Director’s Notes
Gale Summerfield

Words and things. Lourdes Beneria presents this as one of the key areas of debate in the interdisciplinary field of women, gender and international development (see below, 2003). As academics, we are always carefully balancing one with the other. The desire to address real-world, policy-oriented issues motivated the beginning of this field. In recent years, intriguing ideas have been raised by those examining meaning, identity, and culture. Beneria warns about “a growing imbalance between the urgent need to understand economic reality – since distribution is about social sharing of things material – and the more predominant focus on “words” (p.25).

This academic year, WGGP has set up its first study group of faculty and students examining the current discourses in the women, gender and international development field. Time constraints limit the number of readings we can discuss as a group, so we have decided to focus on Beneria’s new book, Gender: Development, and Globalization (Routledge, 2003), Feminist Futures: Re-imagining Women, Culture and Development (Bhavnani, Foran and Kurian, eds, Zed, 2003) (see a review of this book in the current issue of the online journal Feminist Africa www.feministafrika.org where Amina Mama is one of the editors), and articles by some of the speakers we are bringing to campus in the coming months, such as Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, Amina Mama, and Summerfield continued on p. 10

Gender and Human Security: Old Ideas, New Label?
Manisha Desai

Gender and Human Security is the “au current” concept in the fields of gender and international development, globalization, international relations, and in the UN literature. It seems to have replaced capabilities, human rights, and other such concepts in the literature. Is this shift yet another passing fad or does it reflect some new synthesis? I would like to make a case for the latter. In part, this trend no doubt reflects the preoccupation with security in a post 9/11 world. But to the extent that it focuses on people and expanding their capabilities so that they can enjoy various freedoms such as “freedom from want, freedom from fear, and freedom to take action on one’s own behalf,” I think it is a productive integration of the conceptual work of the last two decades on gender, capabilities, and human rights.

But this is not the formulation that one finds in all work that uses human security. For example, in the report of the UN’s Commission on Human Security, while there is acknowledgement of the need to broaden the concept from the state to the security of people, three of the six areas identified “in which manifestations of human insecurity are considered critical and pervasive” were related to conflict, post-conflict, and migration with an emphasis on conflict. Not that issues of human insecurity in these arenas are Desai continued on p. 11

WGPP Staff: Gale, Kathy, Paola, & Manisha
COMING EVENTS

WGGP SPRING 2004 SYMPOSIUM:
“GENDER, IMMIGRATION, AND HUMAN SECURITY IN THE MIDWEST”
MARCH 17-18, 2004
Ilini Union
1401 West Green, Urbana

Keynote Speaker
PIERRETT BONDAGNEU-SOTELO
Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Southern California
LATINO IMMIGRANTS AND RELIGION
IN THE CONTEMPORARY U.S.
March 17, 2004
4 p.m.
Lewis Faculty Center
191 West Illinois, Urbana.

This symposium will bring together scholars, community activists, and state officials to address the gender and human security issues confronting immigrants in the Midwest, focusing on activities in Illinois, the largest immigrant recipient state in the area. The day-long workshop will have three sessions: one on income security and housing; another on health and education; and a third roundtable for emerging issues and future collaboration.

Sponsored by WGGP, the Migration Studies Group, and the Chancellor’s Initiative on International/National Policy and Humanities in a Globalizing World. Co-sponsored by Center on Democracy in a Multiracial Society and other campus units.

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WU QING
Professor Emerita
Beijing Foreign Language University
and
People’s Deputy
Beijing Municipal People’s Congress
coming in September 2004
as a
George A. Miller Endowment Visiting Professor

Wu Qing has experience in academics, politics, and nongovernmental organizations. She helped set up and run the first telephone hotline in Beijing for women to voice their problems and get support. She started a television series about a young woman in Beijing. She is director of Cultural Development Center for Rural Women and is currently working for the rights of rural-urban migrants to education in the city.

ACHIEVING THE U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: PROMISES TO KEEP
Caren Grown

At the Millennium Summit held in 2000, 189 governments made a commitment to achieve eight goals that are labeled the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), namely to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development. The MDG framework represents a commitment to solving first generation development problems, and brings the issues together with concrete, time-bound targets and commitments.

The third goal among the eight seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. The inclusion of this goal resulted from many years of activism on the part of the international women’s movement and agreements by countries at a series of United Nations conferences in the 1990s. The target for this goal is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015. This target is clearly important, but education alone is insufficient for eliminating the range of gender inequalities that exist in labor markets and political and social life, or for empowering women to participate fully in society. In addition to this target, four indicators have been proposed for countries to use in tracking progress toward the goal: two indicators related to progress in education, one economic indicator (the female share of paid, non-agricultural employment, and one political indicator (the female share of seats in national parliaments). Although there has been progress since 1990, a

Grown continued on p. 12

FEMINIST AFRICA: AN INTRODUCTION
Amina Mama

Abridged editorial from the launch issue of the online journal, Feminist Africa

The launch of Feminist Africa marks a critical moment in the continental history of gender politics. Three decades after the development industry first began to respond to the international resurgence of women’s movements, African gender policies have become increasingly complex and contradictory. Feminism, as a movement that is both global and local, leaves little untouched. In post-colonial contexts it presents a praxis that directly opposes the hegemonic interests of multinational corporations, international financial and development agencies and nation-states, as well as the persisting male domination of disparate traditional structures, civil society formations and social movements.

