



Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 5, Issue 5, January 2000

From the Director: Beijing + 5 Preparations in the Midwest and Around the World

The Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) took place in Beijing, China during a two-week period in September 1995. A Platform for Action was adopted at the conference, albeit after considerable wrangling by various delegations over some contentious paragraphs. The Platform is a document that describes the problems women face around the world (synthesized as the "12 critical areas of concern"), with wide-ranging recommendations on solutions to these problems and the means and ways to ensure women's equality and empowerment. Since then, governments -- in cooperation with women's organizations -- are supposed to have adopted their own national action plans to implement the Platform.

Beijing + 5 is a meeting or summit called by the UN to assess what the world has accomplished in terms of promoting gender equality in the five years since the FWCW. It is formally called *Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development, and Peace for the 21st Century*. It will be held at the UN headquarters in New York on 5-9 June 2000, and will be attended by delegations from members' governments, along with representatives of women's organizations that were accredited at the Beijing conference. Among the preparations for Beijing + 5 have been many regional and sub-regional meetings, including one that I attended in Chicago in early December.

Region V Women 2000 was a one-day conference that convened at the Chicago Cultural Center on 6 December 1999. It was organized by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor and the President's Interagency Council for Women, along with the Chicago Foundation for Women and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. Numerous regional women's organizations participated or comprised the steering committee. In addition to televised messages from U.S. officials, the Chicago conference included a session in which several women reflected on their participation in the FWCW; a keynote address by Kavita Ramdas (who heads the Global Fund for Women); a stimulating and instructive plenary panel; a luncheon keynote address by Linda Tarr-Whelan (U.S. Ambassador to the UN Commission on the Status of Women); concurrent workshops (on economic self-sufficiency, on women's health, and on violence against women); and a closing plenary session that included recommendations from the workshops.

The Illinois Platform for Action was included in the packet given to all participants. Its goals and strategic objectives include: making public housing safe for women; creating awareness of the links between livable wages and affordable housing; supporting integrated community responses to end family violence; enabling women to leave abusive partnerships by providing appropriate economic support; achieving universal access to comprehensive, high quality health care services to all; increasing education on sexuality/gender roles issues and sexual health; promoting the rights of immigrants; reducing poverty (43% of households headed by women in Illinois are below the poverty line); promoting fairness for women in the workplace; increasing the number of women in leadership positions in government; passing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Among the many interesting issues that were discussed at the Chicago meeting was the need for the United States to become a "good global citizen" and pay its dues to the United Nations. This -- and the need for the federal government to ratify and implement CEDAW -- was a recurring theme. Another theme was stressed by Tarr-Whelan: the need for a constitutional Equal Rights Amendment, which many countries have but which the U.S. defeated in the 1980s. One interesting suggestion was that unions should have more gender balance in their slates during elections, especially given the high proportion of women in the workforce. Another excellent point was that since 80% of consumer decisions are made by women, "We need to ask questions about how money is being spent, for examples, questions about child labor and genetically altered food." I suggested the need for the U.S. to implement certain recommendations of the International Labor Organization, such as that on paid maternity leave.

The Chicago regional meeting confirmed my perceptions about the active role of women's organizations in the movement for gender equality, empowerment, and social justice around the world. But it left me uneasy about the capacity of U.S. women's organizations to translate discourse into collective action that targets corporations, state legislatures, and the federal government. Much progress has been made here, but the richest country in the world should not have more insecure workers and poor women than less-wealthy countries have. ❧

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Visit our website at: <http://www.cas.ilstu.edu/WomenStudies/womenstudies.html>

ANNOUNCEMENTS/FEATURES

Fifth Annual Women's Studies Symposium Call for Papers (second round)

Women's Studies is issuing a call for papers for the Fifth Annual Women's Studies Symposium on Friday, March 24, 2000. We encourage undergraduate and graduate students to submit proposals for presentation of papers at the Symposium. Proposals/papers are welcome on any topic related to the study of women and gender. Outstanding papers on women and gender issues prepared for courses will be especially welcome! We ask faculty to encourage their students to submit proposals.

Students should send a one-page proposal with the following information to Women's Studies Program, Programming Committee, Illinois State University, Campus Box 4260, Normal, IL 61790-4260. Please include your name, major, student status, the course and instructor for whom the paper was written. The abstract should be detailed, with information on the topic to be discussed, the research question, methodology and sources of data (for social-science papers), and the main arguments.

