

# CRWG's New Director

I write to you as the newly appointed director of the Center for Research on Women and Gender. We return to the model of having one Director for both the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health and the Director of CRWG. It is a natural and perfect relationship and I join the CRWG with much enthusiasm and hope for our future work to promote multidisciplinary activities to improve the lives of women and girls.

I also write to you a month after the US elections of 2004. The election results made me both sad and angry -- and occasionally without hope. I fear for the CRWG/CoE and for all of us involved in this important work for women. I think the implications are huge both globally as well as domestically for all men and women of good conscience. But I worry most about the women and girls. The promise over the next four years of two to four new justices for the Supreme Court and the threat that poses to reproductive freedom; the increasing presence of politics over science in decision-making about women's health, such as the Federal Drug Administration's decision not to offer Emergency contraception as "over the counter" after two scientific panels recommended they do so; Congressional Amendments to the House of Representatives to restrict federal funding to the National Institutes of Health for any research dealing with sexuality. These are only a few examples of the intimidation we face. But they are also indications of the work that is yet to be done.



In the face of these new and dire challenges, we continue in our efforts here at CRWG/CoE, building on past accomplishments and new knowledge about women and gender in society. One of our main activities is to increase women's leadership in all levels of academics. As a women's health researcher and scientist, I was pleased to learn of the New Pioneer Awards recently awarded by NIH. I was, however, far less pleased to note that not one woman scientist was among the nine recipients. As noted in the NIH announcement, "the awards support individual scientists and thinkers with highly innovative ideas and approaches to contemporary challenges in biomedical research." It is difficult to believe that in the year 2004, given the large numbers of women with graduate and medical degrees, that not one woman was worthy of this honor. We are all well aware of research findings that confirm the problems women scientists face in terms of their work being systematically undervalued by both male and female evaluators. It is for this reason that the CRWG/CoE has written to the Director of NIH, Dr. Zerhouni, to strongly encourage him to examine the criteria applied in evaluating the New Pioneer Award applications. We have suggested that an independent assessment be undertaken to ascertain whether there was a subconscious negative bias in the decision making process. We preferred this suggestion, not in a punitive way, but rather as a means to ensure that there was no bias in the NIH evaluation process this year and to avoid the possibility of bias in future years. We also encouraged NIH to resume yearly reporting on the percent of grants submitted to NIH by women as well as the percent of awards given to women, as this can be another important mechanism for monitoring diversity among awardees. The NIH has agreed to conduct an independent evaluation of the New Pioneer Awards and to examine how unconscious assumptions about men's and women's competence may have favored the selection of all men. The NIH is the premier research institutions in the world and is comprised of individuals at all levels that value science and the use of science to find truth and we applaud the NIH for their actions.

So we have some successes---and the struggle continues. It is at times like this that I try to remind myself no matter what, we cannot be "without hope". Rather, we must rededicate ourselves to doing what it is our job at the CRWG to do: rectify health, education, and work inequities and promote social justice for women and their families.

Looking to the future with hope,

Best, Stacie Geller

## A Generation of Troublemakers: Veteran Feminists Celebrate at UIC

--Joanne Spencer Kantrowitz, Ph.D. ( U. of Chicago, 1967)



Forty years ago -- yes, 40 -- Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique*, the book that shook the rafters of American society. Soon after, in 1966, a group of women meeting in Washington as part of the federal Commission on Women got together and formed The National Organization For Women. Then the fights broke out, touching major areas of American life and attacking the sentimentalized version of woman so parodied in *The Stepford Wives*.

Ten years ago, those pioneers created yet another organization: The Veteran Feminists of America (VFA). With its beginning, the VFA gathered together those women who were activists before 1978. Our membership includes well known activists like Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. But it also includes the women who made the changes happen. These are the women

who changed the credit laws, lobbied for Title VII and Title IX, eliminated the segregation of job ads to male and female categories, sued the banks, the corporations, the universities for discriminating against women, sat in at men's clubs and bars, dressed up as witches and "hexed" leading male chauvinists, formed support groups for abortion clinics, lobbied for maternity leave, child care, attacked Supreme Court candidates, and ran women's campaigns for local and national political office. These are the women who produced too many "actions" to list in one paragraph and who made it possible for women now under 50 to reach for the opportunities that were denied their elders.

These are the women who came to UIC on August 27 and 28, 2004 to celebrate the founding feminists of the Midwest. Although the national media tends to focus on the east coast, feminist activity was and is intense and effective in the Midwest as well. (Steinem grew up in Toledo, Friedan came from Peoria. We produce hearty women here in the heartland!) At this first VFA celebration in Chicago, 88 women received medals honoring their contributions to the women's movement during the years before 1975, among them UIC professors Alice Dan and Judith Kegan Gardiner.



In a joyous reunion of veterans and sisters, the women remembered the past and planned for the "unfinished business" still remaining. They created an archive of oral interviews, part of their ongoing focus on gathering and preserving their history. They planned voter registration drives to get out the vote of young women, they examined feminist solutions for motherhood and family, they looked at the far right and asserted the religious feminist role in their movement. They came together to celebrate, to criticize, to plan again and again to exercise their influence in the future. It was a glorious season, a glorious tribute to the anniversary of women's right to vote on August 26. That amendment produced by the "radicals" of the First Wave is now enshrined in American history. So, too, the radicals, the "troublemakers" of the 1960's and 1970's are now approaching their own places in the history of women's assertion of equal partnership in the American landscape.

Those who missed this event can find some enlightenment at our website, <http://www.vfa.us>. As VFA co-chairperson of the reunion, I salute the Center for Research on Women and Gender and especially Patricia Newton who provided so much of the organization and expertise that made our "Unfinished Business of the Women's Movement: Dangers and Opportunities" a sell-out success. It's wonderful how women work together! The Veteran Feminists of America joyfully acknowledge their partnership with the women's center at the University of Illinois in Chicago and thank them for their kind and gracious hospitality. May we live to celebrate together again!



