

WOMEN IN ACTION

1/92



international



Alex Palomeda '92

Empowering Women, Empowered Women

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Empowering and Empowered Women

The global women's movement has brought many significant changes in women's lives. In **Women in Action 1/92**, we highlight some issues and actions that empower women and are initiated by women.


We have included a feature on WOMENET, the international women's communications network formed during the DAWN media workshop in Barbados, an island in the Caribbean. The women's media network will serve as a communication channel for the exchange and sharing of information of women all over the world.

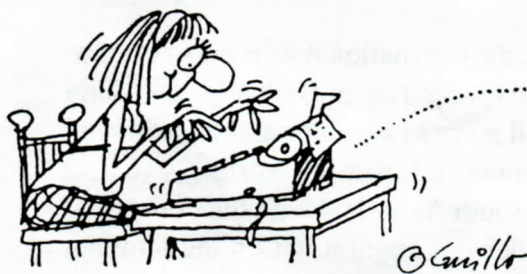
Three companion articles, all coming from South Asia, deal with the concept of feminism and the current problems and ongoing debates about it within the feminist movement. We also have two articles on feminism from Eastern Europe. In contrast to South Asian women's long struggle in the movement and their evolving definitions of feminism based on years of experience, our Eastern European sisters are just beginning to take an active role in the women's movement. Despite this difference, we all share a common cause--a desire to end patriarchy, poverty, underdevelopment and all other forms of oppression, whether it is gender, race, national or state.

Our section, *A Call to Action*, features horror stories on female victims of violence--rape, torture, beating, and clubbing. Maria Elena, Wangari, Kursheed, Veena are all courageous women who stood up and resisted patriarchal institutions. In the case of Maria Elena, it was against an ideological group; in the case of Wangari, Kursheed and Veena, it was against the state. These women have empowered themselves and continue to fight those who wish to disempower them again. Another case is the 14-year old Irish girl who was a victim of rape. She too had the courage to speak about her experience despite the taboo for women to speak about rape and pressures from Ireland's legal system.

We know that they are not the only victims of violence. There are other nameless women who suffer in silence. We express our solidarity with all of them and will be ready to stand by them, should they decide to break out of their silence.

Isis workers brought home first hand accounts of their participation and networking in two international conferences held in Japan and Singapore, respectively. We have also participated in the Interregional consultation for global communicators held here in Manila. Other conferences in this issue are the Isis-WICCE meeting on prostitution and poverty held in Bangkok and the socialism and feminism workshop proceedings from the International Peace Festival in the Philippines. Attendance in conferences of Isis workers is one of the best networking tools, allowing more direct lines of communication with other women.

There is much to celebrate in the women's movement today. We have tried to cover the different stages in its development from old groups from South Asia who continue to seek new ways of practicing feminism to new groups from Eastern Europe who are searching for the meaning of feminism and their role within the women's movement. We celebrate that empowerment is already a reality for many women who have fought and continue to fight for a just and humane society for all of us. 



Calling Women in Radio

Dear friends,

At the fourth conference of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) which was held in August 1990 in Dublin, Ireland, an international women's committee was created. The principal objective of this committee is to set up an international network in order to enable exchanges between women who use radio media (particularly community radio) in order to give a voice to women and to support their full participation in society.

In order that this network includes as many women as possible, we would like to ask you to send a copy of this letter and questionnaire to women and organizations who may be interested in the project.

The lines of communication which will be weaved by this network will reinforce women's initiatives toward the democratization of communication and society as a whole.

Warm regards,

Louise Boivin
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Ed. note: Good luck with your network! We will send copies of your questionnaire to women's groups working in radio.

Gender Issues in Agriculture

Dear friends,

It's a pleasure for me to share with you the information of the new program on Gender and Irrigation of the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI). I recently joined IIMI as an associate expert to initiate and develop this program.

The objective of the program is to improve irrigation management through a better understanding of gender difference in irrigated agriculture. IIMI will concentrate on gender questions related to irrigation management and performance.

We are now in the process of gathering and reviewing literature, and developing interaction with other institutions and individuals working in the field of gender issues in irrigated agriculture. We hope this information will help us evaluate where and how gender is important for irrigation management, to identify areas of research and to further develop the program.

I would appreciate it very much if you could help me with names of people, organizations and institutions which are working in the field of gender issues in agriculture, or if you could provide me with any information on projects, programs or actions in this field.

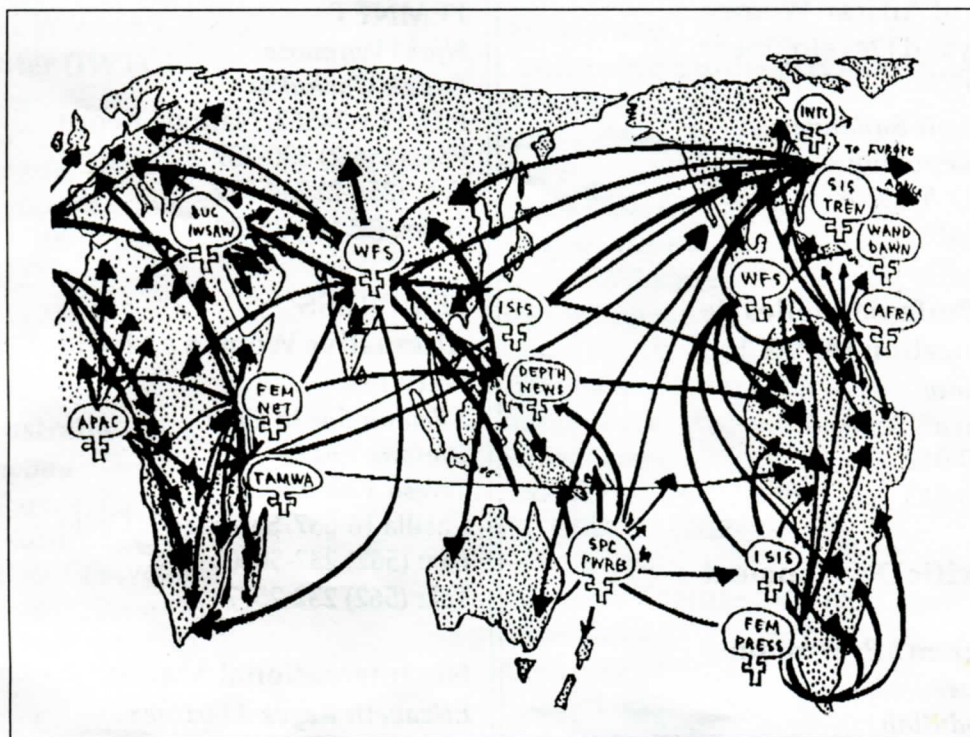
I am enclosing background information on IIMI and on the gender program. I shall be pleased to receive your comments or suggestions and look forward to possible future collaboration.

Yours sincerely,

Margreet Zwarteveen
Associate Expert Gender in Irrigation
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Ed. note: Gender issues should be integrated in all areas of research. We are happy to know that you have taken on gender related research in the field of irrigated agriculture. We will send you information on groups working in the same field.

Women's Media Network formed



DAWN (Development Alternatives for Women in the New Era) held an interregional media workshop last February 10-13 at the Barbados Workers Union Labour College in Barbados, bringing together 11 representatives of international women's communications networks.

The women's communications network groups included: Isis Internacional Santiago, Chile; South Pacific Commission/Pacific Women's Resource Bureau (SPC/PWRB), New Caledonia; The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), Trinidad and Tobago; Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), Tanzania; Sistren Theatre Collective, Jamaica; Isis International Manila, Philippines; Women's Feature Service (WFS), India; International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), USA; and Women and Development Unit (WAND), University of the West Indies, Barbados.

The purpose of the workshop was to identify effective methods of sharing DAWN's research analyses which challenge current models of development. These are models which the organization believes are responsible for the chain of borrowing, debt and poverty in countries of the South.

One of the major outcome of the workshop was the formation of Women's Media Network (WOMENET), comprising among others, those organizations which participated in the workshop. Other groups who have been invited to the workshop but were unable to attend have also been asked to join WOMENET. For a complete listing of member groups, refer to pages 6-7.


WOMENET has the capacity to distribute information across the world through its member networks which cover nearly all parts of the globe (See network map above). Through its wide network, it will help

DAWN in distributing its research analyses to NGO women's organizations in mainstream media.

By sharing its analyses, DAWN hopes to sensitize policy makers to development alternatives which could lead to improved socioeconomic conditions in the South.

WOMENET members will contact each other monthly through facsimiles to share any relevant news and information that they have received during the month. In turn, this information will be shared through each member's networks.