Proposals may be submitted at any time with a deadline for submission on February 22, 2000. ✍

Dr. Michel is Symposium Keynote Speaker

Dr. Sonya Michel will be the Keynote Speaker at the Women's Studies Symposium. She is Director of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a professor in the history department there, co-editor of the journal *Social Politics*, and author of the book, *Children's Interests/Mother's Rights: The Shaping of America's Child Care Policy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

The topic of her talk will be "Why the U.S. Has No Universal Child Care." Dr. Michel will trace the halting development of child care in the US during the 20th century, looking at trends in both the public and market sectors, and the relationship between them. She will discuss how ideologies about mother-child bonding intersected with a deep-seated antipathy to state provision to curtail the growth of public services. She will also examine how the government used tax incentives to spur the growth of market-based services. Finally, she will argue that the divided constituency for child care has blocked development of a lobby for universal services. ✍

Driving Miss Daisy, Crazy

By Nicole Dino

We've all done it. Jumped in the car, turned the key and zipped off to that important meeting, appointment with the doctor or just cruised down Veterans Parkway. We don't give a second thought to getting from here to there. But after revisiting my former Peace Corp country Ecuador this past summer and fall, I will never take transportation for granted again.

I was given the opportunity to return after a year and a half to Ecuador, not as a Peace Corp volunteer, but as the technical trainer for the Rural Public Health Program. Wow, what an opportunity! I was told that as part of my job, I would be driving to small villages to talk with the villagers during a hands-on training segment for the volunteer hopefuls. As a Peace Corp Volunteer my main forms of transportation were buses and hitchhiking. We weren't allowed to drive, for safety reasons. I thought, I drive for heaven sake, no problem. Little did I know that my transportation adventure would begin before I even left Normal.

During the first two weeks of my stay, there was a national taxi-strike, which meant that the buses didn't run either. Thank goodness, I could walk to work. After the taxi strike, I was told that I would be visiting the eight towns of the community-based training and that the program and Spanish language coordinators would be going with me. The sites chosen were all on the coast, hot humid and flat, a very different environment than the mountain region of Quito. I was given keys to a fairly new Toyota Land Cruiser and with a

basic vehicle inspection, we took off. Fortunately for me one of my companions knew exactly where we were going. There are no AAA trip tiks and road signs are infrequent.

Actually, the trip was uneventful and I was feeling rather impressed with myself for having pulled off the first driving event, until on the way back. While we were recrossing the mountains, which divide the Sierra and the Coast, unseen remnants of the taxi strike struck i.e. huge nails, kaboom-flat tire. We were at the very top of the crossing where the air is suitable only for potato crops, llamas and direct descendants of Andean Mountain herders. It was cold and we were still dressed for hot coastal weather. I, of course, being a child of the 50's had never had to change a flat tire in my life and my two Ecuadorian passengers had never ever driven. So there we were trying to find the spare tire and the trick to get it out from under the car. I pulled out the 150-page car manual, which was in English and Japanese and attempted translating tire changing lingo into Spanish. How **do** you say lug nut? After one hour of being on the ground, using sign language to explain "jack up the axle" and watching the locals pass by on horses looking quite smug, we did it. I thought boy nothing could shake me now. It wasn't a wise assumption.

The next trip was back to the coast. I also was in charge of helping the trainees get to and from places that were inaccessible by bus. With the help of the local PC Volunteer, John, we planned two trips to a town called *Cube*, so we could present health education talks. It had been raining two days before, but John assured me that the road was *probably* fine. On this particular trip, I had a Jeep Cherokee. You guessed it, half way to the town, we got stuck in mud. So being the resourceful woman that I am, I rocked the car back and forth between first gear and reverse until I got myself really stuck. When I realized I had four-wheel drive and found how to engage it, we were home free and covered with mud. "Well, we said, we'll go to *Cube* next week, the villagers will understand."

In the meantime, the car began flashing a red warning light of some kind. The next trip was to the mechanic who referred us to another mechanic who decided to take us to a guy who used to be a mechanic in the United States. What luck, he spoke English and lent me the part to temporarily fix the Jeep. I drove the Jeep back to Quito and was given the key to the Land Cruiser again. Back in the Coast it had continued to rain but hey, this "tank" would go anywhere, including *Cube*. The following Monday, we headed for *Cube* certain of our right of passage. It wasn't to be. The Land Cruiser started sliding into a ravine on a curve. Well, I had had it. I got out of the car and gave the keys to one of the trainees and said, get us out of here, I won't tell if you won't. We talked some guys off their horses to help push. An hour later and ten pounds heavier with mud, we were free but never to see *Cube*. Aside from just a lot of driving on roads that made bungee jumping seem tame, the rest of the trip was uneventful and boy was I happy to hand in the keys.

