



Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 7, Issue 3, October 2001

From the Director

Sandra D. Harmon, Acting Director

Women Building Chicago: Illinois State Normal University Connections

I have received a review copy of a new and long-awaited women's history reference work, *Women Building Chicago, 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary*. Edited by Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast, both Senior Research Associates at the Center for Research on Woman and Gender at the University of Illinois at Chicago and published by Indiana University Press, the work was ten years in the making. It includes biographical entries for 423 women of Chicago and the greater metropolitan area who played some role in the history of Chicago. Some of the women are well-known figures in United States women's history, but most are women "who have not yet been included in reference books and about whom little is known." (p. XI)

Since I have been researching women at the Illinois State Normal University in the nineteenth century, I was curious to see what women associated with the ISNU were included. I knew that Sarah Hackett Stevenson, Ella Flagg Young, and Margaret Haley would be there, but wondered if any others would be, too. I found five women listed in the index under Illinois State Normal School and Illinois State Normal University. However, neither Stevenson nor Young were listed in the index under either heading although Stevenson's entry refers to her schooling here.

The seven women with ISNU connections are an interesting and varied lot. The best known are Stevenson, Haley, and Young. Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson (1841-1909), physician and social activist, was a graduate of the class of 1863. She taught school for four years in Bloomington, Mount Morris, and Sterling before pursuing a medical education both in Chicago and London. During postgraduate work, she studied with Thomas Huxley and Charles Darwin while on a second stay in England. Returning to Chicago she

served on the faculties of several Chicago medical schools, was the first woman appointed to the staff of Cook County Hospital and was the attending physician at the Chicago Hospital for Women and Children. A member of the Illinois State and Chicago Medical Societies, she was the first woman admitted to the AMA in 1876, although that organization did not formally admit women until 1915. She served on the planning committee, board of directors, and faculty of the Illinois Training School for nurses that opened in 1881. In addition to those professional activities, she had an extensive private practice. Always interested in scientific writing, she was the author of a best selling biology textbook for school use, *Boys and Girls in Biology*, first published in 1875, *The Physiology of Women* first published in 1881, and scholarly articles in medical journals.

Stevenson participated in the rich women's culture of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Chicago, joining the prestigious Fortnightly, a women's social and literary club, the equally prestigious Chicago Woman's Club, a social and civic organization, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, becoming president of the medical staff of the Frances E. Willard National Temperance Hospital. She was president of the Chicago Woman's Club during the run of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 and served as chief of staff of the model hospital at the fair that showcased the work of women pharmacists, physicians, and nurses. Over 3,000 fairgoers received treatment at the facility. During the economic depression of the winter of 1893, she chaired the Chicago Woman's Club emergency association that financed a system of paid work for women in need. As her biographer concludes Stevenson's entry, "Her contributions as a physician supported the argument for women's admission to the profession, while her activism resulted in new social programs for women and children." (Brigid Lusk, "Sarah Hackett Stevenson," pp. 844-846.)

Unlike Stevenson, Margaret Haley (1861-1939), teacher, labor union activist, and suffragist, did not graduate from the ISNU or any other school. However, in the 1870s she took classes over several years at the ISNU and at Cook County Normal (now Chicago State University). In that respect she is more representative of nineteenth-century ISNU students than Stevenson.

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Most only took a term or two of classes or attended summer institutes rather than complete the three-year course of study leading to a diploma. Even though tuition was free to those who agreed to teach in Illinois, living expenses taxed the financial resources of many students who were self-supporting.

