



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 362-5717

JANUARY 2005

THE U.S IS AT WAR:

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR MILITARY FAMILIES?

Every day we hear reports about the fighting and casualties in Iraq. We hear much less about the families of service men and women deployed to a war zone, families whose lives may be drastically changed by the absence of the member in active service. In addition to worrying about their loved ones, families experience reduced income, may have to relocate, or accept other major disruptions in their lives. Many members of the armed services have had their tours of duty involuntarily extended.

Our speakers represent two organizations vitally involved with this subject. **Julia Pfaff**, Executive Director, and **Kathy Moakler**, Deputy Director of Government Relations, are both with the *National Military Family Association (NMFA)* and **Jeanne K. Mankin**, is Director of Chapter Service Delivery for the Alexandria Office of the *American Red Cross*; the Red Cross provides direct services to and advocacy for military families. Speakers will discuss what is being done for families, what else could be done, and how we can help.

TOPIC: WHAT DOES THE WAR MEAN FOR WOMEN AND MILITARY FAMILIES?

SPEAKERS: **Julia Pfaff**, Executive Director, and **Kathy Moakler**, Deputy Director of National Government Relations, both with the National Military Family Association
Jeanne K. Mankin, Director of Chapter Service Delivery for the Alexandria Office of the American Red Cross

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, January 25, 2005 - Noon to 1:30 PM

PLACE: American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle - 8th Floor, Kellogg Room Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle. In case of bad weather and closing of DC public schools, the meeting will be cancelled. Please listen to broadcast reports.

Next Meeting: February 22, 2005

Program Summary – November Meeting

HEALTH HAZARDS

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Our two speakers at the November meeting were Dr. Diana Zuckerman, president of the National Research Center for Women and Families, and Linda Fair, senior attorney, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission. They spoke on various aspects of health and drug company advertising of health products.

Linda Fair declared that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is primarily concerned with consumer issues of health and safety. The FTC can sue a company if there are deceptive ads or practices. Last year, FTC collected \$867 million from this source..

Ads for drug company products and medical device in magazines and newspapers or on websites, are subject to the federal truth in advertising laws. A product claim can be literally truthful, but still be considered deceptive because of the way consumers understand it. Furthermore, companies must have “competent and reliable evidence” to support each health and safety claim. That means real scientific clinical evidence.

Fair said there is a “simple division of the labor” between the FTC and the Federal Drug Administration. The FDA is responsible for the labels on drugs, dietary supplements, cosmetics, vitamins, foods and medical devices. The FTC is responsible for what’s in the ads. There is one exception: the FDA handles labeling and advertising for prescription drugs.

People ask Fair, “what if it’s just a cosmetic product?” She said that consumers can evaluate an ad that says it makes your face “kissably soft”; but if it claims that “four out of five users prefer this brand,” then the company must have scientific proof. If it says the product “reduces wrinkle depth up to by 37

percent,” there needs to be scientific testing; even if it’s true, but it can’t be “seen,” it is considered a false ad.

Health-related claims are common in ads, such as claims “Anti-aging in a bottle” that promise results in 30 days or less. Or the product “loosens and neutralizes free radicals that cause skin cancer.” Fair says, “It’s easy to ask, who believes this?-- until you see the sales figures for a lot of these products.

Another example: the product “awakens estrogen receptor sites dormant since puberty, largest cause of under developed breasts; many women have never attained their full genetic potential; all natural herbal breast enhancer tablets can increase bust one-half to two cup sizes in two weeks.” .

There are many enforcement actions concerning weight loss products, for example, there’s a skin patch with “dual fat-fighting ingredients that reduce/incinerate away your repulsive adipose tissue;” there are diet creams, diet shoe insoles, even diet earrings. There’s “exercise in bottle,” which had more than \$100 million in sales recently. Many of these ads are aimed at teen age girls.

The FTC has no jurisdiction over tasteless advertising, Fair declared. She pointed out that consumers have power. They should write to companies as well as to newspapers and magazines when they see health ads that are deceptive, inappropriate or offensive. Consumers also can urge the FDA to do a better job of warning consumers and “encourage” the agency not to take the side of industry when there are law suits.

Diana Zuckerman spoke about the political manipulation of science and how it can affect your health. The National Research Center tries to counteract this manipulation, focusing on health and safety of women, children and families.

“What we do,” she said, “is to take research information, figure out what it means and translate it into plain English. We aim at helping people but we target some messages to policy makers and the media to get the word out so we can affect programs and policies.” She pointed out that research that is used for political purposes, is often called checkbook science. It is research conducted to sell products.

She talked first of mercury in fish, particularly tuna fish. Mercury is found in polluted waters. It is estimated that one percent of women eat at least 7 oz (about one can) of tuna fish per week. “One percent doesn’t sound like a lot,” Zuckerman said, but that’s too much for pregnant or nursing women or young children. (“Acceptable” levels were established by the National Academy of Science.)

A few years ago, advocates called a meeting to discuss warnings to consumers about mercury. The government then warned consumers about shark and swordfish, which not many people eat, and did not mention tuna fish. Zuckerman explained that there is an active U.S. Tuna Fish Foundation. Finally, this year, the FDA and the EPA created an attractive booklet that says that pregnant women should eat only 6 oz white tuna per week and up to 12 oz. of other tuna fish. Zuckerman pointed out that white tuna fish has three times the mercury as the lighter tuna fish and those six ounces of white tuna put pregnant women at risk

She discussed the anti-depressants that have been so much in the news lately; they are among the best selling drugs for adults. Although they have been tested for depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder, they are being prescribed for

children for all kinds of things -- nail-biting, for instance, or for “social anxiety,” which used to be called shyness. Studies proved that the anti-depressants for children doubled the risk of both suicide thoughts and attempts. The FDA warned parents to monitor children. Zuckerman wonders how successfully they can be monitored, especially by working parents. She said there will be a “black box” warning, finally, that such drugs increase risk of suicide.

Breast implants, she pointed out, are a really good example of corporate indifference to women’s health. In 1991 FDA asked for studies of breast implants. One million women had implants (only 20 percent of them for cancer) but there had been no studies on health of these women. In 1999 it was reported that implants can cause many local complications, but they were not sure they could cause diseases. “Somehow,” Zuckerman said, “that got translated into ‘implants are perfectly safe.’”

Later National Cancer Institute studies show that women with breast implants are twice as likely to die of brain cancer, three times more likely to die of lung cancer, and four times more likely to kill themselves. Around the same time, their press release said “Implants not linked to most cancers.” “That’s obviously not exactly accurate,” she said, noting that the FDA has come out on the side of industry.

Zuckerman said that the ads with tiny type that you see in magazines are not legal for the FTC, but are legal for FDA. “Look at those warnings, not just the small type but the whole page, so full of words nobody could want to read it. It’s intentionally set that way so the warnings don’t attract readers.”

KEYNOTER: POLITICAL NEWS ANALYST COKIE ROBERTS

The Montgomery County Commission for Women presents its annual legislative briefing on January 30, at the National 4-H Conference Center, 7100 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, 12:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. CWI is a sponsor of this always-interesting event. There is no charge. Registration takes place starting at 12:30; keynote address 1:00 -2:00 p.m., followed by two sessions of workshops on national and international women's issues, as well as understanding the budget and legislative process. Online registration is available at www.montgomerycountymd.gov or you can call 240 777-8330.

WOMEN NOW EARN OVER 80 PERCENT OF WHAT MEN DO

According to the NY Times, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that working women now earn just over 80 percent of what men do, up from 62 percent 25 years ago. "It turns out that almost half of that gap closed during two comparatively short periods of relatively hard times, totaling about six years. Those periods correspond with the recessions and cutbacks in the work force that marked the opening years of the last decade and the current one."

As the economy improved in the late 90's, women held their own but did not continue to move ahead, largely because many men were unable to get back into the work force at the same pay levels as before. The article says that "employment prospects and rising wages for women – while many men stood still or got hurt – has done as much if not more than class-action lawsuits, quotas and equal opportunity laws to narrow the gap between men's and women's pay. "

This represents a shift in the economy, with men more vulnerable than women to layoffs because the men predominate in industries most subject to downturns. "College-educated women, having entered the labor force in large numbers for nearly 30 years...give employers the opportunity to fill more executive, administrative and professional jobs with women who are paid well, but often not as well as men in these jobs." This pulls up the pay level of women as a whole. "Men still hold most of the best-paying jobs in manufacturing, which has been particularly hard hit in recent years. Women, by contrast, are ensconced in white-collar occupations that tend to ride out job cuts almost untouched."

AWARD for YOUNG WOMEN ACTIVISTS: The Friends of Women's Rights National Park in Seneca Falls has introduced a new annual award "to a young woman whose accomplishments demonstrate the link between the founding mothers of the Women's Rights Movement and young women of today," to honor young women activists who follow in the footsteps of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The first award was presented to Clotilde Dedecker, a high school senior from Buffalo, for her work to raise funds for a girls' school in Afghanistan. She "began the ambitious project as a sophomore by founding the Western New York Girls' School Coalition. So far, the group has raised \$18,000 and has funded a school for girls in Kabul."

CWI has linked up to the 21st century with the inauguration of our own website. Please visit us at www.womensclearinghouse.org to get news of future CWI activities, reviews of past programs and other pertinent news. Comments and suggestions for the website or newsletter, always welcome, can be sent to contact@womensclearinghouse.org. We hope this public forum will bring us more community visibility and new friends.

HISTORY/WOMEN in CONGRESS

“Seven new women members of the House – not including returning Rep. Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga. – will bring to 223 the number of women who have served in Congress. Of those, 33 have served in the Senate and seven in both chambers. Five states – Delaware, Iowa, Mississippi, New Hampshire and Vermont – have never elected a woman to Congress.

“The first woman in Congress, Jeanette Rankin of Montana, was elected as a Republican in 1916. She was defeated for re-election after voting against U.S. entry into World War I. Nearly two decades later, in 1940, she was elected to another term, only to choose not to seek re-election in 1942 after voting against U.S. entry into World War II. In 1922 87-year-old Rebecca Felton, a Georgia Democrat, became the first woman to serve as a U.S. senator. She was appointed by the state’s governor during a recess, but served only one day before her elected successor took office. A decade later, Hattie Caraway of Arkansas became the first woman elected to the Senate after being appointed to complete the term of her late husband, Thaddeus Caraway. Here is a glance at the growing ranks of women in the House of Representatives. 94th Congress (1975-77) 19; 99th (1985-87) 23; 104th (1995-1997) 50; 109th (2005-07) 68.” (Congress Daily)

EGYPT: According to Women’s eNews, Egyptian women see divorce as an Islamic right in which men and women enjoy equal rights in all matters, including divorce. “Egypt’s constitution states that Islamic Sharia is the principal source for legislation.” Meaning and interpretation of Sharia, the Islam-derived legal code, varies according to different theological schools. A spokeswoman for the Egyptian National Council for Women says “This is why there is a big difference between true Islamic Sharia and what happens in reality ... the Islamic Sharia reflected in divorce law resulted from men picking those aspects of Sharia that fit their world view ... Under Egyptian law, men have an absolute and unilateral right to divorce. Women by contrast, must turn to the courts, where they must provide exacting proof of abuses. The decision is left to Egypt’s male-dominated judiciary and decisions can be appealed by husbands wishing to prolong the process. With approximately 8,000 judges and 14 million pending cases, a divorce settlement can take years,” with the woman left in legal limbo, with a husband oftentimes no longer supporting her yet she is unable to remarry until the case is decided. (Women’s eNews)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S RIGHTS PRIZE: At the United Nations last month, the International Women’s Rights Prize (a gold medal and \$200,000 in unrestricted cash) was awarded to Sakena Yacoobi and the Afghan Institute of Learning for their work. “The Institute was founded in 1995 to help address women’s lack of access to education after the Taliban shut many schools that year. During the Taliban rule, the institute ran 80 underground schools and established mobile libraries in four Afghan cities. By the end of 2003, the organization had served more than 350,000 Afghan women and girls through programs in teacher training, health education, human rights education, women’s leadership training and literacy.” (Women’s eNews)

September was the date for submission of \$25 in dues for CWI membership (\$35 for organizations). We haven’t heard from some of you. Because of the recent changes in the dues process, you may not be sure of your status. Please call our treasurer, Linda Fihelly at 301 599-1942.

COMING EVENTS

JANUARY 30. Women's Legislative Briefing 2005, National 4H Conference Center, 7100 Connecticut Ave, Chevy Chase. Keynote Address by Cokie Roberts. 12:30 – 5:00 p.m. For more information, call 240 777-8330.

CWI Board: Alvin Golub, a long-time member and supporter of Clearinghouse activities, has joined the CWI board of directors. He replaces Shoshana Riemer, who has resigned. We thank Shoshana for her valuable service to CWI.

CWI Board of Directors, July 2004 - June 2005. Officers: President, Joy R. Simonson; Vice President/Program, Ellen S. Overton; Secretary, Gilda L. Morse; Corresponding Secretary, Jacqueline Scherer; Membership, Jean Landweber and Sue Marx Smock; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly. Board Members: Harriett Harper; Mickey Klein; Jean Linehan; Alvin Golub; Clara G. Schiffer; Elinor Waters; Ruth G. Nadel, ex-officio; Roslyn Kaiser, Newsletter Editor.

CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

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FIRST CLASS MAIL



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FEBRUARY 2005

WOMEN and the 109th CONGRESS

What's ahead for women in the 109th Congress? Now that the FY 2006 budget has been released, we have a fairly clear idea from the new Congress of what's ahead. Severe cuts in many vital federal domestic programs are at the heart of the President's proposals. Women and families will be deeply affected by congressional decisions and action. Our two speakers, who have years of expertise in the policy arena, will guide us through the shoals of the ways the administration's plans will affect women.

Sarah Albert, Director of Public Policy, General Federation of Women's Clubs, will talk about risks to women in the upcoming legislation; **Judith Waxman**, Vice President for Health Policy, National Women's Law Center, will focus on health and reproductive rights issues.

