

CWI

January 2008

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917, Rockville, MD 20852 301/493-0002

www.womensclearinghouse.org

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ISSUES OFFICES IN THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION

What has been accomplished by federal government women's programs? How can we influence the next administration to upgrade policy and programs that will move gender and women's issues forward?

The speakers at our January meeting will discuss these questions. **Dr. Wanda K. Jones**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health and Director of the Office on Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), will speak about the work of the HHS Women's Office, which also helps coordinate the work of women's offices throughout HHS (including those in the FDA, NIH and the Center for Disease Control).

Ruth Nadel, long-time feminist/activist and former CWI president, served as Social Science Advisor in the Department of Labor Women's Bureau, which was established in 1920 to aid war widows and women in the workforce. Nadel will talk about the Women's Bureau "then and now."

Additionally, we hope to hear from others who can share information on the status and need for many other offices on women's issues. Please contact Sue Klein, CWI vice president for programs at 703-522-2214 or sklein@feminist.org

SPEAKERS: **Dr. Wanda K. Jones**, Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Director, Office of Women's Health

Ruth Nadel, Social Science Advisor, Department of Labor's Women's Bureau (1968-1998)

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, January 22 / 12 noon – 1:30 pm
Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE: One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, 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 allow time to go through the sign-in system.

In case of bad weather and closing of government offices, the CWI meeting will be cancelled.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Program Summary—November 29 Meeting

HOW FEMINIST-CARING ECONOMICS CAN EMPOWER WOMEN

Author, lawyer, feminist and social activist **Riane Eisler** discussed her theory of economics and partnership model relations at CWI's November meeting.

Barbara Bergmann, professor emerita of economics, University of Maryland and American University served as discussant, addressing Eisler's perspective and highlighting controversial issues.



Riane Eisler

Eisler grew up in the slums of Havana, Cuba, after her family fled Austria and the Nazis. This escape from the Holocaust, in which she could have been killed as happened to 6 million other Jews, has always been a source of passion for her research, she said, to find out why it is that people do such horrible things to each other. Another source of her passion was the realization in the 1960's that the obstacles she faced as a woman were not unique to her; these were social problems. She began speaking with other women with feelings similar to hers, and took part in the consciousness-raising that became popular during that time. In 1969 Eisler wrote an *amicus curiae* brief to the Supreme Court for a case to recognize women as persons entitled to equal protection under the 14th Amendment Equal Protection Clause. She also taught some of the first courses on women and the law at UCLA.

Eisler explained that she looks for repeating patterns in her research, and over and over again the social configurations that she named the partnership system and the domination system came up, eventually becoming the central theme in her research and writing. The struggle for our future, she said, is between those trying to reinstate the system of domination and those working to move toward the partnership system. She emphasized that in the domination system men and anything stereotypically seen as "masculine," such as domination and violence, is given higher value than anything seen as "feminine," such as nonviolence and care giving – stressing that this is a

matter of stereotypes, not of anything inherent in women or men.

Eisler mentioned her best-selling book *The Chalice and the Blade*, explaining that the blade is the ultimate symbol of power in domination systems, in that it is a symbol of violence and strength, all considered masculine traits. The chalice is the symbol of power as empowering rather than disempowering, the power to give and nurture life, and repre-

sents power in partnership systems. To further expand this research, Eisler established the Center for Partnership Studies (CPS).

A study conducted by CPS found that the general quality of life in a country is most highly predicted by and correlated with the status of women than anything else, including even GDP (Gross Domestic Product). In particular, she added, higher quality of life is directly correlated with the availability of contraception.

In her new book, *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*, she argues that a society's economic system ultimately depends on where it falls on the partnership/domination continuum. While traditional economics ignores the economic contributions of women in their work of care giving in families, she proposes new indicators that include the values caring for people, beginning in childhood, and for the environment. She says that we need economic indicators for this because real wealth is not financial; it is based on the contributions of people and nature to society. "We need to give value to our most basic human work, caring, because without this there would be no one to produce what we traditionally consider measurable." Eisler said.

She then stated a shocking statistic: if we followed the lead of the Swiss and included the value of "female" work, we would see that it makes up about 70 percent of the GDP! She noted that 70 percent of the people in absolute poverty (not enough food/shelter to survive) in

Program Summary con't

the world are women, and this is largely because we devalue “women’s” work. Those who perform the work of caring traditionally, and in many places still largely, done by women are not paid for it, and therefore their contributions to society are discounted.

Eisler says we need to “bake a better pie instead of focusing on getting a piece of the existing pie.” That is, the work of caring needs to be valued in economics. She emphasized that it is not logical to pay so much more to those in the non-caring professions, because caring produces the high-quality human capital so desperately needed for a productive economy. Furthermore, she added, we need to redefine what is considered productive work and value it accordingly.

Eisler said that her empirical data shows that as the status of women rises, as we see in Nordic nations such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway, caring is more valued economically and policies such as universal healthcare and paid parental leave are enacted. One reason is that as the status and proportion of women in leadership position rises, men too are more likely to get behind these “soft policies.”

Barbara Bergmann said that she agrees with some of Eisler’s views but she has some major points of disagreement with Eisler’s theories. Her chief agreement is that we do need to look to the Nordic countries as an example of the social policies we ought to adopt, and that gender equity needs to be achieved.

Bergmann stated that there is a danger in emphasizing caring if gender equity is the ultimate goal. “Women have made nearly all of their gains by leaving the ‘housewife’ status behind, and we should avoid encouraging women to specialize in unpaid caring to a greater extent than men do.” She added that we should also avoid advocating long paid parental leaves (“which don’t help

women in the workplace”) and fight for larger appropriations and improved standards for paid childcare. “The best way to fight poverty among single moms,” she said, “is to make sure they don’t have to pay for child care.” As an economist, she believes that while it isn’t a bad idea to include caring in the GDP, one of Eisler’s few specific suggestions, it would not make a practical difference.

She said that we do need to increase the quantity of and pay for caring, but by offering universal healthcare and subsidized non-parent childcare, and added, “Let’s cut defense spending to pay for it.”

Bergmann faulted the women’s movement for putting almost exclusive emphasis on abortion, and not pushing presidential candidates to advocate for childcare and other issues important to women. Eisler said about the women’s movement that we are in a regression toward a domination system, adding: if caring was more highly valued then women would not be pushed back into the housewife role and they would have a greater sense of independence from being acknowledged for the work they are doing.

Eisler agreed that childcare is crucial, saying, “Early childhood is the most effective investment a nation can make. Money that could be spent on health and childcare, partnership/female issues, is indeed being spent on war, a masculine/dominance issue.” Eisler adds that women would never have created nuclear waste without somewhere to safely put it.

Eisler also clarified that she supports paid parental leave, and said that if parenting is given value men will want to do it too. She supports the partnership model, in which both men and women work, side by side, in the marketplace and in the home and she added, “We need to expand the economic map.”



Barbara Bergmann

IN MEMORIAM: SHEILA WILLET

With great sadness we report the untimely death of Sheila Willet from complications following recent surgery. More than a friend, she was an able and willing leader in the community. Among her many achievements, Sheila produced the CWI Newsletter for several years, was deeply involved in the Washington DC League of Women Voters, served on the national board of OWL (Older Women's League) as the mid-Atlantic regional representative, and as the current National Capitol Chapter chair. A memorial service will be held at the Woman's National Democratic Club at 11am on Saturday, January 19. Sheila will be sorely missed by co-workers, friends and colleagues. The family requests that in lieu of flowers donations be made to OWL, 3300 N. Fairfax Dr. Suite 218, Arlington, VA 22201 or The League of Women Voters, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036-4508.

by Ruth Nadel

IT TAKES A FAMILY

A recent op-ed article in the *New York Times* (*It Takes a Family to Break a Glass Ceiling*) quotes Jo Freeman,* the feminist political scientist, (who) has pointed out that six of the first 14 women elected to Congress were widows of incumbents. Three more were the daughters of politicians. The author, Kerry Howley, describes "the uncomfortable truth ...that political nepotism has often served feminism's cause well. ...Like it or not" she says, "the road to female advancement often begins at the altar. History books are thick with examples of women who broke political barriers because their family connections afforded them the opportunity... India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Philippines seem readier to elect women than does the U.S. (because they are)... societies that value a candidate's family affiliation and therefore have a history of nepotistic succession...s. The great feminist promise of a Hillary Clinton presidency amounts to this: If we elect a political wife now, perhaps we won't have to later."

* Freeman is scheduled to speak at the March CWI meeting.

WOMEN AND KNEES

Women may have poorer post-operative outcomes for osteoarthritis of the knee because they wait longer than men before considering knee-replacement surgery, according to the December newsletter of the Society for Women's Health Research. Roughly two-thirds of the 300,000 thousand knee replacements each year are performed on women. The study was funded by NIH (National Institutes of Health) and conducted by the University of Delaware.

(<http://www.biomech.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=204400502>)

Another article discusses why women develop osteoarthritis of the knee more than men and undergo significantly more joint replacements. "There is growing opinion that potential biomechanical factors might account for some of the gender differences. It is noteworthy that when women develop knee osteoarthritis, it tends to be bilateral, whereas men more often develop it unilaterally." The article mentions footwear (high heels), knee-bending and squatting (housework) as well as obesity as possible reasons for this, but emphasizes that further study is necessary.

(<http://www.biomech.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=204400502>)

LOOKING BACK AT HOUSTON '77

The *Freedom on Our Terms* conference, held in New York in November, was sponsored by more than 60 women's organizations and was "the first women's gathering to look back at Houston '77, the landmark National Women's Conference," according to *Women's eNews*.

"Held at a high point of the women's movement in the U.S., Houston '77 marked the only time the

federal government ever sponsored a gathering of women for equality. With \$5 million in funding from Congress, organizers drew more than 20,000 (people), including three first ladies – Rosalynn Carter, Betty Ford and Lady Bird Johnson...

“Houston ’77 served as a beacon that lit up the organized women’s movement of its time, and *Freedom on Our Terms* was designed to rekindle those sparks and galvanize activists across generations.” Bella Abzug (then Congresswoman) obtained the funding and presided over it.

Gloria Steinem told the group that they should “think of the 1977 conference as ‘simply one step’ forward” ...which transformed individual groups and activists into a “national Populist movement with an agenda.”

TITLE IX VICTORIES

A long running Title IX suit that “accused the University of Colorado of deliberate indifference to sexual harassment and assault by the football players and recruits resulted in victory when the university settled with the plaintiffs ...One woman received \$2.5 million, another received \$350,000. The University agreed “to hire a new counselor for the Office of Victim’s assistance and appoint an independent, outside Title IX advisor. (From *National Women’s Law Center Newsletter*).

Another big win was the award of \$19 million to the former Fresno State (CA) women’s basketball coach who said “she was fired (in 2005) because she is a woman and because she advocated for gender equality at the university ...she also argued that the school investigated her when she complained of gender discrimination, sexual harassment and Title IX violations at the school.” In another case at the same California school, the former women’s volleyball coach was awarded \$5.5 million (later reduced to \$4.52 million) “because of her advocacy for gender equality and perceived sexual orientation.” (*Feminist Daily News Wire*)

MARY GARDINER JONES PUBLISHES AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CWI member and prominent feminist Mary Gardiner Jones recently published her memoirs, *Tearing Down Walls: A Woman's Triumph*, describing her early life with a domineering mother and alcoholic father, the workplace gender barriers that she met in her legal and government career, how this affected her and the psychoanalysis that helped in the healing process. For those of you who may not know of Jones’ distinguished career, she is a graduate of Wellesley and Yale Law School, worked first in the Justice Department until President Johnson appointed her to the Federal Trade commission (1964-1973) and then served as vice president in charge of consumer affairs for Western Union. Available from Amazon.com and Hamilton Books.

MESSAGE FROM BARBARA J. RATNER, PRESIDENT

There are many behind the scenes persons who make our meetings successful. We would like to thank: Connie Banks from the Office of Women of the American Council on Education for all the room arrangements and particularly our microphone!; Amy Rothberg for maintaining our website, we are so pleased with what has been created thus far and look forward to adding more dimensions in the future; Jackie Scherer, Jessica Lazar, our members and Megan Schmitt and Felicia Thrower, interns at the Feminist Majority Foundation, for taking and transcribing the extensive speaker notes; D.Anne Martin for taking wonderful pictures; and all the Board Members who have baked the yummy cookies.

We would also like to thank John O’Connor for his generous contribution in memory of his wife, Mary O’Connor, a long-time active member of CWI. This contribution and those that have been donated in memory of Joy Simonson will be used to update and reprint *Women Networking: Three Decades of the Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues*.

COMING EVENTS

- Saturday, January 19 Memorial Service for Sheila Willet. 11:00am. Woman's National Democratic Club
1526 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington DC 20036
(Q Street North exit, Dupont Circle station, Metro Red Line)
- Monday, January 21 Martin Luther King Day
- Tuesday, January 22 CWI Meeting
- Sunday, January 27 28th Annual Women's Legislative Briefing
12:30 to 5pm / National 4-H Conference Center 7100 Connecticut Avenue Chevy Chase MD
Free, but registration is required. Pre-register call 240-777-8330 / Register on site 12:30 to 1pm
- March 10 & 11 Women's Equality Summit and Congressional Action Day. Two days of issue briefings,
training sessions, face-to-face meetings with members of Congress and national women leaders.

Photos by D. Anne Martin; November meeting summary draft by Felicia Thrower, intern, Feminist Majority Foundation

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 – June 2008

OFFICERS: President, Barbara J. Ratner; Vice President Program, Sue Klein; Membership Co-chairs,
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CWI

CLEARINGHOUSE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES
10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Join us on February 26, 2008

Title IX at 35: Triumphs, Challenges and Strategies to Increase Gender Equity in Education

Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance, was signed 35 years ago. We are celebrating its triumphs, fighting backlash, and strategizing on how it can be fully implemented. Building on recent publications such as the fall 35th anniversary issue of Ms. magazine and the January National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE) report "Title IX at 35: Beyond the Headlines" (www.ncwge.org), the featured speakers, Jocelyn Samuels and Kim Gandy, will highlight advances in gender equality associated with Title IX and discuss backlash on key issues such as sex segregation. They will recommend specific strategies for the next administration.

SPEAKERS: Jocelyn Samuels, Vice President for Education and Employment at the National Women's Law Center (NWLC) and Vice Chair of the NCWGE.

Kim Gandy, President of the National Organization for Women (NOW)

Additional NCWGE Authors will provide brief strategy recommendations on some of the less publicized Title IX challenges: Connie Cordovilla for education employees, Fatima Goss Graves for non-traditional careers, Sue Klein for Title IX infrastructure improvements, and Jan Erickson for ideas on new legislation.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 / 12 Noon sharp – 1:30 pm
Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

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

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Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 25, 2008

Women's History speakers Jo Freeman & Kristie Miller

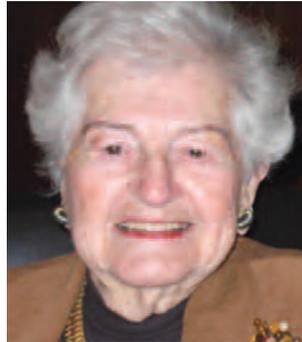
Strengthening Federal Women's Issues Offices

The Clearinghouse speakers at the January meeting were Ruth Nadel, former CWI president who worked many years in the first federal women's issues office, the Women's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and Dr. Wanda K. Jones, deputy assistant secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and director, Office on Women's Health.