After almost twenty-five years in elementary school classrooms, much of the time in Hendricks School in the Chicago stockyards area, Haley joined the staff of the Chicago Teachers' Federation in 1901 where she remained until her death in 1939. The CTF limited its membership to elementary school teachers. As her biographical entry notes, "Since elementary teachers were mostly female, and upper-level teachers and administrators were mostly male, the CTF was a pathbreaking association of women fighting for their professional and economic rights." (p. 338) In the course of her career, Haley took on Chicago's corporate giants in a court battle to make them pay property taxes for the support of schools, the National Education Association to recognize its women members and issues facing classroom teachers, and hostile mayoral administrations who wished to break teachers' ties to organized labor. Her biography concludes, "She was known as the 'Patrick Henry of the classroom teacher movement, and her efforts were fundamental to the growing economic and professional freedom of public school teachers in the early years of this century." (Janet Nolan, "Margaret Haley," p. 338-341.)

One of Haley's friends and associates was Ella Flagg Young (1845-1918), teacher, educational reformer, administrator. From 1889-1909 she was a member of the State Board of Education which was the governing board of the ISNU. A graduate of the Normal Department of the Chicago High School, she began her long career in education as a Chicago primary school teacher in 1862 and ended it as superintendent of Chicago schools from 1909 to 1915 when she retired. She was the first woman on the State Board of Education, the first woman superintendent of a large city district, the first woman president of the National Education Association. She entered the graduate program of the University of Chicago in 1895. A student and colleague of John Dewey, she received her doctorate in 1901 magna cum laude.

While serving on the state board, Young along with the rest of the ISNU community, had to contend with President David Felmley's advocacy of simplified spelling. Felmley adopted the new spelling for his own correspondence as well as for some ISNU publications. Young did not approve. In a letter of May 1, 1909, she wrote:

My dear Mr. Felmley:

After careful and painful effort I have succeeded in translating your deformed spelling into my own vernacular. I make out that the world looks pretty fair at Normal . . . you are to be congratulated. (Quoted in Helen M. Marshall, *Grandest of Enterprises: Illinois State Normal University, 1857-1957* (Normal: Illinois State Normal University, 1956), p. 243.)

She resigned her state board position when she became superintendent in 1909. Her biographer concludes, "She was a pragmatist in her leadership style but committed to a progressive vision of public education for a democracy. Jane Addams commented that Ella Young 'had more general intelligence and character than any other woman . . . [she] knew.'" (Joan K. Smith, "Ella Flagg Young," pp. 1001-1004.)

Next month, the lesser-known Chicago women with ISNU connections will be profiled. ■

Call for Papers

The Department of English and Philosophy at Purdue University Calumet wish to announce the tenth anniversary of the Undergraduate Conference. Abstracts are invited from papers in American, English, world, comparative or feminist literature; American Studies; American/US History; world history; political science; popular culture; and women's studies written by undergraduates. Since the range of topics goes well beyond the discipline of English, students in departments of history, philosophy, political science, and women's studies in addition to English are invited to participate in the conference.

Abstracts must be postmarked no later than January 18, 2001, and should be limited to a maximum of two hundred and fifty words, double spaces, and should include the student's name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and title of the paper. Students whose papers are accepted for inclusion in the conference will be notified by February 25, 2002. The conference, itself, will be held on Friday afternoon, April 19, and Saturday morning, April 20. For more information, contact Women's Studies. ■

New Faculty Profile: Najma Adam, School of Social Work

By Kate Moritz,
Women's Studies
Graduate Assistant



Dr. Najma Adam

Professor Adam received her BA/BSW from Bloomsburg University, Pennsylvania, her MA/MSW from the University of Chicago in Social Service Administration, and her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Social Work. As a professor at Illinois State University's School of Social Work, she currently teaches the undergraduate course Social Policy and the graduate course Foundations of Social Work Research. Next fall she will teach a section of Women's Studies 120, Women, Gender and Society.