TOPIC: Women and the 109th Congress

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, February 22, 2005 - Noon to 1:30 PM

SPEAKERS: **Judith Waxman**, Vice President, Health Policy, National Women's Law Center

Sarah Albert, Director of Public Policy, General Federation of Women's Clubs

PLACE: American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle - 8th Floor, Kellogg Room
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Next Meeting: March 22, 2005

Program Summary – January

The War and Military Families

Our speakers were **Julia Pfaff**, executive director and **Kathy Moakler**, deputy director of government relations, both of the National Military Family Association (NMFA), and **Jeanne Mankin**, director of chapter service delivery, American Red Cross, Alexandria office.

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is called a "purple organization" because it serves the seven uniform services: the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, plus the uniformed members of the National Oceanographic Association (NOAA) and Public Health organizations (active and reserve members). As Julia Pfaff explained, if all the colors of services are blended together, the outcome is purple, and it refers to the "jointness" of the services.

Pfaff and Moakler have personal experience with military family issues. Both have husbands in the military; Pfaff comes from a military family and she has served on active duty in the reserves; Moakler has a son in the National Guard and daughter who is a nurse and has spent time in Iraq recently.

Pfaff reported that a current "hot topic" concerns benefits for survivors of active duty deaths, the military death gratuity, which is now \$12,000; it is given to survivors' families as an immediate benefit. She said, "The \$12,000 may be the only benefit that the service person's parents receive, but there is a whole package of benefits to help sustain the family, to replace the earnings or support the service member might have given throughout the years."

One of the NMFA's top goals today is to insure that "all military deaths are equal," that is, treated equally by Congress in benefit packages. There have been recent proposals in Congress to raise the military death gratuity to \$100,000, for combat deaths. Pfaff pointed out that whether a service person is killed here or overseas, in action or in training, the family has still lost a loved one. As an example, soldiers who helped with the aftermath of the Asian tsunami are not technically in combat and if one died, he or she would not qualify for that special benefit.

NMFA, established as an advocacy group by Navy wives in 1969, is a volunteer organization with a small paid staff; it has representatives all over the world that serve as NMFA eyes and ears. Kathy Moakler declared that NMFA's biggest problem is "getting the word out" so that families know that help is available. She noted that most families with young service persons have no memory of the Vietnam War or experience with some of the problems families may encounter.

NMFA disseminates legislative and policy information through many channels, websites, newsletters, electronic publications and programs. Family Readiness Groups offer support to families of deployed service members. Joint Family Assistance Centers are found in each state and territory, providing information and referral services. With joint sponsorships from national 4 H Clubs, reliable child care is available for a minimum of four hours for National Guard and reserve families during R and R time. Another community partnership is a camp program with the Sears Roebuck Company that helps military children cope with loss. There are 12 such camps now and more being planned.

“Military One Source” at 800-342-9647 or www.militaryonesource.com (password onesource), can answer questions about military matters.

Americans all know the Red Cross, although they may not be aware of the services it provides. Jeanne Mankin said, “The Red Cross has been working with the military since the Spanish-American War, serving side by side and giving lives. During world War I, the Red Cross provided all medical responses to the service, including ambulances, hospitals, doctors, and nurses. During World War II there was a transition, and the military assumed many of these responsibilities.”

Congress has mandated the Red Cross to provide emergency communications for the military and to verify information sent to field commanders who have the ultimate authority to release personnel. “That’s our biggie,” Mankin said. Military commanders rely on the Red Cross to find out “whether Mom really had a heart attack” in order to grant leave to a service person leave. It can, however, be extremely difficult to contact a military member. Current technology is a big help, she said. “We can pretty much find a service member with just some key information, birthday, social security number, etc.”

Mankin also discussed the internal, secure Red Cross communication system that has been established to assist families. Information is constantly updated and she said it has made a significant difference in this conflict.

She emphasized the importance of the cards that the military issues to all service members at pre-deployment sites; these are mailed to the various Red Cross regions. The cards ask the service member to list all persons who should be notified in case of an emergency, including their spouse, parents, or significant other. But the cards do not always have complete information.

It is hard to reach out to military families that live within our jurisdiction if we do not have incomplete information, Mankin said. If a military person dies and we only know that the parent’s address is Alexandria, VA., we can try the secure site, but it may not have any information on the family. “Sometimes I literally play detective,” she said by reading the newspapers or searching Google to find the missing information. A Red Cross representative physically goes to the address to say “we’re here for you.” The organization reaches out to significant others as well as parents. “We can make sure that the significant other has the means to attend the funeral -airplane tickets, a hotel room, appropriate clothing and mental health services if needed.

Last year, Congress asked the Red Cross and the military to conduct a year’s study to document the services the Red Cross is currently providing to the military. “We know there will probably be some change, new or different services that will be the organization's responsibilities in the 21st century.”

All three speakers were concerned about the resource constraints facing the Veterans' Administration at a time when veterans need for services is great. In particular, the speakers believe that it is important to provide 24-hour support to assist the service person after their release from Department of Defense medical care.

Have you seen the Clearinghouse’s website? www.clearinghouseonwomen’s issues.com

THERE’S SOMETHING ABOUT WASHINGTON STATE

Besides the recent fight for the governorship, with Christine Gregoire the winner by 129 votes, Washington is the first state to have a woman governor and two female senators, Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell. In addition, there are four female state Supreme Court justices and 49 female state legislators (out of 147). The first female governor, Dixie Lee Ray was elected in 1976; Seattle elected the nation's first big-city female mayor in 1926. Newsweek Magazine points out that Washington has "a political culture that has produced greater electoral gains for women per capita than any state in the country – ranging from school boards and city councils all the way up. National groups are studying the state's political farm system in hopes of replicating it elsewhere." The state's progressive frontier culture is part of it; Gregoire points out that "Women arrived here in covered wagons." The top current top slots are occupied by Democratic women, but Republican women also have done well. Jennifer Dunn, former chair of the state GOP, represented suburban Seattle in Congress for 12 years, and Cathy McMorris, a pro-life Republican, was elected to Congress from Spokane in 2004. Unfortunately, the article's headline was "Welcome to Girls' State."

MISCELLANEOUS STATS/Women Hold...

- Women hold only 11 of the 50 Republican Party state chair positions and only 9 of the 50 Democratic Party state chair positions.
- Women hold zero of 20 U.S. House of Representatives committee chair positions.
- Women hold only 2 of 20 Senate committee chair positions.
- Women hold only 65 of the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and 14 of 100 seats in the U.S. Senate. (From the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce)

MARCH is WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

There's a lot of information on Women's History Month to be found at the Feminist Majority website (www.feminist.org/news), which offers biographies of women important in the feminist movement. Click on special features and scroll down to Women's History Month. Incidentally, on that same home page you can also click on e-mail alerts and sign up for automatic weekly news digests of feminist articles.

Also, check out the website of the National Women's History Project (www.nwhp.org) which presents a history of the Women's History Month. You can request a copy of their newest print catalog (free) of feminist items. Contact them at nwhp@aol.com.

You can see an important part of women's history if you can view the PBS program "The Sisters of '77," which is scheduled to appear on the Emmy-Award-winning program, Independent Lens. It's the story of the first National Women's Conference in Houston, Texas. Bella Abzug, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinman, Eleanor Smeal, Ann Richards, Coretta Scott King, Barbara Jordan and many others were there, including First Ladies Lady Bird Johnson and Rosalyn Carter. This was a pivotal weekend that changed American life as well as the lives of the women present. The aim of the conference was to promote equal rights and end discrimination against women.

In addition to actual footage of the conference, the program includes interviews with the many who attended. Local PBS stations have not as yet scheduled the program, which may appear in some other cities on March 1.

WOMEN MAKE MUSIC

An article in the NY Time, entitled “Call Me Madame Maestro,” says there is a “new wave of female conductors in their late 20s through early 40’s (within the past two decades) ... with the notable exception of music director posts at the largest symphonies, women have vanquished every major orchestral barrier worldwide ... Yet, despite the progress, momentum appears to have stalled and the number of women entering the field has reached a plateau ... Female conductors seemed to have achieved pay parity with their male counterparts ... but no female conductors have been appointed to lead any of the 20 American symphony orchestras with budgets of \$11 million to \$70 million.”

FUTURE DATES

Women Work!: The 2005 annual conference will be held **April 6-8** in Arlington. The conference includes workshops, information on legislative policies and special events on Capital Hill. For further details, visit www.womenwork.org.

Social Security Forum, **April 28**, is offered by the Iona Citizens Advisory Council, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Cleveland Park Library. Lunch included. 202 333-6035.

New Faces, More Voices: For the sixth season, The National Council of Women’s Organizations, of which CWI is a member, offers summer leadership training for some 30-40 interns in NCWO organizations. This successful program brings together speakers, trainers and interns of diverse background. Application forms will be sent to NCWO member organizations March 1 and they are due May 16. To view the report on last year’s program, contact www.womensorganizations.org and click on “internships.”

INTERNATIONAL NOTES (From Women’s eNews)

Nawal Saadawi, a 73-year-old doctor who has been censored and imprisoned because of her outspoken feminist views, announced that she would run for the presidency of **Egypt** next October. She said the candidacy was largely symbolic but that “she wants to get Egyptians thinking about reform and the separation of church and state.”

The government of **Lesotho** announced that they plan to grant women full legal equality and property rights within a year. This marks “a major step forward in a country where women are legally minors and are subject to the will of their husbands or fathers.”

We all know now what happened in the **Iraq** elections. But we must appreciate and applaud the efforts of those Iraqi women who were especially targeted by religious fundamentalists. “One female candidate was killed in December; another kidnapped and held for ransom. A third managed to survive an assassination attempt in May, but lost her son in the attack. Other candidates sent families out of Iraq for safety. Nevertheless, about a dozen women ran. Many others ran in secret. Iraq’s interim constitution set aside as a minimum, 25 percent of the seats in the legislature for women.”

Yulia Tymoshenko has been appointed prime minister by the newsy-inaugurated president of **Ukraine**, Viktor Yushchenko. “The outspoken Tymoshenko, disliked by business and the political elite in eastern regions, has been hailed by woman’s groups as a powerful model of an outspoken woman in a country that still clings to old-fashioned stereotypes about women.

UN: REVIEW of PROGRESS SINCE BEIJING CONFERENCE

The United Nations, ten years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, will hold a meeting, February 28 to March 11 to “offer an opportunity to policy makers and experts from governments around the world to take stock of progress made in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and to recommend concrete steps for future action.” The event is part of the UN Commission on the Status of Women’s forty-ninth session. The session will focus on: “a review of progress in implementing both the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document that emerged from the General Assembly session five years ago, as well as current challenges and strategies.”

HARVARD’S PRESIDENT SUMMERS

You can’t have missed the brouhaha caused by Harvard President Lawrence Summers who suggested that women have less innate ability than men to perform in mathematics and science. This was followed up with apologies and a defensive explanation - he meant only to be provocative. As a NY Times article said, “Moving to counter widespread criticism of his comments on women’s science capabilities, the president of Harvard University announced initiatives to improve the status of women on the faculty, including a commitment to create a senior administrative position to strengthen recruiting.”

Summers also appointed two task forces to develop recommendations on how to recruit, support and promote women more effectively. One task force consists of women on the faculty and the other is women in science and engineering. The Feminist Majority’s weekly e-mail points out that under Summers’ leadership, “the percentage of tenured positions offered to women in the arts and sciences has dropped each of the three years he has been in office, with only four of 32 tenured positions going to women last year.”

P.S. Check out a new website designed to encourage girls to enter the tech world – www.girlsgottech.org, sponsored by the Girl Scouts and the Ad Council.

CERVICAL CANCER and SECONDHAND SMOKE

Secondhand smoke increases women’s risk of developing cervical cancer, according a recently-published study from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. An article in Women’s eNews says “While researchers have long suspected that secondhand smoke raised cervical cancer rates, the study – one of the biggest in the U.S. – makes the link more definitive. The results are being seen as especially important for women living in developing countries, where smoking is on the rise and cervical cancer is a leading cause of death.”

COMING EVENTS

February 25. AARP Legislative Forum, Chevy Chase Recreation Center. Box lunch, noon; forum 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Reservations for lunch call 1-877 926-8300 by Feb. 21.

March is Women’s History Month.

March 8 is **International Women’s Day.**

March 2. Women's Policy, Inc., Tenth Anniversary Gala Reception and Dinner to honor and celebrate new members and leaders of the 109th Congress and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. Capitol Hill Hyatt Regency. .

CWI Board of Directors, July 2004 - June 2005. Officers: President, Joy R. Simonson; Vice President/Program, Ellen S. Overton; Secretary, Gilda L. Morse; Corresponding Secretary, Jacqueline Scherer; Membership, Jean Landweber and Sue Marx Smock; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly. Board Members: Alvin Golub; Harriett Harper; Mickey Klein; Jean Linehan; Clara G. Schiffer; Elinor Waters; Ruth G. Nadel, ex-officio; Roslyn Kaiser, Newsletter Editor.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

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MARCH 2005

THE "BEIJING PLUS 10" MEETING AT THE U.N.

It has been 10 years since a 12-point Plan of Action was adopted at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing; it called for action on many issues to help achieve equality for women. Thousands of official delegates and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) reported on progress and problems at the recent New York meeting of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. The speakers at our March meeting attended this conference as well as the 1995 meeting in Beijing.

Dr. Suzanne Kindervatter, Director of Gender and Diversity at InterAction, the American Council for Voluntary International Action, has worked in 20 countries at the international level and for 10 years in the U.S. She will tell us about the recent conference. **Mary Haney**, a consultant with more than 30 years' experience in cross-cultural communication and international affairs, will discuss the participation by civil society. CWI President Joy Simonson and Program Chair Ellen Overton will also share their impressions.