Ruth Nadel, long-time feminist/activist, served as a social science advisor in the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau from 1968 to 1989. The Women's Bureau was established in 1920 to aid war widows and women in the workforce. She pointed out some Women's Bureau innovative contributions, including the way she (and others afterward) were hired at a fairly high salary level in the late 1960s based on "credit" for many years of "professional" volunteer work in California and Maryland. Mary Keyserling, a former CWI president and one of the founders of CWI, was the Women's Bureau director and started this work credit for volunteer experience.

In addition, Nadel noted contributions of some of the Women's Bureau directors such as Elizabeth Duncan Koontz, the first African-American director, who had been president of the National Education Association, and Alexis Herman, who later became secretary of labor under President Clinton.

Achievements of the Women's Bureau include many programs to train and encourage women to go into higher paying, high-skilled non-traditional careers for women, outreach and influence on helping women in DOL employment and training programs, working with labor



Ruth Nadel



Dr. Wanda Jones



Margot Dorfman

unions and other federal agencies to support women, work and family policies; was instrumental in the passage of the 1963 Equal Pay Act; recommending sick leave laws, and active collaboration with women's advocacy groups. Nadel showed some of the classic, hard copy Women's Bureau publications on topics such as community solutions for childcare, and job conferences for women and girls. Women's Bureau publications now are available only on the Web.

In 1972 Nadel, the mother of four sons, was assigned to the design and development of the first federal employee daycare center in the then new DOL building on Constitution Ave. She worked on this project with volunteers, including an architect and DOL parents. The Women's Bureau helped many other agencies establish similar day care centers, "Work and family issues, including eldercare, were at the heart of the Women's Bureau," Nadel said.

Speaking about the Women's Bureau today, Nadel pointed out that it needs a larger budget. Under the current administration, it has been reduced from \$10.1 million to \$9.5 million, with only 23 career employees in its national office and

30 positions in its regional offices. She noted that the damaging attempts by government to outsource Department of Labor civil service professional (including Women's Bureau) jobs to contractors have recently been curbed by congressional action, and that women's groups helped convince Congress that the Women's Bureau regional offices should be maintained. For more information about the Women's Bureau see www.dol.gov/wb.

Program Summary, continued

Dr. Wanda K. Jones has been deputy assistant secretary for health and director of the Office on Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) since 1998. The office was established in 1991. Dr. Jones is a long-time civil service employee who joined the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta in 1987, working on women's health and HIV/AIDS issues before coming to HHS headquarters in Washington in 1998.

Jones discussed the role of the Office on Women's Health, as well as many of the other HHS offices focusing on women's issues. She explained that the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health is actually the oldest office in HHS focusing on women's and minorities health research, adding that the NIH Reauthorization Act of 1993 is one of only two containing statutory language assigning an authority on women's health. The other is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), but noted that the legislatively mandated position of associate administrator for women's services is currently vacant. Other HHS agencies with offices on women's health are the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and the Indian Health Service.

Although most people assume that by now all medical research must include women and minorities and report on the disaggregated results, Dr. Jones pointed out an interesting loophole. If the federal government funds research, it must include women and minorities; but privately funded research is exempt from this requirement. The FDA Office on Women's Health fosters analysis by gender and ethnicity as part of the review criteria for drug trials. AHRQ women's health responsibilities are now positioned in the Office of Priority Populations where it works across the entire agency's research portfolio. The newly-established Women's Health Nurse program in the Indian Health Service focuses on issues of violence in Indian country where domestic violence

is especially rampant. Over their lifetime 40 percent of women in the general U.S. population will experience abuse or assault; in Indian country reported rates are 60 to 80 percent.

The efforts of various offices on women's health in and outside of HHS are led by a coordinating committee on women's health in HHS established in 1983. It is chaired by Dr. Jones and managed by her office. All have a designated senior liaison whether they have an office or not. They meet monthly, sharing information and resources.

The Office on Women's Health has a \$31 million budget (FY 2008). They are succeeding in educating health professionals and consumers, disseminating information on women's and girl's health, and establishing programs to help women and girls. In addition to www.4woman.gov/owh/about (for information on the Office on Women's Health), see www.womenshealth.gov and www.girlshealth.gov for details of OWH programs. Additional information about the other women's health offices in HHS is in the "working groups and committees" section of www.womenshealth.gov.

In the Q&As, when asked about the most important recommendations for women's issues offices, Dr. Jones hoped for more attention to gender issues throughout HHS, including increased interaction with administration leadership to influence policy. She said, "Women must be at the table deciding on how to address gender equity issues in all areas. Separate but equal does not work. It is important to hold the whole system accountable for women's and men's health outcomes."

Margot Dorfman, CEO of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, representing 500 million women nationwide and around the globe on economic-based issues affecting them, briefed the attendees on current problems with lack of implementation of legislatively mandated programs to help women's businesses. Dorfman agreed that there is a definite need for federal women's offices but they must have enough independence to fully implement their legislative mandates. She described her congressional testimony and a current lawsuit against the Small Business

Program Summary, continued

Administration and its women's procurement program which issued a regulation that does not adequately implement the 1994 or 2000 legislative mandates to provide a five percent goal for federal contracts with women-owned small businesses. In fact, the highest use of women-owned businesses was in 2003 with less than three percent. She urged all to write Congress, urging repeal of this inappropriate regulation. (Dorfman spoke to the Clearinghouse in 2006).

Former Clearinghouse president Ellen Overton, who served as the first women's program manager at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the Department of Commerce, joined others in lamenting that we had trouble finding any federal women's program offices that had previously been coordinated by a women's office in the Office of Personnel Management. It also was noted that nothing had replaced the coordinating

and public liaison function of the President's Interagency Council on Women which was discontinued when Clinton left office. Information on this council is at www.state.gov/www/global/women/index.html#picw

Dr. Sue Klein, Clearinghouse vice president, pointed out that the job position, special assistant for gender equity, was still a required part of the Department of Education legislation, but the position and coordinating functions on gender equity ended after the Clinton administration.

The issues and insights from this meeting show that it is important to commission a current Government Accountability Office (GAO) study on women's issues offices in federal agencies. It was suggested that the recommendations in this report should include substantial input from women's/gender equity advocacy groups and be used to guide transition decisions and new legislation in the next administration.

Message from Barbara J. Ratner, President

We have all been bombarded with political emails, and many of them untrue accusations. Please don't forward these unless you know for a fact they are true. Election times tell us how much hate and distrust there is in this country! Despite all this, isn't it exciting that a woman finally has a chance at the White House!

Our monthly meetings have been well attended. We would love to have more of you able to join us. If there are any topics of interest that you would like featured, please let us know. We are always looking for speakers, so let us know if you would like to present a program.

How the President's Budget Proposals Would Hurt Women and Children

From Helen Blank, director of leadership and public policy at National Women's Law Center

- 200,000 low-income children and their families would lose childcare assistance and 13,000 children would lose Head Start.
- Decreased funding for Medicare and Medicaid would further reduce critical health care for nearly 50 million elderly and low-income women.
- Reduced funding for employment and training programs, at a time of rising unemployment for women and men.
- Budget cuts supports for vulnerable and low-income people, including victims of domestic violence; energy, housing and nutrition assistance, child support enforcement; and other vital social services.

Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform First Annual Leadership Forum

Sunday, February 24. 11 am – 1 pm.

Dr Susan F. Wood, former assistant commissioner for women's health in the FDA's Office on Women's Health will be the guest speaker. "The Coalition is a state-wide movement working to bring access to quality, affordable health care to every resident in Maryland."

The meeting will take place in the Somerset Town Hall, 4510 Cumberland Ave., Chevy Chase; for more information, or to register, contact womenscoalition@mdhealthcarereform.org or visit www.mdhealthcarereform.org or www.mdhealthcarereform.org.

Women's eNews "Cheers"

(a compilation of good news around the world.)

Denver has the highest teen pregnancy rates in Colorado. "Pregnant teens and counselors are calling for maternity leaves in the public school system ... to give new mothers one month off from school ... and prevent penalties for excessive absences caused by giving birth." The article quotes the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned pregnancies, which says, "nation-wide, only 40 percent of women who give birth before they turn 18 graduate from high school."

"The United Arab Emirates will amend its laws and open courtroom doors to female judges," the justice minister announced. The proposed law would make that country the second Gulf country after Bahrain to allow women on the bench. In neighboring Qatar this led to a media debate "as to whether women are fit to hold the gavel ... Qatari male lawyers either oppose the appointment of women as judges or prefer that they be restricted to family courts."

"Girls Gotta Run" Art Exhibit To Help Ethiopian Girls, Feb. 26-April 6

This exhibit will be at the Invitational Gallery in the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, N. Bethesda, MD. The reception will be held Feb. 28, 7-9pm; sales of the art work will benefit rural Ethiopian girls who, but for the lack of a pair of shoes, could finish high school and perhaps go on to college or a technical school. The girls are migrating to Addis Ababa in hopes of being trained as runners. Running is a popular and lucrative sport in Ethiopia and elsewhere, where races are numerous and girls are a large percentage of the participants. The artists will buy athletic shoes for these young females who are striving to escape poverty, early marriage, and a high likelihood of childbirth-related death. To find out more, visit www.girlsgottarun.org.

UAW Appoints Hallman

Linda D. Hallman has been appointed executive director of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). Hallman has a long history of executive-level association and foundation experience in our area. She served most recently as vice president of policy and government strategy, external and member relations, with the National Alliance for Health Information Technology in Washington.



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

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|------------------------------|--|
| February | Black History Month |
| March | Women's History Month |
| Sunday, February 24 | Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reforms
See page 5. |
| Tuesday, February 26 | CWI Meeting |
| February 26 - April 6 | "Girls Gotta Run" Art Exhibit
Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda, MD.
For more information, www.girlsgottarun.org . See page 5. |

Photos by D. Anne Martin; January meeting summary draft by members, Jean Landweber and Jennifer Lee. Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 - June 2008

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *Vice President Program*, Sue Klein; *Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*; Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Join us on March 25, 2008

Celebrating Women's History Month

Women and Politics / Equality vs. Protectionism in the Law

Celebrating Women's History Month, CWI will present two distinguished authors of books on women and politics, Jo Freeman and Kristie Miller.

Jo Freeman, feminist activist, political scientist, writer and lawyer, chronicles the struggles of women in the United States for political power. She will speak on "Equality vs. Protectionism: Setting the Agenda After Suffrage," the title of one of the chapters from her recently-published book, *We Will Be Heard: Women's Struggle for Political Power in the United States*. (www.jofreeman.com/books/heard.htm). Among her many publications she authored prize-winning books, *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics* and *The Politics of Women's Liberation*.

Kristie Miller, who says that women's participation in party politics in the early part of the 20th century has largely been forgotten, has for the last two decades been writing women back into history. In 2004 she published a biography, *Isabella Greenway: An Enterprising Woman* (www.kristiemiller.com/index.html). Greenway, a New Deal politician and lifelong friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, blazed a trail for remarkable women in Arizona politics (Sandra Day O'Connor, Governor Janet Napolitano). Miller is now writing a dual biography of the two wives of US President Woodrow Wilson.

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Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE: One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, 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 allow time to go through the sign-in system.

In case of bad weather and closing of government offices, the CWI meeting will be cancelled.

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 22, 2008
Women's Role in National Security*

Title IX at 35

Title IX at 35: *Beyond the Headlines*, recently released by the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE), was the focus of CWT's February meeting. The speakers were Jocelyn Samuels, vice president for education and employment at National Women's Law Center (NWLC), who presented an overview of the report and Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), who discussed the disadvantages of single-sex education, one of the major areas covered in the report. The report addresses progress and continued challenges around six major Title IX issues: athletics, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), sexual harassment, career and technical education, employment, and sex-segregated education.

Jocelyn Samuels noted that many statistics in the report were red flags of potential lack of compliance with Title IX policies. For example, female students comprise 57 percent of the student body in some colleges, however, only 43 percent of college athletes are female, but these female athletes receive only 37 percent of operating budgets for sports. Women comprise only four percent of heating, A/C and refrigeration students, six percent of electrician and plumbing students, and nine percent of automotive students. Women make up 79 percent of United States public school teachers, but only 44 percent are school principals. Women represent less than one in five faculty members in STEM disciplines.

Samuels said that over-representation of women in stereotypical female subjects is prevalent, but they continue to be drastically



Jocelyn Samuels



Kim Gandy



Bernice Sanders

under-represented in the higher paying male dominated fields.

A specific example of gender inequity, she said, is seen in the court case *Communities for Equity v. Michigan High School Athletic Association*. In this case, objections were made to the association's decision to schedule six girls' sports, but no boys' sports, during the off season. This scheduling had a negative impact on young women athletes because among other things it gave them fewer chances to meet college recruiters, unlike their male counterparts who met recruiters during the regular season. Thus, young women athletes in the high school had fewer opportunities for scholarships and recruitment.

Lastly, Samuels presented *Title IX at 35* recommendations for all participants on gender equity issues. The report advocates that Congress conduct oversight hearings, strengthen anti-discrimination laws, and enact new laws to close the wage gap that persists between women and men and increase gender equity research, development, and data collection. For administrative agencies, the report recommends enhanced technical assistance, analysis of data, and greater exercise of their enforcement respon-

sibilities. Schools are advised to appoint Title IX coordinators to ensure that they are meeting their responsibilities to be in compliance with the law, such as the adoption and implementation of effective anti-harassment and anti-discrimination procedures. Schools should also take pro-active steps to ensure that girls are being encouraged to take courses that are atypical for their gender.

Kim Gandy discussed the ways single-sex education discriminates against young women.

Program Summary, continued

She stated that the new 2006 Department of Education changes in the Title IX regulations throw out the most basic safeguards of the Title IX legislation. Single-sex programs can now be based on “the vague idea” that they might improve education for girls (or boys). The Department of Education’s new regulations do not mandate equal treatment for those students who are excluded from a single-sex program. She said, the regulations rely on faulty and unproven assumptions about the benefits of single-sex programs.

Gandy explained that one of the problems with gender segregated education is that there is no demonstrative effectiveness compared to similar quality coeducation. She emphasized that virtually without exception, gender segregated programs that “work” invariably have greater resources than other schools, adding, “Take any school and add teachers that are motivated by doing something different, especially carefully selected teachers and smaller classes, then of course, the students will do better.” She added, schools that are single-sex reinforce sex stereotypes and increase sexist attitudes, especially of boys.