Every six months, members will accomplish a survey form indicating how often they sent and received information through WOMENET and how they shared the information with their network.

WOMENET hopes to become an effective communications services group to Third World women who need access to information. 

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Media workshop participants in action

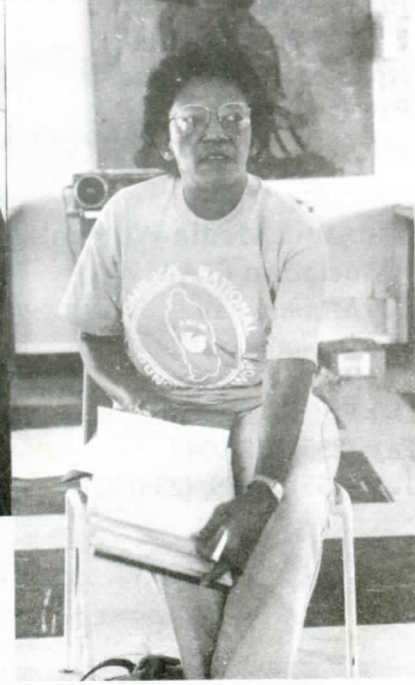


(Left photo): Anne Walker, IWTC director, explains her visual presentation during the women and environment workshop.

(Middle left photo): Rosina Wiltshire is guest speaker of the women and environment workshop. (Middle right photo): Margaret Walker and Jill Emberson read Caribbean poetry during the evening with friends at the College.



(Above) Hilary, Isabel, Nan and Gouri sing their own composition during a pre-workshop activity.



Peggy Antrobus, DAWN coordinator.

Current Developments in Feminism

by Nandita Gandhi and Vasantha Kannabiran

The definition of feminism raises several questions. How open-ended should it be? What do we exclude? What do we include? How necessary is it to spread its ideology at this juncture? Feminism emerged as a reaction to certain aspects of party politics (especially methods of organisation, structure and hierarchy within) and the bias in fellow workers' or comrades' attitudes. Since these have undergone certain changes as a result of the women's movement, is it still necessary to define feminism and its ideological contours? Would it not be more appropriate to take up the task of restructuring socialism which addresses the very issues that concern us so deeply - a vision of a new economic order, human relations with nature, a classless society, etc.? Do we feel the need for feminism merely because women are biologically different and so need a separate ideology? Given a background in Left politics and some experience in working with Left organisations, a good approach would be to work towards theoretical clarifications that would enrich socialism instead. While Marx thought of his work as an exploration, that spirit of openness has been lost in the course of practice. Mao articulated the role of the peasantry and raised the question of women. Yet today there remain large gaps in both the theory and practice of Left movements on the question of peasants, dalits, women and ecology. These inadequacies are evident from the fact that even in socialist countries where women have made progress on all fronts, they still

suffer discrimination and oppression. Within revolutionary movements, women continue to face problems including overt violence. Their criticism and questioning of party structure, organisation and functioning has also raised problems for them. It is this experience of continuously being marginalised in mainstream politics that make women feel a continuous need for participating in feminist activity and politics. Women feel it is necessary to continue to articulate this

movements of the past. Feminism stands for a total transformation of patriarchal relations and of society and not just equal rights or other bourgeois democratic rights. It marks a definite shift in ideology from that of other periods and movements, just as socialism has a definite ideological character and cannot loosely be applied to anyone like Z.A. Bhutto or Rajiv Gandhi for instance, who may choose to call themselves socialists. It might be more accurate to say that, in the earlier period, individual women rather than the entire movement could be characterised as feminist. If we do not recognise and mark such a shift we could end up going all the

Feminism is an awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression at the material and ideological levels, of women's labour, fertility and sexuality, in the family, at the place of work and in society in general, and includes action by women and men to transform society.

marginalisation and the bias we confront, in common with other women who are not politically active. There is a continued need also to articulate our problems, name them and develop our theory, because experience which is not theorised is often lost. This attempt is subtly undermined both within and outside the movements as no longer being necessary. It is in this context that we need to clarify our own perspective and work out the possibilities and linkages that are emerging through the women's movement.

...Another issue was: would we use feminism as a term to describe other movements for women's rights in the 19th and 20th centuries? Would we differentiate between a feminist movement and a women's movement? One opinion was that we cannot use modern definitions to understand

way back to the Prophet Muhammad, who made some very radical changes, giving women the right to inheritance and education, in addition to introducing progressive reforms. Many movements for change in society have had a component addressing women's needs but they cannot be called feminist. For example, the Mother's Front in Sri Lanka, now extinct, was basically a welfare group, not feminist at all.

The opposing viewpoint was that one cannot date feminism any more than one can date socialism. Marx, as we know, drew from the Utopian Socialists before him. Without getting involved in questions of methodology, we can say that feminism, the word and concept, comes from a long tradition spread over several different epochs in history. We can see the struggle in the late 19th and

early 20th centuries as one mainly concerned with equal rights for women. Although control over one's body and fertility is considered one of the key demands of feminism, there was no demand for contraception in India because there was no material basis for it, though some individuals might have propagated it. Therefore, even the definition of feminism changes with what is historically possible.

Our definition of socialist feminism applies to the present period and cannot be used for earlier periods. Our feminist tradition and history give us a sense of strength and continuity, so that feminism can also be used generally to describe different movements which took up the rights and issues of women. If we go into history, we will

see women activists, their lives, their travelling and networking have a familiar ring. Or there are actions, so bold and daring for their time that we might want to call them feminist. What is important, however, is that definite ideological shifts were made from time to time. Today we emphasise the struggle against patriarchy and capitalism; this does not mean that all groups are waging anti-patriarchal/capitalist struggles but that there is a movement towards it. In Pakistan, women are campaigning against their personal laws and going to vote against the wishes of their men. There is a consistent effort in the development of feminist theory towards an international perspective which takes into account the processes of imperialism.

Note: This article and the following one were taken from the nine day workshop attended by 23 women from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1989. The two reports were a result of the debates on critical issues being faced by women in South Asia. It focuses on current trends in feminism and the women's movement. ☐

Source: Pressing Against the Boundaries, Draft Report of an FAO-FFHC/AD South Asian Workshop on Women and Development, pp. 12-14. Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development F.A.O., 55 Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi - 110 003, India.

Feminism, Women's Movements and Mass Movements

by Gail Omvedt

In taking "mass movements" and "autonomous women's groups" as the two main forms in which women's action can be seen, these can be viewed as almost polar opposites. Further, feminists whose main experience was in small groups and have gone through the process of working with Left parties and organizations, have often seen mass movements as inherently inimical to the values of feminism.

In conventional terms, it has to be said that, at the very least, mass movements seem to work on a different level than the new "feminist movement" - if we have the image that most



in South Asia do, of mass movements as strikes, rallies, demonstrations in the streets, roads or government offices, involving thousands or hundreds of thousands. Judging by this crite-

riion, the women's movement would indeed seem to be of secondary status, for it is clear that women do not come out in huge numbers in response to calls by feminist leaders; rather there is much more massive and enthusiastic participation by women themselves in mobilisation by class or caste-based organizations or those taking up the nationality question. Mobilisation even on clearly reactionary appeals to religious identities has also outstripped that by women's organisations, while even on "women's issues" mass calls seem to have to be done on the fronts with more "general issue" mass organisations or party wings. This seems

to yield a general situation that while women's oppression is now almost universally admitted and the new women's movement has gained a good deal of social prestige, feminist organisations and activists seem to have very little "movement power"

As a result, the relationship of feminist activists and mass movements or party leaders may be a tense one. On the one hand, leaders of party and mass organisations feel free to dismiss the women's movement and feminist activists as insignificant and ineffective - when they do not go farther and describe them as the bearers of an alien "bourgeois" ideology floating on the wings of foreign funding. On the other, some feminists reject mass movements as wholesale, viewing leadership and structure themselves as too patriarchal and anti-democratic to be of use on women's issues. "Mass mobilisation" (in response to a call given by a leader or a large organisation) is posed against "self-mobilisation" (undertaken by a small group on its own initiative); "collectivity/democracy" is posed against "hierarchy/bureaucracy", and parties, organisations and mass leaders are accused of "using women" for their other priorities.