TOPIC: REPORT on BEIJING PLUS 10

SPEAKERS: Dr. Suzanne Kindervatter, Director, Gender and Diversity, InterAction
MARY HANEY, Consultant, cross-cultural communication and international affairs

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, March 22, 2005 – Noon to 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: American Council on Education,
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Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle. In case of bad weather and closing of DC public schools, the meeting will be cancelled. Please listen to broadcast reports.

Next Meeting: April 26, 2005

Program Summary – February Meeting **WOMEN and the 109th CONGRESS**

The speakers at our February meeting were **Sarah Albert**, director of public policy for the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, and **Judith Waxman**, vice president for health policy at the National Women’s Law Center. Both speakers discussed public policies that are important to women and are currently being considered by Congress.

Sarah Albert talked about the controversial proposed changes in Social Security. This is a women’s issue because most women rely on Social Security as a major source of retirement income. For a quarter of women, Social Security benefits are their only source of retirement income. Nearly half of retired women rely on Social Security for 90 percent of their income. “On average,” she explained, “Social Security benefits account for 72 percent of women’s retirement income and 66 percent of men’s retirement income. Without Social Security older women would be twice as likely to live in poverty compared to older men.” The current system guarantees lifetime benefits and cost of living increases and this helps lower income earners, who are disproportionately women.

The much-discussed privatized system (personal accounts), she explained, is based on the premise that workers will be employed full time for forty or more years. Since many women work part-time and take time out for child care, it is very possible that they could outlive their accrued investment. Most importantly, under the president's plan there is no guarantee that individuals will receive minimum benefits as they do now. “The loss of a guaranteed minimum could spell disaster,” she said.

Also of vital significance to women is the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Passed in 1994, reauthorized in 2000, it is due for reauthorization this year. The reauthorization bill, still being drafted, helps to combat domestic violence. It would provide funding for legal and victim services, including shelters and counseling, penalties for sexual assault, training for prosecutors, police officers and health care professionals. A key provision of the bill is the SAFE Act (Security and Financial Empowerment Act) which seeks to ease financial restrictions for those trying to leave abusive relationships. This includes granting unemployment benefits, expanding the Federal Medical Leave Act to allow unpaid emergency leave for those who need to escape abusive relationships and to end employment discrimination.

Albert was particularly hopeful for passage of the Elder Justice Act, which would be the first federal law to protect the elderly against abuse and would define a nationwide standard of abuse, exploitation and neglect. The bill would also require criminal background investigations for all long-term care workers. If passed, it will raise public awareness, create programs to assist victims, train law enforcement personnel, and institute criminal penalties. The National Center for Elder Abuse estimates that nearly 900,000 cases of domestic elder abuse occur every year and 70 percent of the abused are women.

Judith Waxman said that proposed changes in Medicaid and Medicare also will affect women disproportionately. Women generally have more chronic health problems and they take more drugs so the Medicare drug bill is important for them. They are less likely to have retiree coverage, and also are more likely to be on Medicaid as well. The President wants to give the states more flexibility, she added, as long as no new federal dollars are

spent. Since every state budget is stretched thinly, it is likely that flexibility will mean cuts in Medicaid, rather than any expansion, as states reorder medical priorities.

There are no cuts in the Medicare budget, Waxman said, because “The President likes the bill.” It is projected that next year when the new prescription drug program starts, drugs for people over 65 will cost \$1.6 trillion, but the bill calls for just approximately \$400 billion, which would cover only 36 percent of drug costs. In addition, she said, everyone will need to understand all the pharmacy drug plans that are being proposed. One of the troubles,” Waxman said, “is that no one can predict which drugs they might need next month.”

She said that poor women would be better off with drugs under Medicaid. Medicaid has been pretty comprehensive but the new plans will be less so. She declared that if you are really poor and were in Medicaid before, you actually would be worse off under the new plans.

Waxman noted that Medicaid is one of the most efficient federal programs operating. She said, “States spend about 30 percent less on each individual than is spent through private insurance ... fraud and abuse account for less than .007 percent of the budget ... yet, the President claims the changes are needed to eliminate fraud and abuse.”

One of the proposals would allow tax credits to enable people to buy their own individual health insurance. This would mean that poor Americans, especially women over 45, would be unable to afford the high-deductible policies.

Yet another proposed change is to the rules for relocating a family’s assets to make an individual eligible for nursing home care. Under the current plan, some money can be transferred to other relatives. The proposed change would not allow that; an individual would have to spend down all of his or her money to become eligible.

Waxman pointed out that Medicaid now supplies more family planning services than any other government program. Although the budget for this has not been reduced, funding for abstinence programs keeps rising. A number of other bills currently proposed will restrict access to abortion in a variety of ways.

“The biggest threat, not surprisingly,” she said, “is the Supreme Court, and it depends on Supreme Court appointees in the next few years. The issue hangs in the balance now. If *Roe v Wade* were overturned, the issue would move to individual states ... and I remember what it was like before it became a constitutional right!”

She urged the audience to tell everyone to contact their Congressional leaders, particularly the Senate, and tell them “No cuts to Medicaid.” For more information, she suggested that people visit the National Women’s Law Center website, www.nwlc.org.

She also declared, in response to a question, that education and coalition building among organizations are the major strategies available if women want to have their concerns heard on Capitol Hill.

COMING EVENTS

March 15. National Council of Women's Organizations, book launching, 5-7 p.m., the Capitol, Room HC-9. "*50 Ways to Improve Women's Lives*" consists of essays written by a group of distinguished women. CWI members are invited to the reception.

April 6-8. Women Work! 2005 National Conference.

April 19. Equal Pay Day. The National Committee on Pay Equity suggests that women wear RED on this day to symbolize how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay.

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Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 362-5717

APRIL 2005

MENTAL HEALTH – THE ROLE of FAMILIES

There is almost universal agreement on the need to improve the quality of mental health services, especially for our underserved population. This should include a philosophy of care that emphasizes an individual's potential, choice, capacity for change, autonomy, and personal growth. For too long the role of families in the healing and care of those who are seriously mentally ill has been minimal. The good news is that there are positive signs of change.

Dr. Laurie Young, director of OWL (the Older Women's League) and a former senior vice president of the National Mental Health Association, brings more than 20 years' experience coordinating treatment services for people with serious mental illnesses. She will discuss OWL's national campaign to screen and help older Americans receive mental health services.

Merion Kane, president of Family Links, is a long-time mental health advocate who helped found the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, D.C. Threshold; and Family Links – organizations that emphasize the importance of families in caring for those who are mentally ill. She will speak about the experiences of families that face the devastating effects of mental illness.

TOPIC: MENTAL HEALTH – FAMILIES TAKE CHARGE

SPEAKERS: **Dr. Laurie Young**, Executive Director, OWL
Merion Kane, President, Family Links

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, April 26 – Noon to 1:30 p.m.**

PLACE: American Council on Education
j One Dupont Circle - 8th Floor, Kellogg Room
Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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Program Summary – March Meeting **REPORT on BEIJING PLUS 10**

CWI members heard a behind-the-scenes account of the recent United Nations meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, designed as a follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women (held in Beijing) with the intent to reaffirm the goals of Beijing and to review and assess the status of women and girls 10 years later.

Our speakers, **Dr. Suzanne Kindervatter**, director, gender and diversity, InterAction and **Mary Haney**, consultant and expert in cross-cultural communication and international affairs, attended the U.N. meeting as well as the 1995 Beijing meeting.

More than 1,800 delegates attended, representing 165 member states; half of the participants were of the ministerial level. In addition, there were the largest numbers of representatives from NGOs ever participating in the General Assembly Hall. Officially there were 2,600 but unofficially the number was at least double that. Parallel to the official intergovernmental meetings, for the first time there were more than 300 NGO meetings on topics from post-tsunami reconstruction to inheritance rights to the continuing concern and challenge of HIV-AIDS.

According to Suzanne Kindervatter, “the verdict was mixed” – with some NGOs claiming that women are just holding the line on progress and others saying there has been significant progress.

“It was very dramatic behind the scenes” said Kindervatter, “because of the actions of the United States, who was not a team player, to say the least.” In planning the meeting last year, there had been “a

gentlewoman’s agreement” that none of the Beijing agreements would be discussed. The meeting would reaffirm and recommit positively to the Beijing Twelve-Point Plan of Action. She said the U.S. surprised everyone by introducing an amendment that said that the outcomes of the Beijing conference “do not create any new international human rights and they do not include the right to abortion.”

The proposed U.S. amendment caused turmoil and dismay among the delegates. There was no practical reason for the amendment, Kindervatter said, since the Beijing agreement, which the U.S. had signed in 1995, only states that abortion should be safe where it is legal; it does not call it a right.

The U.S. amendment dominated the discussions during the first week. Representatives from the U.S. NGOs learned that they could not meet with the U.S. delegation to express their concerns. President Bush had appointed a conservative, all Republican delegation which refused to respond to any requests for discussion. However, an unexpected opportunity took place when a U.S. session to celebrate increased political representation of women in Afghanistan and Iraq gave members of the audience a chance to ask for a democratic hearing on women’s rights at the U.N.

By the end of Thursday, it was not clear if the U.S. amendment would have to be debated and in effect “de-rail” the meeting. An impressive, unanimous vote of government representatives opposed the amendment; only the U.S. and the Vatican supported the amendment. When finally it was announced that the

amendment was withdrawn, the audience cheered wildly.

The U.S. delegation, under Ambassador Ellen Sauerbrey, tried to justify its position by saying the amendment was simply introduced to clarify the Beijing agreement, but the damage to the U.S. and to the conference had been done.

The serious topics that were to be discussed at the meeting, such as sexual trafficking, educational inequalities, and the spread of AIDS, did not get as much attention as organizers had hoped because so much effort had to be used to galvanize opposition to the amendment. The N.Y. Times noted in an editorial on March 5, "An apology is due from the U.S. delegation for the week-long disruption it caused."

During the second week, 10 resolutions were approved. Discussion focused on the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, which had had been adopted in 2000 by heads of states who pledged to achieve the goals by 2015. At a summit proposed for September, government representatives will work on the U.N. Millennium Development Goals.

Mary Haney spoke about the importance of civil society participants at the meeting. The long lines to obtain credentials and photos just to enter the building and the surprisingly large number of Asian and African women led her to conclude that "Yes, Virginia, there is a global women's movement." There were seven "first ladies" in attendance, three from African nations; the NGOs represented some 600 organizations.

Furthermore, Haney said, another well-represented group was from Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. Many among them were young and seemingly new to the U.N. process, but "they were well informed about the issues and very canny about lobbying

their governments and determined to do so." They were well organized and well-led, thanks to support from the Soros Foundation.

A traditional NGO consultation, a non-U.N. function, was held the weekend before the U.N. conference. The meeting's content reflected the importance the UN now assigns to the regional and thematic caucus format for conducting civil society's business at these large meetings. Haney stated, "At this meeting, NGOs bemoaned the rise of conservatives among Western governments, including those who had been at the forefront of the global gender equality campaign, such as the Netherlands."

Haney was particularly impressed with the successful use of caucus groups that met either on a specific issue or regional basis. These groups were well-informed and were trained as lobbyists to effectively influence their country's delegates. She pointed out that Bella Abzug had started this concept in a training program in Rio in 1962 that taught NGO members about the caucus method. In some cases, it exposed people around the world to a democratic process for the first time. "I really think it's a very important aspect of what has changed in the last 20 to 30 years," Haney said.

Now the caucus system is an established part of the way NGOs work, and NGOs display a great deal of political sophistication in using it. An excellent example is the organized and effective way the NGOs in the various parts of the world reacted to and helped to defeat the U.S. amendment efforts.

Kindervatter and Haney agreed (sadly) that at times they were embarrassed to be Americans because the U.S. delegation did not seem well informed about issues

and did not appear to be fully committed | to the Millennium Goals.

NCWO/YOUNGER WOMEN

The National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO) has established a task force designed to help younger feminists build their own movement with guidance from established feminists. At a recent national summit of the Younger Women's Task force, 86 women met to discuss and consider the need for young women to take a more active role in society. One of the many issues discussed was the need to "erase feminism's outdated image," including the term feminism itself. One task force wrote, "We recognize that the use of language can alienate and exclude people. We call on the women's movement to be thoughtful and strategic about the language it uses. ..It was said that labels are less important than actions..." The Clearinghouse is a member of NCWO.

Other recent efforts to organize younger women include the New York City-based Third Wave Foundation, which supports feminists ages 15-30; the National Young Feminists Task Force, which includes women age 30 or under who advise the organization on issues of interest to them. In addition the White House Project's Vote, Run, Lead initiative aims to involve young women in politics.

WEAR RED on EQUAL PAY DAY/ Tuesday, April 19

The National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE), which organizes the annual national observance of Equal Pay Day, urges women to wear red on April 19 "to symbolize how far women and minorities are 'in the red' with their pay." Equal Pay Day is observed in April to indicate how far into each year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year; Tuesday symbolizes the day when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous week. Because women on average earn less, they must work longer for the same pay; for women of color, the wage gap is greater.
(www.pay-equity.org)

FOUNDATIONS for WOMEN and GIRLS

A directory, "The Leading 100 New Foundations Funding Women and Girls," was recently co-published by Women and Philanthropy and Jankowski Associates. According to Women's E-news, "More than one-third of all grant-making foundations (for women and girls) have been created since 1996 ... the hottest trend in foundation giving ... assets of \$43 billion and grants of more than \$3.1 billion." You can preview the guide at <http://womensenews.org/PDF-files/WomenSample.pdf>. (Women's e-News)

TITLE IX

The N.Y. Times criticized a "clarification" of the regulations interpreting Title IX, the statute barring sex discrimination at institutions that receive federal financing, that was surreptitiously posted on the Education Department web site a few weeks ago. Women's advocacy groups immediately condemned the change, under which colleges can demonstrate that they are satisfying the demand for women's sports by taking an online survey showing that female students have no unmet sports interests. This is one of the three tests that college must meet to demonstrate compliance. In a follow-up editorial recently, the newspaper says, "The department says that if the rate of response is low – as it is with most such surveys – that will be interpreted as a lack of interest ... This harmful change, made without public notice or debate, marks a dismaying turnaround ... A public outcry may yet persuade the administration to withdraw the new regulation."