Gandy described schools as the workplace of childhood, where girls and boys learn how to get along and work together. She pointed out that the belief that single-sex schools are better is based on the unfounded assumptions that boys and girls learn differently and thus should be taught differently and separately. For instance, the Livingston Parish, Louisiana, school district planned to have single sex classes in a formerly coeducational school based on “expert” advice that separating students by gender would be beneficial. One of their experts suggested that boys should learn heroic behavior; he also said “boys need to practice pursuing prey and girls need to practice taking care of babies.” (The NCWGE report describes how the ACLU stopped this planned sex segregation.)

She also discussed the claims of intrinsic sex differences by Leonard Sax and the National Association for Single Sex Public Education which argued that boys need loud and moving classrooms and girls need role playing exercises. In particular, NASSPE said that the teachers should be moving at all times, “the boy should

never know where the teacher will be 20 seconds from now and that girls need role playing exercises.” Gandy said that these types of recommendations make no sense based on gender or other knowledge about effective teaching and learning — that there are many learning styles and the best teachers teach to all of them.

There were additional comments from some of the authors of the National Coalition report.

Connie Cordovilla, American Federation of Teachers, reminded everyone that Title IX also protects education employees from sex discrimination. Her chapter in the Title IX report recommended continued attention to the gender wage gap and that the Department of Education should collect data to assess pay equity and require compliance with Title IX and other equal employment laws.

Fatima Goss Graves, National Women’s Law Center, pointed out that despite lack of progress in increasing women in the higher paying male-dominated technical careers, some localities have done better than others by using strategies such as mentors and role models. At the federal agency level, despite requests by the NWLC over the past 5 years, there have been no Title IX compliance reviews for career and technical education. She said it is also important to restore funding of programs to help women succeed in the fields where they are still under-represented.

Sue Klein, Feminist Majority Foundation, recommended that we capitalize on the requirement for Title IX coordinators, estimating if there was full compliance there would be over 100,000 Title IX gender equity coordinators working to advance gender equality in institutions at all educational levels

Jan Erickson, NOW Foundation, noted that one key recommendation from the NCWGE says the Department of Education should withdraw the changes that have been made to the Title IX regulation and only allow single sex education if it is well justified because it decreases sex discrimination. If this isn’t feasible, she said, we will be insisting that there be parameters and demand accountability on single sex programs. A recent evaluation indicated that the girls scored much lower than boys in single sex algebra classes.

Program Summary, continued

In the Q&A discussions, Bernice Sandler, also known as “godmother of Title IX,” added to Gandy’s concerns about the extreme difficulty of establishing gender equitable single sex education in public schools by pointing out that “Different is never equal, it is lesser, and Title IX was set up initially so that with very few exceptions — we would not use sex or gender as a way to categorize people.” She also said that the 2006 changes in the regulations allowing single sex schools, classes, and programs without the previous safeguards against sex discrimination “is indeed the most dangerous attack on Title IX since it began.”

In reply to a question about where the single-sex movement is coming from, Samuels said it might in part be born from desperation about many children failing and from those who want to enhance school choice. She added that as research says, we should be devoting our attention to smaller classes, better trained teachers, and more attention to curriculum. Gandy added that this focus may be a sleight of hand way to divert attention from real problems and that some of the single sex education advocates really want to reinforce traditional sex stereotypes and feel that it is easiest to do this in sex segregated schools and classes.

Gandy, responding to a participant who said “I have heard that women’s colleges help women succeed and that single sex education has been a breeding ground for feminist women,” said single-sex colleges were formed because women were not allowed into Harvard or other elite private institutions, and the schools were not coed, not because women wanted to be segregated, but because it was the only way to get a high quality education. While they are good schools they continue to be single sex because their alumni who help fund them want to keep them that way. The reality is that a Harvard degree was more valued than a Radcliffe degree.

Samuels explained that the Title IX regulations prior to the 2006 changes said that some single sex education was legal if it was for remedial or compensatory purposes. Thus, there must be a very good reason for single sex education. What Title IX and the Constitution say about

public education is “you have to have (and she paraphrased the Supreme Court ruling here) a damn good reason for doing it and you have to think very carefully about how you structure it to make sure that the programs don’t end up reinforcing stereotypes, creating new discrimination against either gender, or undermining the basic purposes of promotion of equal opportunity, the purpose for which these kinds of programs are still permissible.

Key Resources on Title IX at 35:

Title IX at 35: Beyond the Headlines is the third five-year report by the 50 organizational members of the NCWGE. www.ncwge.org

Ms. Magazine articles on Triumphs of Title IX, Fall 2007.

www.feminist.org/education/TriumphsofTitleIX.pdf

Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity through Education, 2nd Edition, 2007, www.feminist.org/education/handbook.asp

Kellye McIntosh Joins CWI Board

Kellye McIntosh has joined the CWI board of directors. She is presently the associate outreach director at the Alliance for Justice where she works on “fair and independent judiciary” issues. Her impressive former work experience includes jobs as national field director for OWL and for the United States Student Association; as program manager for the Children’s Defense Fund; as coordinator for the Feminist Majority Foundation and as deputy field director for Sen. Carl Levin’s (D-MI) successful re-election campaign in ‘96. She has a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University and a master’s degree from Johns Hopkins University. Kellye began her career as president of the Michigan Collegiate Coalition where she advocated around statewide higher education issues; she has trained hundreds of grassroots advocates in direct action organizing techniques.

Ashley B. Carson/OWL

OWL - The Voice of Midlife and Older Women, has named Ashley B. Carson, J.D. as its new executive director. Carson has significant experience in advocacy work for women, children and seniors. She can be reached at acarson@owl-national.org

CWT's nominating committee — Chair Al Golub, Roslyn Kaiser and Jane Walstedt — is looking for you! If you are interested in joining our board to have an input and participation in our program choices and to better acquaint yourself with active, vital, and interesting women, please call Al Golub at 301-565-3125 and leave a message. Or tell Ros or Jane you are interested.

Economic Justice Summit

NOW, The National Council of Negro Women and the Institute for Women's Policy Research are convening the Economic Justice Summit, to bring together "scholars, activist and others interested in... women's economic empowerment, security and equality." The conference will be held April 10-12 in Atlanta, GA. For more information, to submit a workshop proposal, or research paper, go to www.nowfoundation.org/ejsummit

From Barbara J Ratner, President

I spent the day March 10th at the National Council of Women's Organization's annual Women's Equality Summit Conference. I hope more of you will attend next year. There were inspiring speakers who covered most issues important to women. President Susan Scanlan stated, "We are either at the table, or on the menu." CWT's programs keep us well-informed on the issues so we can lobby and advocate effectively. We must stay at the table. It was also stressed that we should hold our candidates accountable on the issues before casting a vote. Ask what they have done or are planning to do on the important issues. Make sure you're an informed voter.

From Women's eNews

"Have a probing, burning question for Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton about their stance on women's issues? Send your question to us at editor@womenwork.org with the subject line "Campaign Question" and we'll pick out the best and publish them before the next major primary election in Pennsylvania. Our list will comprise the questions we'd ask the candidates if we were hosting a women's policy debate and could hold their feet to the fire. Here's your chance to throw out a question that hasn't been asked anywhere else. Deadline: March 21." (*Editor's Note: We presume they'll do the same for Sen. John McCain at some point.*)

Women's History Walking Tour

Sewall-Belmont House & Museum tells us: "On March 3, 1913, Inez Mulholland led the Great Suffrage Parade. Organized by Alice Paul, founder of the National Women's Party, thousands of women marched while 100,000 spectators watched." To mark the anniversary of this historic event, Sewall-Belmont House launched a free, self-guided history walking tour. If you missed it, you can see the map, which is followed by brief descriptions of the itinerary at www.tailoredtours.com. Go to the bottom of the page and click on Women's History Month.

Women Work! and the National Partnership for Equity

National Conference, April 7-9, in Crystal City

Keynote speakers will be Joan Blades, co-founder of Moveon.org and Momsrising.org, and Cathy Lanier, DC Chief of Police. There's an Advocacy Day for lobbying Congress, and more than 20 workshops, including Getting Women into Nanoscience and other STEM-Related Fields; It's Not Your Mother's Retirement: Strategies for the Next Generation of Retirees; Single Sex Schools; Issues of Postsecondary Access for Underrepresented Populations. For further information, www.womenwork.org/network/conferences/advocacy.htm



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

Monday, April 7

World Health Day

April 7-9

**National Partnership for Equity and Women Work!
National Conference.**

Contact: Sarah Heynen (202) 986-2600 / info@nationalpartnership.org
See page 5.

Tuesday, April 22

Earth Day

Tuesday, April 22

Next CWI Meeting: Women's Role in National Security

Speakers: Johanna Mendelson-Forman, PhD, JD, Senior Associate of the Center For Strategic and International Studies and Executive Director of the Jatropha Foundation, and Lorelei Kelly, Policy Director of the Real Security Initiative of the White House Project.

Photos by D. Anne Martin; February meeting summary draft by Glenda Garcia, Feminist Majority Foundation intern. Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 - June 2008

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *Vice President Program*, Sue Klein; *Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*; Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Join us on April 22, 2008

Women's Role in National Security

Johanna Mendelson-Forman, PhD, JD, senior associate of the Center For Strategic and International Studies and executive director of the Jatropa Foundation, is dedicated to the development of sustainable renewable biofuel in Haiti and the Caribbean. Her work focuses on energy security and post-conflict development issues, with a special emphasis on Latin America. She has written extensively about civil-military and security sector issues, arms proliferation, internal security and peacekeeping.

Lorelei Kelly, policy director of the Real Security Initiative of the White House Project, is a national security specialist working to educate elected leaders and the public about the national security challenges revealed by 9/11. Her work focuses specifically on bringing more women into national security decision making. She advises the Progressive Caucus in Congress on bipartisan national security education. Her latest publication is a guidebook for citizens entitled *Policy Matters: Educating Congress on Peace and Security*. She is currently writing a citizen's handbook on civil-military dialogue.

The speaker presentations are followed by discussion.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, April 22, 2008 / 12 Noon sharp - 1:30 pm
Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE: One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, 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 allow time to go through the sign-in system.*

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 27, 2008
Women and Immigration*

Equality vs. Protectionism in the Law / Women and Politics

The speakers at the Clearinghouse March meeting were Jo Freeman, author, activist, and political scientist, and Kristie Miller, biographer of women in politics in the early part of the 20th century.

Jo Freeman spoke on equality vs. protection of women, based on a chapter from her new book *We Will Be Heard: Women's Struggles for Political Power in the United States* (Rowman and Littlefield). Freeman talked about the suffrage movement and the conflict and lack of consensus between two branches of the women's movement on what was the best route for women after suffrage, a disagreement that continued long after the 19th amendment was ratified. The larger and more moderate National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) disbanded and reformed as the National League of Women Voters (LWV). The smaller and more militant National Woman's Party (NWP) continued under the leadership of Alice Paul.

Freeman noted that their different views of what policies were best for women reflected very different world views. NAWSA had been part of the progressive movement and agreed with other progressive organizations that working women had to be protected from exploitation by industrial capitalism. The concept that the state should protect the weak probably originated with the 19th century debate over whether there should be a protective tariff to insulate emerging American industries from overseas competition. Equality is an even older concept, dating at least from our revolution. However, it had been submerged in the 19th century as this country confronted many inequalities.



Jo Freeman



Kristie Miller

On a national level the LWV joined with other progressive women's organizations to form the Women's Joint Congressional Committee (WJCC). It claimed three major legislative achievements: the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act (1921), equal nationality rights for married women (Cable Act - 1922), and the Child Labor Amendment (1924). The WJCC also lobbied for appropriations for the Children's Bureau and the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor. On the state level, the LWV was often the nucleus for women's legislative councils. The LWV regularly published reports on their successes in passing state laws to protect working women, mothers, and children.

The NWP fought against some of these state laws, especially in New York, where many members lived. Believing in absolute legal equality, it wanted to remove all sex-based discriminatory laws. Many of these excluded women from juries or gave married women lesser rights to the family property and to custody of children. Some were state protective labor laws.

NWP attorneys analyzed each state's discriminatory laws and drew up bills to eliminate them. "Blanket" equal rights bills aimed at removing all legal disabilities and discriminations with broad sweeping language were also prepared. Wisconsin was the only state to pass one, in 1921, and it contained an exemption for "the special protection and privileges which [women] now enjoy for the general welfare." This provision was interpreted to keep many of the discriminatory practices that the NWP wanted to eliminate.

Program Summary, continued

When the NWP decided that another constitutional amendment was necessary, it discarded its attempts to exempt protective labor laws.

Everyone agreed that the Equal Rights Amendment, which was introduced into Congress in 1923, would eliminate these laws. This made any agreement between the two branches of women activists impossible. By the end of the 1920s, each side had fought the other to a stalemate. While some progress had been made, the progressive movement had pretty much died.

The LWV, much battered by the political wars, shifted focus. The coalition of women's organizations it led had disintegrated, to be replaced by a different coalition led by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor. Older women's organizations opposed to the ERA were replaced by labor unions and liberal organizations. The NWP shrunk and became even more insular but continued its single minded dedication to the ERA. Decades later, its persistence would be rewarded, but not until a new wave of the woman's movement emerged in the 60s.

Kristie Miller became involved with women's history because her mother "blackmailed" her into writing a biography of her grandmother, Ruth Hanna McCormick. Miller discovered that her grandmother had been a politically active woman, who was elected to Congress in 1928, learning politics from her father, Mark Hanna, an Ohio Republican businessman who managed President McKinley's campaign.

Miller emphasized that after suffrage was granted women didn't vote as a block any more than men did. Many women learned about politics from their husbands or fathers. Women also used their husband's name recognition to launch their careers; the first women to enter Congress were often widows. She quoted Alice Roosevelt Longworth who said, "Women in Congress used their husband's coffins as springboards."

Miller talked of her reaction to one of her male professors at American University who told her, "Women won the vote, and didn't do anything with it."

At this point, she had done research on her grandmother and disagreed with her professor.

Miller searched for a book to prove him wrong, but didn't find such a book. Her publisher encouraged a call for papers on this topic and received 17 papers that were used to create the book *We Have Come to Stay*. The title came from a quote by Judith Ellen Foster, one of the first professional women in politics. Foster said, "We are here to help you, and we have come to stay."

Miller's next project was to write about Isabella Greenway, who like many women got her start in politics in the election of 1912 (*Isabella Greenway: An Enterprising Woman*, University of Arizona Press). Both Isabella Greenway and Ruth Hanna McCormick worked for Theodore Roosevelt's presidential campaign. After 1920, when the Republicans became less progressive, some women like Isabella Greenway turned to the Democratic Party, while other women like Ruth Hanna McCormick, decided to stay with the Republicans and change it from within.

Isabella Greenway's story is interesting, explained Miller, because it is intertwined with politics and the history of Eleanor Roosevelt. Greenway and Roosevelt were lifelong friends who met in their teenage years. Next year she will publish a book on Eleanor and Isabella's 50 years of correspondence.