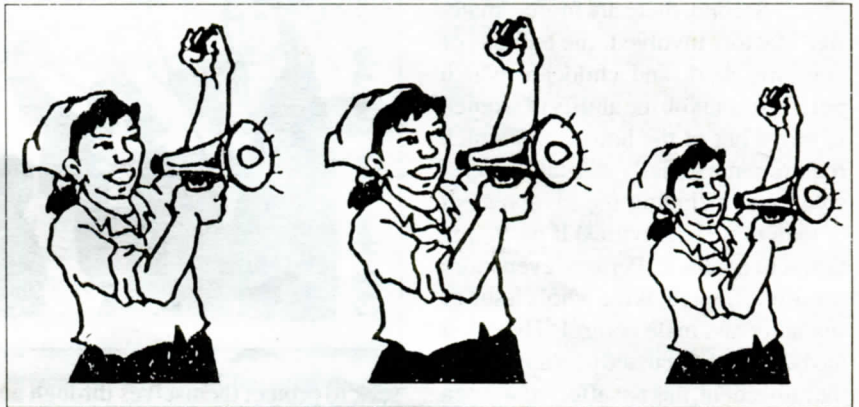
Both responses seem inadequate, it has been argued. The fact is that in spite of the seeming lack of "mass" mobilisation by purely women on women's issues, the women's movement is still felt to be a force in contemporary South Asian societies; feminism continues to be a spectre haunting both conservatives and the traditional Left. How can we understand this? In fact it is argued that to do so we have to transcend the rigid polarisations of autonomous collectives/controlled mass movements; mass mobilisation/self-mobilisation; women's issues/general issues.

There are several points that

emerge when looking at the actual processes of mass movements. We could begin by questioning the very definition/conceptualization of "mass movements" - which need not simply mean a one-time huge mobilisation at the call of a leader or organisation, but also, for instance, large-scale coordinated actions held in widely dispersed places over a large geographical area, organised under the auspices of fronts including quite diverse organisations,

issues", and women's involvement in movements taking up such issues expresses their very basic concerns.

What about the objection that the "actually existing mass movements" have often simply used women as participants and then moved towards restoration of patriarchal control when the need has passed? While we do see, historically and today, such processes taking place, it is also connected with the fact that all kinds of



and with local initiative providing the main infrastructure. "Mass movements" might also mean innumerable local actions guided by a common understanding. It should also not be forgotten that the one-time "big" rally or demonstration is invariably preceded by numerous "small" meetings, discussions, camps, training sessions. Far from "mass mobilisation" being a contrast to "self-mobilisation", it seems to presuppose it, in the sense that involvement always expresses some inherent needs, and in the process, people leave their stamp on both leaders and organisational structures. Similarly, it is difficult if not impossible to separate "purely women's issues" from others: in a very real sense imperialism, environmental degradation, the lack of basic needs such as water and housing, caste oppression, etc. are also "women's

control - imperialist, capitalist, brahmanic - tend to get reasserted, often in new forms, once the course of a movement or revolt has been run. Further, the tendency to evaluate a mass organisation or mass campaign in terms of whether the party or individual leading is "using women" is in fact analysing the movement in terms of the subjective intentions of leadership; put more polemically, it is to look at the movement through male eyes. Instead of looking at the masses of women as if they were simply helpless sheep herded into a pen, it is important to understand their reasons for joining the agitation and to ask the question: what kinds of long-term and short-term openings does this provide for a mass feminism move forward?

While these become quite complex issues, we can make a beginning

in dealing with them by noting the obstacles to increasing women's participation in mass movements. There is first the fact that any massive and sustained participation by women in socio-political movements involves a challenge to the "public/private" distinction so crucial to almost all structures of patriarchy. Women have to break the traditional notion that "a woman's place is in the home" when they do participate, particularly when they move to decision-making and leadership levels.

Second, there are more "material" factors involved: the burdens of domestic work and childcare which put constraints on the ability of women to move out of the house, and which require some socially institutionalised solutions (including the involvement of men in such activities) if participation is to continue. Perhaps even more sensitive, though, is the whole issue of sexuality and male control. Though it has been little discussed publicly within the movement, this has affected women in all kinds of mass movements. Moving out of the house and coming into interaction with the men inevitably raises doubts about the woman's "chastity" and loyalty. In fact there is more than simple suspicion at stake here: sexual or other personal needs do not get expressed in the formation of new relationships in the process of movement involvement. Sexual slandering and in some cases more direct physical suppression are used against women in almost every form of public life.

There have been different ways of dealing with this issue. More traditionally, organisational assurances that "our women are chaste" or that the organisation provides them with protection are used - this is a correlate of the special care that women activists in mass movements often get, but it involves at least some reaffirmation of the traditional ideal woman, and as-

suming the need for special protection implies the weakness of women and provides justification for their downgrading by male activists. Another strategy would be the activating of a separate women's wing which may, by making an organisational separation between male and female activists - be used to avoid some of the problems of this type. Or, women in public life may

tion. It is a striking fact that in the last decade in India, at least, some of the most fundamental issues striking at the heart of patriarchy seem to have been raised by mass organisations.

...Can we speak of a new "epoch of feminism" which holds the promise not only of confronting patriarchy in fundamental ways but also of transforming -- or being a central part



seek to protect themselves through an inversion of the ideal that the "personal is political", asserting their right to have their private lives kept out of public purview. (This in fact is the most challenging to traditional patriarchal evaluations of the character of women.)

But the fact is, that the dynamics of women's mass participation brings them into confrontation with various aspects of patriarchal control and thus, as noted further, must either lead to moving further or to a slackening of participation itself.

"Moving further" involves several things. One is the degree to which mass organisations themselves take up what we may call "women-specific" issues. This has been happening increasingly and it is linked to the process in which the women's movement as a whole is moving towards taking up more and more fundamental issues of women's exploita-

of the process of transforming -- socialist and liberation movements themselves?

Can the traditions and experiences of South Asian feminism also be a vital resource in other parts of the world?

Can the gloom which sometimes settles on us, the feeling of exhaustion and wasted effort, of having to confront too many personal level obstacles and powerful political reactionary forces be changed into some confidence in our own power to face the future? ☾

Source: Excerpt from Pressing Against the Boundaries, pp. 20-23. Draft Report of an FAO-FFHC/AD South Asian Workshop on Women and Development, pp. 20-23. Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development F.A.O., 55 Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi - 110 003, India..

Asian Tradition of Feminist Activism

by Kamla Bhasin and Nighat Said Khan

The booklet, *Feminism in South Asia*, was first published in 1986 with two subsequent printings in 1987 and 1988, by Kali for Women. It is an attempt to respond to questions and doubts raised on feminism. The following excerpt from the booklet focuses on the early activism of our South Asian sisters and their male counterparts. They continue to serve as an inspiration in our continuing struggle for women's rights and empowerment.

18th Century Women Activists

There were many women activists in Asia in the 18th century. Some of the lesser known early agitators on women's rights were *Pandita Ramabai* (1858-1922) of India, who attacked Hindu religious orthodoxy and spoke up for women's freedom as early as the 1880s and who herself led an independent life; *Kartini* (1879-1904), a pioneer of women's education and emancipation in Indonesia, who defied tradition to start a girl's school; *Qurrat ul Ayn* (1815-51) of Iran, a Babi heretic who abandoned her family, gave up veiled seclusion, preached unveiled in public, and died fighting on the battlefield; *Jiu Jin* of China (1875-1907) who left home to study in Tokyo and to involve herself in revolutionary politics and women's issues. *Jiu Jin* was arrested for these activities and executed. It was she who said, "The revolution will have to start in our homes, by achieving equal rights for women."

Sugala (from the Mahavamsa) and *Gajaman Nona* are two Sri Lankan women who defied the stereotype of

feminine passivity and prudery to give expression to their individuality as women. *Sugala* fought King Parakrama Bahu I in defence of her kingdom, while *Gajaman Nona* wrote poetry, some of which are considered by men to be too ribald for a woman.

Male Counterparts

Many of the earliest agitators for women's emancipation in the East were men. In China, for example, Kang Yu-Wei attacked footbinding and women's subordination: "I now have a task: to cry out the natural grievances of the incalculable number of women of the past. I now have one great desire: to save eight hundred million women of my own time from drowning in the sea of suffering. I now have a great longing: to bring the incalculable, inconceivable numbers of women of the future the happiness of equality and of independence."

In Egypt Ahmed Fares El Shidyak in 1855 wrote a book (**One Leg Crossed Over the Other**) supporting women's emancipation, and Kasim Amin, around the same time created a sensation with his book, **The New Woman**.

In Iran several male intellectuals of the 1880s and the 1890s took up the issue of women's rights, opposing polygamy and the seclusion of women; while in India, from the time of Ram Mohun Roy who agitated against sati and women's enslavement, numerous social and political reformers have raised the issue, including famous names like Vidyasagar, Gandhi, Ramakrishna, Rabindranath Tagore, Nehru, and Syed Ahmed.