MUSIC: “The beat begins early in life ...When asked what musical instruments they would like to play, boys invariably will pick something like the trumpet, drums or saxophone while girls tend to favor the violin, clarinet or flute ...children as young as five exhibit stereotypical preferences when it comes to musical instruments ...these gender-based preferences are considerably more fixed among boys than they are in girls. (www.gendercenter.org)

SMOKE and SMOKING: There is strong evidence that women exposed to secondhand smoke increase their risk of developing cervical cancer. A study, recently published by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, is seen “as especially important for women living in developing countries, where smoking is on the rise and cervical cancer is a leading cause of death.” (Women’s eNews)

“A child whose grandmother smoked during pregnancy may have almost twice the risk of developing asthma as one whose grandmother did not smoke – even if the child’s mother was a nonsmoker ...” is the conclusion of a new study conducted by the University of Southern California. Subjects were selected from children who were participating in a children’s health study that began in 1993. Published in the April issue of the journal “Chest,” the study is the first to report that smoking in pregnancy can harm not only a woman’s children, but her grandchildren as well. (N.Y. Times)

BUSH RECORD on WOMEN

The National Women’s Law Center (NWLC) recently published a review of the Bush administration’s record on women, revealing the “rollback of women’s opportunities to succeed in work and in school, their economic security and their health and reproductive rights. Although the administration has taken some positive steps for women, these are greatly overshadowed by the overwhelming number of policies and proposals that already have hurt women or could do so if enacted.” An executive summary of the report, “Slip-sliding Away: The Erosion of Hard-Won Gains for Women Under the Bush Administration and an Agenda for Moving Forward,” may be found on the website: www.nwlc.org.

HATS OFF to MRS. HEMENWAY and the AUDUBON SOCIETY

During the 1880s, fashion decreed that ladies’ bonnets should be decorated with egret plumes, owl heads, sparrow wings, whole hummingbirds and many varieties of feathers from exotic species. At the same time, the modern conservation movement was in its infancy, as the growth of cities was destroying the wilderness and much wildlife. Mrs. Augustus Hemenway, a Boston socialite, read a description of the bloody hunts at the egret rookeries to obtain the precious feathers; she immediately invited her fashionable friends to a series of afternoon teas, at which many of the women pledged to boycott the bird hats. Subsequently, Hemenway and her cousin Minna Hall convened a meeting of prominent Bostonians who formed what is now the Audubon Society. The movement spread rapidly as part of the “woman club movement,” a vast network of women’s groups that clamored for reform during this period. Women started the Audubon clubs and then invited male scientists and civic leaders to join them. (Audubon Magazine)

COMING EVENTS

April 19. National Pay Equity Day. Wear red!

April 22. Meeting on Social Security, at the Cleveland Park Library, 3310 Connecticut Avenue NW, sponsored by Iona Senior Services Citizens Advisory Council and OWL (the Older Women's League). No charge; complimentary lunch. For information, call 895-9415

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CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

P.O. Box 70603

Friendship Heights, MD 20813

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Medicaid. The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) is among 13 national women's and health groups that sent letters to key congressional committee, urging lawmakers to protect Medicaid by preventing cuts and opposing programmatic changes that would hurt health services available to millions of low-income women. "Medicaid provides health coverage for 14 percent of low-income Americans. Women represent 71 percent of all Medicaid beneficiaries age 19 and older ...millions remain uninsured

JUNE The Institute for Women's Policy Research will hold its [Eighth International Women's Policy Research Conference, in Washington, D.C. June 19-21, 2005](#), at the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

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Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 362-5717

www.womensclearinghouse.org

MAY 2005

SOMETHING NEW for CWI! – WE’LL JOIN MARTHA BURK at the WOMEN’S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB LUNCHEON May 24

Because CWI member **Martha Burk** is the distinguished speaker, this month the Clearinghouse will co-sponsor a luncheon with the Woman's National Democratic Club. Dr. Martha Burk will discuss her research on how women fare in corporate America. She is a political psychologist and syndicated columnist who currently serves as Chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations, a network of more than 200 national women's groups, including CWI that collectively represents ten million women. The NCWO effort to open the Augusta National Golf Club to women occurred under her leadership and remains at the forefront of the debate on women's progress. This is a rare opportunity to hear directly from a renowned women's equity expert, author and MS Magazine's 2003 Woman of the Year.

SPEAKER: **Martha Burk**, President, Center for Advancement of Public Policy,
Chair, National Council of Women's
Organizations

TOPIC: Inside the Cult of Power: Sex Discrimination in Corporate America and What Can Be Done About It

DATE/Time: Tuesday, May 24 - Reception 12 noon; Lunch 12:30 p.m. \$25;
Program 1 pm-2 pm (free)

PLACE: WNDC, 1526 New Hampshire Ave NW
Metro: Dupont Circle Q St Exit

LUNCH RESERVATIONS: 202 232-7363, ext. 3003
Checks (\$25) Payable to WNDC-EF; Please identify yourself as a CWI member

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Program Summary – April Meeting
MENTAL HEALTH

Our speakers, **Dr. Laurie Young**, director of OWL (Older Women's League) and a former vice president of the National Mental Health Association, and **Merion Kane**, president of Family Links, discussed mental health services and the experiences of families that face the devastating effects of mental illness.

After twenty five years in private practice **Laurie Young** decided to shift "from provider to advocate," after witnessing how her mother, a vibrant, active person who suffered from chronic depression and dementia, was treated as she became very ill in the last two years of her life. She experienced "personal frustration" because she could get little help to deal with her mother's illness.

When she applied for her position with OWL, Young declared that "Owl needs to focus on mental health issues." As the voice of mid-life and older women, OWL has a responsibility to bring mental health issues to the table and try to affect public attitudes and policy. She pointed out that OWL now has initiated "Older Americans Mental Health Week," a new national public health observance in the country, which will take place the last week in May (which is National Mental Health Month). This year, OWL chapters around the country will collaborate with many organizations to provide screenings, information and referral services in 700 senior centers in more than 1500 community mental health facilities and treatment centers.

"Depression and mental health disorders are not necessarily a normal part of aging," Young said. "They are real, common and most importantly, they're treatable. In fact, there can be more successful outcomes than with many other diseases if people are diagnosed early, diagnosed correctly, and treated appropriately."

She continued, "Older people, and particularly older women, are not valued in our society," and their concerns often are ignored; they are twice as likely to suffer from depression as men. Moreover, care-giving demands, which usually fall on women, increases their rate of depression by 30 percent. Young argues further that care-giving aggravates physical health problems as well. Just recently, the National Council of Social Workers has begun to require courses in geriatrics in professional training programs.

Often problems of the elderly are dismissed, Young said, because they suffer so many losses. Health care providers may consider their concerns "natural." Another reason why depression is under-diagnosed and misdiagnosed is because the symptoms may overlap with symptoms of many physical diseases. In general, Young noted, all mental health problems receive less respect than physical ailments in public policies. Insurance programs, for example, reimburse 80 percent of costs of care for physical problems but only 50 percent for mental health concerns.

Young said that families must take part in the decision-making process, and it is particularly important for women to be involved since they become the major care-givers. She mentioned that Sen. Barbara Mikulski and Rep. Nita Lowey have introduced bills in the Senate and the House that would compensate care givers for time lost with either tax or Social Security credits.

Merion Kane talked about the stigma associated with serious mental illness. Often families are blamed for causing the illness. Speaking from personal experience, she talked of her son who was diagnosed with severe schizophrenia during his second year at college. She found little help when she sought support and some of the medical professionals seemed far removed from the everyday

struggles that she faced as a caregiver. She told one doctor that "You don't seem to know what mental illness is all about. I deal with it 24/7."

She noted that there is confusion between mental health and serious mental illness, and there is an important difference. And sometimes money for treatment goes to the wrong places. She emphasized that she was talking about the 20 percent of the severely mentally ill who never recover.

In 1978 she saw an ad for a meeting for families of the mentally ill in Montgomery County. "Going to that meeting was the best thing I ever did," she exclaimed. The group had started an organization called Threshold, which eventually became part of the National Alliance for Mental Illness. She was the first African American woman to serve on the founding board of directors. Later she started a D.C. chapter, now 24 years old. Today there is an Alliance chapter in every state, and there are 700 members in the District of Columbia.

Kane explained that mental illness usually appears in young people between the ages of 16 to 25. Her son is now in late 40's and doing better, but he's not cured. Who takes care of these older Americans, she asked, and noted that it has been very difficult to raise money to help this vulnerable group.

Today more than 7000 persons receive services from the District of Columbia

Department of Mental Health. But still the needs are great, Kane said, "We have not come too far from where I started." In fact, she cited backward steps, including the D.C. councilman who wanted to stop supplying state of the art medicine to the mentally ill to save money. "We must fight against that," she said.

To illustrate how bad conditions are, Kane told about one parent who was glad her son was in jail because he would be safer there. Forty percent of the jail population is mentally ill, but she said these numbers are misleading. This group commits fewer crimes than the general population. "In fact, they are the ones who are vulnerable, they are the ones preyed upon or attacked and they end up in jail. This is largely because their mental illness is not treated. And when they are in jail, they receive no treatment or little treatment or the wrong treatment."

It is particularly important to involve families in efforts to make others aware of the need for more care. In 1997 Kane spearheaded the establishment of an organization called Family Links and Outreach Center, to provide productive activities for persons with mental illness. CWI member Al Golub serves on the board of directors, which is made up of family members with an advisory board of professionals. They are seeking major funding now, but they did just receive a grant to conduct a Saturday program.

CWI Newsletter Readers: CWI is considering adopting e-mail distribution of our newsletter in order to save money, as many other organizations are doing. We will continue mail service for those who request it. Please e-mail your preference to joy.rs@verizon.net Or you may send a note/postcard to CWI, address on page 1. **(Kindly include your e-mail address if you have one.)**

THE END of BUSINESS PAYROLL DATA by GENDER?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has proposed regulations that would end the collection of businesses payroll data by gender later this year. A final decision will be made by the Office of Management and Budget at the end of the 30-day comment period in May. BLS plans to eliminate the Women Worker Series “who’s working where according to payroll data.” According to Women’s eNews, the agency has been “flooded with pleas to save data on women’s work.”

Although there will still be data about women’s employment from the Current Population Survey, some critics do not consider this information as accurate because it surveys households, not businesses and is based on a much smaller sample. Women’s organizations are opposed to the change. NCWO (The National Council of Women’s Organizations of which CWI is a member) “called the bureau’s plans part of a concerted political trend to downgrade and eliminate public data of relevance to girls and women. A year ago, the Institute for Women’s Policy Research called attention to the issue in a report that described ‘a disturbing pattern of vital information important to women and girls’ lives disappearing from federal government web sites.” (Women’s eNews)

FOREMOTHER AWARDS

The National Research Center for Women & Families presented Foremother Awards on May 6 as a way of saying thank you to “wonderful women who have worked so hard to improve the lives and opportunities of women.” Among the 10 women honored were CWI members Joy Simonson, Margaret Feldman, Gloria Johnson, Ruth Nadel, Ellie Newman, Sonia Pressman Fuentes, and Anne Hale Johnson. The other honorees were Mary Dent Crisp, Fann Harding and Allie Latimer. CWI member Diana Zuckerman is president of the National Research Center.

SOCIAL SECURITY/NWLC

The National Women’s Law Center says that the President’s latest Social Security Plan would cut benefits for widows, children, and disabled workers. “The President proposed cutting future S.S. benefits to reduce the long-term shortfall in S.S., and insisted that private accounts, which would be funded out of S.S. revenues, must be a part of the package. *The part of the plan the President talked about is bad news for women and the parts of his plan he didn’t talk about are even worse.* The President’s latest plan would cut benefits for average earners under age 55 when they retire, whether or not they chose to participate in a private account. What he didn’t say is that it would also cut benefits for those workers if they became disabled before retirement, and for their children, spouses, and surviving spouses who receive benefits when the worker’s income is lost due to retirement, disability, or death ... These cuts would especially hurt women: currently, fourteen million Americans receive a S.S. benefit as a spouse or surviving spouse and 98 percent of them are women.”

Seattle: The city became the first in the country to begin building apartments specifically designed to support deaf and deaf-blind women overcoming domestic violence,” according to Women’s eNews. The Abused Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services was founded 19 years ago after a deaf woman was killed by her husband during a domestic dispute in Seattle. She had sought help, but service providers repeatedly turned her away. One deaf victim of abuse told the Seattle Post

Intelligencer through an interpreter, “The police will talk to the hearing person first. They think we aren’t educated or smart enough, or that we can’t communicate, can’t understand the legal system.”

Women in Science: Reps. Ginny Brown-Waite and Hilda L. Solis, co-chairs, Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues, and Reps. Vern Ehlers and Mark Udall, co-chairs, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education Caucus, will hold a lunch briefing, Advancing Women in Science, Wednesday, May 25, 12-1:30 p.m., B-339 Rayburn House Office Building. Check www.womenspolicy.org for further information.

Alliance for Justice: Leaders of women’s organizations have been speaking out against nominations for appointments of judges who have “deplorable records on women’s rights (that) make them unacceptable for lifetime appointments to the federal bench.” (Marcia Greenberger, co-president, NWLC). The Alliance for Justice, a national association of environmental, civil rights, mental health, women's, children's and consumer advocacy organizations, works to advance the cause of justice for all Americans, strengthen the public interest community's ability to influence public policy, and foster the next generation of advocates. “Just One Vote,” is the theme of their annual luncheon – highlighting the importance of judicial selection at the Supreme Court level – which takes place May 25. For further information, call 822-6070

WHAT’S WOMEN’S ART WORTH?