By 1928, Greenway had been widowed twice and left with young children. At that time, Eleanor Roosevelt recruited Greenway to work in Al Smith's presidential campaign.

Later, Miller discovered that Isabella Greenway played a major role in the nomination of Franklin Delano Roosevelt for president. FDR was being overtaken by other candidates. Greenway had a good friend in the California delegation, Tom Storke; she encouraged him to caucus the delegation to change its vote for FDR. Soon after this, Greenway ran for Congress and became the first U.S. congresswoman in Arizona's history.

Miller added that the issues that female politicians faced in the past are still relevant. She posed the example of presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton and the obstacles she faces running as a wife. "We can see that an unencumbered female has a much easier time in politics."

Annual Foremothers Awards Luncheon

The National Research Center for Women & Families will hold its annual Foremother Awards Luncheon on May 9 at the Cosmos Club, noon to 2pm. Honorees include Mary Frances Berry, Edith Fierst, Marion Ein Lewin, Connie Morella and Eunice Kennedy Shriver. For information, contact Christina Edwards at info@center4research.org or 202 223-4000.

Women on Stamps

The United States Post Office has been issuing stamps that honor women and their achievements for more than a century. The first honored American, Martha Washington, appeared in 1902 on an eight-cent stamp. More than 150 of such stamps have been issued. Most of them are tributes to prominent women, authors, artists, musicians, movie stars, politicians, and feminists. But there also are group recognitions, including Woman Suffrage (1970), Homemakers (1964), Progress of Women (1948), School Teachers (1957), and Nursing (1961). More information can be found at: www.usps.com/postalhistory/_pdf/womenstamps.pdf

From Barbara J Ratner, president

The new Newseum finally opened April 11, 2008. It was well worth the more than four-year wait. This is news/political junkie heaven. If my back didn't begin aching, I might still be there.

One new exhibit worth noting is the Pulitzer Prize Photographs Gallery. A wonderful way to relive history — memories we might have forgotten and some we would like to ignore. Amazing how much one can relive from one picture. You can wander around the display and view the photos, then go behind the exhibit to the computers to hear the photographers speak about taking the photo. There is an exhibit of women in the media. Not a huge exhibit since there is not a huge number of women, but the recognition is important. The short films are quite informative and a good way to sit for a few minutes.

Quite encouraging is that there were many younger people with infants in strollers and small children who chose a Newseum visit on such a gorgeous spring day.

Go to www.newseum.org but better yet, just go see for yourself.

D.C. Becomes Second City in U.S. to Guarantee Paid Sick Days

*Statement of Debra L. Ness, President,
National Partnership for Women & Families*

WASHINGTON, DC – March 4, 2008 – “Today is an historic day for thousands of working families in our nation’s capital, who for the first time will be guaranteed paid sick days. We join workers across the District in celebrating passage of the Accrued Paid Sick and Safe Days Act of 2007, and applaud the Council for passing this measure which is a great first step in giving paid sick days to all District workers who need them. The District is the second municipality, after San Francisco, to guarantee workers paid time away from work to treat an illness or care for a sick child. It surely will not be the last.

“Until now, more than 200,000 workers in the District did not have paid sick time. The majority of them work in low-wage food service, retail and construction. Providing paid sick and safe days to those working some of our most grueling jobs is the right thing to do and benefits the whole community. In addition to paid sick days, workers in the District are now also guaranteed paid “safe” days, so those dealing with domestic abuse can take time off for violence-related court appearances or other services. This measure is compassionate and long overdue.

“We are, however, disappointed that this new measure has a hardship exemption and excludes some food service workers and workers in the first year of their jobs. The new law will provide seven paid sick and safe days for workers in firms with 100 employees or more, five days for firms with 25-99 employees, and three days for firms with 24 or fewer employees. The District Council has taken a significant step forward. This is a good day for workers here.”

National History Museum

Check out the National Women's History Museum's website: www.nwhm.org. It contains detailed biographies on women who ran for president, and in its Cyber Museum, presents information on women by various categories, including journalism, education, spies, suffrage, world War II, and Olympics.

Quoting from the website: Gender is probably the most restricting force in all aspects of American life, most recently noted by numerous pundits and commentators during the 2008 presidential election. Compared with other democracies, the United States in fact has been slow to use the abilities of the majority of its citizens – the majority born female. Although Americans think of ourselves as leaders in all things progressive, the fact is that 26 countries granted women the vote before the U.S. did, and the same is true of electing women as national leaders. The U.S. falls behind many others in setting this precedent, including Australia, Britain, Canada, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, and even Pakistan.

“It is not as though American women haven't tried: NWHM research shows that at least 35 women have run for president. Most are unknown, and some represented parties that arguably merit obscurity – including the Surprise Party and the Looking Back Party. Although such may generate amusement, it nonetheless is true that the women who mounted platforms to speak to their issues were courageous: more than men, they knew that their audacity invited ridicule. As more and more accepted the risk, however, their candidacies elevated public esteem for women's abilities.”

Founded in 1996, NWHM is a “nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the diverse historic contributions of women, and integrating this rich heritage fully into our nation's history. Until legislation passes in Congress designating a permanent museum in Washington, D.C., the NWHM promotes women's history through its temporary exhibits, special events, Cyber Museum, and online educational materials.”

A New Web Site Source for Women's Health Research Information

A new Web resource providing consumers with the latest information on significant topics in women's health research from scientific journals and other peer-reviewed sources is now available through the National Library of Medicine (NLM). The NLM, of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), through its Division of Specialized Information Services, Office of Outreach and Special Populations, has partnered with the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) to create this one-stop resource.

The 2008 National Institutes of Health (NIH) Research Priorities for Women's Health were used to identify overarching themes, specific health topics, and research initiatives in women's health. Within each section of the Web site are topics with links to relevant and authoritative resources and research initiatives for women's health. NLM has created specific user-friendly strategies for these topics to ease searching ClinicalTrials.gov and PubMed. Other Web resources used include AIDSinfo, American Indian Health, Arctic Health, Household Products Database, MedlinePlus and NIHSeniorHealth. Search strategies for major studies related to women's health research have also been created and will be linked between the new Web site and the Office of Research on Women's Health Web site. *From NIH News*

Books on Women by Women

Books on women voters and politics that have been published recently include *Your Money and Your Life: The High Stakes for Women Voters in '08 and Beyond* by Martha Burk, available at www.ms magazine.com; *Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation*, by Cokie Roberts, William Morrow and Company; *Women for President: Media Bias in Eight Campaigns*, by Erica Falk, University of Illinois Press.

Our sincere apology to Bunny Sandler for misspelling her name under her picture in the March newsletter.



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

April is Women's Eye Health and Safety Month

Tuesday, April 22

Earth Day / Equal Pay Day www.pay-equity.org

Sunday, April 27

**Coalition of Labor Union Women,
Annual Gloria Johnson Award Luncheon**

AFL-CIO Gompers Room, 2:00- 4:30pm. For information,
RSVP: Brenda Savoy, president, 301-233-2169

Friday, May 9

Foremother Awards Luncheon See page 4.

Tuesday May 27

Next CWI Meeting: Women & Immigration

July 18-20

2008 National NOW Annual Conference

Hyatt Regency, Bethesda, Maryland

For more information visit www.now.org/conference/2008

Photos by D. Anne Martin; March meeting summary draft by Glenda Garcia, Feminist Majority Foundation intern. Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 - June 2008

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *VP Program*, Sue Klein; *VP Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*; Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Join us on May 27, 2008

Women and Immigration

Come hear a fresh perspective on immigrant women and their families. Our expert speakers have delved into rarely-heard accounts and data regarding this continuing dilemma and the conditions facing women. The speaker presentations are followed by discussion.

Peggy Orchowski, an experienced journalist who has been following the politics of the immigration issue for more than a decade, has recently published her book titled *Immigration and The American Dream : Battling the Political Hype and Hysteria*. Orchowski is a congressional correspondent covering legislative affairs that affect Latinos, having worked as a journalist in several South American countries. She will address the many aspects and turmoil facing immigrant women such as work visas, green cards, illegal status, extended families and rights.

Olga Vives, a longtime activist originally from Cuba, was elected action vice president in 2001 and executive vice president of NOW in 2005. She continues to build their foundation programs, including the global and racial diversity outreach efforts. As a coalition builder, Vives works to expand NOW's reach to more women of color, lesbians and young feminists. Her experience with women from many cultures, particularly Latino and Asian women, provides commentary on their harrowing situations and upheavals.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 / 12 Noon sharp - 1:30 pm
Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE: One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, 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 allow time to go through the sign-in system.*

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 24, 2008

Our Annual Meeting: Honoring CWI Long-time Members

Women's Role in National Security

The speakers at the CWI April meeting were Johanna Mendelson-Forman, senior associate of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Lorelei Kelly, policy director of the Real Security Initiative of the White House Project.

Mendelson-Forman spoke on international and transnational security and the need for women to be equally included into the security framework. She discussed the complexities of today's global security threats, and how nuclear weapons are no longer the only threat to transnational security. She stated that that security threats have many different roots. She said, "Transnational issues transcend the guns and butter issues of the cold war debate that we are used to."

To establish the broad context, Mendelson-Forman explained that the issues that affect our international security include endemic poverty, infectious disease, climate change, energy security and internal conflicts. Endemic poverty creates a situation where people are more likely to get into conflict situations as poverty excludes participation in the political and economic life, causing frustrations and dissent. Infectious disease can now be easily transmitted world wide through transportation, as millions of people use airplanes, trains and buses which increase the vulnerability of people contracting diseases. Internal conflicts, such as the genocide in Darfur, threaten international security because of the destruction of the environment, displacement of people and transnational crime.

Although there are other security threats, she said, terrorism is a part of the United States

consciousness after the 9/11 events, adding that terrorism exists because weak and fragile governments provide the environment for that by allowing terrorism to flourish. For instance, in Afghanistan the government has very little control and a weak presence outside the capital of Kabul. Similarly, in places like Pakistan, where control of its borders is compromised by tribal conflict, it is hard to constrain the movement of terrorist groups.



Johanna Mendelson-Forman



Lorelei Kelly

Mendelson-Forman noted that the roots of our insecurity are that today war affects civilians as much as it affects the military. Women and children are the most vulnerable during wartime. She discussed rape as a weapon of war, and how it is used in various countries around the world, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Two hundred to three hundred

thousand people die each year from armed conflict, and the same number of people die from lack of water and sanitation.

Environmental degradation and climate change create food insecurity, said Mendelson-Forman, adding that populations are continuing to expand, and by the year 2050 there will be 8.9 billion people in the world. We need to figure out a way to cope with this population growth without famine and without war.

Mendelson-Forman continued by explaining that there is no agreed definition on what security is. Countries around the world determine what security means according to the context of their own country. For the people in Africa, their biggest threat is malaria and AIDS. For the people in Latin America their

Program Summary, continued

biggest security threat is poverty. Women in developing countries are double-burdened by gender inequality and their countries' security threats, said Mendelson-Forman.

She also stressed the importance of finding ways to integrate women as agents for change and security. Mendelson-Forman used Somalia as an example of the integration of women who fought for this change. Women in Somalia threatened to take off their clothes and embarrass their elders if peace was not reached.

Lastly, Mendelson-Forman emphasized that women are the perfect agents to fight for security because women understand the importance of working together in teams to enhance the quality of everyone's lives. Progress has been made in the inclusion of women through gendered foreign policy and the State Department has fought for women's security and issues that relate to the victimization of women such as fighting human trafficking.

Lorelei Kelly is policy director of the real security initiative of the White House Project, which is a non-partisan, broad-based organization that seeks innovative ways to advance the cause of women's leadership. She began her discussion on national security challenges and solutions by introducing her slides-on-paper that are used to educate and train women around the country on national security. Kelly stressed the importance of changing the notion of having to choose between the security of the nation over the safety of individuals.

Kelly stated that America is at a crossroads, at a time when the United States needs to prioritize the safety of the people. She emphasized another very important change that must happen, that women must start taking on leadership roles in their communities. She added that it is vital that Americans become knowledgeable on issues of national security.

She discussed the way security threats impact America and its borders. Some global threats are shaped as transnational threats. For

example, an intentional bio-terrorist attack or natural disaster cannot be contained by country borders. She said the US has to stop living in the past and start being pro-active by having citizens become agents of the people. She said that fundamental governmental shifts need to be made from relying on our military forces, and from draining our civilian agencies by cutting their much-needed personnel and institutional memory.

The perception of the United States from the rest of the world is that it likes to think of itself as a democratic supportive country. In actuality, the US is perceived as a country of torturers and as the type of country that fights at 30,000 feet by dropping bombs on specific targets. Kelly also discussed how politicians are now buying their way into Capitol Hill. People who care about public interests need to become more sophisticated in their interface with Congress, she declared.

Kelly suggested that we find a better way to use the thousands of students graduating from master's programs with degrees in peace and conflict resolution studies, perhaps pairing these students with congressional offices, so that both can expand their knowledge on security issues and answers.

She showed how the national security problems relate to our country's budget imbalance. She said that the US is still trading off national security by spending almost \$10 billion on missile security that has never worked. She concluded by reiterating that our country needs critical infrastructure changes, pandemic preparedness, and women's participation in securing the national security of the United States.

The following slate will be voted upon by the members at our annual meeting in June.
Vice President, Programs / Sue Klein
Treasurer / Linda Fihelly
Directors /
Alvin Golub, Jessica Lazar, Sarah Gotbaum

CWI

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

Tuesday June 24

Next CWI Meeting: Honoring 34 years of the Clearinghouse

July 18-20

2008 National NOW Annual Conference

Hyatt Regency, Bethesda, Maryland

For more information visit www.now.org/conference/2008

Please pardon the shortened version of our newsletter this month due to time restrictions.

*Photos by D. Anne Martin;
March meeting summary draft by Glenda Garcia, Feminist Majority Foundation intern.*

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 - June 2008

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *VP Program*, Sue Klein; *VP Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*; Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Join us on June 24, 2008

CWI's Annual Meeting

Celebrating Our Leaders and the Impact of Women's Organizations

HONOREES: The women who have been CWI's leaders since its inception 35 years ago.

SPEAKER: Susan Scanlan, president of the Women's Research and Education Institute (WREI) and chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO), will speak about the impact of women's organizations.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, June 24, 2008 / 12 Noon sharp - 2 pm
Open to the public, RESERVATION NECESSARY FOR THIS MEETING ONLY

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

Lunch will be provided

We must have your RSVP by June 20th • 301-493-0002

IMPORTANT NOTICE

*A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle.
Please allow time to go through the sign-in system.*

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 23, 2008

Women and Immigration

The speakers at the Clearinghouse May meeting were Peggy Or chowski, a congressional correspondent and experienced journalist who has covered immigration issues for more than a decade, and Olga Vives, a longtime activist originally from Cuba who was elected NOW's action vice president in 2001 and executive vice president in 2005.