*Joanne Kantrowitz has lived two careers, the first as an academic, the second as a feminist activist. Her activism began with a legal case asserting discrimination in faculty appointments against Kent State in 1974. That was stonewalled until 1982 when her essay on the case forced a conclusion. That essay appeared in *Rocking the Boat: Academic Women and Academic Processes* (New York: Modern Languages Association, 1982). She subsequently did public relations in New York for Westchester NOW and for Professional Women in Construction, worked in four political campaigns for women candidates in the New York legislature and for U.S. Congress. (The latter included Bella Abzug and Nita Lowey.) In the early 1990s, she successfully intervened in a woman's discrimination suit against the Westchester police department. Her work as Education Chair for the local NAACP there created a program for local schools to recruit minority teachers. In 1998, she retired to Chicago with her demographer-husband, Dr. Nathan Kantrowitz. Her two sons also live in Chicago.*

## Featured Scholar

The featured researcher for this issue of *BRC* is the CRWG's new director, **Stacie E. Geller, Ph.D.** Dr. Geller is an Associate Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Illinois College of Medicine and at the School of Public Health. Since 2002, Dr. Geller has also been the Director of the UIC National Center of Excellence in Women's Health -- one of only 21 nationally designated Centers of Excellence in Women's Health throughout the country. Before coming to UIC in 1998, she did a post-doctoral fellowship in epidemiology at the University of Michigan's School of Public Health.

Dr. Geller is a health services researcher and epidemiologist with expertise in maternal and women's health issues, as well as complimentary and alternative medicine related to women's health. Dr. Geller has published extensively in these areas, with articles appearing in *The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, *The International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics*, *The Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, and *Menopause*, to name a few.

Dr. Geller has a well established research career and has been awarded numerous research grants in the past 6 years in the areas of maternal mortality and morbidity. Since 1999, she has been the Principal Investigator of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cooperative agreement entitled "Investigation of factors associated with maternal mortality." She and her colleagues developed an innovative model for early identification of high-risk women that has garnered national attention, and she has presented this work at several national and international meetings. Dr. Geller's work in maternal mortality and morbidity extends to international circles where she is currently the Co-Principal Investigator on a 5-year National Institute of Child Health and Human Development randomized clinical trial comparing the use of oral misoprostol to standard of care to reduce postpartum hemorrhage in rural India. This study teaches local midwives and traditional birth attendants new and innovative ways to reduce bleeding after delivery of the baby. This is an important public health problem in rural India, as 50% of all women deliver at home, miles from a physician or hospital.

Dr. Geller's research interests extend beyond that of pregnancy to the midlife and menopause. She is currently a Co-Investigator for a 5-year, National Institute of Health, National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine center grant "Botanical Dietary Supplements for Women's Health." She is also the Principal Investigator of the clinical component of this grant for the conduct of Phase I and Phase II clinical trials of two plant extracts (black cohosh and red clover) for the treatment of menopausal symptoms. She has recently completed a successful Phase I clinical trial on these two botanicals and is currently conducting the Phase II clinical trial. Dr. Geller is also a Co-Investigator on a study to examine the "Effects of Prempro®, Black Cohosh and Red Clover on Cognition Function in Menopausal Women." A total of 112 healthy menopausal women are being recruited to participate in the study. They will be randomly assigned to one of four groups taking black cohosh, red clover, Prempro (a combined estrogen and progestin hormone replacement drug) or a placebo. This clinical trial -- the only one of its kind in the United States -- will seek to determine whether the botanicals offer an alternative to hormone therapy for relief of hot flashes. Recent studies have linked long-term use of hormone therapy with significant health risks. Because of this health scare, many women are looking for alternatives, but there is very little scientific information on the botanicals and dietary supplements currently on the market.

## Challenges to Women's Leadership in Academic Medicine

--by Claudia Morrissey, M.D. M.P.H., Deputy Director and  
Director of the WISE Program, CRWG



### Challenges

Although the number of women enrolled in medical schools across the US has increased dramatically over the last 30 years -- approaching parity -- women's entry and advancement in academic medicine has been slow. Between 1995 and 2001, the proportion of full-time women faculty members increased by a mere 3%, from 25% to 28%. And these female academic physicians consistently lag behind their male counterparts in terms of remuneration, promotion, and tenure regardless of their number and accomplishments. Examine the faculty cohort appointed in 1980 eleven years later, and you find that 83% of men have achieved associate or full professor status versus only 59% of women. The absence of women in top leadership positions is even more glaring with numbers at token levels-- 12% of full professors, 8% of academic department chairs, 6% of deans.

This stubborn persistence of differential advancement has led to rethinking what was previously perceived as simply a pipeline problem: too few women entering medicine leading to too few choosing academic medicine; too few achieving distinction in their fields; too few interested in tenure and leadership positions. Clearly there are other dimensions to this problem beyond the oft-claimed scarcity of "qualified" women.

Attention is increasingly being directed toward the operations and culture of medical academe itself, a system, like others, that rewards or marginalizes to preserve the status quo. Women faculty are negatively affected by system inertia in several ways. First, the norm that assumes unlimited time for professional endeavors differentially disadvantages women. Faculty commitment is still based on the age-old practice of paying for the services of one while benefiting from the work of two -- a man and his wife. Such a supposition is an anachronism in the 21st century with women entering waged labor in record numbers and dual-career families the norm. By and large, working women continue to have primary responsibility for children, elders, and housework. Thus the time beyond the 40-hour workweek that can be devoted to professional endeavors is often more limited for women than men. These competing demands can cause acute problems for women in academic medicine where the period of peak career obligations coincides with child-bearing and early child rearing.