The Link to Europe

European imperialism directly linked the European capitalist system to those countries that were colonized and brought about major changes in them. These changes were not only political and administrative but also fundamental to existing economic and social systems, in that they fundamentally altered the lives of the colonized peoples. Women were equally affected by all these changes. The policies and practices of the colonialists made the position of women even worse than what it used to be.

As in Europe, in South Asia women of the bourgeoisie were kept in the home but were given some education and a few basic rights. But in spite of these, basic laws were patriarchal with the man as the undisputed head of the family.

Thus with the growth and development of capitalism both in Europe and in the colonies, patriarchal structures were strengthened. Women lost their earlier rights in household production and were exploited in the field and factory, or confined to the home.

In all spheres, the culture of capitalism initiated in the 19th century by colonialists reinforced and established patriarchy and patriarchal socioeconomic values more firmly. □

Original source: "Feminism is Relevant" by the Feminist Study Circle in Colombo.

Our Source: "Feminism in South Asia." India: Kali for Women. 1986.

The Politics of Language: "Feminism" in Eastern Europe

by Lisa Mulholland



In Eastern Europe, "feminism" is a dirty word. The same holds true for other words like "emancipation," "equal rights for women," and "women's liberation." Under communist regimes of the past, "emancipation" was imposed on women and given as the reason for requiring women to leave their homes to become part of the labor force.

As a result, the newly democratic nations like Czechoslovakia and Hungary are experiencing a backlash against feminist ideas.

The analogy of a pendulum used for other political and social trends in the region also works with this issue. In the past 50 years, the pendulum was held artificially to the left. Pictured as happy workers, contented to leave children with equally happy grandmothers or in provided childcare, women were visible in unrepresentative but recognizable numbers in the political and public social arena and the charters of most governments provided equality under the law.

The result was not so rosy. Not

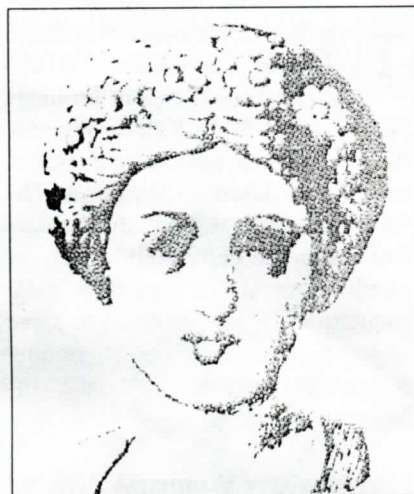
treated as social equals, women carried the double burden of outside job and household maintenance. They often mistrusted state provided childcare and resented demands on their time for mandatory attendance at party meetings and holiday celebrations.

Given present opportunities, the pendulum has swung far to the right. Private enterprise, imported goods on store shelves, and tourism are on the rise, as are skinheads, racism, and threats to legal abortion. Women are expressing hopes to return to roles labelled "traditional," caring for the home, and their families.

When asked about their dreams for their daughters, many of the 110 Czech women questioned in a recent survey responded that they are looking forward to sons-in-law with well-paying jobs or other circumstances that will allow their daughters to stay at home more than they were able to do. One architectural engineer named Lenka had this to say, "The girls should [put aside] their emancipation, which they have learned in socialism. They should learn the woman's role in the family, which was suppressed by socialism."

Although a number of women hold beliefs which are encompassed in the spectrum of feminist thought—equal access to education, freedom to choose a career, abortion on demand, etc., even many of these women would not claim to be "feminists."

Klara Sankova, a representative to the Czech and Slovak Federal Assembly, is one example. Elected on a platform of rights for minorities, she refuses the title of feminist, saying, "I am for all minorities in our democracy, not just one."



Alena Kratka, a young, highly educated English teacher in Prague explains her distaste for the term. "I don't like the word 'feminism' myself. It reminds me of the Czechoslovak Union of Women. It was a really formal group. The women in this horrible institution were gung-ho communists who were supposed to represent the working women of Czechoslovakia. They had funny congresses and funny meetings to solve pseudo problems, it was all in theory. They just talked about it. The institution was purely women and showed that women had the right to talk about problems in public, but it was very superficial, no depth. In the past, equality was not that a woman could become a head of a school, but that she could drive a tractor or operate a crane." □

Source: *Off our backs*, July 1991, page 10. 2423 18th NW, 2nd floor, Washington, DC 20009, USA. Tel.: (202) 234-8072.

Yugoslav Feminists found Newspaper

by Natalie Nenandic

KARETA is the first independent, nonpolitically affiliated feminist newspaper in Yugoslavia. It is a quarterly which comes out of Zagreb, the capital of the western republic of Croatia. It was named under the title of a poem by the late Croatian feminist poet Yelena Zuppa.

The radical feminist group KARETA was formed in the spring of 1990 in the aftermath of democratic elections in Croatia and Slovenia when it became clear that it would no longer be illegal to form a feminist newspaper outside the institution of the state. The group received a small startup grant from The Global Fund for Women.

KARETA is run by a collective which includes poets, journalists, sociologists, ethnologists, and economists--lesbian and heterosexual. In Slovenia there is also a recently formed feminist group called Lilit and a lesbian and gay newspaper called *Revolver*.

As the first feminist newspaper in Yugoslavia, KARETA is directed toward all women who want to engage in feminist discussions about women's new political status. Its aims are to raise women's consciousness and to stimulate further development of feminism by politicizing women's lives. KARETA covers discussions on issues such as male violence against women, women's legal status, sexual violence, women's reproductive rights, pornography, rape, prostitution, and women's work status.

KARETA prints interviews with international feminists and reviews of feminist texts in order to encourage publishers to translate foreign feminist literature.

The first issue included: a reprint of an anti-war article first published in 1917 in the Zagreb feminist periodical "Women's World," a call for an anti-war demonstration, a report on the first Parliament of the Women of Croatia, which was in part organ-

to insisting on the right to abortion, KARETA is placing pressure on the new government to invest in contraception and to politicize rape and incest.

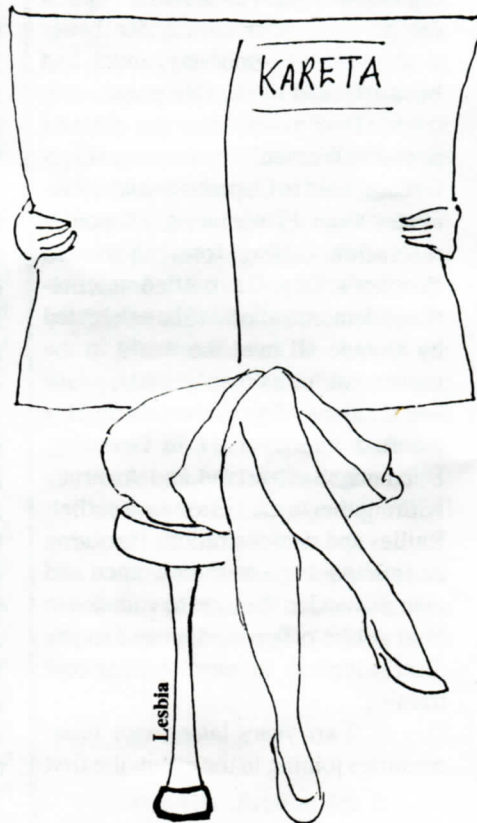
KARETA is also politicizing pornography and increasing violence against women and will print information and evidence of women being coerced into pornography.

KARETA is also encouraging the formation of feminist institutions, such as rape crisis centers (Zagreb already has a battered women's hotline number in effect for over three years), feminist bookstores, feminist historical archives, women's presses, and feminist studies programs by printing articles about such institutions abroad.

In addition to coming out with a feminist newspaper, KARETA is trying to raise money to form a badly needed feminist library/reading room so that scarce resources can be shared. The group would like to request the international feminist community to assist them in their library/reading room project by donating new and used books, pamphlets, photocopies, journals, newspapers and advice on how to run the library.

This article was compiled by the KARETA collective--Asja Armanda, Katarina Vidovic, Durda Miklauzic, Katja Gattin and Zorica Spoljar.

For more information, write: KARETA, 44 Zagorska, 41000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia. ☐



ized by KARETA, an article on how the economy excludes women, an article on women's legal status, advertisements for donations for the SOS battered women's shelter, feminist poetry and interviews with feminist filmmakers, news from international feminism, and feminist studies at Stanford.

KARETA's next issues will cover major themes of abortion, pornography and prostitution. In addition

Source: *Off our backs*, July 1991, page 10. 2423 18th St, NW, 2nd floor, Washington D.C. 20009, USA. Tel. (202) 234-8072.