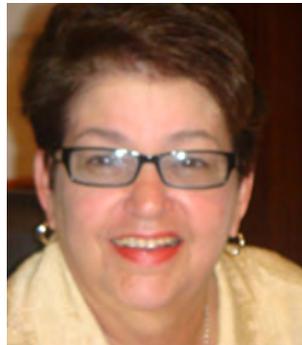
Peggy Or chowski, who has recently published a book titled *Immigration and the American Dream: Battling the Political Hype and Hysteria*, spoke about the ill effects of the current "hype and hysteria" against immigration. She pointed out that the United States is a nation of immigrants, a principle that demands both 1) willing immigrants and 2) a willing nation-state. The latter requirement, she explained, has been ignored by every advocate of immigrants "rights" in the recent debate; in fact, there is virtually no country in the world with open borders — all have immigration laws that they must enforce.

Orchowski stated the present paradox in immigration: every individual has the right to leave his or her country of origin, but no one has the right to move to, live and work in another country simply out of desire. Certainly, she pointed out, even the pilgrims who came to the U.S. on the Mayflower did so by contract.

She gave a brief overview of immigration in the U.S. Until 1870, the states, regions and cities were assigned jurisdiction on the subject of immigration laws. In 1870, immigration was assigned national jurisdiction. In the 1920s, the first comprehensive immigration law was passed out of strong pressure from labor unions which established a quota system. The correlation between strong labor unions and strong immigration laws, Orchowski maintained, is no coincidence; it is almost a mantra today that "immigrants come for jobs;" they come to improve their lives and to have better work



Peggy Or chowski



Olga Vives

opportunities. That is the American dream. The U.S. enforced the quota system, favoring immigrants from northern Europe, until the mid 1960s.

In 1965, Senator Ted Kennedy revamped the system through two major reforms. The first reform eradicated the national quota and instilled the concept of a commitment to diversity. Under this new concept, no one nation's immigrants could hold more than seven percent of the total number of green cards distributed by the U.S. government. The second reform shifted the emphasis from a work- and skills-based system to a family-based system that allowed the extended family of legal immigrants to become legal immigrants themselves. Or chowski indicated that this second reform may have contributed to a rise in the number of illegal immigrants in the U.S., as it initiated

an increase in the number of extended family members physically present in the country while assigned to the waiting list.

Finally, from the 1990s onward, the U.S. government has adopted a more permissive stance on immigration, allowing the presence of not only those who have come illegally over the Mexican border, but also those longtime immigrants who originally came on work visas and stayed much longer. Today, the public is extremely divided on the issue of "comprehensive immigration laws," that is, laws that detail a "path to citizenship." The most recent pieces of immigration legislation introduced in Congress are classified as "comprehensive immigration laws," and many claim that this makes them "poison bills." Indeed, such buzz words combined with the emotional dynamics inherent in immigration reform, have set in motion a further polarization of the public on the issue. This is precisely the "hype and hysteria" that Or chowski strives to avoid, for it detracts from the more pertinent issues of decreasing illegal immigration and

Program Summary, continued

taking care of legal immigrants. Orchowski ended by stressing that immigration laws are not necessarily bad, and cautioned against labeling a person as “anti-immigrant” simply for promoting immigration laws. Getting away from the rhetoric and hype is a crucial step in moving immigration reform in the right direction.

Olga Vives, the executive vice president of NOW and a founder of the National Coalition for Immigrant Women’s Rights, emphasized that immigration is an important feminist issue. Herself an immigrant from Cuba who gained U.S. citizenship in the 1970’s, she argued that any immigration reform must address the issues faced by immigrant women. Immigration legislation, she maintained, has typically had a disproportionate effect on women in such areas as public benefits. In 2006 and 2007, Congress put forth efforts into a massive overhaul of the immigration system, shifting the emphasis from a family, work and asylum-based system to a point system that awards visas on the basis of factors such as age, education, job skills and English proficiency. Since many immigrant women had come to the U.S. on extended family visas, they generally lack job skills and many end up in underground industries such as prostitution.

Vives provided a few basic facts about the current status of immigration in the U.S. An estimated 12 million people are living in the U.S. without documents. Of these, 30 percent are women. The last two attempts at immigration reform in Congress placed emphasis on “comprehensive immigration reform” (also known as CIR). Although CIR has become a controversial phrase, Vives pointed out that there has always been some sort of path available to individuals seeking citizenship in the U.S. Even Ronald Reagan believed in providing some degree of amnesty to immigrants; in 1986, he signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), one provision of which granted amnesty to undocumented immigrants who had entered the country before 1982 and continued to reside here. Therefore, Vives asserted, this “path to citizenship” is not quite as radical an idea as opponents have made it out to be. Indeed, it has recently become a wedge issue dividing the country. And, in the absence of successful federal immigration legislation, many local communities have unlawfully taken matters into their own hands. In several regions, most recently

in Iowa, groups of individuals have raided workplaces, separated women from their infant children and held them in local detention centers. These types of actions by individuals are illegal. Vives emphasized the need for immigration reform to address the category of domestic services. She said that the work of immigrant women is not valued or counted, and as long as these women work underground, they will continue to suffer ill treatment. Indeed, as she stated earlier, immigration is a feminist issue. The controversy surrounding immigration reform in the U.S. has been further complicated by misinformation in the media and in the public. One such myth is that federal funding is being drained providing Medicaid services to illegal immigrants. This cannot be the case, Vives argued, since in 1996, President Clinton signed a bill prohibiting states from using federal funding to provide Medicaid services to undocumented immigrants. Another such myth is that immigrants do not pay taxes; many in fact do file taxes. They come here to work and generally are law-abiding citizens.

Vives said that immigration is the civil rights issue of our time and that the country is in need of a humane way to address it, in particular a way that acknowledges and aims to remedy the disproportionate effects of immigration on women. Like Orchowski, Vives asserted that immigration reform necessitates dispelling the myths, rhetoric and hype that has turned it into such a divisive, hot-button issue.

During the Q&A after the presentations, the speakers were asked about what needed to be included in immigration law. Orchowski said that two bills are now in Congress but don’t expect legislation until next year. Bills need to include: a verifiable ID card (as Europe has), sanctions for employers who hire illegals and a path to citizenship.

Vives said we need to deal with the immigration problem in a reasonable, enforceable way which would be beneficial to the entire country. Our government has no verifiable database for social security numbers and can’t track the visas of people entering the country. We need a system that is: legal, enforceable, and humane.

Orchowski added that children born in U.S. are considered citizens and have two basic rights by federal law: education k-12 and emergency medical facilities. States decide the other benefits.

“Diversity isn’t Rocket Science, is it?”

That’s the headline in a *New York Times* article that says “Back in the bad old days, the workplace was a battleground where sexist jokes and assumptions were the norm. Women were shut off from promotion by an old boys’ network that favored its own. They went to meetings and were often the only women in the room. All that has changed in the last three decades, except where it has not. In the worlds of science, engineering, and technology, it seems, the past is still very much present.”

The Center for Work-Life Policy is a non-profit organization that studies women and work; their latest study, scheduled for publication in the June *Harvard Business Review*, says that in these professions “all the predatory and demeaning and discriminatory stuff that went on in workplaces 20, 30 years ago is alive and well.” Based on data from roughly 1,500 women and 1,000 men and many more interviewed in focus groups, the report says that in these fields women are still very much outsiders and “those who enter are likely to eventually leave.”

According to the article, “The study was conceived in response to the highly criticized assertion three years ago, by the then-president of Harvard, that women were not well represented in the science because they lacked what it took to excel there.” The article points out that women are making progress in the hard sciences, they enter sciences in large numbers, do very well at the start, and then around ages 35-40, 52 percent drop out.

The authors describe “a pervasive macho culture,” in which engineers, biological and chemical scientists are “at best unsupportive and at worst downright hostile to women.” Included in reasons for dropping out: sexual harassment; dismissive attitudes of male colleagues; lack of mentors; and hours not suitable for working mothers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics says that job opportunities in these fields are growing five times faster than in other industries. There are a few companies trying to remedy the situation, but the study asks: “Wouldn’t it make financial sense for employers to find a way to halt the exodus? And will that incentive be sufficient to transform a culture that has been resistant to calls for change?”

Women’s and Men’s Brains

Formerly only speculation, there is now some proof that there are differences in men’s and women’s brains. Although the differences are not yet understood, the study of sex differences in the brain is advancing quickly, according to the Society for Women’s Health Research.

“Science is proving that the differences in our brains may have more serious implications beyond our everyday social interactions. Scientists are looking into ways that sex-based brain variations affect the thought processes and behavior of men and women differently ... their discoveries could point the way to sex-specific therapies for men and women with neurological conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, schizophrenia, depression, addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder ... As researchers continue to explain how sex influences brain function, we will see more diagnostic tools and therapies that successfully account for the biological differences between women and men. That will mean better health outcomes for all patients.”

Women and Health Care

The National Women’s Law Center states that one in four women cannot pay their medical bills ... and “one thing is clear, it’s time to make affordable, high quality health care a reality for women.” To help women understand the issues and learn more about the harmful disparities women face under our current health care system, the NWLC has established a new project “aimed at encouraging women to be active and vocal advocates in the fight for progressive health care reform and giving them the tools to do so.” The project is called Reform Matters: Making Real Progress for Women and Health Care. To help, A Reform Matters Toolkit will be available this summer. Check out their website at www.nwlc.org.

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Sharon Cohany, Economist, and her colleague, Jim Walker, attended the May meeting on Women and Immigration and distributed copies of the latest BLS press release on foreign-born workers. The press release can be accessed on the BLS web site at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/forbrn.pdf> Any questions? Email Cohany.Sharon@bls.gov.

From Women's eNews

- “Nineteen percent of the women who live in 1,000 counties included in a University of Washington study have a significantly shorter life expectancy than the rest of the country. The study concluded that diabetes, lung cancer, emphysema and kidney failure have led to a drop in some U.S. women's life expectancy for the first time the *Washington Post* reported April 22. The trend is most evident in the Deep South, Appalachia and in the lower Midwest but is not limited by race.”
- “A Human Rights Watch report condemned the limited rights of Saudi Arabian women, who must have permission from a male guardian to travel, have medical treatment, work or attend school. Mothers cannot make decisions on behalf of their children. ‘The Saudi government sacrifices basic human rights to maintain male control over women,’ said researcher Farida Deif.”
- “The percentage of U.S. women starting their own businesses has dropped to a 10-year low, according to CNN. Men are now twice as likely as women to start up businesses, the largest gap in a decade, according to a Kauffman Foundation report. The female entrepreneurial rate dropped from 0.23 percent in 2006 to 0.2 percent in 2007.”
- “A May 20 study from the American Association of University Women concludes that girls do not succeed at the expense of boys and income disparities rather than gender has a greater impact on educational performance and achievement. The study examines student performance over the past 35 years in 50 states and focused on standardized test scores. Both girls' and boys' performance is improving. The association says the study debunks the ‘boy's crisis’ theory in education and provides a more extensive view of gender equity trends.”
- “Female ski jumpers from six countries — Canada, the United States, Germany, Austria, Slovenia and Norway — have sued the Vancouver organizing committee for the 2010 Winter Olympics for not allowing women to compete in ski jumping. Their lawsuit asks the committee to either hold a competition for women or ban the men's equivalent event.”

Veteran Feminists of America

VFA's June 9 Salute to Feminist Lawyers honored 30 feminist legal icons active from 1963-1975. Honorees included Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sarah Weddington, the lawyer who won *Roe v. Wade*, and long-time CWI member Sonia Fuentes, who was also on the planning committee for the event.

Legal Momentum

Legal Momentum, the nation's oldest legal advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the rights of women and girls, has appointed Irasema Garza as its seventh president. She is former head of the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau in the Clinton Administration, and has served as community outreach director for Working America, the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

Daily Women's Health Report

National Partnership for Women & Families is now the publisher of the *Daily Women's Health Policy Report*. Formerly produced by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the *Daily Report* is a free synopsis of local, state, national and international reproductive health developments. You can sign up at www.nationalpartnership.org/daily.

From Barbara J. Ratner, president

This will be our last meeting until we resume in the fall. It has been an interesting year. We've covered topics from pay discrimination to immigration to Title IX. As we enter into the 35th year of the Clearinghouse we are celebrating those who have been the inspiration for the organization. You will have difficulty finding better role models than the CWI leaders we are honoring at our June meeting. Please plan to attend so we can show them how much we appreciate their efforts.

2008-09 Board

The following slate will be voted upon by the members at our annual meeting in June.
Vice President, Programs / Sue Klein
Treasurer / Linda Fihelly
Directors / Alvin Golub, Jessica Lazar, Sarah Gotbaum



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

- Tuesday, June 17** **WREI Fellows Salute Class of 2008.**
6-8 pm Room B-354, the Rayburn Building. RSVP www.Wrei.org.
- Thursday, June 26** **Reach Higher, America: Overcoming Crisis in the U.S. Workforce.** National Commission on Adult Literacy Final Report Release. 10:30-12:00p. RSVP: Email anne.sparkman@widmeyer.com
- Thursday, July 10** **Luncheon speaker Mary Gardiner Jones** will speak about her autobiography, *Tearing Down Walls: A Woman's Triumph* at the Woman's National Democratic Club luncheon at noon. Reservations to Pat Fitzgerald at 202-232-7363.
- July 18-20** **2008 National NOW Annual Conference**
Hyatt Regency, Bethesda, Maryland
For more information visit www.now.org/conference/2008

*Photos by D. Anne Martin; May meeting summary draft by Jennifer Lee.
Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design*

CWI Board of Directors, July 2007 - June 2008

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *VP Program*, Sue Klein; *VP Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*; Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

The Politics of Aging—Healthcare for All

Neither the public nor policy makers have settled on one preferred approach to providing health coverage for all Americans. Are Social Security and Medicare enough? What can we afford? What are our real choices? What are the policies and politics that are driving these debates?

At CWI's September meeting, the speakers, **Laura Feldman** and **Ashley Carson**, will compare the healthcare proposals of Barack Obama and John McCain with the recommendations of the Older Women's League.

Laura Feldman is grassroots manager of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, serving as organizer for the past 17 years. Past president of the Southern Gerontological Society, she is a professional advocate and lobbyist for older Americans. Feldman was appointed to the first Seniors Cabinet of the Montgomery County Council of Maryland.

Ashley Carson is executive director of the Older Women's League (OWL). She has a background in advocacy work for women, children and seniors. She worked in human resources for the continuing care retirement community in Portland, OR, before earning her law degree at Vermont Law School, where she focused on elder law issues and worked on the domestic violence hotline. In addition, Carson worked on the Vermont long-term care ombudsman project and helped with guardianship reform issues in the state legislature.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, September 23, 2008 / 12 noon sharp-1:30pm

Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE:

One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, 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 allow time to go through the sign-in system.*

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 28, 2008
Sexism in the Media

CWI 2008-09 dues are payable in September. Although our meetings are open to the public at no charge and guests are welcome, if you are not already a member, we would appreciate your joining. There are membership forms on our website.