It’s a well-known fact that the work of women artists, even those who are very successful, do not earn the mega bucks that men’s work gets. From a New York Times article: “Asking why women's art sells for less than men's elicits a long and complex answer, with endless caveats, entirely germane qualifiers and diverse, sometimes contradictory reasons. But there is also a short and simple, if unpopular, answer that none of those explanations can trump. Women's art sells for less because it is made by women.”

As an example, the article cites the following incident: “In the early 1950's Lee Krasner, not yet famous but already a promising Abstract Expressionist painter, asked Hans Hofmann, her former teacher, to help her land a gallery show. He offered her the biggest compliment he could: "This is so good," he said of her work, "you would not believe it was done by a woman." Nonetheless, he declined.” This must sound familiar to many long-time feminists.

Corrections: In the program summary in our April newsletter, the sentence referring to the use of caucus groups at the UN meeting should have read, "... Bella Abzug introduced this concept in Rio in 1992. A quote attributed to Mary Haney, “NGOs bemoaned the rise of conservatives among Western governments,” is actually from Gem News, the daily paper of the African Gender and Media Initiative. Finally, Haney was embarrassed specifically because the U.S. delegation unnecessarily introduced a controversial abortion issue that wasted time and isolated the U.S. from every other country attending the meeting.

COMING EVENTS

MAY: National Mental Health Month and Older Americans Month

May 25. Alliance for Justice, annual luncheon. 822-6070

June 9-12. National Women's Political Caucus, Biennial Convention, "Women Leading Change," www.NWPC.org

July 22-24 Women's Rights National Park, Seneca Falls, NY, 25th annual celebration. 607-274-3779

<p>CWI Board of Directors, July 2004 - June 2005. Officers: President, Joy R. Simonson; Vice President/Program, Ellen S. Overton; Secretary, Gilda L. Morse; Corresponding Secretary, Jacqueline Scherer; Membership, Jean Landweber and Sue Marx Smock; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly. Board Members: Harriett Harper; Mickey Klein; Jean Linehan; Alvin Golub; Clara G. Schiffer; Elinor Waters; Ruth G. Nadel, ex-officio; Roslyn Kaiser, Newsletter Editor.</p>



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 362-5717

www.womensclearinghouse.org

JUNE 2005

WOMEN and MIGRATION: in the U.S. and WORLD-WIDE

Approximately one out of every 35 people in the world is a migrant who has crossed at least one national border in search of a better life. Many are women who cross with their families; these women and others may face gender-specific persecution and exploitation. In the United States, immigration has become a major national issue. Concerns include admission policies, implementation of asylum policies, illegal immigration and integration of immigrants. Immigrant women in the US have some unique problems, such as domestic violence, workers' rights and access to education.

Each of our June speakers brings a specific expertise about women and migration. **Frances Sullivan** will present a world-wide view of the migration of women; she heads the North American office of the International Organization for Migration, established in 1951 to provide humane responses to migration challenges. **Eleonor Velasquez**, legislative assistant for immigration on the staff of Rep. Hilda Solis (CA), will speak about the special problems of immigrant women in our country and proposed legislation that addresses these issues.

SPEAKERS: **Frances Sullivan**, Regional Representative for North America and the Caribbean, for the International Organization for Migration Migration

Eleonor Velasquez, Legislative Assistant to Rep. Hilda Solis (CA)

TOPIC: **WOMEN and MIGRATION**

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, June 28, 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.**

PLACE: American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, 8th Floor, Kellogg Room. Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle

Next Meeting September 27, 2005

[Program Summary – May meeting](#)

DR. MARTHA BURK

Dr. Martha Burk, president of the Center for Advancement of Public Policy, chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations, and CWI member, discussed her new book, "The Cult of Power--Discrimination in Corporate America and What Can Be Done About It," at the Woman's National Democratic Club. (CWI is a member of NCWO and co-sponsored the luncheon meeting.)

Burk wrote her book based on her experience with the campaign to persuade Augusta National Golf Club, which sponsors the world-famous Masters Tournament, to admit women members. The crusade started with a "modest letter of protest" to the club. That letter unleashed a storm of controversy that clearly showed the power of corporate American leaders.

A tirade of protest arose against the letter. But it was not really about golf, she said; rather it was an argument about where women can go and where they ought to go. The debate had national and international repercussions.

It was clear that the arguments pro and con were confused. Not all men were against women participating in the golf club. Not all women supported the women's protest. Burk read a letter from a female student at North Carolina State reflecting the confusion. The writer seemed to support the NCWO's position, while at the same time declaring that "gender rights have been taken care of" already.

The opposition's arguments against women participating in Augusta followed

certain patterns. Some argued that women should open their own club, that the women's movement should not go where they weren't wanted, and that the issue was not about gender, but about golf.

As Burk pointed out, if the wording of the statements had used racial or ethnic terms, the public would have been outraged. But gender had become "acceptable discrimination," the phrase coined by columnist Christine Brennan, whereas racial or religious discrimination was "unacceptable discrimination."

Surprised by the strong outburst of negative comments, and with only limited personnel and financial resources, NCWO members decided next to approach those corporate sponsors who supported the Masters Tournament to express their concerns. She explained, "We reasoned that no sponsor would stick with Augusta National once we made it clear that national women's groups were watching."

But the women had underestimated the power of corporate ties. The Augusta National membership list was a closely guarded secret, and uncovering it was a tough research task.

But when the names of the 300 members finally surfaced, it was a very impressive roll call that included some of America's most powerful corporate leaders, CEO's of major corporations, bank presidents, political leaders, media giants, and many of the wealthiest, most influential men in the nation.

Burk pointed out that the powerful leaders who determine American policy are able to discuss key issues in the informal atmosphere of the golf club (and other private clubs).

An examination of the membership roster shows the pattern of interlocking directorates that allow those who are powerful in one area to translate their

influence to another. The book's 35-page appendix, which contains the club membership list, documents the "cult of power" after which the book is named.

The protests of the NCWO and others who sought change at Augusta National proved futile. The powerful corporate membership stuck together and issued statements that supported "acceptable discrimination." The leaders of Coca Cola, Coors, IBM, the pharmaceutical companies, the Harvard Corporation members, along with bankers and even other athletic organizations, simply denied that women had any place in their golf club. Moreover, it was implied that women did not belong among powerful decision makers.

Burk pointed out that as the struggle to bring about change continues, women must work closely with men who want change. Howard Dean, for one, who as governor of Vermont promoted more women to positions of leadership than any previous governor; more than half of his judicial appointments were women. Burk believes that there are other men out there who will support efforts to put women in key positions.

She warned about the hypocrisy of some groups who purport to have the interests of women at heart. For example, the magazine *Working Mother* publishes an annual issue congratulating the companies that are best for working women. The list includes companies that have had outstanding legal complaints and fines, even some that have been sued by the Bush administration for sex discrimination.

Another major problem in fighting discrimination, Burk says, is that the laws against discrimination are complaint driven. That means a woman must make the complaint and then endure all the negative recriminations and hostile effects of the complaint. Even if she succeeds, the settlement

usually contains a gag order preventing her from further action. For this reason, the NCWO is supporting two bills before Congress: The Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act. These are designed to achieve positive momentum for change rather than negative sanctions.

Of course, companies can report what people earn without new laws. She cited the Ben and Jerry ice cream company, which provides that information in their annual report.

She pointed out that the Bush administration now is suggesting that the government no longer collect statistics according to gender. Without clear and honest information, it will be difficult to end discrimination, Burk says. She added that the data could be available from all companies right now without changing the law if the companies were seriously concerned about equal pay.

Martha Burk believes that sex discrimination in corporate America can be changed with persistence. "We have to be in for the long haul and we have to challenge 'acceptable discrimination.'"

She added one of her favorite quotations from Emma Goldman, "If I can't dance, I won't come to your revolution," and told the audience, "We have to keep dancing and showing up at the revolution."

CWI ANNUAL ELECTIONS

CWI bylaws call for the election of officers and members of the board of directors at the June 28 meeting. All paid-up members are eligible to vote. The nominating committee, consisting of Sue Marx Smock and Elly Waters, co-chairs, Irene Murphy, Alvin Golub, and Joy Simonson, ex officio, submits the following slate:

2005 CWI Board of Directors: President, Ellen Overton, Treasurer, Linda Fihelly (Continuing), Secretary, Harriett Stonehill, Program Coordinator, Susan Klein, Membership, Jean Landweber (continuing). At large directors include Alvin Golub, Harriett Harper, Roslyn Kaiser, Karen Mayers, Ruth Nadel, Jacqueline Scherer, Clara G. Schiffer, and Joy Simonson, ex officio.

Most of the nominees on the slate are long-time active CWI members. Here are bios of the three “newcomers.”

Susan S. Klein, with a doctorate in education, spent most of her professional life in the National Institute of Education, where she served in a variety of positions dealing with gender equity, was an advisor to the National Advisory Council on Women’s Education. She also edited the *Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity through Education*. Since retiring from the Department of Education in 2004 she has been the education equity specialist at the Feminist Majority Foundation.

Karen S. Mayers has employed her degree in gerontology as a professional, board member and volunteer in many local and national organizations concerned with the needs of families, women and the elderly. They include House of Ruth, Iona Senior Services, Home Care Services and Family and Services.

Harriett M. Stonehill has served as Washington representative for major women's organizations, worked on the Hill supporting women's employment and education legislation, and worked as legislative editor for Women’s Work magazine on issues of women in the work force and the military. She is director of the MegaSkills Education Center, training leaders to conduct educational programs for both parents and students. With CWI member Dr. Bernice Sandler, she has co-authored *Student to Student Sexual Harassment K-12*, which will be available in August.

CWI expresses deep appreciation for the services rendered by members who are leaving the board of directors: Gilda Morse, Mickey Klein, Jean Linehan, Sue Marx Smock and Elinor Waters.

“HONORING MRS. GRISWOLD”

From the American Progress Website

June 7 was the anniversary of a “critical, life-changing legal victory” for women in our country. On that day, in 1965, the U.S Supreme Court, in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, ruled that “married women have a constitutional right to privacy that allows them to obtain contraception.” The article continues, “Ironically, forty years later, women are still fighting to exercise that right: in courtrooms, legislatures, and even pharmacies, obstacles to reproductive freedom continue to this day.”

In 1965, Connecticut’s outmoded laws banned the sale or use of birth control. “The Connecticut ban, enacted in 1879 under the sponsorship of Connecticut state legislator P.T. Barnum of Barnum & Bailey Circus fame, had withstood years of legislative and legal challenges. Finally, in 1961, Estelle Griswold, executive director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, with her colleagues, challenged the ban directly, opening a clinic in New Haven that offered family planning services. She and Dr. Lee Buxton, a Yale obstetrician, were fined \$100 each; they appealed. The Supreme Court victory four years later recognized for the first time a constitutional right to privacy in matters of marital intimacy and reproduction.

“Griswold led the way for a string of other decisions in which the right to contraception was extended to unmarried women ... to minors ... from contraception to abortion ... (Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, 1973), and from reproductive rights to sexual rights. “These decisions – and others that rely on and expand them – have been fundamental to advancing human rights in the United States. For only with the freedom to decide whether, when, and with whom to have sex, and whether, when and with whom to have children, can other human rights – economic, social, cultural, and political – be fully realized.”

The article further says, “However, in celebrating the Griswold decision this month, we must acknowledge that this victory was always incomplete and is now at great risk.”

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE CWI NEWSLETTER ON LINE? CWI is considering adopting e-mail distribution of the newsletter in order to save money, as many other organizations are doing. We would continue mail service for those who request it. Please e-mail your preference to joy.rs@verizon.net Or you may send a note/postcard to CWI, address on page 1. (Kindly include your e-mail address if you have one.)

CHASTITY: The government is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on chastity programs. The ACLU is taking issue with the government support of one particular chastity program, the high-tech Silver-Ring Thing, a live three-hour, high-tech sound, light and video show. The presentation includes actors and comedy sketches that promote teen chastity and “so-called Christian values. Teens pledge abstinence until they present a silver ring that symbolizes their celibacy to their spouse on their wedding day. They also sign a covenant agreeing to follow ‘biblical standards.’ Teens who don’t want to participate in the religious testimonials that are part of the ceremony are allowed to leave the room.” ACLU filed the suit in Massachusetts against the Department of Health and Human Services for mingling religious and governmental messages in the Silver Ring Thing. (From Women’s eNews)

President Joy Simonson received the following letter from John O’Connor, husband of CWI’s long-time treasurer Mary O’Connor, who died in 2001. He enclosed a contribution in her memory. CWT’s recently-published History is dedicated to Mary.

Dear Joy: The enclosed check is in memory of Mary. I hope it helps in your most important work. I know Mary would think so, more now than ever when our country is going in the wrong direction on so many issues, Sincerely, John (O’Connor).
P.S. Thanks for sending the newsletter. I enjoy reading it.