Complicating this picture, career demands have grown for all workers over the last 30 years. Americans work six more weeks per year than we did two decades ago and eight more than the average European. In fact, workers in the United States are putting in more hours per year than in any other country across the globe. "Commitment creep" only intensifies the difficult decisions women academics must make between work, on the one hand, and private interests and obligations, on the other.

Second, traditional system processes facilitate ongoing discrimination against women and minorities, however inadvertent or subtle. Decision-making in academic medicine is too often undemocratic, lacking in transparency, and based on veteranism and cronyism, resulting in access to fewer resources -- space, start-up funds, support staff -- and more clinical and teaching expectations for women faculty. As Tobias, Urry and Venkatesan note in *Science*, "To be sure, women need to better understand the mechanisms of hiring, funding, and promotion; that is, how to play the game. But the game itself has to be purged of cloning, patronage, and outright discrimination if transparency in hiring and promotion is to become the rule."

Third, system norms continue to reinforce a narrow range of values, given that top leadership in academic medicine remains primarily white male. Women and minorities are often underrepresented on high-level committees and other decision-making bodies, rendering them voiceless on important procedural issues and policy decisions. Their experiences are not brought to bear on the critical issues of how medicine should be framed and practiced, and how research and teaching must change to meet the demands of a more diverse patient and student population. Career "gendering" makes this lack of diversity even more acute in some departments, given that women are still concentrated in family medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics/gynecology.

Academic medicine clings to these antiquated norms and arcane processes at its own peril; lack of diversity in leadership stifles innovation and creativity. Research findings reveal that heterogeneous teams consistently out-perform homogeneous ones. Yet attracting women and minorities to academic medicine is becoming more and more difficult. Currently, the academy is perceived as having a chillier climate for women than does industry, serving to decrease the pool of women in academic careers. If medicine is to attract the best and brightest, regardless of sex or ethnicity, concerted efforts to warm the climate and reconfigure work commitments to 21<sup>st</sup> Century realities must be championed by senior leadership.

Continued from Page 4

## Responses

Clearly, the pipeline for women in academic medicine is replete with holes, resulting in only a trickle of leaders emerging at the end. System retooling will be necessary to reach the “tipping point,” often cited as 30%, when women in leadership positions are no longer isolated and easily marginalized. To begin this transformation, the AAMC has endorsed several approaches to improving the climate and opportunities for women in academic medicine. These include efforts to:

1. Emphasize faculty diversity by evaluating department heads on their successful development of women faculty;
2. Focus on the professional development needs of women faculty within the context of enabling all faculty to achieve their professional goals;
3. Determine which system practices differentially disadvantage women’s professional development, such as rewarding unrestricted availability to work;
4. Increase the effectiveness of search committees to attract female candidates by providing insight into group processes and how candidates’ qualifications are characterized and evaluated;
5. Support Women in Medicine programs and the AAMC Women Liaison Officer;
6. Monitor and report on the representation of women at senior ranks.

CRWG’s National Center of Excellence in Women’s Health responded to this challenge by sponsoring the “Beyond Parity: Transforming Academic Medicine Through Women’s Leadership” conference in September 2002. There have been two major dividends from this meeting: the Beyond Parity Workbook for Action <http://www.uic.edu/depts/crwg/whatsnew.htm> that is being distributed nationwide, and the College of Medicine Faculty Academic Advancement Committee (FAAC). *Building Research Connections* will profile the mission and activities of FAAC in our next newsletter.

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<sup>3</sup> Bickel J et al. (2002 October) Increasing Women's Leadership in Academic Medicine: Report of the AAMC Project Implementation Committee. *Acad Med* 77: 1043-10612

<sup>4</sup> Valian V. (1998). *Why so Slow: the Advancement of Women*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Williams J. (2000). *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It*. New York: Oxford University Press

<sup>5</sup> Scheier L. (2002, May 5). Call it a Day, America. *Chicago Tribune*. Section 13 Health and Family

<sup>6</sup> Stuart R. (1999). Organizational Approaches to Building Gender Equity. Prepared for, *Made to Measure: Designing Research, Policy and Action Approaches to Eliminate Gender Inequity*. National Symposium, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 3-6 October 1999

<sup>7</sup> Study on the Status of Women Faculty at MIT. (1999 March). *The MIT Faculty Newsletter*. Vol XI, No. 4  
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<sup>8</sup> Tobias S, M Urry, A Venkatesan. (2002 May 17). Physics: For women, the Last Frontier. *Science*. Vol 296  
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<sup>9</sup> Lippman H. (2000, May). Variety is the Spice of a Great Workforce. *Business & Health*. pp. 24-29

<sup>10</sup> Women Scientist in Industry: A Winning Formula for Companies. (1999) *Catalyst*. New York: Catalyst

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## CoE

## Research Opportunities for Women

The UIC National Center of Excellence in Women's Health now maintains a Women's Health Research Registry (WHRR). The main objective of the WHRR is to assist women in finding research projects of interest. Since it was initiated, over 400 women have joined the registry and indicated an interest in participating in research here at UIC. All names in the registry are confidential and used solely for the purpose of educational mailings about the research opportunities. Women included in the registry are asked to initiate contact with the individual study investigators for more information.

Over 70 open protocols are currently listed on the publicly accessible research opportunities web site at <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/womenshealth/opportunities>. In addition to providing a list of research protocols currently seeking women ages 18 and over, the site also provides links to the UIC Cancer Center, Eye Center, and Center for Cognitive Medicine open protocols. Many of these studies are seeking women and minorities in order to comply with the National Institutes of Health's policy on the inclusion of women and minorities as subjects in clinical research. For more information about this policy, please visit the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research website at [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women\\_min/women\\_min.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women_min/women_min.htm).



If you are interested in joining the registry and would like your name to be placed on the mailing list for the quarterly listing of open protocols, please call the Information, Referral and Appointment Center at 1-800-842-1002 and request the Women's Health Research Registry newsletter. The quarterly newsletter "Women's Research Opportunities" can be mailed to you via e-mail or ground mail. Principal Investigators who want to add a research protocol to the listing may do so on line at <http://www.cade.uic.edu/eHealth/application.aspx>.