In African contexts, feminism has emerged out of women’s deep engagement with and commitment to national liberation, so it is hardly surprising that African women’s movements today feature in the disparate struggles and social movements characterising post-colonial life. African women are mobilising at local, regional and international levels, and deploying various strategies and forms. Little wonder that they display gender politics ranging from the radically subversive to the unashamedly conservative. Gender politics in post-colonial Africa are deeply contested, within and beyond the minority who might name themselves as feminists. Today’s women activists are as likely to be engaging the World Bank over the deleterious impact of structural adjustment on African women as they are to be lobbying the national governments over the marginalisation of women in the corridors of political

Mama continued on p. 3

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power, or challenging traditional and community-based organisations.

Since independence, the persistence of patriarchal hegemony across the African region has stimulated a visible proliferation of feminist scholarship and strategy, yet this is only rarely brought together for collective reflection and analysis. The year 2002 has been an exciting one for the continent in this respect. Shared reflection began in January, when the African Gender Institute brought together over 30 women scholars working in gender and women’s studies from countries including Nigeria, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and Botswana to launch a new continental initiative, Strengthening Gender and Women’s Studies for Africa’s Transformation. [1] A few months later, the CODESRIA symposium entitled “African Gender Research in the New Millennium: Perspectives, Directions and Challenges” was held in Cape Town. This was a long-awaited follow up on CODESRIA’s 1991 gender conference, which yielded the book edited by Imam, Mama and Sow, Engendering African Social Sciences (1997). [2] A third major event was the Women’s Worlds Congress, which was held on African soil for the first time under the apt title, “Gains and Challenges”. Hosted by the Women’s and Gender Studies Department at Makerere University in July, this gathering was attended by over 2500 women and men from 94 countries, all of them in some way involved in African gender and women’s studies, with a sizeable proportion of them drawn from different parts of Africa. [3]

Feminist Africa responds to the heightened salience of gender issues in the African political and intellectual landscapes. It provides a forum for the intellectual activism that has always been as intrinsic to feminism in Africa as to feminisms anywhere else. It provides the first continental platform for reflecting on the accumulated wisdom which has matured in the cauldron of postcolonial gender contradictions. It is in this spirit that we see feminist knowledge as comprising the intellectual and political responses - historically rooted in the women’s movement - to the challenges relating to conditions of the African continent. In focusing on contemporary postcolonial feminist theories, politics and strategies, Feminist Africa makes no apology for valorising feminist academic work and insisting on rigorous analysis. The African continent has a rich history of globalisation, the re-marginalisation of women in the new African Union, WGGP Perspectives, Vol. 24(1), Page 4

not to mention the ongoing salience of poverty and outbreaks of conflict, civil and militarism, are all deeply gendered phenomena that demand incisive analysis and response.

The decision to embark on the strategy of producing an overtly feminist scholarly journal grounded in African contexts is born of the African Gender Institute’s ongoing engagement with gender politics, and its strategic objective of contributing to the production and strengthening of intellectual, analytical and strategic skills for advancing the quintessentially feminist agendas of African women’s liberation. It is therefore part of our ongoing suite of activities, all of which address the challenge of producing people seriously equipped to contribute to democratic transformation in a region where feminism clearly has a pivotal role to play.

Footnotes

Amina Mama, Ph.D., is Chair and Professor of Gender Studies, African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa, and Project Coordinator of the Strengthening Gender & Women’s Studies for Africa’s Transformation (GWS Africa) Project. Feminist Africa is a publication of the African Gender Institute and the (GWS Africa) Project with the support of the Ford Foundation. For more information, see http://www.feministafrica.org.
as more feasible legal articles’ changes than others. These were stated as follows: 1) An opening statement declaring the recognition of a general principal of sex and gender equality based on international conventions of human rights as well as the Prophet’s Hadith. 2) That in the eyes of the constitutional law and Muslim society, men and women’s rights and duties in matters of household responsibility, divorce, separation of wealth, and children’s custody and alimony be clearly defined, respected and correctly upheld. 3) That the age of maturity be raised from 15 to 18 for both young men and young women. 4) That the two most sensitive issues be abolished: polygamy and repudiation as well as the issue of men’s guardianship over women be removed. 5) That new DNA and progress in genetic scientific technology be used to identify and establish parental blood types and filiations in case of sexual assault, abandonment of women and/or children. 6) To abolish any disposition that will be contrary to international conventions or agreements, concerning the rights and protection of migrant women and their children, with host countries. 7) That women living in Diaspora should have same legal rights and support in matters of divorce, separation of wealth, and children’s custody and alimony. 8) That the Den Haag convention ratified by Morocco on the rights of children should be upheld and the women and refugees will be respected, based on the Geneva Convention, (article 12) ratified by Morocco on July 28, 1951.