For Women--and Revolution!

by Barbara Rogers

International Women's Day was formalised as an annual event by the United Nations General Assembly, which fixed 8th March as the date during its 1977 session. Since then the idea has been taken up by women's organisations, trade unions and local authorities in Britain as an event around which women's activities can focus. It can easily go beyond the idea of a single day, and sometimes lasts for a week or even a fortnight.

The idea of an annual day for women has been around long before 1977. International Women's Day has had its moments of glory both in support of women's rights and in the peace movement. The most dramatic was a 1917 Women's Day march in Petersburg which sparked the revolution overthrowing the Russian Empire's semi-feudal and autocratic monarchy.

In Britain as in many other countries, International Women's Day was long associated with the trade unions and the left in general - and it in fact originates in trade union organising by working women, especially those in the sweatshops of the clothing industry, who were doing extremely long

hours in dangerous and unhealthy conditions. March 8th was proposed as the landmark when a march was held in New York on that day in 1908 to commemorate the struggle for improved conditions by a group of clothing workers - and their hunger march the previous year calling for better wages and a ten-hour day, which had been attacked by the city police.

Two years later the Second Socialist Women's International Conference, held in Copenhagen with delegates from 17 countries, adopted a resolution calling for "an annual Women's Day - a unified international demonstration" to be celebrated by women all over the world in the movement for women's rights, peace and freedom. This was celebrated for the first time in 1911 in Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria - with another in the US a month earlier. Rallies and demonstrations involving an estimated one million women and men demanded the right to vote and to hold public office, and an end to sex discrimination in employment and training.

Two years later, with more countries joining in the event, the first

Women's Day rally was held in Russia's main industrial city, Petersburg. The marchers, also comprising mainly women from the clothing industry, faced severe police brutality. The event established International Women's Day as the Russian "working women's day of militancy" and the event has become a standard part of the Soviet Union's official secular calendar - although now sentimentalised into a kind of Soviet Mother's Day complete with sappy cards, bunches of flowers (at inflated freemarket prices) and a couple of hours off for all women on that day. A few hours to compensate for a double or triple shift and the ravages of a long, cold winter. Big deal.

As the First World War loomed in 1914 International Women's Day became an anti-war event. Peace became a major theme of the day in the US for the duration of the war. Meanwhile back in Petrograd, on 23 February (the equivalent of 8th March in the old Julian calendar, later abandoned for the western or Georgian one) it was the large demonstration celebrating Women's Day that led to a riot - and to the February Revolution which estab-



Trade Union Congress

lished the Provisional Government under Kerensky. This lasted only a few months, trying to continue fighting the war against the Germans against all odds, until the Bolshevik coup d'etat in October.

In Britain it was only in 1926 - the year of the General Strike - that International Women's Day was taken up. This was done by an interesting alliance of the (then) very important Co-operative Women's Guild and the Communist Party. From then on until the end of the Second World War, 8th March was a regular event for expressing opposition to fascism in Britain and Europe.

Perhaps because of this anti-fascist (and left-wing) association, the event was dropped at the end of the war in Britain and many other countries. It was revived in the late 1960s by the new women's liberation movement. In 1971 a demonstration of 5,000 women in London demanded equal pay, equal opportunity, free 24-hour childcare, free contraception and abortion on demand. The event has grown since then in a completely unstructured kind of way - there is no coordinating body, for instance - because it provides a convenient date around which women can organise if we want to. This is why some parts of the country have well-organised and very lively events, while others may not have anything. Most trade unions organise something, and the Women's Trade Union Congress takes place around this time. Local authorities are the other source of events.

International Women's Day has taken its place, along with Feminist Book Fortnight in June, as one of the two key dates for women's events. It is Women's Day which offers perhaps the widest range of activities, and the possibility of reflecting on the original - and not yet achieved - goals of the women who started it all: women's rights, and peace and freedom for all.

Source: Everywoman

March 1991. 34 Islington Green, London, N1 8DU United Kingdom.

Women in Development

Europe Working Group prepares for 1995 UN Conference on Women

Preparations are now beginning for a UN conference on women to be held in 1995. Women in Development Europe (WIDE) has decided to begin preparing for this event by assessing the achievements/failures of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies. WIDE is also planning to be involved in the early discussions about the agenda of the Conference by applying for official UN observer status.

Pauline Eccles, Mieke van der Veken and Anna Foca will make up the core working group which will prepare a discussion paper assessing the Forward Looking Strategies (FLS) for broader discussion among WIDE network.

At present the group is collecting information and responding to a paper sent to the group by Erika Maerke on the FLS.

Possible themes

The UN division for the Advancement of Women in Vienna reports that the priority themes for the meeting are: equality, increased awareness by women of their rights including legal literacy, equal pay for equal value, equality in economic decision-making, elimination of stereotyping of women, development, women in extreme poverty, integration of women's concerns in national development

planning, women in urban areas, population, and nutrition, health factors, migration, drug consumption and AIDS, peace, women and the peace process, measures to eradicate violence against women, women in international decision-making, and education for peace.

Contact addresses

Focal points for United Nations agencies who are preparing the meeting are:

- Division for the Advancement of Women, Vienna International Centre
P.O. Box 500 A-1400
Vienna, Austria
- International Research Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (Instraw)
Avenida Cesar Nicolas Penson 102-A
P.O. Box 21747
Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic

Source: WIDE Bulletin, August 1991:2. c/o SID, Palazzo Civiltà del Lavaro 00144 EUR Rome, Italy. Fax: 39/6/5919836.

1992 Calendar: Dates to Remember

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| February 15 | - | <i>Self Defense Day</i> |
| March 3 | - | <i>Girls' Day, Japan</i> |
| March 8 | - | <i>International Women's Day</i> |
| April 7 | - | <i>World Health Day</i> |
| April 22 | - | <i>Earth Day</i> |
| May 1 | - | <i>International Day of Workers' Solidarity</i> |
| May 24 | - | <i>International Women's Day of Disarmament</i> |
| May 28 | - | <i>International Day of Action for Women's Health</i> |
| May 31 | - | <i>World No Tobacco Day</i> |
| June 5 | - | <i>World Environment Day</i> |
| June 16 | - | <i>International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling People of South Africa</i> |
| August 9 | - | <i>South African Women's Day</i> |
| September 8 | - | <i>International Literacy Day</i> |
| September 14 | - | <i>Women's Image in Media Day</i> |
| September 20 | - | <i>International Day of Peace</i> |
| September 28 | - | <i>International Abortion Rights Day</i> |
| October 16 | - | <i>World Food Day</i> |
| November 25 | - | <i>Day of NO Violence Against Women</i> |
| November 29 | - | <i>International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People</i> |
| December 1 | - | <i>World AIDS Day</i> |
| December 10 | - | <i>Human Rights Day</i> |

What all the women of the world did say and would have said at the Earth Summit.



*Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
1-12 June 1992*

Women and Family Planning in Indonesia:

Where are the Women's Voices?

by Elizabeth Thomas

In 1989 President Suharto of Indonesia received the United Nations Population Award. Indeed, Indonesia's family planning program is frequently acclaimed by development agencies and international organizations as a program which is successfully lowering population growth. With the fifth largest population in the world- 180 million - a successful family planning program is one of the major factors motivating international lending agencies to give development loans and aid to Indonesia.

The voices which are left unheard in this exchange between the Indonesian State, the United Nations, and international lending agencies, are those of the women to whom this issue most pertains. Women whose bodies and lives are controlled by contraceptive technologies and government policies receive little information and are not given any voice in decision making.

Family planning is a big issue for the government of Indonesia, particularly when it comes to the lower classes. A jeepney ride down a main road reveals this; each tree bears a symbol showing the blue circle with the letters KB, short for *Keluarga Berencana*, meaning family planning. The circle can be seen painted on curbsides or stencilled onto trash cans in front of every home.

In villages, low walls are built in front of homes. They bear the picture of a hand with two fingers raised, beneath them the slogan *Dua Anak Cukup* (Two children is enough), then the Indonesian state symbol. At sugar factories and cigarette production lines signs and posters extol the virtues of small families and family planning.

However, no such posters or signs are to be found on university campuses or in middle or upper class neighborhoods.

The KB program in Indonesia is run jointly by the Department of Health and the Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional (BKKBN), the National Coordinating Board for Family Planning. The Department of Health has national, district and sub-district levels; the BKKBN composes an extensive, centralized reporting structure. For both organizations, all policy decisions are made in Jakarta and representation is made at the *puskesmas*, the government health clinics. *Puskesmas* are likely to be the cheapest and often the only source of western medical facilities for women, so it is significant that the state chooses these as the place from which to run the KB program.