GLOBAL NOTES:

KUWAIT: --A woman has been appointed to the Kuwait cabinet for the first times in its history. This is one more victory for women’s rights in that country, occurring just a month after women won the right to vote and run for elective office. (N.Y. Times)

IRAN: The first public display of dissent by women since the 1979 revolution took place in Tehran, when hundreds of women protested sex discrimination under Iran’s Islamic leadership just a few days before the scheduled June 17 presidential election. Women’s rights advocates in Iran picked this time to draw attention to the problems because it is a

“time of relative tolerance by the government as it seeks to draw more voters to the polls.” (N.Y. Times)

JAPAN: The ruling Liberal Party in Japan is trying to “change the constitution to return to a dark period of history,” according to women’s advocates. The constitution that was written in 1946 after the war contained a provision to ensure that marriage “would be based on agreement of husband and wife, who had equal rights.” Prior to that, those civil or legal rights were not guaranteed to women, who also were not allowed to own property and could not file for divorce. These hard-won rights are now under siege as there are discussions about overall proposals to add language that would emphasize the values of family and community. A leading activist against the revision says “The government is borrowing family values – which attack women – from the U.S. It’s the same thing, but the only difference is that we don’t use religious language. We use nationalistic language. This is an attack on women’s constitutional rights.” (Women’s eNews)

EGYPT: “Government opponents say one way Egyptian authorities pursue suspects has been to pressure their female relatives. Over the years, if the policy could not find a wanted man, for example, they sometimes took his wife or daughter into custody ... Images of women being hit and sexually abused – particularly offensive in this conservative Islamic society – have helped bring together diverse groups ... (and) many political novices, “creating a backlash that has taken the government by surprise.” (N.Y. Times)

SCOTLAND: – “Golf clubs in Scotland raised membership fees for women to equal those of men, prompting a sharp decline in women's membership, reports Glasgow's The Herald. Until two years ago, most clubs charged lower fees to women in return for restricted access and no voting rights. Women's membership fell from 36,366 in 2002 to 34,876 in 2004, according to the Ladies' Golf Union. “The decline in women's golf is a major concern,” said Andy Salmon, chief executive of the union.” (Women’s eNews)

NORWAY: There must be 40 percent female members on the corporate boards of Norway by the end of this month or companies could lose their licenses. (Women’s eNews)

BOARDROOM PRESSURES

Conditions may be improving for women who want to serve on boards. New rules and regulations, in response to the recent corporate scandals, are changing the way boards are constructed. Women’s eNews quoted the head of a recruiting firm, who said “The percentage has doubled since 1995 in terms of the requests for women and minorities from nominating committees.” The article also says that “boards have begun recruiting more directors from outside the company and are therefore becoming or independent from senior management. Of the 443 new outside directors named last year, 24 percent were women, up from 16 percent in 2003. “This is the largest one-year increase among S&P 500 companies.”

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM: The tragic shooting of a doctor by her ex-husband at a Kaiser Permanente hospital in San Jose caused the national health maintenance organization to establish a unique comprehensive program to handle domestic violence cases. The Oakland-based organization launched a pilot program in 1998 to take domestic violence screening beyond the emergency room. “It connects those experiencing violence in the home with a network of resources quickly, both within the health care setting and in the community ... Clinicians are being

trained to ask patients about home life during routine exams, to identify situations before people come in with injuries. In 2000, a total of 761 patients were diagnosed with domestic violence at Kaiser facilities. The figure jumped to 2,575 in 2003. Plans are underway to expand the award-winning program across the country.”

TITLE IX: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to consider reinstating a lawsuit that challenged the law that mandates equal opportunity for women and girls in sports, reported The Associated Press. “At issue was whether the law, known as Title IX, discriminates against male athletes because it requires that the ratio of male to female athletes be similar to the overall composition of the student body. In this case, a group of male wrestlers argued that enforcing what they called ‘quotas’ undermined men's sports. The Supreme Court, without comment, rejected the appeal.

‘After almost four years, we hope the last word on this case has been spoken,’ said Marcia D. Greenberger, co-president of the National Women's Law Center in Washington, D.C. ‘Title IX cannot be blamed for cuts to men's teams. It's high time the wrestlers stopped using this important law as a scapegoat for their own problems.’”

WOMEN'S HEALTH: The NY Times, in a special section on Women's Health, ran an article entitled, **“UPDATE: What's a Woman to Believe? The Latest on Shifting Guidelines.”** The article explains: “Medical practice often shifts over the years. As conflicting research comes in, beliefs can swing one way or the other and back again. A most recent example is the case of hormone replacement: when it was found that some of the drugs actually increased the risk, as well as the incidence, of breast cancer, many women went off the hormone-replacement therapy.

But there also is the question of who should get Pap smears and for how long. “Women are now advised to have their first Pap test done by age 21, have the tests every year until age 30, and then if they've had three negative screenings in a row, they should be tested every two to three years. That is the advice. But in 2003, 75 percent of obstetricians and gynecologist surveyed said they still recommended yearly tests.”

And then there's osteoporosis, and whether or not calcium and vitamin C supplements are effective in preventing broken bones. Dr. Barbara Rose Gottlieb of the women's health division at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston said, “It is also very important to do weight training to keep bones strong, and to not smoke and not drink too much alcohol ... and people who are too thin are more likely to break bones. “This is going to make you crazy,” she said. “Because I'm telling you to lose weight, and I'm telling you not to lose it.”

Editor's Note: I have enjoyed the past six years as editor of the CWI Newsletter. Thanks to the many CWI members who provided program notes, submitted ideas for stories and offered support in general. Sheila Willet who is currently employed by the DC League of Women Voters and publishes the newsletter of the National Capital Chapter of OWL will assume the editor's post in September. Roslyn Kaiser

COMING EVENTS

June 19-21. “When Women Gain, So Does the World,” Institute for Women’s Policy Research, 8th International Conference. For info, contact Dianne Munevar, 785-5100.

September 27, 2005. Next CWI meeting.

CWI Board of Directors, July 2004 - June 2005. Officers: President, Joy R. Simonson; Vice President/Program, Ellen S. Overton; Secretary, Gilda L. Morse; Corresponding Secretary, Jacqueline Scherer; Membership, Jean Landweber and Sue Marx Smock; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly. Board Members: Harriett Harper; Mickey Klein; Jean Linehan; Alvin Golub; Clara G. Schiffer; Elinor Waters; Ruth G. Nadel, ex-officio; Roslyn Kaiser, Newsletter Editor.

**CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES
P.O. Box 70603
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SEPTEMBER 2005

THE SUPREME COURT AND EMERGING WOMEN'S ISSUES

The nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr. to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has focused public attention on the critical importance of the judiciary for public issues affecting our lives. We are fortunate that two exceptionally well-qualified speakers will provide us with their special insights on these issues that specifically affect women.

Nan Aron, President of the Alliance for Justice, is a major voice in public interest and civil rights law. She founded the Alliance 25 years ago. It now leads a coalition of major organizations concerned with monitoring judicial nominations at all levels. Nan is nationally recognized for her vast expertise in public interest law, the federal judiciary and citizen participation in public policy. She has appeared as an expert in such media outlets as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, *Vanity Fair* and National Public Radio.

Professor Laurence Nolan specializes in family law, legal research and writing at Howard University. She is the author of many articles and several books on related topics. She is accredited to practice before the Supreme Court as well as the courts of several states and the District of Columbia. Professor Nolan will discuss Bush appointments to federal courts, recent changes in state courts, the outlook or changes that may impact particular concerns of women and possible strategies to protect gains that may be threatened.

SPEAKERS: **Nan Aron**, President of the Alliance for Justice
Laurence Nolan, Professor, Howard Law School

TOPIC: **Supreme Court Nominations – Potential Impact on Women**

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, September 27, 2005 / 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.**

PLACE: **American Council on Education,
One Dupont Circle, NW, 8th Floor, Kellogg Room**

Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle

Next Meeting: October 25, 2005

Program Notes – June Meeting **WOMEN and MIGRATION**

“Men and women move all over the world in search of a better life because it is so easy to do so,” said Frances Sullivan of the International Organization for Migration (IOM.) Factors that encourage migration include conflict, a change in the economy, rising unemployment, and wage differentials. Sullivan explained that the term “migrants” captures the complexity of mobility and refers to all persons who need services, immigrants, emigrants, and refugees, legal or non-legal, temporary or permanent.

She reported that women are approximately 48 percent of the estimated 185 million migrants in the world. The fate of migrant women reflects the status of women in the host countries. If discrimination is practiced against all women, migrant women have few opportunities to correct grievances. Often conflict between different cultures increases the migrant’s marginalization.

IOM was founded in 1951 to solve problems of displaced persons after World War II. The organization, which has mounted awareness campaigns to make others understand the economic, social and legal problems that women migrants confront, would prefer to prepare people for their new lives before they leave their country. Increasingly, migration has become more of a business, with smugglers and traffickers exploiting people. Women Migrants have particular problems related to their gender; they are more vulnerable than men and too often are caught up in clandestine activities.

According to Sullivan, government policies and legislative barriers generally understate the number of women migrants; they are usually counted as dependent on males. Husbands are generally seen as the family provider, but this perception may be changing. Since 1980, more women migrants have made pragmatic choices to leave their homelands and they are increasingly becoming migrants independent of family.

In many cases their wages provide essential family support in the form of remittances sent back to their original homes. Migrant females have become an important economic force in spite of the fact that women generally have low-level positions, such as household domestic workers.

She said that in the developed world, the number of men and women who migrate is about equal. In the U.S. and Canada, for example 51 percent of migrants are female and usually have definite skills. This holds true for Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia. Migrants from poorer countries are less skilled and more vulnerable. They are often unaware of their rights and obligations and are more fearful of lodging complaints. As a result, they tolerate abuse.

Sullivan believes that women are agents of change. In addition to the needed remittances sent home, when migrant women return they sometimes network with others, and often start small business operations and export local products. In other ways, women find new ways to exert power. She said that some women migrants send home remittances to their mothers, rather than husbands, to ensure that the money is used to support the children left behind.

Turning to the topic of displaced persons, Sullivan noted that women and children are 70 percent of the persons displaced through conflict. Although it is women who press for peace and create survival strategies with limited resources, they are seldom invited to talk at the peace table.

The major theme throughout her talk and in response to questions, was that we must find ways to manage migration that than trying to control it through harsh laws. The practical reality, she said, is that the long wait for legal status makes it more attractive to circumvent the law. She pointed out that in the U.S. there are more than 70 different kinds of visas but there are only four routes to legal status: family ties, employee support for a

specific job, refugee status and success in the diversity lottery.

Two student interns who work for Legal Momentum (the new name for NOW's Legal Defense and Education Fund), Lindsey Kerr and Jamie Bagliebter, discussed their experience this summer working with migrants. They have been providing technical assistance with the problems, particularly domestic violence. For example, violence may be severe when the migrant woman cannot obtain legal immigration status; if the husband is a permanent resident, he must petition for his wife, and can withhold her passport. The problems are further exaggerated if neither partner is a citizen. There is some limited support for migrants in the Violence Against Women Act, which is up for renewal this year, as well as in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act,

passed in 2000. "Identifying victims of trafficking is very difficult," Sullivan said, "These people don't have status or passports, and they are afraid. This is especially true for women and children and they need to know there are avenues for help."

She added that the best hope for change will come from comprehensive immigration reform and she urged her listeners to support legislative initiatives, such as the McCain-Kennedy bill (The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act). Proposed in May, the bill contains an "essential worker visa program," which would offer certain visa status and opportunities for work in the U.S. These special visas expire after three years, and may be renewed once for three more years and some of these immigrants will be eligible to apply for permanent status.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As incoming president of the CWI, my first task - and it is a most pleasant one - is to give thanks to our outgoing board members: Mickey Klein, Elinor Waters, Gilda Morse, secretary, and to Roslyn Kaiser, our superb Newsletter editor.

I would like pay "joy-ous" tribute to Joy Simonson, our outgoing president. Joy has represented the Clearinghouse at numerous conferences and at steering committee of the National Council of Women's Organizations. She is also responsible for the research and publication of "Three Decades of the Clearinghouse on Women's Issues," which records the activities, issues, speakers and officers involved since our founding. Most recently, Joy has brought the organization into the 21st Century by arranging for a website and electronic mailings of our newsletter.

Joy has agreed to chair the September meeting, which I cannot attend due to a long- standing commitment abroad. I look forward to a great year working with our excellent and enthusiastic board.

VISIT OUR NEW WEB SITE
www.womensclearinghouse.org

TODAY'S IMMIGRANT WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

A recent report entitled "Today's Immigrant Woman Entrepreneur" provides a detailed look at this segment of U.S. population. Excerpts from the executive summary, written by Susan C. Pearce, Ph.D. as seen on the web site of The American Immigration Law Foundation (www.aifl.org) states: "Immigrant women entrepreneurs are rapidly making their mark in the U.S. business sector, in every region of the country and across a large range of industries. Today, immigrant women of the post-1960s wave of immigration comprise one of the fastest growing groups of business owners in the United States. This study examines the rise of immigrant women entrepreneurs and profiles them as a group using data from the 2000 Decennial Census and other sources. Among the findings in this report:

- In 2000, 8.3 percent of employed immigrant women were business owners, compared to 6.2 percent of employed native-born women.
- The number of immigrant women business owners has increased nearly 190 percent since 1990 and 468 percent since 1980.
- The largest group of immigrant women entrepreneurs in the United States – 234,454 or 41.6 percent of the total – comes from the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean. The second largest group – 165,483 or 29.4 percent of the total – comes from Asia and the Pacific Islands.
- Among the top ten countries from which immigrant women entrepreneurs in the United States originate, three are in Latin America (Mexico, El Salvador, and Cuba), five in Asia and the Pacific Islands (Korea, Vietnam, Philippines, China, and India), and the remaining two are Germany and Canada.
- The top industry for immigrant women business owners is work in private households, followed by child day care centers, and restaurants and other food services. Nineteen of the top twenty industries in which these entrepreneurs work are service industries.
- In addition to the 563,814 immigrant women business owners, 1,054 immigrant women across the United States are CEOs of not-for-profit organizations.

The top ten cities where immigrant women business owners work are distributed across the U.S. Northeast, Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest. The most popular destination is the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County metropolitan area, which hosts 74,134 immigrant women entrepreneurs, or 13 percent of all immigrant women entrepreneurs in the nation." The report is published by the Immigration Policy Center, A division of the American Immigration Law Foundation. The full report with graphics can be obtained on their web site: <http://www.aifl.org/ipc/ipf011705.pdf>

CWI NEWSLETTER NOW AVAILABLE VIA E-MAIL

Members wishing to receive the CWI Newsletter via email instead of by U.S. Mail can send their requests by email to **cwi_nwsltr@aol.com**. The newsletter will be sent in PDF format. The first issue after the request is received, the newsletter will be sent via e-mail and U.S. mail. The following month, the newsletter will be sent via email only. Requests to discontinue the email version and re establish the regular mail version can be sent to the same email address. If you have questions concerning these procedures, please call Sheila Willet, newsletter editor at 202 588-1734.