Her research interests focus on domestic violence against women immigrant populations and social policy. As Director of the Women's Capabilities Initiative, a joint project with Women's Studies, Adam's main goal this year is to develop a dynamic conference that seeks to connect professionals and low-income minority women. By creating such an environment, she believes together the groups can establish a representative voice to generate necessary programs. Since recently arriving from the University of Illinois at Chicago, Adam is striving to make connections with people in the domestic violence field so she can further study domestic violence against women in immigrant and rural communities. She ultimately hopes to help ease the suffering women too often experience. ■

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WOMEN'S STUDIES FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

Faculty and Staff News

Mary Trouille, Foreign Languages, was awarded a Teaching Competition Prize by the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) for the design of her French course "Marriage and Domestic Violence in Eighteenth-Century French Literature and Society." The course was drawn from Trouille's sabbatical-year research in France (1998-99) and was first taught at ISU in the fall of 1999. A description of the course was published in *Teaching the Eighteenth Century* 8 (Fall, 2001): 73-99. The course (FOR 420.12) will be offered again in fall, 2002.

Trouille's translation of volume 1 of *Rethinking France: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, ed. Pierre Nora and David Jordan, was published in October by the University of Chicago Press. This is the first volume of a four-volume collection of essays on French history originally published in French by Gallimard in 1984-92.

Ann Haugo, Theatre, has been named as a co-president of the Illinois Chapter of the National Coalition on Racism in Sports and the Media. She will share administrative duties with University of Illinois faculty Brenda Farnell, Associate Professor of Anthropology, and Carol Spindel, Visiting Teaching Associate in English and Author of "Dancing at Halftime," a cultural history of Chief Illiniwek. While the Illinois chapter of NCRSM supports the elimination of racist mascots nationwide, their principal goal is the elimination of Chief Illiniwek as the symbol of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Haugo holds an A.M. ('93) and a Ph.D. ('99) in Theatre History from UIUC, and her research on Native American and First Nations performance includes critical examination of stereotypes on Native peoples in American performance.

Priyanka Samarakoon, former Undergraduate Teaching Assistant, graduated from Illinois State University last spring with a degree in Sociology. She has since returned to Sri Lanka and is currently working for the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies. The Consortium serves as a coordinating body for various humanitarian organizations. ■

Sandra D. Harmon's report from the August *Women's Voice* on the Enhancing Women's Capabilities in Central Illinois conference was reprinted in the October issue of *Business to Business: McLean County's Monthly Magazine*. The conference was held this past June and was part of the Women's Capabilities Initiative (WCI), a joint venture of ISU's School of Social Work and the Women's Studies Program.

Governor's Commission on the Status of Women Report

By Rozel White, Women's Studies Secretary

On September 5, 2001, I attended the meeting of the Education and Training Working Group of the Governor's Commission at Springfield. One of the items of discussion was an update on the goals of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) and the needs of adult students. One of the goals of ISAC is to promote attendance at postsecondary institutions by marketing financial aid programs for adult learners, particularly female students with children. A recent ISAC/Advisory Group Meeting for Adult Learners discussed the "Serving Adult Learners in Higher Education" report, which is a study of what is effective in serving adult learners by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. Three groups who might need help were identified at the ISAC meeting. They are individuals who have decided to pursue more education but cannot afford it; individuals who would think about attending school if they knew they could afford it; and individuals who are not finished, but who could finish with financial assistance. ISAC will be working with the educational institutions to tailor

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Midwest Society for Women in Philosophy Comes to ISU

By Alison Bailey

The Department of Philosophy co-hosted the fall meetings of the Midwest chapter of The Society for Women in Philosophy (SWIP). The topic for this year's meetings was: "The Intersections between Critical Race Theory and Feminisms." The meetings were held during the weekend of 12-14 October. They began with an evening screening of Michal Avid's documentary "The Women Next Door." This timely film explores women's lives in Jerusalem, The West Bank, Gaza Strip and settlements; it was followed by a discussion about the impact of war and terrorism on the lives of women.



Department of Philosophy hosts pictured left to right are: Patrick Francken, assistant professor, James Swindler, chairperson, and Alison Bailey, associate professor.