We are emailing the CWI monthly newsletter beginning with this issue. If you still prefer to receive the hard copy instead, please just hit the reply button at the top of the newsletter and put NO in the subject line.

CWI's Annual Meeting: Celebrating Our Leaders and the Impact of Women's Organizations

The Clearinghouse's June meeting honored the women who have been CWI leaders since its inception 35 years ago. (See listing of the honorees.) Our speaker, Susan Scanlan, president of the Women's Research and Education Institute (WREI) and chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO), spoke about the impact of women's organizations. Here are excerpts from her speech.

It's an honor to be asked to help celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Clearinghouse on Women's Issues along with the remarkable



Susan Scanlan

women who have led it through tumultuous times. The New York Yankees would have done well to field such a "Murderer's Row" of heavy hitters. What a Who's Who of the activists, advocates, scholars and visionaries who've altered the history of this nation!

Let me commend them and you for not only living up to, but exceeding the Clearinghouse's mission to "provide information on issues related to women, with particular emphasis on public policies that affect the economic, educational, health and legal problems of women."

Honorees

Joan Aron
Mary Bailey
Virginia Briggs
Colleen Challenger
Alice Day
Catherine East*
Margaret Feldman
Daisy Fields
Linda Fihelly
Arvonne Fraser
Sarah Gotbaum
Barbara Green
Diane Hampton
Peggy Hansen
Harriett Harper
Cynthia Harrison
Dorothy Height
Gloria Johnson
Roslyn Kaiser
Anne Kasper
Mary Dublin
Keyserling*
Marilyn Klein

*deceased

Nancy Lang
Jean Linehan*
Olya Margolin*
Audrey Marra
Abigail McCarthy*
Joyce Miller
Gilda Morse*
Ruth Nadel
Elaine Newman
Mary O'Connor*

Ellen Overton
Florence Perman*
Shoshana Riemer
Gloria Ruby
Jacqueline Scherer
Clara Schiffer
Ruth Shinn
Helen Sherwood
Jeanne Simon
Joy Simonson*

Sue Marx Smock
Felice Sorett
Carmen Delgado
Votaw
Caroline Ware*
Elinor Waters
Mildred Wurf

Key Founders

Alison Bell
Marjorie Blaufarb
Bobbie Deister
Catherine East
Pearle Eisenberg
Arvonne Fraser
Bernice Frieder
Marge Gates
Mary Lou Hennessy
Gloria Johnson
Jan Liebman
Ellen McCartney
Ruth Shinn
Kerry Thalhim
Helen Tibbits
Caroline Ware
Mildred Wurf



Front row: Clara Schiffer, Ellen Overton, Roslyn Kaiser. Second row: Linda Fihelly, D. Anne Martin, Barbara Ratner, Gloria Ruby, Shoshana Riemer, Daisy Fields, Diane Hampton, Ruth Nadel. Back row: Nancy Lang, Kellye McIntosh, Mickey Klein

Program Summary, continued

Over the past three and a half decades, no other women's organization has brought so many experts to the table, examined so many issues so thoroughly, or spread the word so effectively. While helping all of us find our voice, you have truly enlightened the debate of our times. I — and so many others — salute your success!

2008 marks the 160th Anniversary of Seneca Falls, and of a movement by women to achieve full civil rights in this country. Over the past seven generations, dramatic social and legal changes have changed the world. They are now so accepted that they go unnoticed by people whose lives they have utterly transformed. Many of those who have lived through the recent decades have come to accept blithely what has transpired. And younger people can hardly believe life was ever otherwise. They take the changes completely in stride — as how life has always been.

The staggering changes for women that have come about over those seven generations in family life, in religion, in government, in employment, in education — these changes did not just happen spontaneously. Women themselves made these changes happen, very deliberately. Women have not been the passive recipients of miraculous alterations in laws and human nature.

Seven generations of women have banded together — almost always through historic organizations — to effect changes in the most democratic ways: through meetings, petition drives, lobbying, public speaking, and nonviolent resistance. They have worked very deliberately to create a better world, and they have succeeded hugely.

I'm speaking today as Chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations, a coalition of some 240 progressive women's groups representing 12 million American women. In that capacity, I'm entitled to brag on the work done, the mountains moved, and the worlds changed by my coalition members.

Allow me to briefly review the bidding from the "First Wave" of feminism. Here are a few NCWO organizations that advanced women's rights from suffrage onward:

The Young Women's Christian Association is the largest and oldest women's association in the United States. The

YWCA was founded 150 years ago to help immigrant women coming into the country maintain high moral character. How? By providing chaperones on ocean liners for women traveling in steerage and giving them bilingual instruction. Over time, the Y's mission evolved to setting up boarding houses and typing courses for rural women leaving farms for the city. Once strictly segregated, the YWCA is now headed by Lorraine Cole, an African-American. Its mission today is to fight for racial justice, economic empowerment, and reproductive freedom, and to fight against domestic violence.

Since 1881, the American Association of University Women has promoted education and equity for women and girls. With public education as their priority, AAUW has worked for adequate funding, higher standards, and recruitment of and fair pay for qualified teachers. Their study of child development led to pioneering work in nursery schools, kindergarten, and guidance. Their fine arts committee organized showings of circulating exhibits as a means of public education long before museums did so. Perhaps my favorite factoid: In 1919, AAUW raised \$156,413 as a grant to enable Marie Curie to purchase one gram of radium for her experiments. Just a few weeks ago, AAUW made front page headlines around the country with *Where the Girls Are*, a comprehensive look at girls' educational achievement during the past 35 years. It refutes the arguments advanced by anti-Title IXers that girls' academic successes come at boys' expense.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs, founded in 1890, is dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. During its first 100 years, the Federation established 75 percent of the country's public libraries, developed kindergartens in the public schools, and worked for healthy food and safe drug regulations. Women's Clubs are also largely responsible for the white lines painted down the center of U.S. highways, for the adopt-a-highway program, and for the introduction of children's car seats in automobiles. In 2007, GFWC and its members raised nearly

Program Summary, continued

\$32 million and volunteered more than 8.4 million hours to create parks, put trashcans in urban areas, and bring cancer detection/treatment equipment to regions without such resources.

In 1912, Juliette Gordon Low founded what became the Girl Scouts, an organization that brought girls into the outdoors, encouraged their self-reliance and resourcefulness, and prepared them for varied roles as adult women. Today Girl Scouts earn badges in financial literacy, self esteem, obesity prevention, and basic astronaut training.

While mobilizing for World War I, the U.S. Government needed to identify women's available skills and experience in order to replace male workers going off to fight. A Women's War Council, was established by the War Department to organize the resources of professional women. In 1919, this Council evolved into the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. B&PW helped with the formation of the women's military service branches during World War II and with the "status of women" commissions in the 1960s. Their *Red Purse* campaign in the 1980s drew public attention to pay inequities and the issue of comparable worth. Throughout the years, B&PW members have fought for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in perhaps the most difficult and unsympathetic venue — the corporate boardroom.

Those are a few of the first wave institutions that grew up in 19th and 20th century America. Evolving to address women's changing roles and constant challenges, they're standing strong in the 21st century.

So it's clear that, contrary to common misconception, the Women's Rights movement did not begin in the 1960s. But what brought about the second wave of activism? I'd narrow it down to three events:

First, Esther Peterson, director of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor convinced President Kennedy to convene the Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt. Its report documented discrimination against women in virtually every

area of American life. Second, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, inspiring thousands of women to look for fulfillment beyond the role of homemaker. And, third, thousands of young women on college campuses were playing active roles in the anti-war and civil rights movement. But many found their efforts blocked by young men who felt that women's participation should be limited to serving coffee and running mimeograph machines. From this vantage point, it seems almost inevitable that, in 1966, Betty Friedan and other mothers of the second wave would organize the National Organization for Women. NOW was soon followed by an array of other mass-membership organizations that address the needs of specific groups of women, including African Americans, Latinas, Asian-Americans, lesbians, labor union members, welfare recipients, business owners, aspiring politicians, and professional women of every sort.

So let's examine which stars aligned and forces came together to inspire formation of the Clearinghouse on Women's Issues 35 years ago. Somehow it all sounds ominously familiar. America was embroiled in a highly controversial war that we went on to lose. The president was deeply unpopular and calls for his impeachment were being heard across the country.

A married woman couldn't obtain credit without her husband's signature.

There were exactly two battered women shelters in the entire United States: one in northern California and the other in upper Michigan.

Only 44 percent of women were employed outside the home. And those women earned about fifty-two cents to the dollar earned by males.

Girls took physical education classes and played half-court basketball. But they couldn't participate in soccer, track or cross-country or on any varsity sports teams.

There were exactly 817,073 girls taking part in high school sports, about one in 20. Today there are 3 million — one in three.

The Miss America Pageant was the biggest source of scholarship money for women who wished to attend college.

Only 14 percent of the doctorates were

Program Summary, continued

awarded to women; only 3.5 percent of MBAs were female.

And here are a few of the headlined events of that eventful period:

HBO (Home Box Office) subscription cable TV is launched

The first commercially successful electronic game (Pong) is released

Nike running shoes hit the market

Supplemental Security Income (SSI), federal aid for the aged, blind, and disabled, is established by Congress

The first Federal Election Campaign Act is passed to limit campaign spending

The first popular manual on human sexuality, *Joy of Sex*, is released

The Supreme Court rules that the right to privacy includes an unmarried person's right to use contraceptives. It also bans sex-segregated "Help Wanted" advertising.

Other headlines:

The Equal Rights Amendment is approved by the Senate, with a seven-year deadline for passage. By the way, the first 18 amendments to the Constitution were approved without any time limits. One of them took 23 years to be ratified by the states

Ms. Magazine appears for the first time as a supplement to the *New Yorker*

The first e-mail program is invented in Cambridge, Mass

Scientists report the first successful freezing of mouse embryos

As part of the Apollo 17 mission, Eugene Cernan becomes the last man to walk on the moon

OPEC doubles the price of oil, sparking the gas crisis of the 70s. Oil went from \$1.50 a barrel to \$11.56 a barrel over the course of a few months. This Tuesday's price? Slightly over \$136 a barrel

Thirteen women serve in the U.S. House of Representatives, two in the Senate. That's 3.5 percent of the legislative branch. Among them are the first Asian-American, Patsy Mink of Hawaii, and the first African-American, Shirley Chisholm of New York

Another New Yorker in Congress is Bella

Abzug. Who went on to organize the first National Women's Conference in Houston and to found women's organizations of her own. Who told us that "Women have been trained to speak softly and carry a lipstick. Those days are over."

Roe v. Wade is decided by the Supreme Court, overturning state laws prohibiting first and second trimester abortions. It was successfully argued — twice — by Texas attorneys Linda Coffee and Sarah Weddington

President Nixon declares a ceasefire after the Paris Peace Accords are signed and takes most of the American troops out of Vietnam. The U.S. Prisoners of War are released and John McCain returns home after more than five years of captivity

Attorney Hillary Clinton, 26 years old and just out of Yale Law School, is working on the Nixon Impeachment inquiry on the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives

Barack Obama celebrates his 12th birthday

UPC barcodes are introduced in grocery stores to universal shopper's suspicion

The Endangered Species Act passes and DDT is banned, largely because of a book written by a woman, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*

Tower number two of The World Trade Center opens

The Boston Marathon is opened to women runners for the first time. Nine women finish the race.

Title IX is two years old and its implementation is still being delayed by administrative inaction.

And amidst these landmark events, the Clearinghouse on Women's Issues establishes an informed and civilized conversation that continues to this day.

As perhaps the most important election of our lifetime looms, the next generation of feminists — the third wave — need the Clearinghouse more than ever. Here is the forum where they can move the discussion forward, gain perspective, make sense of controversy, form coalitions, and honor the legacy of personal freedoms and expanded opportunities won over the past 160 years. I have no doubt whatsoever that you will live up to this mission.

Some Discussion Items after Susan Scanlan's talk

Asked if the women's movement should continue to advocate the inclusion of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the US Constitution, Scanlan noted that current women leaders in Congress, including Caroline Maloney, have put the ERA back on the agenda, changing the name to the Women's Equality Amendment. Other important topics included maternity leave policies and the need for mentors when working within the women's movement in Washington, DC.

Honorees and members were asked to share personal examples of discrimination and how they reacted to protect their rights, especially in the workplace. Some of the experiences were prior to the 1964 Civil Rights Act Title VII which provides protections against sex and other types of discrimination in employment.

Labor leader Joyce Miller reported that she objected to the men getting higher allowances for expenses than women. She was told that this was because the women labor organizers would be taken out for dinner by men. She succeeded in getting the union to change their unfair policy. Others reported on how they said they were unable to work for a company that would not pay them equally. These examples of courage led to discussions about how even with civil rights laws, women today, especially young professionals, need to negotiate for their fair salaries to help eliminate the current gender wage gap.

Mary Haney described the way she fought for women's equity when living in India during the 1970s while her husband was in the foreign civil service. During this period her "unofficial" position as a proponent of women's rights led her to a meeting with a staff person in India's Ministry of Education. A native of India, he was taken aback when he heard Haney speak of sex. She saw the confusion and suggested that she would speak of gender. Then she explained her concerns by asking if the official understood the problems with racism. He was a minority group member in India and fully understood racism. Then she described how "sexism" was parallel to "racism" and the official then understood her comments. This is an especially appropriate example, because Dr. Margaret Feldman, another honoree and former Clearinghouse board member, invented the term "sexism" in the late 1960s in Ithaca, NY.

Want to be Interviewed?

Stan Hinden, a columnist from the *AARP Bulletin*, a national circulation newspaper of the American Association of Retired Persons, is searching for people willing to be interviewed for a story he is researching. Please see his request below and feel free to contact him if you are interested.

The informal title of the story is: *Retired With Children*. The goal is to describe the situations in which many families find themselves these days, such as:

Situation One: The parents are getting relatively close to retirement and they are trying to save for retirement but they still have children at home who must be supported and educated.

Situation Two: The parents also are nearing retirement, or may even be already retired, but their children have come home to live because jobs are scarce in the current economic climate.

There are, of course, many similar situations—each with its own variations. But the key questions are:

How do families deal with the financial and other challenges that they face in these circumstances?

Do retirement savings take second place to college savings? Do some parents tell their kids: No, we only have a short time to save for retirement, you'll have to work part time and depend on student loans?

Are there strategies that some families employ to live frugally and stretch their dollars? Are people working two or even three jobs? Are people postponing retirement?

What are people doing to get by, to save, and to get to retirement in decent financial shape, while still doing the best for their children?

If you or your friends and colleagues know of any families that fit these descriptions, please contact Stan Hinden, Retirement Writer, at 301-598-9207 or email him at Stanjh@aol.com. You can check his website: www.stanhinden.com. He will call them and see whether they are willing to be interviewed for his AARP article.