Each *puskesmas* in a given district is set a target figure by the BKKBN office in Jakarta. This target figure for people who accept KB is determined from ideal population percentages provided by the United Nations. Workers

at the government health clinics are supposed to keep track of the number of families, the number of children in each family, and the method of contraception used by each woman. Each person who accepts KB is given a *kartu merah*, a red card stating what type of contraception the woman is using. This card must be regularly presented in bureaucratic dealings, even if they have nothing to do with family planning.

Not only are there target numbers for acceptors of KB, but the methods of contraception are also targetted. These targets form an essential part of the program because health care workers will persuade women to use the targetted methods in order to fulfill requirements issued from Jakarta. The methods of contraception most strongly encouraged by the BKKBN are IUDs, DepoVera injections and tubal ligations, methods in which the woman has little direct control. Vasectomies are not targetted and are rare; also extremely rare is the use of condoms.

While there are no legal penalties for having more than two children, government employees, for example, cannot receive state assistance for a third child. (In Indonesia where many industries are state-owned, and the majority of universities and schools are state-run, most professionals are state employees.) BKKBN employees cannot receive raises or promotions if they have more than two children. They must also use targetted methods of contraception. However, a woman's choice to have only one child or none at all is not given recognition. Indeed, if a woman requests sterilization, her age multiplied by the number of children she has must come to a figure over 100 for the request to be



granted. Women cannot obtain family planning without the consent of their husbands and there is no access to family planning before marriage. Abortion is illegal unless one doctor and two specialists believe it to be necessary for the health of the mother.

The *puskesmas* reach into the community through *kader*, local women volunteers who recruit women and check up on their contraceptive use. In a clinic that I visited, the *kader* were more conservative Muslim women than the general community; one was the wife of the village headman. In this way the KB program takes advantage of an existing power structure to encourage people to become acceptors. This has been documented in an article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. Here, what they call "safaris" were described in the outer island areas of Indonesia. These are "intensive efforts to meet fixed targets of new acceptors.... A team of government health workers -- accompanied by local Muslim leaders, teachers, and military personnel -- descend on a village and gather all the women together for a lecture on the benefits of contraception. By the end of the day, they recruit anywhere from ten to hundreds of women to adopt IUDs, pills or other methods. Individual counselling and information on side effects tends to be minimal on these occasions." (FEER, 18 April 1991, p. 48). The article goes on to say that international agencies have discouraged the Indonesian government from using such tactics. Yet the persuasion of women to use specific contraceptives still takes place in a social structure which denies the status of women, particularly those of the lower class.

Although the Indonesian gov-



Family Planning Health Clinic in Indonesia.

ernment is making strides in controlling population growth, it seems to be doing so at a cost. There is a general lack of consideration for the women involved in these policies. Information is hard to come by, statistics kept by workers at the *puskesmas* and used in calculating targets are precarious to say the least, and there seems to be little or no feedback between community workers who deal directly with the women, those who make the policies, and the international organizations that set the initial target figures. Minimal consideration has been given to counselling women, offering alternative methods should a particular type of contraceptive not suit her, or warning her about the side effects certain methods may have.

Another question that needs attention is the use of Norplant (hormone implants) in Indonesia. According to an article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "From 1987 to 1990 more than 886,000 women in 27 provinces in Indonesia received implants. To date, the Indonesian government has purchased some 75 percent of the supply." The Norplant treatment consists of silicone and rubber capsules implanted into the upper arms. These are intended to release a low dosage of progestin over a five-year period before being removed. However, surgical insertions

are often done in unhygienic and rushed conditions and, more frighteningly, no one has been trained to take them out. "Up until now, health worker training has focused almost entirely on insertion rather than removal, the latter being far more difficult. As the original acceptors near the end of the five-year cycle, this is becoming critical." (FEER, p.49)

From the evidence I witnessed during my stay in Indonesia, it seems that before holding up these family planning policies as an example for other developing countries, the loopholes and failings of the system, particularly regarding women's rights, should first be seriously addressed.

About the author: Elizabeth Thomas, North American, served a six-week internship program with Isis International Manila from January to February 1992.

Prior to joining Isis, she was in Malang, Indonesia for six months where she studied languages and women's issues dealing with health care. Her article is based on her research work.

She will pursue her Master's degree in International Relations at the University of Chicago this fall.

Singapore hosts Industrialization and Women's Health Regional Workshop

by Dominga Anosan and Eliz Reyes-Martinez

Fifty participants, composed primarily of Singaporean women from the Ministry of Labor, Health and the academe attended the Industrialization and Women's Health Regional Workshop for ASEAN countries held at the Amara Hotel in Singapore last April 21 to 26, 1992. Invited as resource speakers were health experts from both government and non-government organizations and the academe in the ASEAN region.

This workshop brought together researchers in the field of women's health and industrialization to report their findings and to propose actions for the promotion and improvement of women's health. Some of the NGOs represented were Isis International Manila, Solidaritas Perempuan (Women Solidarity) in Indonesia, All Women's Action Society (AWAM) in Malaysia and the Asia Monitor Resource Center in Hong Kong.

The workshop was jointly organized by the Singapore Council of Women's Organizations (SCWO) and Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE). It was the outcome of a resolution passed during the 4th General Assembly of the ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organizations (ACWO) in January 1990 in Bangkok, Thailand. This resolution called upon ASEAN women's organizations to work together on environmental and occupational hazards to women by coordinating research efforts, establishing contacts, sharing information and experiences and organizing a regional workshop.

Dominga Anosan, Isis International health networking project associate, participated as a resource speaker and presented a paper on the conference topic: *Medicine and society: health education and facilities for working women.*

The other three conference topics were: *the health implications of the changing roles of women in industrialization; the effects of industrialization on reproduction; and the impact of industrial work regime on women's health.* These were discussed through 26 paper presentations from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

In addition, public forums were held on *sexual*



Isis presenter Doms Anosan

harassment: its legal and political implications; and health hazards to women at work: the right to know.

A wide range of issues was raised and discussed during the three-day conference. Some highlights from the presentations were:

- With regard to the health implications of the changing roles of women in industrialization, it was a general observation that the number of women in the labor force has increased. It was also noted that women play twin or triple roles as mother, homemaker and wage earner. Some questions raised were: Does the entry of women in the labor market bring about improvement in their health and welfare? And does women's participation in wage work in fact create more demands on their time and energies causing their health to

suffer?

In her paper, Chung Yuen Kay states that "Housework and childcare remain firmly entrenched as the concern and responsibility of women even when it has been delegated, because it is delegated to other women--these women are usually mothers and other relatives and hired maids who are expatriates."

In her conclusion, she says that real alternatives to solving problems on the sexual division of labor which places household chore and childcare as the sole responsibility of women will come about only when real gender-related questions are raised with accompanying real shifts in perspectives on what constitutes work--in particular, the work women do, which must include housework. Real structural and attitudinal reorientations must be worked out. At the everyday level, this would mean that shared parenting and shared domestic management will have to become more of a reality than it presently is.

- In the discussions on the effects of industrialization on reproduction, Dr. David Koh in his paper on *Reproductive Toxicology* says that "the study of the effects of environmental exposures on the reproductive system has undergone rapid growth in the past few decades. Its development is due in part to several reasons, including 1) the recognition of numerous potential environmental toxins,

many of which have been introduced through the process of industrialization; 2) the progressive rise in the participation of women of reproductive age in the industrial work force; and 3) the increasing importance of reproduction in many of the industrial countries which have declining birth rates. Reproductive processes in both men and women may be adversely affected by some environmental and occupational agents. All stages of reproduction are potentially at risk.

Unfortunately, the extent of the problem of adverse reproductive outcomes from work exposure is presently unknown. Much of the available information originate from laboratory studies on animals which may not always be extrapolated to humans.

In the final analysis, there is a need to balance the moral duty to protect the unborn from environmental and workplace toxins, against the danger of exaggerating the potential risks based on current information.

- Six papers were presented to discuss the impact of the industrial work regime on women's health which raised a wide range of work related health issues such as the effects of shiftwork and visual display terminals (VDT) and other types of emerging new technologies on women's health and ergonomics and legislation for workers' protection.

Ergonomics was defined by Halimathun Mohd Khalid as the study of human abilities and characteristics which affect the design of equipment, systems and jobs...and its aim is to improve efficiency, safety and well being (Clark and Corlett 1984:2). It is an approach of taking into account workers in the design and organization of things. Furthermore, it is a listing of objectives or criteria which includes jobs, systems or products that are comfortable, safe, effective and satisfying.

