Walker's poem about growing old alone.

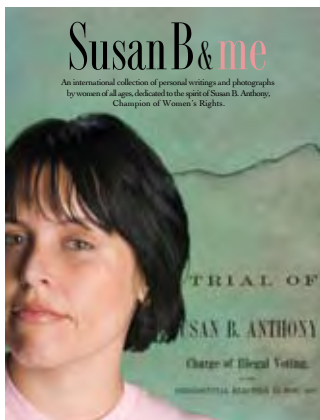
The goal, says Steinberg, was to select photos that made a strong expressive and creative statement on their own, and also supported the text. In a few cases, no image available worked with a particular text, so Steinberg sent out e-mail requesting additional choices.

In one such instance, an image was needed to accompany a poem about a feisty Asian mother.

"I received e-mail from Julie Brown, who was traveling in China," says Steinberg. "She had just photographed a group of Chinese women who sing every afternoon in a public park. It was perfect."

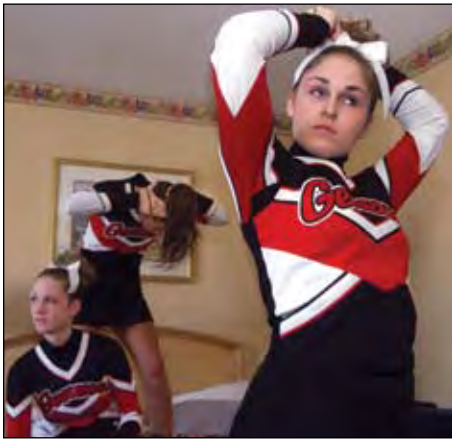
While the stories and pictures of women might have seemed familiar to Susan B. Anthony, she could not have imagined the technology that made this book possible. Words arrived via e-mail. Digital photos were posted and edited on a Web site established for that purpose. Design and layout were accomplished using computer tools. Finally, Xerox Corp., a sponsor of the project, produced the first printing of the book on the iGen3 Digital Production Press.

"It is fitting that Xerox chose to help



To buy the book

Susan B & Me is available in the Rochester area at Wegmans Food Markets and major book, museum and gift shops. It can be ordered for \$24.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling from Big Kids Publishing, P.O. Box 612, Fairport, N.Y. 14450. For more information, contact Patricia Ronsvalle at pattiup@rochester.rr.com.



Kathleen Lange '99 contributed this photo of teen-age cheerleaders.

publish this book," says Ursula Burns, president, Xerox Business Group Operations. "Our company was among the first in big business to recognize that a diverse workforce fosters success. By supporting this important project, Xerox pays tribute to Susan B. Anthony for championing equality and giving women a vote that counts."

Ronsvalle is working on plans to distribute the book nationally and internationally. She hopes that wider visibility will accomplish a personal goal for the project.

"This is a way to start the dialog about why the women's movement has stalled," she says. "Women are going Mach 20 with our hair on fire, and we're pretty satisfied with where we are. But there's still more to be done."

For the photojournalists, *Susan B & Me* offered an opportunity for their work to be seen by new audiences.

"The book not only pays tribute to Susan B. Anthony, but to women all over the world," says Kathleen Lange '99 (photojournalism), a photographer for Associated Press in Maryland who has five images in the book. "I'm honored to be part of it."

RIT photojournalism alumnae whose work is included in the book are: Nicole Goodhue Boyd '98, Julie Brown '90, Christine D'Amato '02, Megan Kuryla Daniels '98, Laura Glazer '99, Jill Hardy '01, Heidi Hoffman '06, Julie Henderson Kobin '97, Kathleen Lange '99, Elizabeth Torgerson Lamark '00, Barbara Lemaire '98, Kasey McDonough '06, Elizabeth Nida '99, Jamie Oppenheimer '96, Debi Parker '04, Joon Powell '04, Samantha Powell '99, Laura Segall '99, Kara Fulgenzi Slating '02 and Carla Ten Eyck '95.

Kathy Lindsley



Photo by Elizabeth Torgerson Lamark '00

I Don't Want to be Anyone Else

By Ruth Mark, Netherlands

From *Susan B & me*. Used by permission.

**The frown lines are souvenirs,
survival marks. They are the cracked
roads of my story, as is the scar
above my right eye. Imperfections,
in this world where beauty is all.
Perhaps, yet they are part of me.
I don't want them removed, botoxed-out
plumped with silicone, smoothed flat.
Prefer to wear these badges of strength
they represent. Let them remind me of
the life I've lived and died, died and lived.
I'm finally happy in my skin, don't
want to be anyone else.**