EVENT NOTICES/ARTICLES ACCEPTED FOR INCLUSION IN CWI NEWSLETTER

Notices of upcoming events as well as articles sent by members and member organizations can be sent via email to cwi_nwsltr@aol.com. Be sure to include your name and telephone number.

It's Time to Renew! September 2005

BEST BARGAIN IN TOWN.... *Individual dues \$25.00 or \$35.00 for organizations.* We have made joining easier by having one date for everyone. Dues are now due in September to start your membership for the upcoming year (September 2005 through August 2006.) Use the renewal coupon sent the first of September to all members or clip the coupon below and mail today.

RENEW NOW....WHY? Clearinghouse for Women's issues (CWI) presents educational, expert speakers nine times during the year on current topics, which impact the lives of women.

WHERE? We meet the fourth Tuesday of each month (except Dec. July, Aug.) from 12 noon to 1:30 P.M. at One Dupont Circle, NW, 8th floor conference room. Bring a brown bag lunch and enjoy speakers from government, academe, and advocacy organizations.

NEWSLETTER....With your membership you will receive nine issues of the newsletter. Each issue contains a preview of the upcoming program, a detailed summary of the previous month's presentation, and timely news items of special interest to women.

TAKE ACTION....Your dues will enable CWI to take action on important issues affecting women's lives. We do this by joining in coalitions with other organizations that work to improve the status of women.

NEW THIS YEAR....We have a website. Visit us at www.womensclearinghouse.org.

Sincerely,
Ellen Overton, President

Clip and mail with your check made payable to CWI to CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES c/o Linda Fihelly, Treasurer, 5618 N. Marwood Blvd., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____ EMAIL _____

Enclosed is my check made payable to CWI: ___ Individual-\$25 ___ Organization-\$35
Name of Organization: _____

I would like to help CWI with an additional contribution: \$10.00 ___ \$25.00 ___
\$50.00 ___ Other \$ _____

Donations and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

COMING EVENTS

- SEPTEMBER 27** CWI Meeting, 12 NOON – 1:30PM (See page 1.)
- OCTOBER 6-9** 25th Anniversary OWL Convention, Sacramento, CA
Reservation form and additional information available
at web site www.owl-national.org
- OCTOBER 25** CWI Meeting, 12 NOON – 1:30PM

<p>CWI Board of Directors, July 2005 – June 2006. OFFICERS: President, Ellen S. Overton; Vice President Program, Sue Klein; Vice President Membership, Jean Landweber; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly; Secretary, Harriett M. Stonehill. BOARD MEMBERS: Alvin Golub, Harriett Harper, Roslyn Kaiser, Karen S. Mayers, Ruth G. Nadel, Jacqueline Scherer, Clara G. Schiffer, Joy R. Simonson, ex officio. Sheila A. Willet, newsletter editor</p>

CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

P.O. Box 70603
Friendship Heights, MD 20813

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 338-4820

Website: womensclearinghouse.org

OCTOBER 2005

UNCLE SAM AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

We are all affected by and dependent on government policies, programs and agencies to protect our health. A key agency is the Food and Drug Administration, which has been much in the news lately. We are fortunate to have as a speaker Dr. Susan Wood who recently resigned from a top position at FDA because of policy differences, particularly emergency contraceptives and breast implants. How much should health policies be determined by scientific research and how much by political views?

Dr. Beth Jordan will bring us a report on controversial women's health issues she is battling for in two significant positions: Director of Health Policy at the Feminist Majority Foundation and Medical Director of the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals. She is a specialist in women's health, is involved with students groups and is an advisor to Ms. Magazine.

SPEAKERS: **Susan Wood, Ph.D.**, former Assistant Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration

Beth Jordan, MD, Medical Director, Feminist Majority Foundation and Association of Reproductive Health Professionals

TOPIC: **WOMEN'S HEALTH AND THE FDA**

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, October 25, 2005 / 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.**

PLACE: **American Council on Education**
One Dupont Circle, 8th Floor, Kellogg Room
Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle

Next Meeting: November 29, 2005

SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS -- POTENTIAL IMPACT ON WOMEN

As the U.S Senate debated President Bush's nomination of John G. Roberts Jr. to be Chief Justice of the United States, and awaited the administration's choice of a successor to Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Nan Aron, president of the Alliance for Justice, and Professor Laurence Nolan of Howard Law School discussed the impact of these nominations.

Both Nan Aron and Professor Nolan emphasized the broad spectrum of women's issues influenced by lower courts and the Supreme Court. Aron reported that the Alliance had 12 attorneys researching Roberts' record. What jumped out of the texts for the researchers, she said, was Roberts' record on women.

Aron stated that Roberts took positions against women's rights on issues such as sexual harassment and the gender gap. As an example, he had no objection to providing training to male prison guards while denying it to women guards. Aron emphasized that Roberts has declined to make revisions to his previous positions, and there is no evidence that any of his beliefs have changed. She also noted that Roberts' legal credentials probably could have guaranteed entry into one of the nation's best law firms, but he chose instead the more political atmosphere of the Reagan Department of Justice. Roberts' positions on the Voting Rights Act and the effects test were also addressed during the discussion. Roberts was in the Justice Department when the Voting Rights Act came up for renewal, and he wrote memoranda recommending that the Act be weakened by requiring an intent test. Under this recommendation, which was not adopted, a

prosecution under the Voting Rights Act would have to prove that a governmental unit intended to discriminate when it took action affecting citizens' voting rights. That is a very difficult burden of proof, Aron said. Under the Voting Rights Act as it exists, as well as in some other civil rights legislation, it is sufficient to demonstrate that actions have a discriminatory effect.

One member of the audience asked Aron why the right wing of the Republican Party has continuing objections to Attorney General Albert Gonzalez, who has sometimes been mentioned as a Supreme Court nominee. Aron replied it is primarily because when Gonzalez sat on the same court as Judge Priscilla Owen, and they both wrote opinions about requiring parental notification prior to abortion, he described her dissent as "an unconscionable act of judicial activism."

Aron expressed the hope that the Senate would be willing to set a higher standard for Justice O'Connor's replacement, since O'Connor had a more moderate record than the late Chief Justice. The Alliance staff is already researching a short list of potential administration nominees to replace O'Connor

Professor Laurence Nolan, who specializes in family law, presented an overview of the impact on women and families of lifetime appointments to the Federal judiciary at all levels. She explained that since some state judges are elected, the Federal judiciary is meant to be completely nonpolitical. President Bush has appointed 213 Federal judges in his five years in office, compared to 367 appointments by President Clinton during his eight-year tenure. So far, Bush has appointed a smaller

proportion of women and minorities than Clinton. Nolan noted that Circuit Court decisions could have significant impact if they are not appealed. Sometimes litigants do not appeal an issue until they find an ideal case that will maximize their chances of success. Meanwhile, the lower court decision is binding in its region. For example, Texas had to drop its affirmative action admissions policies after the Fifth Circuit ruled them unconstitutional, and no one appealed.

The concept of federalism and limited federal power continues to play a significant role in Federal court decisions, Nolan explained. She cited a 5-4 Supreme Court decision in 2000, written by Rehnquist, that overturned civil remedies provided to women in the Violence Against Women Act. Rehnquist wrote that Congress had gone beyond its power, because this new protection for women could not be justified as part of the regulation of interstate commerce. Since the mid-1990s, some federal courts have placed restrictions on the congressional use of the commerce

clause in the constitution for the first time since the 1930s.

During the discussion period, Nan Aron said that now the Alliance is more interested in nominees' records and positions than in their gender. The audience indicated it would recommend opposing any nominee who had a record of opposition to reproductive choice because such opinions exist in the context of many other attitudes about women's issues.

To have an effect on judicial nominations, Aron urged Clearinghouse members and their friends to send individual letters and emails to express the gratitude or disappointment with which they viewed their senators' vote on Supreme Court nominees. She suggested that those who live in the District of Columbia compensate for their lack of a senator by developing and alerting a list serve of friends who live in other areas. Aron noted that Democratic senators, in particular, consider a "no" vote to be politically risky, but that is not always the case.

N.O.W. REPORT SHATTERS MYTHS ABOUT U.S. WOMEN'S EQUALITY

The National Organization for Women recently published a report that says, "When it comes to narrowing the gender gap, the United States ... ranks a low 17 out of the 58 countries surveyed in measuring the global gender gap." NOW's report is based on a study conducted by the World Economic Forum, a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization based in Switzerland ([Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap](#)).

"Each country was judged on five criteria, which included measures of health and well-being, economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment and educational attainment." Sweden came in first and Egypt was last. "The U.S. was ranked 19th in economic participation for women and in political empowerment, but earned the low rank of 46th for economic opportunity and 42nd for health and well-being. Other countries that outrank the U.S. on the overall score include: Norway, Iceland, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Latvia, France, Netherlands and Ireland ... Both developed and developing countries were included in the survey, showing that the state of gender equity in the world is meager at best. " To read more about it, go to <http://www.now.org/issues/global/100105gendergap.html>

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH PRODUCES TWO FACT SHEETS ON THE GENDER WAGE GAP

The Gender Wage Ratio: Women's and Men's Earnings (IWPR #C362 August 2005) reports that women who worked full time earned 76.5 percent of men's earnings in 2004. It further states that in 2004, the median annual earnings for women working full-time year-round were \$31,223 while men with similar work earned \$40,798. The full report can be viewed on-line at <http://www.iwpr.org>.

Memo to John Roberts: The Gender Wage Gap is Real (IWPR #C350 September 2005) includes two graphs. The first graph depicts an estimate of the cumulative loss over time, due to the gender wage gap, for the average college-educated woman since Judge John Roberts dismissed the way gap in 1984. The second graph shows the average earnings for women and men at five time points. The report shows the sum total loss to women is a staggering \$1.7 trillion. The full report can be viewed on line at <http://www.iwpr.org>.

HELPING WOMEN GET TO THE TOP

The July 23, 2005 issue of *The Economist* writes on the subject of getting more females in senior corporate positions. It states that although women represent almost half of the workforce in western countries and can be found in the lower ranks of many of the big companies, the top of the ladder is quite different. "For every ten men in the executive suite there is one woman, a ratio that has changed little since the term 'the glass ceiling' was coined two decades ago...even though a growing number of companies have become convinced that it makes good business sense to have more women in their executive suite." The article continues by stating that "...many hard nose bastions such as ABB, BP, and General Electric have renewed their efforts to help women reach the higher levels, not out of a sense of corporate social responsibility but because they genuinely believe it will be good for their company profits." The article cites research about America, Britain and Scandinavian support this view due to a "strong correlation between shareholder returns and the number of women in the executive suite."

Barriers seen by some firms for promoting women to the top positions on the corporate ladder are seen as the belief that the move of many women to drop out for a time being to have children or provide caregiving for a family member is because they can live happily on one salary. However, it is seen that most career minded women would be just as ambitious to do a man's job if given the chance.

"...The first place that companies should look if they want to bring more women to the top is at the point of re-entry," states the writer who suggests that a number of things the company can do is to offer special allowances as flexible working time and work location to those who are also caregivers at home. Because of advances in electronic technology, this can be arranged for both men and women caregivers.

The writer concludes: "The men who currently occupy positions at the top have to learn that female executives are not just men in skirts and trouser suits. It is now clear that women will not rise to the top of the corporate ladder by a simple process of osmosis once there is enough of them at the bottom. They have different needs in the workplace. Only when men understand this will women join them at the top."

REDSKINS PLAN SHOOTING EVENT WITH NRA TO BENEFIT REDSKINS' CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Ladd Everitt, President, Million Mom March DC has sent out the following Action Alert. The Washington Redskins and their owner, Daniel M. Snyder, have announced a planned shooting event with the National Rifle Association (NRA) on October 25, 2005, to benefit the Redskins' Charitable Foundation.

The mission statement of the Redskins' Charitable Foundation "is to utilize the assets of the Washington Redskins and its corporate and community partners to make a positive and measurable impact on youth in the greater Washington, D.C. region in the areas of literacy, youth development, education, community service and health and wellness."

The NRA is currently lobbying Congress to overturn all of Washington, D.C.'s gun laws. The bills to repeal the District's gun laws promoted by the NRA would: legalize handguns, semiautomatic assault weapons (i.e., AK-47s, Uzis, Tec-9s, etc.) and 50 caliber sniper rifles; allow any person to carry, openly or concealed, loaded handguns and other concealable firearms in houses, places of business, or other land "possessed by that person"; and, severely weaken the District's ban on armor-piercing handgun ammunition.

Literally every elected official in our city, Democrat and Republican alike, vigorously opposes the NRA's legislation. Mayor Anthony Williams, Metropolitan Police Department Chief Charles Ramsey, and D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton have all spoken out repeatedly against repealing D.C.'s gun laws. Chief Ramsey has stated point blank it would make it harder for his officers to do their jobs, keep our neighborhoods safe, and get guns off the streets.

The Redskins' announcement comes the same month that the cover of the NRA's "America's 1st Freedom" magazine features "Washington's Newest Monument," an imagined "monument" consisting of a giant tombstone marked "Washington, D.C., America's Murder Capital." The tombstone is covered with skulls and faces of the dead. Inside, a two-page photograph of Mayor Anthony Williams holding up his hands while making a point has the headline and caption, "D.C. to Criminals: We Surrender! The mayor of Washington, D.C., the Murder Capital of the U.S. for 14 of the last 15 years, strikes a telling pose as he defends D.C.'s absurd gun laws." The article then goes on to attack Mayor Williams and Chief Ramsey (visit <http://www.vpc.org/nradcarticle.pdf> to read the full article).

Mr. Everitt suggests all concerned citizens call the Redskins front office immediately at (703) 726-7000 and tell them to cancel the October 25 event with the NRA IMMEDIATELY. The Redskins should be speaking out firmly against the NRA's reckless attempts to push more guns into our city, not hosting shooting events with the NRA and hypocritically speaking of the "health and wellness" of District children.