## Community Outreach Initiatives

The CoE Clinical Core has an on-going partnership with the Chinese American Service League (CASL), a social service agency located in Chinatown that serves Chinese Americans living in Chicago and the suburbs. Through a grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health, the CoE provides osteoporosis education and screening to Chinese American women. During the first year of the collaboration over 200 women participated in educational presentations and received a bone density scan. The CoE and CASL have recently begun the second year of their collaboration.

The CoE Community Core has re-established the Women's Health in Beauty Salons Initiative, a project developed in 2001. The initiative aims to extend awareness about women's health and wellness to women in African-American communities through a training program that provides beauty salon owners with the resources and skills to affect the health of the clients they serve by improving women's sense of well-being. Beauty salons provide an excellent opportunity to reach women of all ages in a friendly environment where women congregate, to focus on improving women's sense of well being. The initiative extends the concept of personal beauty to include personal health. This year the initiative will focus primarily on breast and cervical cancer prevention and screening as well as general women's health concerns that salon clients might be interested in learning about. The project will work with five beauty salons in neighborhoods on Chicago's West Side and South Side, and activities will focus on breast and cervical cancer.

## Heart Health

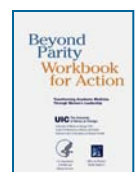
On October 1, 2004 the CoE was awarded a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health. The CoE will work in collaboration with the University of California Los Angeles CoE and the Mariposa Community Center of Excellence in Women's Health (CCOE) to enhance the Heart Truth campaign web site for Health Care Professionals and test the site for usability. The Heart Truth campaign is part of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) mission to inform both community members and health care providers about the devastating effects of heart disease in women. The goal of the Heart Truth campaign is to give women a personal and urgent wake-up call about their risk of heart disease.

The grant will allow the UIC CoE to add educational materials to the National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) web site, which will serve as a resource for health care providers seeking additional information about heart health for women. The CoE will also provide links to research articles and Medline references, information about heart health research studies, and patient support web sites. Usability testing will be performed on the web site using input solicited from urban and rural practitioners, private practitioners, academic practitioners, and practitioners at community clinics. The grant will allow the web site to not only provide an information gateway for providers, but also to inform patients about the importance of heart health.



## Leadership Activities

In addition to the publication of the *Beyond Parity Workbook for Action*, the CoE has been involved in leadership activities on campus. The College of Medicine's Deans Committee on Faculty Academic Advancement (FAAC) meets monthly, and recently hosted a visit by Dr. Molly Carnes. Dr. Carnes, Director of the University of Wisconsin Madison CoE, spoke at a faculty breakfast for women at UIC and to Department Heads in the College of Medicine where she was introduced by Joe Flaherty, Dean of the College of Medicine. Dr. Carnes spoke about the efforts underway at the U of WI to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of underrepresented faculty. In an effort to promote diversity in the College of Medicine, the CoE and FAAC also plan to continue efforts on a College of Medicine self-study that was started last year.



## The Prison Issue of Feminist Studies

By Judith Kegan Gardiner  
Professor of English and Gender and Women's Studies, UIC

While Interim Director of CRWG, I continued my work as a member of the editorial board for the interdisciplinary journal *Feminist Studies*. I co-edited the summer, 2004 special edition of the journal, entitled "The Prison Issue," which is now available at bookstores like *Women and Children First* or through the *Feminist Studies* web site. This issue includes essays by UIC's Beth Richie and by Ann Stanford of DePaul, who spoke about her prison project at a CRWG-sponsored talk on campus. Many of the essays in the special issue feature the voices of incarcerated women themselves. The excerpt below is adapted from the Preface to this issue, co-written by myself and my fellow editorial board member Lisa Crooms, Associate Professor at the Howard University School of Law.

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As we prepare this special issue of *Feminist Studies* on "Women and Prisons for publication, the abuse of Iraqis detained at Abu Ghraib prison has come to light. Stories and images witnessing the sexual humiliation and other types of abuse visited upon Iraqis by U.S. and British military personnel have been roundly criticized by those who recognize the legitimacy of the Geneva Conventions even in the midst of an illegitimate war. Most of what has been reported has involved male detainees whose nakedness has been seared into our memories as their basic humanity has been violated in the name of the War on Terrorism. Less visible, however, have been the women held in Abu Ghraib who have also reportedly been sexually abused, raped, humiliated, photographed naked, intimidated, even "disappeared."

Despite the evidence of the abuse of both female and male detainees, the media continues to focus primarily on the abuse meted out to the men. Women are included, if at all, almost as afterthoughts. While the majority of those both detained and abused are men, the numbers cannot be the only reason women have been less visible as victims of these human rights abuses. The stories and images of men as victims of sexual abuse, humiliation, and intimidation may seem particularly egregious because such treatment challenges their gender identity, making their feminization a central part of the military's tactics in breaking down the Iraqis and bringing them under control. If this is the case, then the abuse of female detainees may seem all too ordinary.

This ordinariness of being women and vulnerable to abuse, humiliation, and intimidation whether actually incarcerated or theoretically free is the situation faced by many of the women whose stories are told in this special issue of *Feminist Studies*. For some women, life in prison is a refuge from even greater oppressions in their home communities; for others it is a sudden initiation into a terrifying subculture; for many, unfortunately, it is the continuation of immersion in a toxic and inegalitarian society. According to Beth Richie's review essay, the situation of incarcerated women reveals "nearly all of the manifestations of gender domination that feminist scholars and activists have traditionally concerned themselves with -- exploited labor, inadequate health care, dangerous living conditions, physical violence, and sexual assault. . . ." compounded together in a "convergence of disadvantage, discrimination, and despair."