At the end of our three day congress, all women attending agreed that our gathering should not just stop there and test on potential recommendations for a rewrite of the Mudawana. All the women present and I included, made a commitment to create an international network of Moroccan women, a world wide Moroccan women’s web site with the objective to share information and human/women resources, coordinating and following up on the progress of our actions, both at the local and global level, meaning in every participating country, region, city or agency.

This long-term project will help us keep track of the activities and progress of all Moroccan women associations in Morocco and abroad. Another short term project is the publication of a book, a collection of all the papers, that could be sold with its proceeds going to local women’s agencies such as the Casablanca’s Young Single Mothers Foundation that welcomed us and cooked our dinners every night, or the first women’s shelter and agency against domestic violence in Rabat. It is important also to highlight that the congress was originally initiated by CIOFEM, an agency of information and observation for all Moroccan Women, and a resourceful entity within the Democratic League of Women that also needs non-governmental independent funding.

My personal impressions.
I found actually amazing the passion and ingenuity of the activist women I met, as well as the strength, diversity, sense of timing, organization and direction of the politics of Moroccan feminist movement within and outside borderlands. I recall also from informal conversations how much Moroccan women were sensitive to the question of the reform of the Mudawana.

They kept repeating, “It is now or never!” The most interesting conversation took place often at the end of the day or during the breaks, behind the formality of the congress setting, in small groups of chatting women in the hotel lobby or in the bus that took us every evening after the congress to a Foundation for Single Mothers. There we were warmly welcomed and treated to delicious Moroccan dishes cooked by young single mothers living in the foundation. We contributed with individual donations put in an envelope. On Sunday afternoon, we visited the first women’s shelter against domestic violence in Rabat. The women who welcomed us were genuine, awesome, and well-grounded in the daily reality of underprivileged people. During the trip, we talked and interviewed each other, we took pictures and sang. It was amazing how in three days we passed from perfect strangers to united sisters in struggle.

After we befriended each other, exchanged cards, phone numbers and by the end of our sojourn, we were calling each other by our first names, singing, dancing and playing music and most of all opening our agendas, hearts and minds to each other. At the airport, we exchanged hugs. We could sense it in the air, I really felt at the time that we were part of something big, a movement really beyond our wildest imaginations. A dream about to come true.

On our last night, we were treated to a very nice goodbye party. As I looked and observed all of us, women beautifully dressed, singing, chanting and dancing with all their souls and bodies, I realized something that was quite extraordinary, I was surrounded by an active movement, made up of wonderful, smart and articulate women who came from far and wide, could go anywhere and could do everything they please. They knew how to work without and within the system; and proactively make waves, while awaiting for King Mohamed VI’s decision to reform the Mudawana and decide on the future of Moroccan women and children.

I have just been informed that the reform has been approved by the king and has passed as of October 10, 2003. Women have won on almost all the points. The newspapers called this reform of the Mudawana, “La Revolution de velour,” which translates as the velvet revolution because for some reason it went so smoothly. This so-called “Moroccan feminist victory over more conservative forces” has been widely acclaimed and celebrated. So much so that feminists have decided to make October 10 a V-DAY holiday. As a consolation prize, men have still the right to polygamy and repudiation, except that or both, which adds insult upon injury. So is this really a win-win or win-lose situation for women? The answer to that question I, myself, do not know, except that this is still a first step, a lot has been accomplished, but there is so much to do still.....

My second opening line in my speech was actually my mother’s last words before I left for the conference. The last image I have of her, I said, is her waving at me from the door of our home. As she was saying goodbye to me, she looked at me, straight in the eyes and said not only in words but also from the depth of her teary eyes, “Do not shame me! Make me proud.....You know what you and I had to fight for all our lives. Tell the truth like it is.”

So I dedicated the first part of my speech to my Mom, her friends and all the mothers like them — who raised their children alone because they had been repudiated by whimsical husbands and who made it through in spite of all obstacles......

All my gratitude once again to Kathy Martin, Manita Desai, and Gale Summerfield as well as Ken Cuno who were the first ones to support the ideas of this trip as well as Earl Kellogg, Associate Provost of International Affairs and Professor Blake, Head of Comparative Literature program, Professor Mattis and Professor Assaad from French department, Professor Pandurangadu from Religious Studies program and the Graduate College.

Zohra Belghiti is a GRID graduate student in Comparative Literature at UDC.

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REPORT FROM A GRID ALUMNA
Flora Kessy

The 2nd National Multisectoral AIDS conference in Tanzania, held in Arusha International Conference Center in December 16-20, 2002, was organised by the Tanzania AIDS Society (TAS) in collaboration with the government, academic institutions, donor community, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private sector. The objective of the conference was to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders involved in the fight against AIDS in Tanzania including people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) to come together and share the new knowledge and best practices and experiences in tackling the problem. More specifically, the main emphasis of the conference was to link new knowledge, experiences, science and technology to improve HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

The conference drew about 1000 participants from various institutions, government ministries, public and private institutions, community representatives, representatives of faith-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, representative of civil-based organisations, people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as media and information communication experts. It was also attended by representatives of international development partners and collaborating international experts. Twenty three countries from Europe, America and Canada, Africa, Asia and Australia were represented. The Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), which is my current employer, was represented by three researchers. The Executive Director presented a paper on “The Multisectoral Social Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS” in a plenary session. In addition, I presented a paper titled “Socio-economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education Sector: the case of Mbeya Urban District” in concurrent sessions. During the conference more than 200 scientific papers were presented in oral and poster presentations. In addition, community activities were given particular attention on each day of the conference. More fascinating were the presentations made by people living with HIV/AIDS in various sessions. In their presentations, stigmatisation and discrimination were observed to be the most constraining factors in the war against HIV/AIDS.