NWLC Nov. 19 Awards Dinner

The National Women's Law Center annual awards dinner will take place Nov. 19 in Washington. Honorees are Debra L. Lee, chairman and CEO of BET Networks; Linda Greenhouse, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former Supreme Court reporter, *The New York Times*; and Deborah Slaner Larkin, advocate for women and girls and champion of Title IX. For more information, contact Nancy Delahoyd at ndelahoyd@nwlc.org or call (202) 588-5180.

Noted: Two Anniversaries

July 19-29 marked the 160th anniversary of the First Women's Rights Convention, in Seneca Falls, NY.

Aug. 26 was the 88th anniversary, when the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution became law, and women could vote.

About.com: Women's History Site

Included in material on suffrage is a tongue-in-check article, from 1915, by writer Alice Duer Miller, entitled, *Why We Don't Want Men to Vote*:

Because man's place is in the army.
Because no really manly man wants to settle any question otherwise than by fighting about it.
Because if men should adopt peaceable methods, women will no longer look up to them.
Because men will lose their charm if they step out of their natural sphere and interest themselves in other matters than feats of arms, uniforms, and drums.
Because men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at baseball games and political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them unfit for government.

Candidates Budget Info

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget recently released *Promises, Promises: A Fiscal Voter Guide to the 2008 Election*, which analyzes the details and costs of the two major presidential candidates' fiscal policies. This and other reports focusing on fiscal policy and the 2008 presidential election can be found at www.USBudgetWatch.org.

From Barbara J. Ratner, President

Here we are again. This was the fastest summer ever! We're ready to begin another meeting schedule with exciting topics and dynamic speakers. We hope many of you will join us at lunchtime to share the ideas and thoughts of our members, speakers and guests.

I have just returned from the Democratic Convention in Denver. Every aspect was spectacular but I noted that women's issues were finally entering into the discussions, particularly pay equality and domestic violence. We should be proud that there are so many more women in politics and they are such compelling speakers.

Sarah Gotbaum

Our newest board member is very familiar with Washington and the Clearinghouse. She has worked and volunteered here for many years. After completing her bachelor's degree at Brooklyn College, her master's at Columbia and her Ph.D. at Yale, Sarah has held positions in government, politics and women's organizations, working on pay equity, healthcare, aging and disability issues just to name a few. A few years back she was program chair of CWI. Now Sarah is the force behind the reorganization of Montgomery County OWL. She has three sons, a daughter and eight grandchildren.

Women and Politics Blog

The Women's Campaign Forum Foundation has a new blog, www.womenandpolitics.org. WCFF is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping women prepare for public leadership roles and build the skills and knowledge they need to become political leaders. "The blog is set to become our mouthpiece, a new platform on which our members and our staff can use to continue our mission of empowering women in public service and making our voices heard."

"We'll be featuring guest bloggers and cross-posts from sites like Pundit Mom and Heartfeldt Politics. We are also starting our blog with 'Letters from the Conventions,' an in-depth look at the Democratic and Republic National Conventions that will profile women from all levels of influence at the conventions."



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

October 28

Next CWI Meeting

Sexism in the Media

November 19

The National Women's Law Center annual awards dinner.

See page 7.

January 25, 2009

Women's Legislative Briefing

12:30-5pm. University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus.

For information call 240-777-8330.

Photos by D. Anne Martin; June meeting summary draft by Lauren Shapiro, intern, Feminist Majority Foundation. Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design.

CWI Board of Directors, July 2008 - June 2009

OFFICERS: *President*, Barbara J. Ratner; *VP Program*, Sue Klein; *VP Membership Co-chairs*, Jean Landweber and D. Anne Martin; *Treasurer*, Linda Fihelly; *Secretary*, Harriett M. Stonehill.

DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Sarah Gotbaum, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*, Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Sexism and Racism in the Media

How should feminists counteract sexism and racism in the print and electronic media? What criteria should be used for the criticism of sexist and racist coverage of candidates? What is not acceptable in the coverage of women and minorities? The speakers, Erika Falk and Shir een Mitchell , each have impressive experience in the communications field that will help us better understand and counteract the sexism and racism, obvious and subtle, that often play a role in influencing elections.

Erika Falk, PhD, is the associate program chair for the master's degree in communications at Johns Hopkins. Prior to this she served as research director of the Washington office of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, where she wrote reports on diverse communication issues. Author of *Women for President: Media Bias in Eight Campaigns*, Falk has a doctorate in communications from the Annenberg School and a master's degree in politics from the University of California.

Shir een Mitchell is the founder and executive director of Digital Sisters/Sistas, Inc., a non-profit organization focused on using digital media and technology to help women and children who are traditionally underserved. Mitchell has combined information and communication technologies to assist organizations with policy, advocacy and education issues. She has written many articles including *Gaining Daily Access to Science and Technology*, in the book *50 Ways to Improve Women's Lives*, and *Access to Technology: Race, Gender, Class Bias in The Scholar and Feminist Online*. Mitchell is a graduate of University of District Columbia and is currently working on a doctorate in human-computer interaction.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, October 28, 2008 / 12 noon sharp - 1:30 pm

Open to the public, no reservation necessary.

PLACE:

One Dupont Circle, American Council on Education, [NOTE DIFFERENT ROOM](#)
Conference Room A Floor1B. Bring brown bag lunch.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

*A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle.
Please allow time to go through the sign-in system.*

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 25, 2008
Post Election Feminist Issues*

The Politics of Aging — Health Care for All

The speakers at the Clearinghouse September meeting were Ashley Carson, executive director of the Older Women's League (OWL), an experienced advocate for women, children and seniors, and Laura Feldman, grassroots manager of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare and a professional advocate for older Americans; she previously served as president of the Southern Gerontological Society.

Ashley Carson declared that the Older Women's League, founded in 1980, is still the only national advocacy and education organization dedicated to the wellbeing of older women. Its three major areas of focus are: healthcare, economic security, and quality of life. Every Mother's Day, OWL releases a report highlighting critical issues. Members then lobby Capitol Hill for reforms benefiting older Americans. This past Mother's Day, OWL released an addendum to its 2007 Mother's Day Report, which proposes the expansion of Medicare under the title "Medicare-For-All."

While supporting measures to preserve and improve the original Medicare provisions, OWL also backs a universal system of health insurance for people of all ages provided by original Medicare. It is important to note that this system maintains a public-private partnership in the processing of claims—this system of "universal" health care is not the wholly government-controlled plan that has elicited so much fear in the minds and hearts of Americans.

Carson described the origins of the universal health care campaign in the United States, which received a big push in the 1990's. She cited cost as the single greatest barrier to health care insurance and emphasized the fact that more than 47 million Americans are uninsured. She listed the proposed plans and current events that have cut down on progress—including President Bush's



Ashley Carson & Laura Feldman

veto of expansions of State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

Carson then offered reasons why Medicare-For-All is, in fact, the best plan to date. Medicare is a proven system that has already been in place for years, in which patients can continue seeing their own doctors. It offers necessary health care serv-

ices for older women; nearly all women 65 and older are covered by Medicare. She said that women in particular need Medicare: women tend to live longer and have chronic illnesses at old age, are more likely to be in poverty, and less likely to participate in an employer health plan.

Carson drew on her own experience. After being diagnosed with cancer at the age of 25, she was disqualified from obtaining medical insurance. Her pre-existing condition led insurance companies to reject her; at the same time, not in poverty, she was not eligible for her state plan. She noted that many Americans fall into this gap, and Medicare-For-All would ensure that they would be given the care they need in such situations.

Carson emphasized that Medicare-For-All would reduce non-benefit costs, substituting one billing regime for the thousands used now and eliminating costs related to advertising, commission, business expenses and administrative needs. On the other hand, the other proposed plans place various conditions on the receipt of coverage, which, in effect, *add* non-benefit costs. In addition, this defeats the savings that "could get us closer to covering everyone." Finally, she emphasized OWL's conviction that "assured and affordable health care is a necessity, a fundamental right, not a privilege."

Laura Feldman reminded the audience that political candidates' positions are only ideas. Currently, the two presidential candidates are acting consistently with their parties' respective ideologies. The Republicans—who believe in less government, personal responsibility, free market

Program Summary, continued

reform and the trickle-down effect—believe that leaving health care to unregulated competition in the free market will improve the quality of health care in the long run. The Democrats, who have faith in government, regulation and social programs, also believe in government intervention. They believe more in trickle up than trickle down, such as raising the minimum wage and tax breaks for middle income people.

Feldman feels that people do not fully understand Senator Barack Obama's plan. What Obama is actually proposing, she explained, is a national insurance plan. This plan lowers the premiums, which raises the risk pool. Because this lowers the cost of health care, more people are able to enroll and gain protection under it. This health care system is not run by the government—the insurance companies are still the insurers.

Senator John McCain, on the other hand, is a staunch supporter of tax incentives and wants to give Americans more money with which they can choose to purchase their own insurance. Hence, when the two candidates say they vow to “strengthen” health insurance, they are talking about two completely different approaches, and neither involves “universal” health care coverage.

Feldman noted that it was interesting that Carson emphasized “assured and affordable” health care as a basic right. As an advocate in 12 states, she frequently asks her crowd, “How many of you believe that basic health care is a right?” Feldman revealed that she has never gotten a majority “yes” answer. Even in a small town region in Pennsylvania, the responses came out 50/50. In light of this, she asked, why do progressives believe that basic health care is *not* a right? She explained that people are simply confused as to what constitutes “basic” health care, just as they are confused and scared by the term “universal.” The reality, she stated, is two-fold: the American people just are not there yet, and there isn't enough money to fund either Obama's or McCain's health care plans.

However, Feldman cautioned the audience not to give up hope. “A manager,” she said, “lights a fire under people. But a leader lights a fire *in* people.” While Obama knows, and even stated a few years ago, that he cannot change health care tomorrow, he still has faith in the ability to enact longer term changes in the system. He asks instead, “Where do we want to be in five years?”

This, she claimed, is a more realistic timeframe for the goal of changing health care.

Feldman then summarized the basic provisions of Medicare. Medicare A is the hospital side; once reaching the age of 65, patients can go to the hospital, pay a deductible and have full coverage. Medicare B is the doctor side: while Medicare covers 80 percent of the doctor reimbursement, the patient is responsible for 20 percent of it, and he or she needs to buy private insurance to pay for this portion. Medicare A and B combined are supposed to cover what is medically necessary. In recent years, Medicare C and D have been added. Medicare C, known as “managed care” and “Medicare Advantage Plans,” is private health care, and was added to the former Medicare provisions in a manner that the general public has not realized. These private plans are subsidized *by* the government *to* private insurance companies; in effect, companies are receiving money from the government in order to cover this 20 percent. Medicare D includes prescription drugs. These last two forms of Medicare, she said, are factors that have contributed to the higher cost of health care in Medicare. She stated that, contrary to the popular opinion, it is not Medicare that has driven up the cost of health care, but health care itself.

During the Q&A portion the speakers were asked about their predictions on the effect of the financial market crisis on government action in health care. Feldman stated that Congress and the next administration will be forced to make important decisions in a short amount of time. She feels that the war and the economy will be bigger priorities, and that health care will only be a priority if the next President decides to make it one. Carson agreed, claiming that it will be awhile until politicians get on the ball. Feldman added that it is to our advantage that the baby boomers are currently aging. As they encounter the flaws in the health care system and speak up in great numbers, the government will be harder pressed to do something about it.

One attendee asked, “What are the actuaries saying about the funding for Medicare?” Carson responded that they have reported that the trust fund for Medicare should be solvent until 2018. Feldman noted that the terms “solvent” and “insolvent” are misleading. The funding will never

Program Summary, continued

actually be “insolvent” because there is always money coming in; it is up to the administration, then, to decide how much they want to afford.

Another attendee commented on the number of doctors forced to cap reimbursement or reject Medicare patients because they simply cannot afford to take them on. The reimbursement of doctors, then, is another flaw in the system. Feldman agreed and declared that we all need to fight against this.

The speakers were then asked whether they think that the projected 20 percent funding cost will press the government to action on health care. Feldman answered yes, and expressed her hope that whoever wins the upcoming presidential election tells the truth: that we cannot currently afford it and that we must find a way to pay for it. The real question, then, is: How do we choose to pay for it? Carson noted that under the Medicare-For-All system, reimbursement rates would rise.

One attendee suggested getting rid of private insurers and asked what the speakers thought about the idea. Carson stated that the only role she sees for private insurance companies is as an intermediary. It would not be wise to abolish them completely, she reasoned, because they are a huge source of funding—they are the only

way that the money would be there. Feldman agreed and asserted that getting rid of private insurers would be a tremendous challenge, especially given that they are one of the pillars of our economy.

Another attendee asked whether there exist any comprehensive reports that note all of the factors that drive up the cost of health care, including the high cost of medical school and the popularity of brand name drugs over generic drugs. Carson stated that, although she is not aware of any such reports, organizations such as OWL and Families USA have some very good research and statistics. Feldman responded that, while there is no national incentive to do this, our country has come a long way. These factors are all moving parts, and while there are no over-all plans that incorporate them all, we can gradually get there by acknowledging them and integrating them into the present research.

The speakers were then asked about the off-sets gained from preventative care, such as by quitting smoking, and how we might go about creating incentives for early intervention. Feldman answered that it is hard to prove a negative (e.g., how many lives could have been saved if a certain number of people quit smoking). This is just one more challenge to health care reform.

From Barbara J. Ratner, President

We’ve been through difficult times before but since the 1929 depression I don’t think we’ve experienced any economic challenge like our current situation. As if this presidential election were not stressful enough, our economy is causing us to rethink our futures. One TV financial expert said not to worry about something you can’t do anything about. So, I won’t worry. But believe me, I am very concerned! Does that choice of words sound better?

CWI presents meeting topics that are relevant to women’s lives. Join us to become better informed and get answers to your questions. Our meetings provide the opportunity to visit with interesting women (and sometimes a few men) and also give you the time to relax for a little while. We look forward to seeing you.

MLAW Legislative Agenda Conference

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) will hold its fourth annual Legislative Agenda Conference on Saturday, November 8, 2008 from 9:30am to 2:30pm at the American Federation of Teachers, Conference Room, 5800 Metro Drive, Baltimore, MD. Delegate Karen Montgomery, the keynote speaker for the conference, is the current chair of the Women Legislators of Maryland, also known as the Women’s Caucus. For information, call 443-519-1005 or e-mail admin@mdlegagenda4women.org.

CWI 2008-09 dues were payable in September. Although our meetings are open to the public at no charge and guests are welcome, if you are not already a member, we would appreciate your joining. There are membership forms on our website.

For Women Only

Elderhostel is now running some travel programs only for women. If you are interested, check out their website

www.elderhostel.org/programs/search_res.asp?keyword=women.

Jeannette Rankin Returns To Congress

Everyone is invited to attend the screening of the film, *A Single Woman* at the Capitol Building Room HC5 at 3:30pm October 30. *A Single Woman* stars Jeanmarie Simpson as Jeannette Rankin, the first US Congresswoman and Lifelong pacifist. Cameron Crain is featured in several roles, reprising his work in the play which he performed with Simpson more than 200 times in a multi-state tour between 2004-06. View the invitation online www.asinglewomanmovie.com or contact Cameron Crain 775-232-4974 for more information.

