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Women's Voice

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

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## Women's Voice, Volume 6, Issue 3, October 2000

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program  
*Illinois State University*

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# Women's Voice

Illinois State University

Volume 6, Issue 3, October 2000

## *From the Director:*

### Women, Peace and Change

As I write, the Middle East is engulfed in violence and turmoil. The Oslo peace agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis is all but destroyed, and hatred and killings continue unabated. Accusations and recriminations abound, with no one taking responsibility for the breakdown and no one willing to take a step toward conflict resolution. Meanwhile, conflicts continue in Sri Lanka (between the government and the Tamil Tigers, who seek independence), in the Sudan (where the predominantly Muslim north and the government repress the predominantly Christian and animist south), in different parts of Africa (where the breakdown of state systems has led to murderous political groupings), in northern India (where there is a struggle with Pakistan and Islamic groups over control of Kashmir) and in Colombia (where there has been a longstanding violent conflict over the narcotics industry, and between the state and leftist guerrillas). Even in Europe, there has been a long and violent struggle between the Spanish state and the Basque independence movement. Politicians and community leaders alike seem unable or unwilling to resolve these conflicts, and many profit from them.

For too long, the women of the world have watched these conflicts from the sidelines, or have been destroyed by them. In more recent years, however, the expansion of the population of educated, employed, mobile, and politically-aware women has led to increased activism by women in the areas of peace and conflict resolution. Demographic changes and the rise of a "critical mass" of politically-engaged women are reflected in the formation of many women's groups that are highly critical of existing political structures, that question masculinist values and behaviors in domestic politics, international relations, and conflict, and that seek to make strategic interventions and to formulate solutions that are informed by feminism.

I am involved in one such initiative, called **Peace and Change in the Euro-Mediterranean: Women Taking Action**. Coordinated by the Bruno Kreisky

Forum for International Dialogue in Vienna, Austria, the initiative involves a multinational Core Group of academics and activists (of which I am a member), and a network of women who have been involved in peace action in the conflict areas of the Euro-Mediterranean. The conflict areas are Algeria, Cyprus, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, and Yugoslavia. The initiative was launched in January of this year, when the Core Group met in Vienna to prepare a framework. In early October, we met again in Vienna, this time in the context of a conference that examined peace, security, and conflict resolution from a distinctly feminist perspective.

Most of the participants were from the Euro-Mediterranean region, but for a comparative perspective we invited activists from South Africa, Burundi, south Asia, and Northern Ireland. These included Sibongile Sigodi, a lawyer and member of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission; Paula Banerjee of India and Karmat Ali of Pakistan, both members of the Pakistan India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy; and Eilish Rooney and Bronagh Hinds, peace educators in Belfast. Among the participants from the Euro-Mediterranean region were Zahira Kamal, an official of the Palestine Authority in charge of gender planning; Anissa Smaty, Algerian law professor and women's rights activist; Maria Hadjipavlou, academic and 'mother' of bi-communal activities in Cyprus; Neshe Yashin, Turkish-Cypriot poet and radio programmer now living in the southern part of Cyprus; Marie-Rose Zalzal, lawyer and secularist in Lebanon; Amira Gelblum, academic and feminist activist in Israel; Yana Mintoff, president of the Association of Women of the Mediterranean Region. (For members of the Core Group, see photo.)

The plenaries and workshops made for an intensive but valuable series of discussions. Topics for the plenaries were: the pre-conflict situation and conflict prevention; conflict escalation; transition from conflict to 'ceasefire', peace processes and peace accords; and postconflict management and peace-building. The workshops were on: states, civil societies, rights, and the global arena; women's rights and women's organizations in conflict prevention and in times of conflict escalation; making gender an explicit

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## Women's Studies Staff

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

# FROM THE DIRECTOR (Continued)



An equal opportunity/affirmative action university encouraging diversity.

# NEWS ABOUT WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENTS AND

## Welcome to Women's Studies Minors

We begin the fall semester with thirty-two women's studies minors.

Corrie Baker-Theatre  
Rhonda Bean-General Student  
Jamie Bockenfeld-Sociology  
Kara Brown-Philosophy  
Jordan Brownlee-English  
Leah Bruno-English  
Kelly Christian-English/Teacher Ed  
Melinda Crabill-Sociology  
Julie Dawson-Speech Communication  
Jennifer Day-Sociology  
Avada Douglas-Social Work/Econ.  
Michelle Ganschow--Psychology  
Raigan Grane-Public Relations  
Jennifer Guarin-Social Work  
Tara Haberman-Political Science  
Erin Hale-Social Work