NEWS FROM OUR ASSOCIATES

Wendy Anaecke, Energy and Development Research Centre, University of Cape Town, South Africa (and Visiting Scholar at WGGP in 1995), recently completed a PhD thesis entitled, "One man one megawatt, One woman one candle: Women, gender and energy in South Africa, with a focus on research. The thesis sketches the evolution of women/gender and energy as a field of interest through development theory and the women/gender and development debates and critiques. It suggests that the early international women and energy literature followed the WID path, whereas later literature explored the differences between men and women's energy needs and roles, and called this gender and energy. In South Africa the field of gender and energy developed somewhat differently, due to South Africa's isolated position as pariah, the discourse of liberation and the politics of gender at the time. These differences affected initial research, but were short-lived once South Africa re-joined the international community and gender lost its political edge. The thesis explores the role of women in the energy sector, the types of feminist methodologies used in energy research, and the ways women have been able to influence policy making. It reviews the progress made, the impact of HIV/AIDS and how to improve our strategies for emancipation, including using the unique Ministerial Pledge for gender equality in the sector.

Manisha Desai, WGGP and Program in South Asia and Middle Eastern Studies, UIUC, edited the Greenwood Encyclopedia of Women's Issues Worldwide. Asia and Oceania (2003). She was invited by the Yale Interdisciplinary Bioethics Project to present a paper at their symposium on Globalization and Health: The Gender Challenge. Her paper was titled, "Gender, Health, and Globalization: A Critical Social Movement Perspective," at Yale University, June 19-21, 2003. She also received a travel grant from the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Science Foundation in their Women in International Science Cooperation Project to attend the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India. From December to May 2004, Manisha will be working with UNESCO in Paris to help set up their gender and human rights section.

Cynthia Radding, History, UIUC, published three articles in international journals and edited volumes, published in Mexico, Bolivia, and The Netherlands. She is concluding her book manuscript on Landscapes of Power and Identity, Imperial Borderlands in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia, from which she has presented chapters in progress on the UIUC campus, for the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory, and for the combined Latin American workshop of the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois-Chicago. During August 2003, Radding traveled to Bolivia, where she presented a paper in the First International Congress of South American History and advanced in the collaborative research she has begun on the recovery of local histories in the Chiquitano Indian communities, with strong participation by local women researchers.

Nancy Folbre. With support from the Chancellor's Initiatives on National and International Policies and Humanities in a Globalizing World, we have been holding focus groups on gender and human security of immigrants in Illinois, stressing health care access, income security, and housing. We are organizing a symposium on the topic for March 17-18, 2004, and have invited state officials and legislators, community activists and academic researchers. Illinois is the fifth largest recipient state for immigrants in the U.S. and there are lots of serious and interesting human security issues here. This is the first state to set up a state-level bipartisan task force on immigrants and refugees, and we have invited the members of the committee to participate in the symposium and work with us on policy issues. Although women comprise approximately half the immigrants, gender issues are almost invisible in the publications and policies that have come out in recent years. We have put together a brochure and a summary letter raising some of the gender issues, such as:

1. Health Care Access. Many immigrants, especially Latinos, lack health insurance. Women may have access to some special programs when they are pregnant but not otherwise. Children who are born in the U.S. can have KidCare coverage but providers are hard to find. Interpreters are often unavailable. We do not know whether mothers or fathers are more likely to take children to see doctors and dentists. Not enough is known about the different needs and actions of women and men.

2. Income Security. We know little about the different types of jobs and entrepreneurial activities that women and men are doing throughout the state. Nor do we know about work-related issues for women and men such as availability of benefits, transportation problems, work place safety, and ways of addressing grievances.

3. Housing. Housing discrimination has been noted in some areas around Chicago. We do not know if this is a problem throughout the state. Housing near work may be more important for women than men because they have more responsibilities for taking care of the children and feeding the family.

4. Education. To what extent are schools aware of the immigrants in their midst? What are the needs of first generation, non-English speaking immigrant children? Is there educational disparity among girls and boys? Are there opportunities for adult learning? Are there ways to help local school districts adjust to rapid fluctuations in the number of immigrant children?

Our gender and development background adds to our perspectives on immigrant issues. Latin Americans and Asians are the largest immigrant groups. When someone says, for example, that Mexican women only follow their husbands or family members and that new immigrants adhere so strongly to patriarchal traditions that women only do unpaid work and stay at home, we can raise questions based on research on women's agency and restructuring policies in Mexico. From those studies we know that many women move from rural areas to the city to work in maquiladoras, that increasing numbers of women are moving to the U.S. on their own, and that women contribute directly to household finances as well as reproductive activities through home-based businesses (microenterprises) and jobs outside the home. We also know that the depth and diversity of experiences make it difficult to categorize immigrant behavior easily.