The formal part of the conference began on Saturday with Audrey Thompson's paper "Gentlemanly Orthodoxy: Critical Race Theory and the Whiteness of the APA Guidelines," and Emily Lee's "Visible Differences of the Body as Possibilities for Creative Meaning." The afternoon sessions began with a discussion of Sheil Shah's incredible documentary on women's lives under the Taliban. During the discussion, SWIP members decided to look into bringing members of the Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association (RAWA) to various mid-west campuses and communities. The hat was passed and we raised \$325.00 to support RAWAs clandestine documentation of Taliban atrocities and their efforts to continue the education of girls.



Pictured to the left are some of the participants of the Midwest Society for Women in Philosophy conference held at Illinois State University.

Other presentations included Eleanor Blount's "Reflecting on the Woman in the Mirror," which explored questions about black women's hair and shame. Nancy McHugh's "Excited Attention: Immorality and Images of Racialized and Intersexed Genitalia", which presented her archival research on British doctor's notes on hermaphrodites. And, Linnette R. Lowe's "Feminism, Vegetarianism, and Anti-Hate Speech Activism," an exploration of oppression of the common discourse in these fields.

The Midwest SWIP spring meetings will be held in Whitewater, Wisconsin. For further information, please contact Alison Bailey at Illinois State University at 309-438-7795, or email her at baileya@ilstu.edu. ■

In November check out the Women's Studies redesigned website!

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Take Back the Night a Success

By avada douglas

Take Back the Night was again a success! The rain deterred many folks from participating in the evening's events; however, it is estimated that 100 folks were present. Groups from campus and the community were in support of Take Back the Night providing information for all who came. Ten different groups were represented including PATH, Countering Domestic Violence, Black Student Union, Campus for Choice, Hillel, PRIDE, McLean County Voice for Choice, Sexual Assault Prevention and Survivor Services, PFLAG and FMLA.

The speakers this year included Lara Saba, a senior Political Science major; avada douglas, a senior Social Work/Economics major; and Meridith Kruse, an activist and former ISU professor. The rest of the evening went as scheduled with the march and safe space. The men discussed the possibility of starting a Men Against Rape group.

Take Back the Night shirts are still available for \$13 (2001) or \$7 for shirts from the previous two years. Our next major projects looks like it will be the play "The Vagina Monologues." If there are questions about anything at all, email ISU_FMLA@hotmail.com or call avada at 436.9561. Meetings continue to be Mondays in STV 401 at 7pm. ■

Women's Studies Welcomes New Minors

Gwen Givens – Mass Communication
Melanie Manego – Political Science
Ann Mizwicki – Social Work
Amy Wyatt – Social Work

Report by Rozel White Continued from Page 3

the marketing of their services to the individual needs of the institutions. ISAC will work again this year on increasing the less than half time funding to \$3.5 million, which would fully meet the needs of students who are less than half time. To accomplish this, an additional \$1.5 million would need to be added to the Illinois Board of Higher Education's (IBHE) budget and IBHE supports this increase. Also, they will work on increasing the Illinois Incentive for Access Program (for freshman only) to increase it from \$500 to \$1,000.

One of the items of discussion was the upcoming "Work, Welfare and Families" Forum to be held in January at Joliet Junior College to raise awareness for improved access to higher education. Also discussed were the community meetings to be held by Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) in September and October regarding TANF recipients. The goal of the meetings will be to identify the needs of individuals and their children who are approaching their 60-month time limit in the TANF program in the next year, address those needs in a meaningful way, and identify what steps are needed for those who are not self-sufficient at 60 months to become self-sufficient. One suggestion is to stop the clock for TANF recipients who work 20 hours a week and attend a training program for 10 hours a week. An update of all the IDHS meetings will be given at the next meeting of the Working Group.

If you have a topic or issue that you would like to bring to the attention of the Employment and Training Working Group of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, feel free to contact Rozel White, and she will present it to the committee at an upcoming meeting. For further information regarding this report, contact Rozel White by email at rwhite@ilstu.edu or call 309-438-2947. ■