Also, contact your DC Council member immediately and ask them to pass the same message onto Mr. Snyder. A phone list for council members is available at <http://dccouncil.gov>

COMING EVENTS

- OCTOBER** **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**
- OCTOBER 17-21** **National Business Women's Week.** See the Business and Professional Women/USA calendar at <http://www.bpusa.org> for activities.
- OCTOBER 25** **CWI Meeting**, 12 NOON – 1:30PM. See page 1.
- NOVEMBER 1** **Deadline to submit articles or events for the November CWI Newsletter.** Email to CWIInsltr@aol.com
- NOVEMBER 19** **An Afternoon with Alice Neel and Friends.** Art historians will discuss the work of Alice Neel. One of the 20th century's great portrait painters, Neel often used women subjects, revealing their changing roles in different eras.
Location: National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC

CWI NEWSLETTER NOW AVAILABLE VIA E-MAIL

Members wishing to receive the CWI Newsletter via email instead of by U.S. mail can send their requests by e-mail to **CWIInsltr@aol.com**. The newsletter will be sent in PDF format. The first issue after the request is received, the newsletter will be sent via e-mail and U.S. mail. The following month, the newsletter will be sent via email only, unless cancelled. Requests to discontinue the email version and re- establish the regular mail version can be sent to the same email address. If you have questions concerning these procedures, please call Sheila Willet, newsletter editor at 202 588-1734.

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CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

P.O. Box 70603
Friendship Heights, MD 20813

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Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

P.O. Box 70603, Friendship Heights, MD 20813 Tel: 202 338-4820

Website: www.womensclearinghouse.org

NOVEMBER 2005

Student-to-Student Sexual Harassment: A New Critical Issue for our Schools

Schools, ever concerned about safety and violence, often overlook a common reason why many students feel unsafe in school - they are sexually harassed by other students. Studies show that 50-90 percent of girls and boys experience student-to-student sexual harassment. These behaviors make them feel unsafe, isolated, and anxious, lowering their self-esteem and inhibiting their ability to learn. Sexual harassment in K-12 has been increasing during the past few years, with incidents increasing at an even higher rate in the lower grades. Peer-to-peer sexual harassment in schools is a serious problem with serious emotional, educational, and developmental consequences.

CWI members Bernice (Bunny) R. Sandler and Harriett M. Stonehill have recently written a book on the subject: Student-to-Student Sexual Harassment K-12; Strategies and Solutions for Educators to Use in the Classroom, School, and Community. Sandler, nationally recognized expert on women's equity and harassment issues and Senior Scholar at the Women's Research and Education Institute (WREI), is a pioneer in developing strategies for educational equity for women and girls. Stonehill is an educator, administrator and speaker who is the Director of the MegaSkills Education Center and serves as adjunct faculty at UDC.

SPEAKERS: Bernice R. Sandler, Senior Scholar, WREI
Harriett M. Stonehill, Director of MegaSkills Education Center

TOPIC: Student-to-Student Sexual Harassment

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, November 29, 2005 / 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle, 8th Floor, Kellogg Room
Bring brown bag lunch; soft drinks available from a machine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle. Please come a little earlier than usual because there is a new, slightly more time consuming, sign-in system. In case of a snowstorm and/or closing of government offices, the meeting will be cancelled. Please listen to radio reports.

Next Meeting: January 24, 2006

Program Summary – October Meeting

WOMEN'S HEALTH and the FDA

The speakers at our October meeting were Susan Wood, Ph.D., former Food and Drug Administration (FDA) assistant commissioner for women's health, and Beth Jordan, MD, medical director of the Feminist Majority Foundation and the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals.

Recently, Susan Wood was featured prominently in the media when she resigned from the FDA to protest the organization's failure to approve emergency contraception (EC) - often referred to as the morning after pill or Plan B - for over-the-counter status. She began with an explanation for her resignation: "Science was ignored, the process was abused and women's health was harmed as the result."

Wood argues that most disagreements within the agency seem to revolve around women's reproductive health, and she believes that science has been overruled by politics in these instances. She emphasized that "public health cannot be protected if the scientific process is not respected."

Wood explained that despite the considerable misinformation that has been written about it, the morning after pill is not an abortion pill. It is a contraceptive that works more effectively and efficiently the earlier it is taken. EC works by suppression of ovulation, not disruption of an established pregnancy.

She offered her perspective on the impasse in the process of releasing the pill for over-the-counter use. The scientific review process within the FDA

began in 1999 when Plan B became obtainable, by prescription. In 2003 the pharmaceutical company that produces EC wanted it to become available over the counter. In December 2003, staff of the FDA made a presentation of their findings at a well attended joint advisory committee meeting, which voted 23 to 4 in favor of bringing it over the counter. Testimony was given from scientists both within and from outside the FDA as well as from women who had used the medicine. The vote was unanimous: the drug is safe. One of the major stated objections made by conservatives to release of the medication for over-the-counter use was the concern that it would increase pedophilia. There was no evidence given for this objection, which Wood said seemed to be a scare tactic and was offensive to men in general. Approval of the drug for over-the-counter use was expected approximately six months from the time of the vote.

Although scientific staff at all reviews had approved the release of Plan B for over-the-counter use, the center director failed to approve it, overturning professional staff recommendations. His major stated objection was that young teens would not understand how to use the pill correctly simply by reading the label. Wood noted that this has never been required of any other medication sold over-the-counter for young teens or any other sub-population of potential users. She said, "The data on general public understanding was available, but it was not enough to validate the understanding of the under-16-population. The director believed that there was a need for a young-teen label or a two-tiered medication in order to get to yes." (A "yes" decision would

have allowed it to be sold over-the-counter). Six months later the company came back with a plan to provide a prescription status for those 16 and younger and non-prescription for those over 16. Meanwhile, Wood was out of the country on a fellowship. When she returned late last summer, she found that although there was a September 1 deadline, none of the staff or scientific review levels were informed of the status of the decision. She found "no paper moving through the agency."

On August 26, it was unexpectedly announced that the FDA would proceed to rulemaking, usually a multi-year process in the government. Wood pointed out that this was most unusual, because "Rulemaking is usually done at the beginning of an approval process, not at the end." Wood saw this as an abuse of the system and an affront to the scientific process. She saw it as "an announcement of a 'no' without saying no." In the past, the FDA has conducted a two-tier system without the need of rulemaking (for example, nicotine patches). The EC decision denies all women access to the emergency contraception medicine. Woods explains that this ruling questions the entire science-based decision process and impacts upcoming decisions, such as the HIV vaccine and others. Finally, she added, "the FDA's credibility is at stake."

Beth Jordan provided the statistical basis of the need for women's access to emergency contraception. In the U.S. there are about 3 million unplanned pregnancies a year and approximately 1.6 million end in abortion. There are approximately 75 million vulnerable-to-pregnancy menstrual cycles per year and about 60 million of these occur

without contraception. In addition, there are about 14 million cycles occurring with contraceptive failure. There are about 890,000 reported rapes annually, with pregnancy resulting in 25,000 cases. Twenty-two thousand of these pregnancies could be prevented with timely access to EC contraception.

Although leading health authorities recognize that EC is a standard of rape treatment, in September 2004 the Justice Department came out with guidelines for criminal justice and health care practitioner communities to respond to immediate needs of sexual assault victims. "Curiously," Jordan said, "any mention of EC was omitted in the final draft (although it had been included in earlier drafts), because of political concerns." One national study shows that only about 20 percent of rape victims received EC in hospital emergency rooms.

A continuously growing number of hospitals are being purchased by religious organizations. There are 4,650 hospital emergency rooms and about 600 are Catholic owned; half of those will not dispense EC under any circumstances. Another issue plaguing EC access is "pharmacy conscience clause" laws (Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi and South Dakota) that allow pharmacists to refuse to supply the medicine. This is particularly burdensome to women in rural or other low resource areas. Twenty-eight states have introduced anti-refusal legislation, but Illinois is the only state that requires pharmacies to issue contraception medicine without exception.

More than 70 women's health organizations, the FDA scientists, and the Office of Public Health support

release for over-the-counter access to EC. While there is a delay in the federal process, advocates are working on state-by-state legislation. More information is available from www.ahrp.org, the website for the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals. The EC website, www.not-2-late.com, also contains pertinent information. Through the Feminist Majority Foundation's EC campaign, 373 college campuses are involved with EC promoting activities. In addition, the Feminist Majority is conducting an on-line petition to the FDA to release the medicine over the counter (<http://www.feminist.org/>). There also are some professional grass-

roots activities. For example in New York City a family practice organization hands out prescriptions at large events including professional conferences and academic meetings. On Capitol Hill, Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Patty Murray are demanding an up or down vote on legislation to approve the medicine.

Susan Wood emphasized that "Networks and advocacy groups have to reach out everywhere, particularly beyond the Beltway, beyond feminist issues. Everyone that cares about health, good governance and what they send their tax dollars for has to demand better." (FDA Office of Women's Health, www.fda.gov/womens/programs.html)

CHANGE YET TO COME: It's Still Cosmetology for Girls, Carpentry for Boys

Despite the 33-year old TitleIX prohibiting sex discrimination in education, a comprehensive 12-state report, *Tools of the Trade: Using the Law to Address Sex Segregation in High School Career and Technical Education*, released by the National Women's Law Center finds there has been little progress in technical fields: girls still represent the vast majority of students in traditionally female occupations and boys are nearly all enrolled in traditionally male occupations.

"*Tools of the Trade* " shows how girls' opportunities continue to be limited by barriers such as gender stereotyping and sexual harassment in nontraditional classes; this in turn also limits their earning capacity. The Report and accompanying state toolkits outline proactive steps that can help reverse the situation. For further information, contact the National Women's Law Center at Info@nwlc.org or visit the website at www.nwlc.org.

GETTING TO KNOW BOARD MEMBERS

RUTH NADEL: Ruth is a past president of the Clearinghouse, serving several terms in the 90's. In her 50s she began a 21-year career as a social science adviser in the Women's Bureau where she earned the Department of Labor's Distinguished Service Award for her work in employer-supported child care. Currently Ruth is on the Woman's National Democratic Club governing board, IONA's Citizen Advisory Council, and with her background in eldercare, is a DC Commissioner on Aging. In addition, she produces and is the voice of POWERLINE phone # 1-800-825-3695, the weekly legislative call-in message for OWL (Older Women's League). Despite Ruth's wide range of interests, she has always found time to participate in and offer strong support to CWI activities.

EDUCATION EQUITY WEEK IS NOVEMBER 13-19

Do you know how Title IX helps women and men? Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments prohibits discrimination in education on the basis of sex. Most people recognize the important role Title IX plays in athletics; what they don't know is that it applies to much more. Title IX prohibits sexual harassment and discrimination in higher education, career and technical education, employment, learning environments, math and science and standardized testing!

Because Title IX is so important to increasing gender equity in education for girls and women, the Feminist Majority Foundation wants to remind you to take action November 13-19 to educate other students, faculty and staff on your campus. This comes at a crucial time in our history with the impending Supreme Court confirmation hearings of Samuel Alito, who could become an important vote in many women's and civil rights issues including Title IX. More information about Title IX can be found at www.feminist.org/education/titleix.asp or www.feministcampus.org. (The Feminist Majority Foundation)

WOMEN'S eNEWS OFFERS TWO ARTICLES WORTH READING

O' Connor's Legacy:

Landmark Decisions on Rights for Women and Minorities
Women's eNews asked their top legal affairs reporter to select the most significant opinions for women and minorities written by Justice O'Connor. These selections compiled in a special PDF document filled with archival photos, entitled *O' Connor's Legacy: Landmark Decisions on Rights for Women and Minorities* is now available. For more information go to: <http://womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/2382>

Our Story: Phyllis Wheatley's Poetry Passes 'Inspection'

by Louise Bernikow

In October 1773, Phyllis Wheatley's poetry is examined at an inquisition in Boston by white male citizens who believe her to be an imposter. Most people, at this time, did not believe it possible that a 20-year-old slave girl could have actually produced literature by herself. The committee of 17 men found her to be true. But that conclusion carried little weight among potential subscribers and publishers; the poems would not be published until four years later and not in Boston, but London. The full article can be found at: <http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/2471>

(Women's eNews.org)

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Apologies are in order: A computer crash prevented the sending of the October newsletter via email and a delay in the mailing of the paper newsletter. Be assured the computer problems have been fixed. Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused. Sheila Willet, editor

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 13-19 Education Equity Week

NOVEMBER 17 Memorial celebration of the life of Molly Yard Garrett (1912 – 2005). You are invited to join family, friends, activists and Members of Congress. Gathering 12:30 PM, Program begins at 1PM. Reception to follow. Hart Senate Office Building, Room 902, Constitution Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets, NE, Washington, DC RSVP: Elisa Ortiz - 703.522.2214 or eortiz@feminist.org

DECEMBER 1 Gene Cohen, MD. PhD. Director of the Center on Aging, Health and Humanities at George Washington University will lead a discussion at IONA Senior Services on the problems and possibilities of aging from 1:00 – 2:30 P.M. Free, open to the public. Registration required. Call (202) 966-1055.

2006

JANUARY 2 Deadline to Submit articles and event announcements for January CWI Newsletter. Email your submissions or questions to cwinwsltr@aol.com.

JANUARY 24 CWI Meeting. Topic: Women and the Media

CWI Board of Directors, July 2005 – June 2006. OFFICERS: President, Ellen S. Overton; Vice President Program, Sue Klein; Vice President Membership, Jean Landweber; Treasurer, Linda Fihelly; Secretary, Harriett M. Stonehill. BOARD MEMBERS: Alvin Golub, Harriett Harper, Roslyn Kaiser, Ruth G. Nadel, Jacqueline Scherer, Clara G. Schiffer, Joy R. Simonson, ex officio.
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