Now back in the U. S., I drive my car to work everyday. When we pass a Toyota Land Cruiser on the road, I smile, sigh and pat the seat and say, "Thank you, we don't know how lucky we are." ✍

Union Elects First Female President

On January 8, 2000, more than one million members of the Illinois AFL-CIO elected a female leader for the first time in its 102-year history. **Margaret Blackshere** received 60 percent of the ballots cast by the labor organization's approximately 1,500 union locals. Madison County labor leader George Machino Jr., her opponent in the first contested contest for the leadership of Illinois' largest labor organization, received 40 percent of the vote.

Ms. Blackshere, a resident of the Chicago suburb of Niles, previously served as secretary-treasurer of the organization. She taught elementary education in Madison, Illinois, for 17 years. After 16 years with the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), Blackshere was appointed Secretary-Treasurer of the Illinois AFL-CIO. She was later elected and is completing her second term and will take office as president on April 1, 2000.

In September 1999, Ms. Blackshere was a presenter and participant in the Women's Studies "Women and Employment" conference at Illinois State University, taking part in Round-Table discussions on Supporting Maternal Employment and The Women's Movement and the Labor Movement. ✍

NEWS ABOUT WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENTS AND FACULTY/STAFF

Women's Studies Alumni News

By Sandra Harmon

Terri Ryburn-LaMonte was a December recipient of a Doctor of Arts in history from Illinois State University. The topic of her dissertation was "Route 66, 1926 to the Present: The Road as Local History." She earned both her bachelor's (1985) and master's (1988) degrees in history from Illinois State. On campus she has been an Assistant Director of the Honors Program, Coordinator of Parent Services, and Executive Director of the Bureau of Tourism and Recreation Research. Terri is currently the Assistant Chairperson of the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department, where she will teach a Route 66 course during the summer session.

Anita Revelle, History BS (1995) and MS (1997) was awarded a 1999 Master Communicator Award of Excellence for her work on the Illinois State University on-line calendar. The award is sponsored by the Association for Women in Communications, the International Association of Business Communicators and the Public Relations Society of America. She is the University Calendar Coordinator. The calendar web site is www.clanedar.ilstu.edu.

Diana Onken, a 1997 graduate, will be a special guest at the Women's Studies 25th Anniversary Open House and Award Ceremony. She is the Membership Development Associate in the national office of Peace Action in Washington, D.C. During the program portion of the open house, she will talk about how her Women's Studies minor is beneficial to her current position. While she is on campus, she will also speak to Professor Janie Leatherman's Peace Studies class.

Molly DiRago, Anthropology (1998), has accepted a position at EMILY's List in Washington, D.C. EMILY's List (Early Money Is Like Yeast) raises funds for women political candidates. In her new job, she will be in the fundraising department working with major donors. ☞

Faculty News

Dr. Valentine Moghadam, Director of Women's Studies, is a member of the Core Group of the project "Euromediterranean Charter for Peace and Change - Women Taking Action", sponsored by the Bruno Kreisky Forum in Austria. She attended the group's first planning meeting in Vienna, 21-23 January.

She continues her URG-funded research on Transnational Feminist Networks. In December she conducted interviews in Chicago with leading figures of DAWN. While spending the Christmas holidays in London, she took the fabulous Eurostar train to Brussels and interviewed an officer of WIDE. In Vienna she interviewed the founder of Women Living Under Muslim Laws (who is also a member of the Euromed project's Core Group).

Dr. Moghadam's latest publication is: "Gender and Economic Reforms: A Framework for Analysis and Evidence from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey", pp. 23-43 in Feride Acar and Ayse Gunes-Ayata, eds., *Gender and Identity Construction: Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey* (Leiden: Brill, 2000). ☞

University Teaching Award

In the November/December issue of Women's Voice, we inadvertently failed to include **Deborah Gentry**, Family and Consumer Sciences, as being named an Outstanding University Teacher. She will be among those honored during the Founders Day Celebration in February.