WGOP is actively raising issues from many regions of the world through the activities that we are sponsoring and cosponsoring this year. Alice Heininger, Trent University, on women's organizations and returning immigrants in the Czech Republic, Amina Mama, University of Cape Town, on gender issues in the transformation of Southern Africa, and Mika Valka, Banjere University College, London, on the meanings of the sari, are some of the highlights of the fall semester. And we are already planning events for the next academic year: Wu Qing, professor emerita and politician in Beijing, will address inequities faced by China's 100 million rural urban migrants in September 2004 and Nancy Folbre, U Mass Amherst, will be a keynote speaker at our October 2004 symposium on transnational caring work. We also are arranging for Irene Tinker, UC Berkeley, emerita, to return to speak on women's political participation in Asia. Many of these events are discussed further in this newsletter, and a complete listing is available on our newly redesigned website: www.ipg.ulg.ac.be/ wgop. We welcome your support and involvement. *****

Desai from p. 1: unimportant, especially in this historical moment of increasing conflicts in the name of "war on terrorism." Even in the three non-conflict arenas, economic security - the power to choose among opportunities, health for human security, and knowledge, skills and values for human security, there is a tension between supporting and challenging the status quo. And as with UN efforts in general, the rhetoric far outpaces the actual practices.

For example, under economic security, the emphasis is on the "proper functioning of markets. . ..Efficient and equitable trade arrangements. . .and sudden economic downturns, natural disasters and the social impacts of crises." This despite the clear evidence on the growing disparities resulting from structural adjustment programs and the failure of the OECD countries to support fair trade at the WTO talks in Cancun is surprising. Similarly, the section on health for human security highlights the catastrophic impact of HIV/AIDS and the need for "All health actors...to promote health services as public goods," without addressing the reality of increasingly privatized healthcare, which is unavailable to most people. Statements like, "An equitable intellectual property rights regime needs to be developed to balance incentives for research and development with ensuring people's access to affordable life-saving drugs," highlight tensions between supporting the status quo and the need for transformation. The SARS pandemic has again focused attention on "a global surveillance and control system for infectious diseases." But primary health for all as a right guaranteed by the state is invisible. Mobilizing is to be done by non-state actors to both provide information to "remove root causes of ill health, to provide early warning systems and to mitigate health impacts once a crisis occurs." To shift the emphasis of security from state to people does not warrant a shift in responsibilities from the state to people, most of whom do not have the resources or capabilities to undertake such social mobilization.

In contrast to the tensions in the above sections, the one on knowledge, skills, and values for human security emphasizes that, "basic education and public information that provide knowledge, life skills and respect for diversity are important for human security." This section does address the issue of primary education with a particular emphasis on girls.

education, and it does make the state accountable for this. Public media are seen as important in providing "information and skills that will improve work opportunities and family health, but they should also enable people to actively exercise their rights and fulfill their responsibility." Again, in an era when public media are facing stiff opposition from privatization panals as seen in the recent FCC ruling in the USA, it seems ironic, at best, that we entrust them with the most important educational tasks.

While the UN Commission on Human Security's report is contradictory, efforts by other actors are more sustained in their critique of "old security" and need for a more people centered security. For example, one such effort is by the National Council for Research on Women (NCRW), a working alliance of women's research and policy centers, whose aim is to "enhance connections among research, policy analysis, advocacy, and innovative programming on behalf of women and girls." NCRW and the Center for the Study of Women and Society (CSWS) at the CUNY Graduate Center are coordinating a three-year program, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowship, "to explore the intersections of globalization, citizenship, human rights, gender, and agency." Their focus: "Facing Global Capital, Finding Human Security: A Gendered Critique," will examine what constitutes a human security framework at this historic moment, and the ways such a framework can shape policy priorities and address the challenges women and girls face under globalization in different parts of the world. The program will also explore ways that activists can use a human security framework to lobby for women's rights; to end sex discrimination and violence; and for better living conditions for women and girls.

Another such effort was a conference that I recently attended on "Clash or Consensus? Gender and Human Security in a Globalizing World" organized by Women's Learning Partnership (WLP) and the Global Fund for Women in
Desai from p. 12
Washington D.C. at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies. WLP (www.learningpartnership.org) is an international NGO “For Rights, Development, and Peace... that empowers women and girls in the Global South to re-imagine and restructure their roles in their families, communities, and societies. WLP achieves this goal through creating culture-specific learning materials, providing leadership training, supporting capacity building, and helping women use new technologies to generate and receive information and knowledge.”

“The Global Fund for Women (www.globalfundforwomen.org) is a non-profit grant making foundation that seeds, strengthens, and links women’s rights organizations in every part of the world... grants help expand the choices available to women and ensure that women’s voices are heard at local, national and international levels.”