- The issues raised by the topic, *Medicine and society: health education and*

facilities for working women, included the availability of information about occupational hazards to women working in industries; extent of affordable health care provided by industry, government and other organizations to factory women; the percentage of working class women's income available for her health over and above her subsistence needs and contributions to her family; medical care and financial compensations provided by industry, government and other organizations in the event of industrial accidents.

Except for Singapore where health education and health facilities are readily available to working women, majority of working women in the other ASEAN countries experience a general dearth of all these health facilities and benefits. Among women in particular, middle class working women are generally better informed and can afford better health care than working class women who have to work a "double day", bear and nurse children, earn a living and give medical priority to other family members.

From the workshop discussions, it became evident that researches and studies on the effects of industrialization to women's health and reproduction were lacking. On the positive side, the workshop became the venue for Singaporean women to see the realities of working women in the other ASEAN countries.

Built into the conference schedule was a factory tour which allowed participants to take a first hand look at an actual work station.

Future plans include holding another regional workshop in 1994. The Women and Health Committee in Singapore will continue as the Secretariat for the next workshop. For more information about the conference, write: AWARE, 64 A/B Race Course Road, Singapore 0821.



Conference participants

Brisbane, Australia: Women of Non English Speaking Background (NESB) Speak Out

Although Australia is classified as a developed country, and its population has a very high standard of health, pockets of inequality still exist. Women of non English speaking backgrounds (NESB) are doubly disadvantaged because of their gender and ethnic background. However, they have not remained a silent minority. Through activities such as the Speakout, they are being heard.

The Association of NESB Women in Queensland held a Speakout on the 9th and 12th of October 1991. The Speakout aimed to give grassroots NESB women an opportunity to share their experiences, raise issues of concern, provide ideas to the Association and produce recommendations to the relevant government bodies.

The major problems the women identified are those having to do with language difficulties, especially in relation to health and legal services and information. English classes are often not suited to NESB women. For example, some women are refugees who are traumatised and cannot relate to or learn within a formal education environment. Unemployment as the result of factors such as language difficulties and racial discrimination is a great stress on these women. In addition, women identified problems with isolation due to inadequate public transport and lack of multilingual information on existing transport services. Also, there is a lack of ethnic child care services and information on the ones which are operating.

Women at the Speakout made a number of suggestions for tackling these problems. First, there needs to be

a greater outreach to women in isolated areas so that they may be informed about such events as the Speakout. The majority of women who attended the Speakout were attending English classes or working at community centres and appeared to be from relatively secure economic backgrounds. One venue through which contact may be made is through the Factory Project.

Another way outreach work may be done is through travelling vans with multilingual information and interpreters who can visit isolated areas, shopping centres, and schools with high percentages of NESB women. Stalls could be set up in shopping centres with needed information and multilingual posters could be put up in shops and schools. Other strategies include holding workshops on issues such as health, legal issues and domestic violence and running talks and information sessions at community centres. More English classes should be held in the inner city and isolated areas, and questionnaires can be distributed to appropriate services to better identify needs and resources. In addition, women may lobby government for improved services. This can be done through letter writing to newspapers, visiting local and state parliamentarians and government officials and having stories run on current affairs shows and in newspapers. ☾

Source: Women's Health Centre c/o Indrani Ganguly, Ph.D., project research officer. 165 Gregory Terrace Spring Hill. P.O. Box 665 Spring Hill, Queensland, Australia, 1004.



Women and AIDS

Geraldine Bailey, a Canadian feminist working on women and health issues, was guest speaker in a video film showing and discussion at the WomanHealth office in Manila last March 6, 1992. Isis International Manila workers participated in the lively exchange which started with explaining what part of the body you like and why, followed by videos on rape and prostitution and the vulva, and the main discussion on AIDS and safe sex and the use of condoms. ☾

Convention Protects Women Migrant Workers

During the 48th Session Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland held on 3 March 1992, the Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women brought to the attention of the Commission the situation faced by thousands of women migrant workers in the world.

While the problems faced by migrant women cannot be isolated from the problems facing all migrant workers, it is nevertheless true that their situation is considerably harder than that of men. Women migrant workers are forced to live in more inhuman conditions in which migrants are generally forced to live in. To an even greater degree than men, the women are alienated, exploited and oppressed:

- as migrants sharing the conditions suffered by all migrant workers;
- as wives of migrant workers who have, in most cases, been obliged to leave their homes and follow their husbands;
- as women workers, working for the lowest wages in the hardest and most exhausting conditions, and subjected to discrimination and pettiness of all kinds;
- as foreign women who have to be the guardians and defenders of the traditions of their own countries while, at the same time, going through the cultural shock of adapting to new ways of life;
- as women living in a male-dominated industrial society and coming from societies where man is the absolute master;
- as mothers whose traditional role is to transmit the language, customs and religion of their country to their children while the children attend school where only the values, language and way of life of the receiving country are



taught; and

- as women vulnerable to sexual abuse, rape and violence.

Women migrant workers leave their countries and traditional homes primarily because of the unjust economic and political conditions in their own countries. These economic and political conditions are bred by the inequality of North and South international relations as well as by the international division of labor between the North and the South. Thus, women migrant workers, barely surviving in their own countries, are forced to look for opportunities for a better chance to live primarily for their families and for themselves.

Familial obligation is so deeply internalized in Third World women that they become, consciously or unconsciously, "sacrificers" for the benefit of other family members. Thus, many of these women migrant workers work abroad in order to earn enough for their families. The money that migrant workers send home resulting from their work contribute to their countries' capital accumulation and,

in the case of the Philippines, to debt servicing.

At the same time, the labor that women migrant workers give in to receiving countries, primarily the industrialized countries, are necessary for the functioning of these industrialized countries. The women migrant workers are received by these countries because of their countries' needs. For example, there is a felt need in these industrialized and newly developed countries for domestic services. Moreover, the need for entertainment, rest and recreation and sexual pleasures of the industrial men and technocrats have become more prevalent in these countries, particularly in the case of Japan which, by estimate, receives about 100,000 women entertainers every year.

The conditions most women migrant workers find themselves in consequent to their migration are more often than not fraught with harsh conditions of work and injustice. Research and studies on the plight of these women have revealed disturbing cases of violations of their human rights.

Women Workers

Moreover, the illegal status of a number of women migrants as workers without permits make these women more vulnerable to state control and punishment on one hand, and keeps them inferior to local workers, on the other hand. Treated as criminals, they cannot rely on justice or legal protection.

A specific example of this situation concerns the very recent newspaper report on the experiences of women migrant workers in Kuwait. One year after the liberation, hundreds of foreign workers, including Filipino and Sri Lankan women migrant workers, are being beaten and raped by their Kuwaiti employers. In January 1992, 172 Filipino women migrant workers were in the Philippine Embassy, some with faces so swollen their eyes are shut up. Up to a dozen more runaway housemaids arrived daily. Three-fourths of the women have told embassy officials they have been sexually assaulted. One badly cut and bruised woman said that her Kuwaiti boss had thrown her out of a second-story window.

At least 69 women had hidden in the Sri Lankan Embassy with up to eight more arriving daily. Officials report that as many as six sexual assault cases are reported each day and at least one pregnancy a month. Several dozen women hide in the Indian and Bangladeshi embassies with up to 20 more a day arriving.

According to the news report, Kuwaiti officials angrily deny the women as being abused -- as they did when the rapes were first reported in a newspaper -- and tell the outsiders to butt out. Interior Minister Ahmed Hamoud al-Sabah had reportedly stated that only Kuwaitis under the constitution have the right to criticize them but not the foreigners and that foreigners ought not interfere.

The example just shared with this Commission is merely one of the many other examples and is just the tip of the iceberg. What the situation does reveal is that more and more, women migrant workers all over the world, in varying degrees, suffer from harsh conditions of work, sexual abuse and violence, discrimination and injustice.

In response to this situation, studies and researches, as well as social workers giving direct assistance to the victims, have concluded that there is an urgent need for policy changes with regard to the treatment of migrant workers in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is in this light that the Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers. This international instrument contains very important protective measures that, if implemented, will protect and promote the rights of migrant workers, including women migrants. We therefore urge the members of the Commission, as well as all other States, to ratify this Convention. ☺

Source: Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women. 41 Rajah Matanda St., Proj. 4, Quezon City, Philippines 1109. Tel. (632) 786469; Fax: (632) 9215662.



A Feminist Perspective

On Prostitution and Third World Women

In the latter part of 1991, a group of 15 women from Latin America, Asia and Africa met in Thailand to begin a period of exchange and intensive exposure to the realities of prostitution in these regions. The women who were part of the Isis-WICCE exchange program realized the need to articulate a feminist and Third World perspective on the issue as the prevailing analysis approaches groups, scholars or researchers and official institutions. One of the most misleading elements in their view is to reduce the issue of prostitution to one of violence against women. This view lacks an integrated framework which takes into consideration the global, social and economic realities and in particular the unequal North-South relations.