In addition, imprisoned women face formidable problems of family separation, denials of citizenship, human rights abuses, and an institutionalization of racism, classism, and homophobia as well as sexism that distinguishes the United States as the most concentrated prison society among developed nations. This issue of *Feminist Studies* vividly illustrates what incarceration means to the women behind bars, to those who work in prisons, and to the circles of women that include former offenders, their families, and all the rest of us. As a whole, by presenting the words of prisoners, prison workers, scholars, and anti-prison activists, this issue achieves the goal that Rachel Roth holds out for her essay investigating prisoners' abortion rights, "to bring women in prison from the margins to the mainstream" of feminist scholarship.

The prison system is filled with catch-22 provisions for its inmates. One that is especially heart-rending concerns the challenges faced by incarcerated mothers with children in foster care. Often they lose permanent custody because the rules for family reintegration depend on birth mothers being actively involved in decisions about their children and in keeping contact. Although U.S. prisons punish and degrade the incarcerated rather than rehabilitate them, incarcerated women also demonstrate vast reserves of resilience and hope. Several essays describe creative encounters between feminist scholar activists and incarcerated women who stage plays based on mythological plots, interpret novels that confounded professional literary critics, and write poetry. According to Ann Folwell Stanford, women in Cook County Jail wrote poetry that helped them achieve a new, more empowered "notion of collectivity." Similarly, Beth Richie, herself an activist scholar in the movement for alternatives to incarceration and restorative justice, describes feminist books about women and prisons that "take readers beyond the bleak statistics and the broad political and economic analyses directly into the lives of incarcerated women as they tell" their stories of "lives behind bars."

The efforts of formerly incarcerated women to build new lives are hampered by social distancing, shame, and stigma. One goal of this issue of *Feminist Studies* is to reduce the distance between women inside and outside those bars by drawing wider attention to the unique victimization, agency, and talents of incarcerated women. Another goal is to expand feminist academic theorizing through testing it against the situation of incarcerated women for whom the topics of feminist theory are living, insistent matters -- including the meanings of voice and silencing, conditions for individual agency, the institutionalization of oppression, and the intersections among race, class, gender, and global economic forces. More intensely, and with fewer resources, incarcerated women face all the problems of those of us who remain outside and responsible to them.

## Women and Science and Engineering

WISE

### What's Up with WISE?

The Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program is marking the end of our first year in the Science Learning Center on the East Campus. Our new location has allowed us (and our copying machine, staplers, rulers, pens, paperclips, etc.) to be more accessible to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) students. We're starting to build a community that will help improve and expand our programs. Some of the new developments in these programs, which focus on the entire STEM pipeline, are described below.

#### Pre College Program

The Girls' Electronic Mentoring in Science, Engineering, and Technology (GEM-SET) project continues to connect over 700 girls, ages 13-18, with seasoned female mentors using a web interface. GEM-SET is completing its third year and has just produced "The Best of GEM-SET," a sampling from the archives of posted questions and answers and a how-to replication manual. Our recent focus has been on identifying and recruiting GEM-SET partners from our own UIC neighborhood. Interest is tremendous, particularly from the many new charter schools springing up as part of the Renaissance 2010 initiative. One of our most recent partnerships is with Perspectives School in the South Loop.

WISE just received funding from Caterpillar to support our UIC WISE Neighbors outreach effort. Members of WISE Chic(ago), our student organization, have put together a presentation about careers in STEM, "How to Get There From Here." These STEM ambassadors will don their WISE Chic t-shirts, pick up the laptop and LCD just purchased with grant money, and visit classrooms in middle and high schools throughout the near Westside. We hope to motivate young neighborhood women interested in math and science to stay the course and think of UIC as their perspective college of choice.

#### UIC Student Program

The WISE Wing living /learning community began its second year with a well-attended, high-energy WISE Wing Fling. The number of WISE Wing residents is still small (17), but enthusiasm runs high. WISE continues to host monthly pizza nights and has encouraged residents to set up study groups for all the gatekeeping STEM courses.

The WISE student-to-student mentoring program has nearly doubled this year with over 80 students participating. Third and fourth year STEM students are paired with first years by major or interest area. Two "Meet you Mentor" orientation meetings were held this fall and mentoring pairs are encouraged to attend monthly WISE activities. Our first AY 04/05 WISE "STEM Careers: A World of WISE Choices" workshop—featuring women from industry—was held in October. For November, WISE will host a workshop on stress reduction, helping students get "in the WISE zone" prior to finals.

WISE has attracted major funding for scholarships this year. In addition to the existing four \$1000 tuition scholarships for undergraduate engineering, we will be announcing ten \$3,750 scholarships for science and engineering. Application and selection criteria will soon be posted on the WISE Web, <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/wise/>. Please encourage female science and engineering students in good standing to apply.

#### Faculty Program

WISE received a small grant from NSF to continue building momentum for gender equity in eleven target STEM departments through its Women in Science and Engineering System Transformation (WISEST) Initiative. WISEST Facilitators were named for each department and they have amassed data on the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women faculty in their departments. These data were presented to the WISEST Executive Committee, headed by the Provost, at the WISEST retreat in August. Facilitators sent the committee six action items based on this data and their work over the last year. Recommendations include expanding on-campus childcare to allow for infants, using cluster hires when there are fewer than 2 women faculty in a department, and making progress towards gender and ethnic equity an annual reporting requirement for all Deans and Department Heads.

WISEST is eagerly awaiting the results from a climate survey that was fielded to faculty of the Colleges of Engineering and LAS. Analysis is underway. WISE will work with the Provost and other units on campus that are charged with improving the working environment for all UIC faculty. Five WISEST Leadership Seminars were held last year, orienting STEM leaders to how gender equity is framed and addressed at other institutions.

This year's seminar series was kicked off in October with an all-campus women faculty breakfast and workshops featuring Dr. Molly Carnes. Dr. Carnes is Principal Investigator and Director of the NSF ADVANCE project and the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health at the University of Wisconsin. Attendance at all events exceeded expectation. Clearly WISE has many allies across campus invested in making UIC a destination of choice for talented underrepresented faculty.