At the conference there seemed to be a consensus on broadening the concept of human security and focusing it on human needs and freedoms. For example, the panel on rethinking security, focused on social rights and interpersonal violence, the need for a new enlightenment that did not exclude the right to religion from human rights law, a call for linking security to HIV/AIDS and the importance of ensuring accountability, communities of commitment, and transformation of institutions and values. The conference also looked at the threat to security from religious fundamentalisms as well as development models and governance models that exclude the voices of women and other marginalized people from true democracy.

At WGGP, we are also engaged in transforming the definition of security through our research projects. One of our main, long-term projects is to examine the gendered nature of human security, defined as economic security, health, education, and a life of dignity and respect, of immigrants in Illinois. We are beginning with a focus on Mexican immigrants (as they are the largest immigrant group in Illinois) in four counties in east central Illinois, counties outside the Chicago metropolitan area. In the future we hope to study other immigrant groups in the Midwest.

Another project through which we are trying to redefine security is a joint project with the Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security Program at the University. Out aim in this project is to look at efforts in South Asia by women’s groups engaged in redefining human security in the region.

Thus, there are efforts in women’s research centers and international NGOs to rethink human security based on incorporating the knowledge of the past decades to enable people all around the world to live safe, productive, and meaningful lives.

Manisha Desai, Ph.D., is Program Coordinator, WGGP and Assistant Director, South Asia & Middle Eastern Studies, IUUC.

Grown from p. 3
recent analysis conducted by the International Center for Research on Women reveals that no country has yet to achieve gender equality.

In order to help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations has established the Millennium Project, whose purpose is to propose the best strategies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This includes reviewing current innovative practices, prioritising policy reforms, identifying means of policy implementation, and evaluating financing options. The project is led by Professor Jeffrey Sachs at Columbia University and is carried out by 10 Task Forces, each of which is comprised of scholars, policy makers, and practitioners, with broad representation from both developed and developing countries and high-level participation of the United Nations agencies.

Task Force 3 focuses on the goals of universal primary education and gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Task Force has produced a background paper, “Promises to Keep.” posted at www.unmillenniumproject.org which proposes a broad framework for understanding gender equality and reviews the progress made to date by countries across the globe. The Task Force has commissioned a number of papers and will be synthesizing those and other research in two reports to be submitted to the United Nations in December 2004 and December 2005.

The Task Force has identified four overarching messages to communicate to the international community and national-level actors in its preliminary report this year. First, because gender equality is central to the success of all the MDGs, all institutions-local, national, regional, and international-that are responsible for achieving the MDGs must give gender equality within their institutions and their work the utmost priority. This includes providing the necessary leadership, as well as sufficient financial and human resources to ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment are addressed. Second, investing in the health, education, safety and economic well-being of adolescents, especially adolescent girls, is a priority. The current cohort of adolescents is the largest in the world’s history. Actions that respond to their needs and rights are urgently needed and can simultaneously accelerate progress toward several of the Millennium Development Goals.

Four types of action are warranted: investments to help girls complete good quality secondary education, support the transition from education to work, develop healthy sexuality, and guarantee physical safety.

Third, reducing women’s and girl’s time poverty through gender-sensitive infrastructure investments are critical. Data from time use and other surveys show that there are significant social and economic costs of the time that women and girls spend in such activities as collecting fuel and water. Key areas to be addressed to ensure time savings include water supply and sanitation, fuelwood and domestic energy, transportation, and labor-saving technology (mills, stoves, etc.). Finally, monitoring and evaluating progress toward the MDGs requires having sex-disaggregated data. The list of indicators suggested by the U.N. for tracking gender equality and women’s empowerment has limitations and should be supplemented by additional indicators. Efforts are underway in international agencies, regional commissions, and national governments to collect a broader range of sex-disaggregated data. These efforts need to be well documented and support to be developed and used by national-level actors and the international community.

In addition to these recommendations, the Task Force is proposing key priorities for action by the international community and national level actors over the next fifteen years. These priorities include:

Improving women’s capabilities through:

- Free, compulsory universal quality primary education and opportunities for secondary education for girls. Secondary education provides incentive to complete primary education. It has more impact on adolescent girl’s own outcomes than does completion of primary education. Several well-documented approaches can work to increase girls’ enrollment and performance in secondary school.

- Increased support for women’s sexual health and rights, as spelled out in ICPD +5. Within the health sector, countries should prioritize policies that promote universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning, safe abortion and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, as well as policies that enable women to give birth safely by ensuring that all deliveries are attended by appropriately skilled health personnel and that all women have access to health facilities providing emergency obstetric care in the event of life-threatening obstetric complications. Interventions and measures to protect women and girls in the HIV-AIDS epidemic are particularly crucial.

- Property and inheritance rights for women and girls. The lack of property and inheritance rights are associated with increased violence against women and it makes women more vulnerable to destitution.

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in the context of HIV/AIDS. Interventions include law reform, enforcement of laws, legal literacy; land reforms, resettlement schemes, and other such interventions that incorporate specific provisions giving women equal land rights, providing information that safeguards their interests, and preventing their exclusion from access to and use of land; joint titling; and credit.

- Addressing discrimination in employment – gender gaps in earnings, the relegation of women to informal employment, occupational segregation. To address this, attention needs to be paid to macroeconomic policies (e.g., employment-targeted economic growth is a prerequisite for low-income countries coupled with social policy that eliminates discriminatory employment barriers); enforcement of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation, and micro-level interventions to improve wages and working conditions for millions of informal workers.