Welcome New Women's Studies Minors

Rebecca Koehler--Journalism

Ann Ward--Finance

An equal opportunity/affirmative action university encouraging diversity

OTHER NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeannette Rankin Internship Available

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in Washington, D.C., the legislative office of the US Section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, provides information, educational materials and organizing connections for the grassroots work of WILPF's 10,000 members across the United States. WILPF works in coalition with other disarmament, women's human rights, racial and economic justice organizations to translate women's experience and vision into new policies to promote peace and justice. The focus for the years 2000-2002 is centered around three campaigns: Dismantling the War Economy, Challenging Corporate Power, and Uniting for Racial Justice.

Internships are for 12-14 weeks, 20 hours per week, starting in September, January and May. Complete internship responsibilities and qualifications are available in Women's Studies, Rachel Cooper 2nd Floor, or by contacting Gillian Gilhool, WILPF in Washington, 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Suite 102, Washington, DC 20002. Telephone: 202-546-6727, Fax: 202-544-9613, or <http://www.wilpf.org>. ☞

2nd Feminist Exposition and Convention

The Feminist Majority Foundation will produce and organize over 350 speakers - feminist leaders, scholars, celebrities and authors at the 2nd Feminist Exposition and Convention to be held at the Baltimore Convention Center March 31-April 2, 2000. The event is expected to have over 6,000 feminists in attendance. Contact Feminist Expo 2000 Team at expo2000@feminist.org or call 703-522-2214. ☞

Barbados Summer Institute

The National Center for Curriculum Transformation Resources on Women (NCCTRW) at Towson University in Maryland (USA) plans to conduct a summer institute in Barbados from June 12-21, 2000. The issues the workshop will address include:

- ??Teaching comparatively about, and bringing an international perspective to bear on women's lives and gender arrangements
- ??Feminists' redefinitions of the concept of development
- ??Tourism and Women in the Caribbean
- ??The impact of globalization and structural adjustment policies on women's lives and gender arrangements
- ??How the study of women's experiences challenges disciplinary and interdisciplinary paradigms
- ??How a comparative study of women challenges the concepts and theories of Women's Studies as practiced in the West
- ??Women's activism in various locations throughout the world
- ??Pedagogical challenges to teaching comparatively about women and gender.

Directors are: Dr. Karen Dugger, Director of NCCCTRW and Professor of Women's Studies, Dr. Beth VanFossen, Director of the Institute for Teaching and Research on Women (ITROW) and Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies. The institute fee is \$850. To receive further information and/or application regarding particulars of fees and other arrangements, send e-mail to dugger@towson.edu, or letter of interest to NCCTRW, Towson University, 8000 York Road, Baltimore, MD 21252-0001. Telephone: 410-830-3944 or 3943. Fax: 410-830-3469. ☞

The **Womvn's Coalition** will meet on Thursdays at 7:00 PM in Stevenson Hall, Room 211, during the Spring semester

Women's Voice
Illinois State University
Women's Studies Program
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You are invited
to the

**Women's Studies 25th Anniversary Open House
and
Award Ceremony**

Wednesday, 26 January, 2000
3 - 5 PM

Women's Studies, Rachel Cooper 2nd Floor

For more information, contact Rozel White at (309) 438-2947 or
rwhite@ilstu.edu.

**Women's Lives, Women's Voices, Women's
Solutions: Shaping a National Agenda for
Women in Higher Education Conference**

On March 27-29, 2000, a national teleconference for women and men students, faculty and staff will be hosted by the University of Minnesota, March 27-29, 2000. The University of Minnesota will broadcast the keynote sessions and moderated panel discussions on the first and last days of this event to satellite sites at colleges and universities around the country. Those sites will facilitate caucus sessions on their own campuses to help shape a national agenda to improve campus climates and the status of women in higher education for the 21st century. Plans are being finalized at this time for Illinois State University to host a site on campus. Complete information will be available soon. Contact Women's Studies for further information at 309-438-2947 or e-mail rwhite@ilstu.edu. ✉

International Women's Day Breakfast

The AAUW Bloomington/Normal branch will again sponsor the International Women's Day Breakfast on Saturday, March 11, 2000, from 9:11 a.m. at Eastland Suites, 1801 Eastland Drive, Bloomington at a cost of \$10. The guest speaker will be Dr. Kristin Wurzbarger who worked in Africa for Doctors without Borders, the organization that won the Nobel Peace prize this year. For reservations contact Marion Jones 309-454-3870 by March 9.

Working Women Conference 2000

Five-thousand working women will gather on March 11-12 in Chicago to attend workshops on women's issues spanning work and family, pay and promotions, women and the global economy and more. The registration fee is \$75 and closes February 15. For information on the conference contact Betty Brawley at bbrawley@afclio.org or call 303-637-5239. ✉