WISE is always appreciative of staff and faculty involvement. Please let me know if you'd like to devote some of your precious time to helping with this important work.

Claudia Morrissey, MD, MPH

Director

Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Program

Women in Science and Engineering System Transformation (WISEST) Initiative

## CRWG Community Partner Spotlight

### Chicago Women in Trades Receives a Major Federal Grant to Attract Illinois Women to Careers in the Construction Industry

*Building Research Connections* is especially pleased to feature one of the CRWG's longstanding community partners, Chicago Women in Trades, on the heels of the organization's receipt of major funding. In October 2004 Chicago Women in Trades received a multi-million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's High-Growth Construction Industry Workforce Solution Initiative to coordinate the three-year "Women in the Skilled Trades" (WIST) Collaborative Project.



For readers unfamiliar with the organization, Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1981 that is dedicated to improving women's economic equity by increasing the number of women working in well-paid, skilled trade jobs, particularly high-wage, blue collar jobs in construction, manufacturing, and other well-remunerated skilled labor. CWIT's organizational efforts are directed towards:

- advocating for policies that increase women's access to and retention in careers in the trades, and that promote equitable working conditions for women employed in the trades;
- increasing awareness of the gender wage gap, occupational segregation, and non-traditional employment opportunities for women;
- providing direct service programs that assist women and girls to prepare for and pursue careers in the trades.

Nontraditional occupations offer women wages and benefits far exceeding wages in female dominated fields and combat the persistent wage gap between men and women's earnings. A journey level tradeswomen earns approximately three-and-a-half times the wage of a childcare worker, a job typically filled by women. CWIT direct service programs prepare individual women and girls to succeed and flourish in the skilled trades. CWIT also conducts research to document areas that need improvement, develops policy recommendations, challenges discrimination and institutional barriers, provides technical assistance, and develops strategic partnerships to promote equitable workplaces and conditions.

The WIST Collaborative Project -- the first of its kind to receive a national grant -- was developed by CWIT in cooperation with many diverse partners. Its purpose is to address the construction industry's workforce needs by linking them to the area's abundant pool of under-employed women through the region's existing workforce development and educational systems. The project aims to forge a linkage between the industry, community colleges, the workforce development system and community based organizations to increase female awareness of, preparation for, and participation in skilled construction trades. The WIST project will not only link disparate and independent systems, but create specific materials and programming necessary to reach an underrepresented population, and identify and fill the gaps in service to that population. As a result of the project the State of Illinois will develop new strategies for supporting the high growth construction industry's workforce demands by accessing nontraditional applicants, specifically women in this case, though the same innovations could be applied to other under-represented populations.

Since 1999 the CRWG's Evaluation and Technical Assistance Program has collaborated with CWIT to provide external evaluation services, offer training in evaluation to CWIT staff, and to develop an organization guide for participatory evaluation. The guide, entitled "Tools of the Trade: A CWIT Guide to Participatory Evaluation" (created by CRWG staff Kris Zimmermann, Janise Hurtig, and Erin Small thanks and funded by CWIT) will be available on line through the CRWG web site, <http://www.uic.edu/depts/crwg/> in 2005.

For more information about Chicago Women in Trades, you may visit their website at [www.chicagowomenintrades.org](http://www.chicagowomenintrades.org), or call 312-942-1444.

## "Documents Missing Information about Women" New Report from NCRW

The National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) released a report entitled "Missing: Information About Women's Lives." The report documents a disturbing pattern in the activities of federal agencies with regard to research information on women. That pattern includes: the disappearance from federal government web sites of vital information important to women and girls' lives; a reluctance on the federal government's part to support and sustain offices dedicated to addressing the specific needs of women; and the government's inclination to ignore and/or tamper with key research affecting women's lives.



"This report outlines a series of decisions by federal agencies to delete, delay, alter, or spin data about what is happening to American women," said NCRW President Linda Basch. "Politics and ideology are trumping science on important issues that affect women's daily lives, resulting in the loss or manipulation of information critical to women and girls as they make decisions about their health, careers and safety. Without accurate information, research suffers; women and girls suffer; our society suffers."

Several of the scientists participating in the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) pre-college outreach program called Girls' Electronic Mentoring in Science, Engineering, and Technology (GEM-SET) recently shared first-hand observations about how misinformation is impacting science. Mentor Leslie Waite, PhD, Assistant Research Biochemist at the University of

California San Francisco and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign alumna, reveals "the smothering of research has been targeted at research projects designed to understand the risk factors for HIV/AIDS and the effectiveness of prevention programs for people who are at risk." She believes these policies are dangerous because, "it limits scientific freedom and scientific freedom is absolutely necessary for successful research." Joan Lusk, PhD, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Brown University and also a GEM-SET mentor, corroborates, "When scientific consensus is ignored, the whole scientific process is corrupted. Consensus can be challenged with new evidence and new theories, but to ignore evidence for political purposes is not right. In the long run it will do harm-just as imposing Lysenkoism in the USSR damaged Soviet biology and agriculture."

The full NCRW report is available through the MisInformation Clearinghouse found on the Internet at <http://www.ncrw.org>. Researchers are invited to submit web pages where accurate information about women and girls is now missing and also to submit alternate links where that information can be found. Together, we can work to restore and maintain the integrity of women's research.