Amanda Karvelaitis-English  
Mike Keegstra-Social Work  
Stephanie Kiesewetter-English  
Rebecca Koehler-Finance  
Hillary Patridge-English  
Audrey Rosenblatt-English  
Julie Ruby-English  
Katherine Ryder-Mass Com.  
Lara Saba-Political Science  
Anne Semlak-Political Science  
Dru Shirley-Social Work  
Rose Simpson-Sociology  
Meghan Smith-Anthropology  
Samantha Turrentine-Sociology  
Diana Weekes-Sociology  
Erin Whitworth-Social Work

## Women's Studies Hosts Speaker

By Sandra Harmon

On September 20, Kaethe Morris Hoffer, a member of Governor Ryan's Commission on the Status of Women, spoke to an audience of around 130 students, faculty and staff about House Bill 4407, the Illinois Gender Violence Act, which is pending in the Illinois General Assembly. Hoffer, an attorney specializing in inequality issues, helped draft the bill which was introduced in the House last winter. She is making a tour of Illinois colleges and universities to help drum up support for the bill which may be called during the veto session, November 14-16. If it is not called at that time, it will be reintroduced in the next session. Hoffer's visit to the Illinois State University campus was sponsored by the Women's Studies Program.

Under the Gender Violence Act, anyone who has been sexually abused, physically attacked, or threatened with such violence on the basis of sex, gender, or sexuality, may take their attacker to court and ask that the attacker pay for damages caused by the violence. The legislation is similar to a section of the 1994 federal Violence Against Women Act which provided a federal court civil remedy. However, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down that section in May of this year, ruling that it was up to the states—not Congress—to offer legal remedies to victims of gender-based violence.

According to Hoffer, the GVA is needed to close loopholes in existing legislation and to provide judges with statutory authority to assess actual, compensatory, and punitive damages against perpetrators of gender-based violence. For example, the Illinois Domestic Violence Act provides certain legal remedies to victims, primarily orders of protection. It does not provide for civil suits for damages.

Hate-crime legislation, in theory, Hoffer said, could cover gender-based crimes. However, hate-crimes are generally understood to take place between different groups of people. Many gender-based crimes are committed within families and among acquaintances. In response to a question, Hoffer said that this included assaults against gays by their fathers, which she stressed is "not hypothetical". Since gender-based crimes are a relatively new classification of violent crimes, there is little or no case law precedent. For all of these reasons, Hoffer believes a new law is needed to provide the authority for victims to sue their attackers.

Following her presentation, a lively discussion took place about the merits of the proposed bill and reasons for its delay. One of the reasons the bill has been bottled up in the House is its inclusion of crimes based on actual, perceived, or attributed sexual orientation and actual, perceived, or attributed sex or gender role conformity or nonconformity and gender identity in addition to assault and battery such as rape and domestic violence. Hoffer

was clear in her defense of this inclusion. The law seeks to address the full range of discrimination that falls on people. Victims of assaults based on sex, gender, or sexuality should all have the same legal options available to them.

Hoffer urged people in the audience who support HB 4407 to contact their representative by phone, mail, or in person to urge passage of the bill. The Governor's Commission is sponsoring a Young Women's Lobby Day in Springfield on November 16. People (men as well as women) interested in attending may contact Erika Goodman, Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, Office of the Governor, JRTC, 100 W. Randolph, Suite 16-100, Chicago, IL 60601. Telephone: 312-814-3940, Fax: 312-814-3823. □

## Faculty and Staff News

**Dr. Valentine M. Moghadam** attended the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association (APSA), held in Washington DC over the Labor Day weekend. She took part in a roundtable discussion on the state of gender research in political science, and her own presentation was on feminist scholarship and gender research in comparative politics.

In mid-September, **Dr. Moghadam** participated in an expert group meeting in Tunisia organized by CAWTAR (Center for Arab Women's Training and Research) and funded by the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) on the subject of globalization and its impact on the economic conditions of Arab women.

On 22 September, **Dr. Moghadam** gave a guest lecture at Macalester College in Minneapolis-St. Paul, on globalization, inequalities, and transnational feminism.

**Dr. Moghadam's** work on global feminism is mentioned in a new publication, "Internationalizing the Study of Women and Gender: Selected Topics", by Janice Monk and Deborah Rosenfelt. This is part of the Women in the Curriculum Series published by the National Center for Curriculum Transformation Resources on Women, 2000.

This summer, **Dr. Elizabeth Reitz Mullenix**, Theatre, had a new book published by St. Martin's Press. Her book, *Wearing the Breeches: Gender on the Antebellum Stage* is a study of gender ideology in antebellum culture and particularly considers, from a feminist perspective, the popular nineteenth-century performance convention of female transvestism. There will be a book talk and signing at the Bloomington Barnes and Noble on Monday, October 2 at 7:00.