FREE! 2009 Women's Health Calendar

The calendar, we're told, is "full of information about and for women... on topics such as health, nutrition, life, etc." It is published by the National Women's Health Information Center, part of the Department of Health and Human Services. Submit your order soon because they tend to run out. To print an order, go to www.womenshealth.gov/pub/2009Calendar.

Women: Pessimistic on the Economy and Worried About the Future

That's the headline from a National Women's Law Center press release about the findings of a poll conducted for them recently by Peter D. Hart Associates. To read the release go to www.nwlc.org/details.cfm?id=3326§ion=newsroom.

NCWO Fellowship Award

This year's Younger Women's Task Force Fellowship has been awarded to Lillian Walker Shelton, a legal secretary at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Among her many volunteer activities, she is an activist member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). Having recently completed a graduate certificate program in conflict resolution, Shelton decided to establish dialogue groups that she hopes will empower young women who are members of the blue collar workforce.

Small Business Rule: Women-Owned Businesses

(From the blog of the National Women's Law Center) The U.S. Small Business Administration on Oct. 1 published a final rule that weakens a program that helps women-owned small businesses receive a fair share of federal contracts. Visit nwlc.blogs.com/womenstake/2008/10/administration.html.

Women's Policy, Inc. Briefing

Women's Policy, Inc. held a briefing last month, titled, "Expanding the Middle Class: Expanding Path to Self-Sufficiency for Women and their Families." Information on the various topics covered may be found on the website, www.womenspolicy.org.

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, January 25, 2009 Montgomery County Commission for Women's Women's Legislative Briefing

NEW LOCATION: University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus, Rockville, MD. The event is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required. Registration opens November 2008. For more info, please contact the MCCCFFW at 240-777-8330.



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

10401 Grosvenor Place #917
Rockville, MD 20852

FIRST CLASS MAIL

COMING EVENTS

- October** **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**
Hispanic Heritage Month
- Saturday, November 8** **MLAW 4th Annual Legislative Agenda Conference**
(see page 4)
- Tuesday, November 18** **Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC**
Champions of Choice Annual Awards Luncheon
Grand Hyatt, 1000 H St NW, Washington, DC
To inquire about purchasing tickets or tables, contact 202-347-8500
x7520 or www.championsofchoice.com to register online
- Wednesday, November 19** **NWLC's Annual Awards Dinner**
For info and tickets www.nwlc.org

*Photos by D. Anne Martin; September meeting summary draft by Jennifer Lee, CWI member.
Newsletter production by Letterforms Typography & Graphic Design.*

CWI Board of Directors, July 2008 - June 2009

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DIRECTORS: Alvin Golub, Sarah Gotbaum, Roslyn Kaiser/*CWI Newsletter Editor*, Jessica Lazar, Kellye McIntosh, Ruth G. Nadel, Ellen S. Overton, *ex officio*.

Examining Prospects for Progressive Social Change

We've cast our ballots and the results are in. How can we ensure that the Obama administration and a stronger Democratic Congress will pursue a progressive agenda on feminist issues, including civil rights, child care, pay equity, domestic violence, employment, housing rights, immigration, education and judicial appointments? Our speakers Nan Aron and Lisalyn R. Jacobs have extensive familiarity and experience with the judiciary and women's issues.

Nan Aron is President of the Alliance for Justice, a national association of public interest and civil rights organizations, designed to advocate for a fair and independent judiciary and to strengthen the public interest community's influence on national policy.

Lisalyn R. Jacobs is Vice President for Government Relations of Legal Momentum, formerly known as NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. She has worked in the Office of Policy Development of the U.S. Justice Department on a number of issues including implementation of the Violence Against Women Act, judicial appointments, the welfare reform law and affirmative action. She also served as Chief of Staff of the Civil Rights Division, as well as Special Counsel to the Director of the Violence Against Women Office.

Date/Time: Tuesday, November 25, 2008 / 12 noon — 1:30pm

Open to the public, no reservation necessary

**Place: American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle,
8th floor Kellogg Room.** Bring brown bag lunch

IMPORTANT NOTICE

A photo ID must be shown at the security desk of One Dupont Circle.
Please allow time to go through the sign-in system.

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 27, 2009
A Fresh New Year: What Women Need to Know*

Sexism and Racism in the Media

The speakers at the CWI October 28 meeting were Erika Falk, the associate program chair for the master's degree in communications at Johns Hopkins and author of *Women for President: Media Bias in Eight Campaigns*



Erika Falk and Shireen Mitchell

(University of Illinois); and Shireen Mitchell, an active feminist, who has had 20 years of communications experience working with various organizations and specializing in the use of digital media and technology to help traditionally underserved women. Mitchell is vice chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations and also heads NCWO's media and technology task force.

Erika Falk based her remarks on her book, which contains the results of her study of press coverage of eight women candidates for president between 1872 and 2004; she compared them with equivalent men who ran in the same races. In each case, Falk took the highest circulating newspaper in each candidate's home town and the *New York Times*, from the first day of the month in which they entered the race through the day they exited the race.

Falk pointed out that many women have run for president and she picked the eight who had received the most publicity. The first woman to run for president, Victoria Woodhull (1872), did so when women could not vote, none been elected to the House of Representatives, and there were not many female reporters, editors, or newspaper owners. The other candidates included in the

book and the date they ran were Belva Lockwood (1884); Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (1964); Rep. Shirley Chisholm (1972); Lenora Branch Fulani (1988); Rep. Pat Schroeder (1988); Sen. Elizabeth Dole (2000); and Sen. Carol Moseley Braun (2004).

Hillary Clinton's campaign for president occurred after Falk's book was published, but Falk did a pilot study on her campaign, and shared some of the findings with us. Clinton entered the race three days before Obama, and she was considered the front runner. Nevertheless, in Falk's survey of six major newspapers in the first month of the campaign, she found Obama mentioned 59 times in headlines, with Clinton receiving 36 headline mentions.

Initially, Falk expected to "find dramatically disparate coverage of women and men candidates in the 19th Century," leading to demonstrated equality in 2004. But, she reported that "most of the differences found in the coverage of 1872 were still present in 2004," suggesting that "attitudes about men and women have not changed as much as we think they have." She found that men had twice as many articles in newspapers and they were generally 7 percent longer. Surprisingly, this did not change much over time.

On coverage of public policy issues, women received around 16 percent of the paragraphs on their public policy positions, and men received 27 percent of the paragraphs. Falk explained that meant men had 68 percent more issue coverage of policy posi-

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tions than women. Clinton did much better in this category than the average of the women who ran before her, but did not do as well as the typical white men who ran before her.

Another category of the research was called dropped titles. For instance, Margaret Chase Smith was often referred to as Mrs. Chase Smith, rather than Sen. Smith. This was true of 32 percent of references to women; with only 11 percent of such references to men (this was not true for Rep. Pat Schroeder). Clinton's title was dropped 19 percent of the time, compared with Obama's 14 percent. In the category of physical descriptions, women received four mentions of their appearance (*i.e.* hair, clothing, good looks) for every one used to describe men; Falk added this also has not changed over time. As for viability, men had three times the positive viability comments that women received (example, Rockefeller will be a front runner). But Clinton had 21 positive viability mentions compared with Obama's seven.

Falk stated that emotional descriptions have not changed over time either. Terms such *alarmed*, *delighted*, or *moved to wipe away tears*, were used for women two times more per 10,000 words than for men. Falk also said that in every case, the gender of women's supporters was noted; their character and their families were mentioned twice as often as men's.

Lest women be demoralized by her results, Falk pointed out that in general when women run for political office, women win just as often as men, despite the bias; she added that one of the best ways to overcome the bias is for more women to run for office so that women become more common in the political field.

In conclusion, Falk said, "With the radical changes that have taken place for women in politics and journalism over the last 130 years, it is surprising that the press portrayals of women candidates have not changed more... though biased coverage may be very understandable given extant sex roles and sexism in

American society, we should be no less concerned about its potential impacts." Lack of coverage could possibly dissuade women from running, and may make it harder for women to get elected.

Shirleen Mitchell talked of several organizations and programs with which she is involved, including the Women's Coalition for Dignity and Diversity in the Media; Women in Media and the News (also a blog); Feminist Media List; Women's Action and the Media; Women's Media Equity Collaborative; and the NCWO task force. Each of these organizations, she said, takes some form of action to combat the prevalent stereotypes of women.

Mitchell said, "We succumb to the stereotypes that we're accustomed to seeing. When the media starts to use them, we may not realize that they are derogatory, and we may accept them as reality." She referred to the *slippery slope of racism*, saying we may identify with a white woman or a black man or a Latino, but we do not see the diversity or culture within the groups, and the person loses any further identification unless there is a targeted area of concern. Someone can be described as Latino, a general description, but could come from many different places — Mexico, Cuba, Spain, or Puerto Rico.

Atrocious things may be said in the media, Mitchell said, which may seem acceptable to some because it's during political campaigns. About aging for instance, once Chris Matthews asked, "Who wants to see a woman age before your eyes?" Mitchell's response to the remark is that it's the kind of thing men hear their friends say, inappropriate in the media. Another example on TV was the insinuation that Chelsea Clinton was being *pimped out* to work on the campaign.

Many were outraged about the reference to Michelle Obama as Barak Obama's *baby mama*. That phrase in the black community is a typical comment about a single black mother. *Baby Mama* also was the title of a movie, Mitchell said, and it's "a great example of how far a stereotype can be taken without

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realizing how inappropriate it is.” In this case the movie was about a single mother — who happened to be white.

Mitchell then discussed several other examples of the prevalence of stereotypes. There was the flap over Don Imus’ remark about the Rutgers girls’ basketball team, which was based on a stereotype of black women that seemed to make it okay to insult them. They were college girls and athletes. The stereotype is “they had to be

rough girls,” Mitchell said, “They were not cute, demure or attractive.”

She further touched on the Isiah Thomas incident, in which Thomas, the coach of the New York Knicks, called a black female a bitch; he defended himself, saying a white man couldn’t say that, but a black man could.

Then Mitchell spoke about the Reverend Wright, Obama’s former minister, who made denigrating remarks about America. Implying that people are not knowledgeable about and do not understand the black church, Mitchell

said, “what happens is that some aspect of remarks that are not understood is turned into fearmongering. People may think all black churches are like that.”

The media presents “snippets” of remarks, and people may not hear the context of a statement. It’s a sound bite culture, she said, and so much information is out there and repeated often. People then make decisions on small bits of information.



Shireen Mitchell and Erika Falk

Mitchell then listed some actions that have been taken: Chris Matthews was pressured to apologize. There’s monitoring of the airwaves, —a “Matthews watch,” as well as a “Michelle Obama watch” to catch denigrating remarks. A congressional hearing was held on “Imus to Industry,” which focused on why

these denigrating images were prevalent and why it is not all right, even in political debates, to degrade women. She said, we also talked with media heads and told them they don’t have enough people on staff to alert them to what’s inappropriate before it is sent out.

From Barbara J. Ratner, President

Now what? Now we have the opportunity to enact laws and programs beneficial to women. Where do we even begin? So many issues have been ignored and neglected throughout the past administration. We have elected new leaders. Now we need to join women’s organizations to help them implement their agendas. Join us for our November meeting and find out how to participate in the process. What exciting times!

Women Running for Office — Good Looks Count!

A recently published study finds that “women must appear attractive as well as competent if they want to be elected to political office. The reason may be the same as people preferring attractive mates — good looks tend to signal overall biological fitness.” The study found also that men continue to hold an advantage overall. Male politicians were perceived as significantly more competent compared to female politicians. “Everyone had to seem competent to get a vote. But while men needed to appear approachable to get an edge, women had to be good-looking... Studies have shown that this effect tends to go away when more women run for high office — Voters may be able to learn to reduce their reliance on these cognitive short-cuts.” The report is published on the Internet at www.reuters.com/article/scienceNews/idUSTRE49U00620081031 (copy and paste this URL in your browser)

Women’s Media Center

Check out WMC’s website, www.womensmediacenter.com. It is filled with items of interest to CWI members. Here are several: WMC has a new video, *Sexism Sells but We’re not Buying it*. It covers many of the sexist remarks on TV during the election campaigns. Hard to believe what was said.

Lorelei Kelly of the White House Project has an article titled *National Security: Women Must Define the Debate*. Kelly spoke on national security challenges at CWI’s April 2008 meeting.

Margot Dorfman, executive director of the U.S. Women’s Chamber of Commerce, recently testified before Congress on the effect of the economic turndown on women businesses. Dorfman spoke at CWI’s October 2006 meeting on challenges that face women in the workplace.

CWI 2008-09 dues were payable in September. Although our meetings are open to the public at no charge and guests are welcome, if you are not already a member, we would appreciate your joining. There are membership forms on our website.

Women Buying Health Policies Pay A Penalty

That’s the headline on a front-page story in the October 29th *New York Times* that said “women pay much more than men of the same age for individual insurance policies providing identical coverage, according to new data from insurance companies and online brokers... Insurers say they have a sound reason for charging different premiums. Women ages 19 to 55 tend to cost more than men because they typically use more health care, especially in childbearing years.”

But even without maternity care, women pay more, “because claims experience... (shows that women) are more likely to visit doctors, to get regular checkups, to take prescription medications and to have certain chronic illnesses.” For women whose insurance policies do not cover maternity care, the cost for bearing a child can be as much as \$8,000. The article includes statistics showing that in some specific companies, women may pay anywhere between 31 to 49 percent more than men. “Rep Xavier Becerra of California said, ‘If men could have kids, such disparities would probably not exist.’”

Women’s eNews

Go to the Women’s eNews website www.womensenews.org/ to view coverage of the House, Senate, and gubernatorial races in which women were the candidates, and the outcomes of key ballot initiatives. Click on Rosie the Voter and check out the 35 races Women’s eNews identified as the hottest in the country involving female candidates.

A New Platform

The National Women’s Law Center (NWLC) has developed *A Platform for Progress* with concrete proposals to address the unmet needs of women and their families in the areas of education, employment, basic economic security, health, and legal rights.



Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

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COMING EVENTS

- Tuesday, November 18** **Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC Champions of Choice Annual Awards Luncheon**
Grand Hyatt, 1000 H Street NW, Washington, DC
To inquire about purchasing tickets or tables, contact 202-347-8500 x7520 or www.championsofchoice.com to register online
- Wednesday, November 19** **NWLC's Annual Awards Dinner**
For info and tickets www.nwlc.org or call 202-588-5180
- Monday, November 24** **YWCA Sesquicentennial Celebration**
Kennedy Center, Terrace Theatre; ticketing information, www.kennedy-center.org, tickets, \$18.58 (YWCA's founding year)
- January 25, 2009** **Women's Legislative Briefing**
12:30-5pm. University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus.
For information call 240-777-8330

Photos by Sue Klein

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