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## Stories from the Parents Write their Worlds (Padres como escritores) Project

### The Joys of Reading, Writing, and Childhood Pranks

Each issue of BRC includes a selection of writings from the "Parents Write their Worlds" Program. Parents Write their Worlds is a program of the UIC Community Writing Project, coordinated by Hal Adams (College of Education) and Janise Hurtig (CRWG). The Community Writing Project offers writing workshops to residents of poor and immigrant neighborhoods in Chicago and publishes selections of their writing in the magazine *realconditions*. The "Parents Write Their Worlds" series of *realconditions* features writing by parents and relatives of students who attend Chicago Public Schools. The purpose of the series is to bring parents into the schools as equal participants in the educational process. Not surprisingly, most parents who participate in the writing projects are mothers and grandmothers. Through their stories and the discussions that follow, the workshop members show the importance of personal experience in understanding history, language and social change.

By encouraging the workshop writers to communicate their thoughts to others and reflect collectively on the meaning of their everyday experiences, the Community Writing Project also supports the participation of ordinary people in civic life. In past community writing groups, members have started larger discussions within their neighborhoods of themes raised in their writing and in some instances have taken action to change the conditions of their communities.

One of the ways some writers have done so is to become teachers of other adults in their communities. Abel Angeles, a long-time participant in the Telpochcalli writing workshop and the mother of children who attend Telpochcalli School in the Little Village neighborhood, now teaches Spanish literacy and English as a Second Language to other parents and grandparents. Below are two stories, one written by Abel and the other by one of her students, Rosa Pulido. Rosa is the grandmother of a Telpochcalli student. Rosa has learned to read and write thanks to Abel's amazing teaching abilities. Rosa is also a wonderful storyteller and now writer of her own experiences.

If you would like more information about the Parents Write their Worlds program or the Community Writing Project, contact Janise Hurtig at 312-413-7721 or [jhurtig@uic.edu](mailto:jhurtig@uic.edu).

stories from the parents continued from Page 11



### *Mis travesuras*

*Rosa Pulido*

Cuando yo era niña vivía muy feliz con mi mamá y mis hermanas. Yo era la más chica y muy juguetona. Mi mamá me enseñaba a lavar los trastes y a lavar la ropa. También me gustaba ayudarle hacer las tortillas, aunque no sabía. Se me pegaban en las manos y ella me decía que las hiciera bien. Como ella era muy buena me daba una canastita para que yo pusiera mis tortillitas. Yo las quería para jugar con mis amiguitas. Jugábamos a las comadritas. Mi mamá me dijo, “Si no va a hacer los quehaceres no te voy a dejar jugar. Les vas a llevar la pastura a los puercos.”

Yo fui con mis hermanas y les dije, “Dice mi mamá que les den la pastura a los puercos.” Y yo me escondí en la milpa. Cuando mis hermanas ya les daban el maíz y el garbanzo a los cochinitos yo salí corriendo y le dije, “Mamita, ya les llevé la pastura a los puercos. Deme la carne y la sopa y los frijoles.” “Ya voy. Espérate tantito.” “Ya Mami.” Yo le dije que pronto porque ya iban a llegar mis hermanas. Yo no había hecho lo que mi mamá me había dicho. No me había dado la comida para jugar cuando llegaron mis hermanas. Yo salí corriendo para que no fuera regañar. Así corriendo me fui a jugar.

Cuando mis hermanas llegaron le decían, “Ya llegamos mamá.” Ellas no se daban cuenta que yo le había mentido a mi mamá. Cuando yo llegué mis hermanas me preguntaron, ¿Dónde andas tú, chiquilla, que no fuiste ayudarnos?” Y decía mi mamá, ¿Cómo de que no fuiste, niña mentirosa? Yo no te dije que les dijeras a ellas, sino que tú lo hicieras.” Yo le contesté, “Mamita, perdóname, yo quería jugar con mis amiguitas.” Ella me abrazó y me dijo, “Ay, mi niña,” y me talló la espalda y me dijo que no lo volviera hacer. “No mamita,” contesté yo. “Nunca lo vuelvo a hacer.” Así fue mi mamá, muy linda y cariñosa.



### *My Escapades*

*Rosa Pulido*

When I was a girl I lived very happily with my mother and my sisters. I was the youngest and very playful. My mother taught me how to wash the dishes and wash clothes. I also liked to help her make the tortillas, even though I didn't know how. They would stick to my hands and she would tell me how to do it right. Since she was very kind she gave me a little basket for me to keep my tortillas. I wanted to use them to play with my friends. We used to play house. My mother told me, “If you're not going to do the chores I'm not going to let you play. Go and take the feed to the pigs.”

I went with my sisters and said to them, “My mother says that you should give the feed to the pigs.” And I hid in the field. When my sisters had already given the corn and garbanzos to the little pigs I came out running and said, “Mommy, I've finished giving the feed to the pigs. Give me the meat and the soup and the beans.” “Just a minute. Wait a bit.” “Hurry, Mommy.” I told her to hurry up because my sisters were coming. I hadn't done what my mother had told me to do. She still hadn't given me the food to play with when my sisters arrived. I left running so that I wouldn't get in trouble. I just ran off to play.

When my sisters arrived they said, “We're back, mom.” They didn't know that I had lied to my mother. When I arrived my sisters asked me, “Where have you been, little one, that you didn't come help us?” And my mom said, “What do you mean that you didn't go, you little fibber? I didn't tell you to tell them to do it. I said that you should do it.” I answered, “Mommy, forgive me, I wanted to play with my friends.” She hugged me and said to me, “Ay, mi little girl,” and then tapped my back and told me not to do it again. “No, Mommy,” I answered. “I'll never do it again.” That's how my mother was, very kind and loving.

Stories from the Parents continued from Page 12



### Abel Angeles

#### *Mi afición por la lectura*

A mí siempre me ha gustado leer. No sé realmente desde cuando, no me acuerdo. Pero este gusto por la lectura lo sigo teniendo. Cuando era chica recuerdo que al estar barriendo y me encontraba algún papel en el suelo, lo levantaba y comenzaba a leer. A veces eran pedazos de hojas de la escuela, otras eran anuncios. El hecho es que siempre quería saber que decía, y así me tardaba en terminar de barrer. Eso me hacía ganar los regaños de mi mamá porque no me apuraba a hacer mi quehacer.