Improving security by:

- Ending violence against women. This issue is notably absent in the MDG goal and target, but violence against women represents a key barrier to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Women who are victims of domestic violence are less productive on the job, leading directly to a decrease in national output. Male perpetrators of violence also have lower productivity due to absenteeism from work immediately following violent incidents. Violence against women (and the fear of violence) increases women’s vulnerability to unwanted pregnancy, STIs, and HIV by restricting their ability to negotiate protection or leave risky relationships. The Task Force will recommend a massive media and public education campaign, much like what was done to reduce the acceptability of smoking, to be spearheaded by the UN Secretary General which would highlight the epidemic proportions of gender-based violence and raise the resources necessary for countries to implement action plans on which they would be monitored and held accountable.

Investments must be made simultaneously in each of these areas because no one domain of gender equality is more important than the other. In all five priority areas, there are interventions that work. What is needed, however, is the leadership, political will, and financing to end gender inequality and empower women.

Caren Grown, Ph.D., is Director of the Poverty Reduction and Economic Governance Team at the International Center for Research on Women. This article draws on a recent posting by Caren Grown and Geeta Rao Gupta to the UNDP MDGGender-NET electronic discussion. For more information, see http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/.

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IRANIAN WOMAN WINS 2003 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Honoured for her "efforts for democracy and human rights", Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer and activist, is only the 11th woman to receive the award. One of the first female judges of her country, she was forced to resign after the Iranian revolution, and has since taught at the University of Tehran and published extensively in the field of human rights. She has focused especially on the struggle for the rights of women and children, has advocated on behalf of refugees, and defended individuals and groups in Iranian courts. Recently, Shirin Ebadi was among the founders of the Center for the Defense of Human Rights, which provides legal aid to the families of imprisoned journalists and student activists. The Norwegian Nobel Committee stated that it was pleased "to award the Peace Prize to a woman who is part of the Muslim world, and of whom that world can be proud - along with all who fight for human rights wherever they live."


WGPP FALL ACTIVITIES

We supported a wide range of events this semester.


Amina Mama, Nov. 11, “Strengthening Gender Studies for Africa’s Transformation,” jointly sponsored with Center for African Studies.

WGPP co-sponsored the following campus events this semester:

Gerda Lerner, A Life of Struggle for Justice, Sept. 17, sponsored by History Dept. & others.
Sanjay Kak's documentary film, Words on Water, Sept. 25, sponsored by Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences & others.
Kathy Kelly, Baghdad Under the Bombs: A View from the Iraq Peace Team, Sept. 29, sponsored by community organizations and campus units.
Christina Klein, Martial Arts and the Globalization of US and Asian Film Industries, Oct. 2, sponsored by the Center for Advanced Study’s Initiative on Globalization and others.

Neema Kudva, Decentering Power: NGOs & the State in India, Oct 30, sponsored by Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning & others.
Mary Clutter, Twenty-first Century Biology, Oct. 30, sponsored by Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and others.
Ruth Wasem, Immigrant Communities and the Patriot Act of the 1990s, Oct. 31, sponsored by Migration Studies Group and others.
Warrington Hudlin, A Filmmaker's Journey: From East St. Louis to Hollywood to Cyberspace, Nov. 6, sponsored by Afro-American Studies and Research Program and others.
Spiderwoman Theater by three Kuna/ Rappahannock sisters—Lisa, Gloria, and Muriel Miguel performing Storyweaving Workshop, Nov. 11, and Persistence of Memory, Nov. 12, sponsored by Native American House and others.
Joint Area Centers Conference on "Interraciality in a Globalizing World," Nov. 14-15; Keynote address by Mary Layoun, on Threat and Promise in the Spaces Between Cultures, sponsored by the International Area Centers and others.
University YMCA Friday Forum, Voices of Conscience: Taking a Stand in a Culture of Conflicting Values.

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Upon his return, he had secured 81 scholarships for Kenyan men and women to over 40 institutions of higher education in the U.S., including Harvard, Georgetown, University of California, Michigan State University, and Howard, to name a few. One British colonial public relations officer noted that Mboya seemed "obsessed with expanding the educational opportunities for young Africans" (Eugenia Hughes, 1/1/1960). Subsequently, there was a scramble to either parallel Mboya's success or eclipse it all together. As a result, organizations like the Africa-America Institute, East African Women's Society, the United Negro College Fund, and various churches more actively pursued educational opportunities for both African men and women. This study contends that Mboya's tour and its success helped to stimulate competition from both sacred and secular organizations resulting in expanded educational opportunities in Kenya and specifically seeks to understand the positionality of women in this endeavor. It utilizes gender as an analytical framework to gain insight as to gender disparity and seeks to further conceptualize Africans' women's participation. This project will analyze higher education attainment abroad while assessing its impact upon Kenya's social, economic and political development.