**Dr. Maria Canabal**, Family and Consumer Sciences, attended the American Association for Family and Consumer Science (AAFCS) Annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois, on June 23-25. As chair of the American Council on Consumer Interest International Affairs Committee, **Dr. Canabal** was invited to participate in the Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF) International Consumer Conference: On-Line Transactions and Dispute Resolution. Over ten countries were represented in this meeting on June 15-27, in Chicago, Illinois.

**Dr. Canabal**, as the Director of the ISU-Avinashilingam Faculty Exchange Program, sponsored by the U. S. State Department, organized a program and travelled to Coimbatore, South India during the month of July. The following faculty from ISU also travelled to India as participants of this program: Dr. Nancy Ridenour, Dean, College of Nursing, Dr. Alison Bailey from Philosophy and Women Studies, Dr. Eileen Fowles, College of Nursing, and Ms. Nicole Dino, Graduate Student from Political Sciences and Peace Corps Fellow. Dr. Bill Semlak, Director OISP, also joined the group for a few days.

On July 24-29, **Dr. Canabal** attended the Nineteenth World Congress of the International Federation for Home Economics held in Ghana, Africa, where she presented a paper: "Decision Making Styles of Young South Indian Consumers". During that trip to Ghana she also participated in the study tour "Crafts, Traditions and Family Life in Ghana" organized by Michigan State University from July 29-August 4, 2000.

**Kerri Calvert**, Coordinator of ISU Student Health Service Health Promotion Program, has joined the Women's Studies Programming Committee. One of her goals as Coordinator of the Health Promotion Program is to work actively with other campus/community units to facilitate the development of coordinated programs. □

Women's Voice  
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## Women Employed Schedules Local Meeting

Women Employed is a 26-year old membership organization dedicated to improving women's economic status. The organization conducts advocacy and public education programs on issues such as equal opportunity policy and enforcement, fair workplace practices, access to education and training, and welfare reform, as well as providing a range of direct services. Services provided include career development and employment preparation for adults, career exploration and life planning for teen girls, and development of model programs designed to enable women to pursue non-traditional employment options.

Women Employed is initiating the Women Employed Women's Informational Network, WE-WIN, in communities around the state of Illinois. The network will enable women across the state to learn more about and act on issues of importance to them.

On October 19, 2000, Women Employed will hold two informational meetings at the YWCA of McLean County, 1201 N. Hershey Road, Bloomington, from 12-2, and 5:30-7, regarding WE-WIN. For information regarding the availability of childcare during the meetings, telephone the YWCA at 309-662-0461. Visit WE-WIN's website at [www.womenemployed.org](http://www.womenemployed.org) for further information. □

## World March of Women in the Year 2000

On October 15, 2000, the World March of Women 2000 will take place in Washington, D.C. The National Organization for Women has organized the march with the purpose of uniting with women around the world to demand that leaders of the United States, the United Nations and its member States, and other institutions of power work to eliminate poverty and ensure a fair distribution of the planet's wealth between rich and poor, and between women and men; eliminate violence against women, and ensure equality between women and men. For further information, contact the National NOW Action Center, 733 15<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20005. Telephone 202-628-8669 (extension 0). Visit their website at [www.worldmarch.org](http://www.worldmarch.org). □

## ISU Alumni Featured in Women's Art Exhibit

Two ISU Master of Fine Art alumni, **Devita Schulman** and **Sigrid Wonsil**, have been selected for the prestigious exhibit *Illinois Women Artists: The New Millennium*. The exhibit opens with a reception for the artists on Saturday, September 23, in the University Galleries, and will run through October 29. Both alumni took courses in Women's Studies during their MFA Program studies at ISU.

These are the only ISU alumni in the show of 50 Illinois artists chosen by the international juror, Clare Henry of Scotland, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and art critic for the Glasgow Herald. Dr. Cynthia Kukla, Associate Professor, Art Department, was the major professor to both artists, so it gives her great pleasure to witness their success.

The exhibition was inaugurated by the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. The exhibit opened at the J. Thompson Center in Chicago, Illinois and then immediately traveled to the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington. It will be circulating throughout the state for two years, including this stop at the University Galleries. □

## Volunteers Needed for Crisis Line

Providing Access to Help (PATH), needs volunteers. It is through volunteers that PATH is able to provide continuous 23-hour crisis, information and referral services to McLean County. PATH provides senior services, referral seminars, and human services directory for members of the community. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Karen Zangerle, Associate Executive Director, PATH, 201 E. Grove Street, Bloomington, IL 61701, for information regarding their training schedule. Telephone: 309-828-1022, Fax: 309-827-7485. □

## Take Back the Night Rally

The Women's Coalition have scheduled **November 2, 2000**, to host the annual rally, which will be held at Illinois State University, Bone Student Center Ballroom. Email [womynsco@hotmail.com](mailto:womynsco@hotmail.com) for further information.