Ahora que doy clases de alfabetización, llegaron a mis manos unos libros que uso para enseñar. Cuando los recibí del consulado mejicano me dió mucha emoción, como cuando recibía los míos en la primaria. Los tocaba casi con cariño. Los acariciaba, sintiendo la suavidad de la pasta, leyendo con alegría el título, para saber de qué materia era. Al abrirlos para ver que contenían, era realmente un placer. Eran libros que se abrían por primera vez para mí, para que yo leyera con gran gusto su contenido.

Todavía sigo sintiendo lo mismo. Ahora tengo más conciencia y puedo comprender mucho más de lo que leo. Por eso me impresioné con las folletas de "Educación para la vida." En ellos se enseña sobre muchos temas que son importantes para todas las personas. El que me impresionó mucho fue el de los Derechos Humanos. Yo nunca había sabido qué eran o cuáles eran exactamente los derechos dumanos. Sólo escuchaba en las noticias que se violaron los derechos humanos de una persona o comunidad y era todo. Ahora los conozco y ha cambiado mi manera de pensar y de ver la vida. Y me siento muy contenta de que mis alumnos y alumnas de alfabetización ahora los puedan conocer y defenderlos.



### Abel Angeles

#### My Fondness for Reading

I have always enjoyed reading. I don't really know since when, I don't remember. But I have always had this joy for reading. When I was little I remember that while I was sweeping if I spotted a piece of paper on the ground I would pick it up and start to read. Sometimes they were pieces of paper from school, others were ads. The thing is that I always wanted to know what it said, and so I was slow in finishing the sweeping. That won me the reprimands of my mother because I didn't hurry to do my chore.

Now that I give literacy classes, books come into my hands that I use to teach. When I received the ones from the Mexican consulate it made me very emotional, like when I received my own books in elementary school. I touched them almost with love. I caressed them, feeling the smoothness of the binding, reading the title with joy in order to find out what the subject was. As I opened them to see what they contained, it was really a pleasure. They were books that opened for the first time for me, so that I could read their contents with great enjoyment.

I still feel the same way. Now I have more awareness and I can understand much more of what I read. That is why I was impressed with the pamphlets "Education for Life." The pamphlets teach about a lot of themes that are important for everyone. The one that impressed me a lot was the one about Human Rights. I had never known what human rights were exactly. I had only heard in the news that the human rights of a person or community had been violated, and that was all. Now I know about them and it has changed my way of thinking about and looking at life. And I feel very happy that my literacy students can now know about them and defend them.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Welcome CRWG New Staff!

#### Veronica Arreola, WISE

Veronica I. Arreola returns to CRWG after being an advisor in the UIC Department of Biological Sciences. She was a project coordinator at CRWG from 1997-2000. Veronica earned her BS at UIC in 1997 and her MPA at UIC in 2003. An active member of the National Organization for Women on the local and national level, Veronica's interests range from education to reproductive justice. Outside of work Veronica is attempting to keep up with her 18-month-old bookworm daughter and teaching her the fine art of keeping score at a baseball game.

#### Rachna Chaudhari, CoE

Rachna Chaudhari joined the CRWG/COE staff in September of 2004. She is originally from Cedar Falls, IA and completed a BS in Chemistry from the University of Iowa. She received her Masters in Public Health from Tulane University and had prior work experience with the Center of Excellence in Women's Health at Tulane as well as Planned Parenthood of Louisiana.

#### Melissa Martin, CRWG

The CRWG also welcomes Melissa Martin as our new Visiting Assistant to the Director. Ms. Martin comes to the CRWG from the City Colleges of Chicago where she held a position as Administrative and Financial Specialist for 7 years.

### New Alice J. Dan Dissertation Award!

The Center for Research on Women and Gender announces its Fourth Annual Alice J. Dan Dissertation Research Award of up to \$3000 for Spring 2005. The purpose of this award is to encourage original and significant research about gender and/or women by UIC students.

The award is open to UIC doctoral students in any field who have completed the requirements for candidacy and have an approved dissertation proposal by Tuesday, March 1, 2005.

Applications should be delivered to the Center for Research on Women and Gender (1640 W. Roosevelt Road, fifth floor) by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 1, 2005. The winner will be announced in June 1, 2005.

The application, no more than five pages double-spaced, should describe the proposed dissertation research; present the rationale for it and its significance to research on women and gender; outline the methods and give progress to date; and present a one-page timetable for completion.

#### Supporting materials to be included:

- Documentation of candidacy (may be included in advisor's letter)
- Two letters of reference, of which one will be from the dissertation advisor
- Brief statement of background and commitment to research on women and/or gender

#### Applications will be judged on:

1. Potential for contribution to research on women and/or gender
2. Originality and significance to the major field
3. Applicant's academic preparation and ability to accomplish the work
4. Feasibility of completion of research within a reasonable time period.

For more information call or email:  
 Sarah Shirk 312-413-1636 sshirk1@uic.edu or  
 Pat Newton 312-413-1924 patrnewt@uic.edu

**CRWG STAFF****CRWG Bids Farewell!**

The CRWG also bids a fond farewell to Mary Lynn Dietsche, formerly the Center's Assistant Director. Mary Lynn began working at the CRWG in 1993 as Project Coordinator. Not only was she in many ways the financial and managerial backbone of the Center, Mary Lynn contributed to the cultural work of the Center through her involvement in numerous projects related to Women and the Humanities. Ms. Dietsche now holds a new position as Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Research at UIC. We will miss Mary Lynn deeply.

**Welcome New CRWG Board Members!**

Nancy Cohen, Associate Director of Development, Engineering Administration

Mary Lynn Dietsche, Assistant to the Vice Chancellor

Emily Godfrey, Visiting Assistant Professor, Family Medicine

Joan Kennelly, Research Assistant Professor, Community Health Sciences

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