I am glad to announce that I have received the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grant to return to Kenya January 2004. I look forward to the ten months I will spend in Nairobi. But I must admit that even with all of the unrest, which spread to several campuses from the middle school to university level over the five weeks of my earlier visit, I was more excited than afraid. Here I was studying social protest and was caught up in the midst of one. I remember the day the protest at KU was first televised. My host family's young son shouted with surprise, "Look! Even women are out there!" I turned to him and said, "My sentiments exactly, and they have a long history of protests, too."

Joy Williams-Black is a GRID student and Ph.D. candidate in History at UIUC. Joy is the 2002-03 recipient of the Kathleen Cloud International Research Grant.

THE PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD

Laura Ripani

Do women pay a price for being mothers? In developed countries, the answer is yes. Several studies show that women with children in Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States earn lower salaries than women without children, despite equal levels of education and work experience.

But those findings may be different in Latin America. Laura Ripani (Department of Economics and GRID graduate) spent her summer at the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) working with Claudia Pira (Women in Development Unit - Sustainable Development Department) on a preliminary study about the costs of being a mother in Latin America. Their findings suggest that in some Latin American countries, being a mother does not have a clear impact on wages. This study, conducted in Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru and based on data from national household surveys, suggests that Peru and Bolivia are the only countries among these four where mothers of children under six are penalized. In fact, in Bolivia, mothers with children between the ages of 13 and 18 actually earn higher wages. In Ecuador, motherhood doesn't seem to have any significant effect on wages.

The study, "The Effects of Motherhood on Labor Force Participation and Wages: Evidence from Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru" by Claudia Pira and Laura Ripani, goes beyond the subjects suggested by the title. The study shows that mothers with children under six are less likely to work than those with no children, with the exception of single mothers and mothers under 26 years old. Mothers are overrepresented among the self-employed, working longer hours than other women, perhaps because they combine their work with childcare, while mothers who are employed in the formal sector tend to work fewer hours.

Piras and Ripani believe that this topic is highly relevant to issues involving gender inequality. Most women are mothers, and one of the main characteristics of the gender division of labor within the household is the assignment of most child-rearing responsibilities to women. It is for that reason that the price of being a mother affects most women and contributes to gender inequality.

The consequences of penalizing mothers, however, go beyond gender inequality. To the extent that well-reared children are 'public goods,' the motherhood penalty is of interest—both in theory and in practice—for two reasons. First, there is an equity problem, since mothers are not paid for their contribution to society. Second, there may be an inadequate supply of good mothering to produce future generations of responsible citizens.

Laura Ripani is a doctoral student in Economics at UIUC. She has finished the GRID concentration at the master's level and she received the 2003-04 Kathleen Cloud International Research Grant for dissertation research examining the effects of computer use on the gender-wage gap in Argentina.

Laura Ripani is her office at the Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC.

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RESOURCES


New Books and Periodicals available in the WGGP Research Room, 233 International Studies Building, 910 South Fifth Street, Champaign:

Thanks to Joe Pleck, Professor, Human and Community Development, UIUC, for donating Gender, Information Technology and Developing Countries: An Analytic Study by Nancy Hafkin and Nancy Taggart published by Learn Link of USAID and the United Nations Report of the High-Level Panel on Information and Communication Technology, New York, April 2006.

Thanks to Manisha Desai, WGGP Program Coordinator, UIUC, for donating Volumes 16 and 17 of Gender and Society journals. Please note the Special Issue, Vol 17, No. 2 on “Global Perspectives on Gender and Carework.”


Two new resources developed by the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) can be found at http://www.awid.org/index.pl. Getting a Job provides tips, hints, and insider info for successful job searching. It is especially designed for those in the early stages of their careers and is catered to jobs in the fields of gender and development, women’s human rights, sustainable international development, civil society, environment, and social justice. It also includes other resources and websites that might be useful.

Scholarships in Development And Human Rights is a list of relevant scholarships to pursue an education in women’s rights, human rights and/or development. Most opportunities listed aim to support individuals, rather than organizations or projects, and are intended for junior development practitioners, activists and students. While the majority of fellowships are for countries in the global North (primarily the USA), they seek to attract applicants from around the world.

CHANGES

The Women and Gender Resources (WAGR) Library at the UIUC has moved to 1 Library in the basement of the Main Library (formerly the location of the Newspaper Library). This is a temporary move, while the permanent location of the WAGR Library on the fourth floor of the Main Library is renovated and expanded. The WAGR phone number is still 217-333-7998. Also, please check the web site at http://library.uiuc.edu/wagr/ for up to date information and to find useful resources. Questions: Please contact Cindy Inglod, WAGR Librarian at 217-244-1894 or cingleod@uiuc.edu.

The Women’s Studies Program here at UIUC has changed its name to: Gender and Women’s Studies (not to be confused with WGGP) and is offering an undergraduate major. CL Cole is serving as Interim Director during Dr. Kal Alston’s leave. Dr. CLole is Associate Professor of Kinesiology, Sociology, and Gender & Women’s Studies. Her research interests include feminist cultural studies, body studies (race, gender and sexuality), national popular culture, and interpretive and ethnographic methods. The Gender and Women’s Studies Program is located at 911 South Sixth St., Champaign. Contact information, 217-333-2990 or http://www.womstd.uiuc.edu/