In Third World societies, there is an alarming increase in the magnitude of poverty and prostitution. Viewed within the context of North-South relations, this situation is the outgrowth of the colonial histories which brought capitalism which in turn has improved economic and social lifestyles. Today, in spite of all the modern development strategies, large numbers of Third World women are entering prostitution as a survival strategy.

The transnationalization of capital has been paralleled by the transnationalization of the sex industry where demand and supply for women in prostitution go beyond national boundaries. Demand largely comes from men of the North and middle men from both North and South, and this demand seems to form effective international criminal organiza-

tions. National governments, of both North and South, in not taking decisive actions against this situation, are contributing to reinforce the sex industry in society.

The internationalization of sex services is manifested in sex tourism, prostitution around military bases and international trafficking in women and children for prostitution. Although

women may knowingly enter prostitution for lack of viable economic alternatives, the recruitment of women for prostitution is often characterized by force, violence, trickery and deceit.

The institution and business of prostitution are maintained and perpetuated by patriarchal assumptions and myths such as: prostitution is the oldest profession; male sexuality is uncontrollable and should be given full rein; women's sexuality should be for the service of men, and therefore women's bodies are commodities to be bought and sold in prostitution.

The women who attended the meeting challenge the very basis of the institution of prostitution and denounce child prostitution, sex tourism, militarization and prostitution and trafficking of women and girls for prostitution. They make a distinction between the institution of prostitution and the individual women, and address their concerns to women in prostitution and stand for the decriminalization of prostitutes.

In light of this, and as a result of the exchange and exposure, the participants at the meeting have formulated action strategies in education and awareness raising, economic development, legal actions, creation of infrastructure, and networking, lobbying and political action.

The formulated action strategies will be implemented at the national, regional and international levels. ☐

Source: Isis-WICCE, 3, chemin des Campanules, 1219 Aire, Geneva, Switzerland, Tel.: (022) 796-4437, Fax: (022) 796-0603.



Maria Elena Moyano

Requiem for a Feminist Activist

Maria Elena Moyano, Peruvian activist, community organizer and feminist was assassinated by a *comando de aniquilamiento* (death squad) of the group *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) on February 15, 1992 in Lima. A 33 year old black woman, she was the mother of two boys, 10 and 8.

Moyano was the founding president of the *Federacion Popular de Mujeres de Villa El Salvador* -- FEPOMUVES (People's Federation of Women of Villa El Salvador), one of the most vibrant grassroots organizations in the largest shanty town on the outskirts of Lima, Peru. As head of the organization, she played a key role in the establishment of hundreds of social programs attending to the basic needs of an increasingly impoverished population. In the context of Peru's economic crisis, Moyano was instrumental in devising a response based on women's community efforts rather than on the State or outside agencies. Under Maria Elena Moyano's visionary leadership thousands of poor women became involved in mother's clubs, community soup kitchens, community health groups, small income generating projects, and programs that provide a daily glass of milk to malnourished children. These organizations were the training grounds for a leadership model from the bottom up, and catapulted Moyano to the position of Deputy Mayor of Villa El Salvador in the last municipal elections. In 1991 she was named "Woman of the Year" by two of Peru's most respected media publications.

The women's organization started by Maria Elena Moyano came together in their struggle for autonomy from all kinds of political manipulation and evolved into a powerful and independent women's Federation, the first of its kind. As President of

FEPOMUVES Moyano opposed publicly all Shining Path attempts at penetrating the community, denouncing its terrorist methods of trying to control the population by fear. She believed the only response to Shining Path's terrorism was to create awareness among the population, speak up against it and provide an avenue for people's participation in the direction of their communities. She was the target of death threats and various attempts at undermining her leadership. These only increased her commitment to change within the democratic system.

On February 14, Shining Path called for an "armed strike" aimed at bringing Lima, the capital of Peru, to a halt. They warned they would kill anyone who attempted to come out of their homes. That morning all the houses of Villa El Salvador raised a white flag under the slogan "Unity, Peace, and Work." Maria Elena Moyano and other community leaders took to the streets and thousands of people joined them in a March for Peace signaling their rejection of Shining Path's "armed strike".

On the evening of Saturday February 15, Moyano attended a community celebration to raise funds for the women's glass of milk program. At the event she was surrounded by a woman and four men who shot her twice, in the chest and in the head. After she fell down the killers ordered everybody to leave, shooting anyone who tried to assist Moyano. The squad proceeded to order a teenage boy to tie five kilos of dynamite to her body, blowing her to pieces in front of her children and other women from the organizations, and wounding eight other people. They further threatened to blow up her tomb if she was buried in the district's cemetery. The assassination of Maria Elena

Moyano is one of the most ferocious attacks in the relentless and bloody violence perpetrated by Shining Path in the 12 years it has been terrorizing Peru.

This is a call to the international community to denounce the assassination of Maria Elena Moyano at the hands of Shining Path. While the political and economic situation in Peru has deteriorated badly and there is an urgent need for social justice, it is ironic that Shining Path targets popular leaders of the very communities in whose name it claims to act. Union leaders, community organizers, peasants, religious and development workers, teachers, politicians, and small businessmen are among the thousands of civilian victims in the war waged between Shining Path and the armed forces. Shining Path has come to justify any violent act on the grounds that it will lead to a revolution and the destruction of the State. They are especially brutal to those who are trying to better the conditions of the poor, accusing them of collusion with the State. What is most distressing is how their claims find a sympathetic ear among romantic and uninformed people in the industrialized world who see them as revolutionaries.

You can show your rejection of this attack and express your solidarity with women's organizations by doing the following:

- Write to the President of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, Palacio de Gobierno, Lima 1, Peru, demanding the capture of the assassins, and bringing them to trial.
- Speak up against Shining Path in every forum where they come to spread their propaganda and sell their publications.



"I am certain I was not born to spend my entire life at the front line, fighting battles which never seem to end." --Wangari Maathai

On Tuesday, 3rd of March, Wangari Maathai, the well known activist and environmentalist and founder of the Greenbelt Movement of Kenya, was one of a group of women clubbed unconscious by riot police after holding a peaceful hunger strike to demand freedom for political prisoners in Nairobi. The incident comes only a few weeks after



Maathai had been released on bail following a court case in which she was charged with having spread false rumors: Maathai had participated in a meeting in January in which the public was warned that President Daniel Arap Moi was possibly planning to turn the government over to the military in order to prevent multiparty elections. At her trial it was reported that Maathai was in bad shape after her stay in prison. Despite a history of heart trouble and arthritis, she had been forced to sleep on the floor of a cold cell without a mattress or blanket; her requests to see a doctor had been refused.

Wangari Maathai was Kenya's first female PhD, and at 38, the first female professor at Nairobi University. She married a young politician who promised, in elections in 1974, to plant trees in a slum area in his constituency. She decided to keep the pledge, and, after several false starts, Maathai began to build a mass movement. She soon found that newly-planted trees left in the care of officialdom quickly perished, while those looked after by local women flourished. Women are paid a small fee for every tree they

plant that survives three months; often this is their only cash income.

Fifty thousand women have now been involved in Maathai's Green Belt Movement, planting 10 million trees. Following her example, the government increased its spending on tree-planting twentyfold in just four years, and 12 other African countries be-

gan similar movements.

Poor women are now harvesting fuel wood and fruit from their own trees, and springs have returned to dry land. The movement, working with the National Council of Women of Kenya, also teaches good nutrition with traditional foods, promotes family planning, campaigns to improve the status of women and helps them to become effective leaders in their communities. And, for many years, Maathai has been bravely denouncing official corruption.

While Maathai has become increasingly unpopular with her own country's establishment, her reputation has grown overseas. Last year she won The Hunger Project's Africa Prize and the Goldman Award for environmental activity.

Women's organizations and other concerned groups are rallying to support Wangari Maathai and urging their respective governments to intercede with President Moi to secure the safety and freedom of one woman who has done so much for women and the environment. □

Action Alert

Send your letters of protest to the Kenyan president immediately and to your national government and your embassy in Nairobi in order to secure the safety and freedom of all our fellow sisters who have been harrassed, arrested or imprisoned on the issue. Notify other organizations and contacts nationally and internationally.

Please send copies of your protest letter to: The Standard, P.O. Box 30080, Nairobi; Society Magazine, P.O. Box 12868, Nairobi; Weekly Review, P.O. Box 42271, Nairobi; Attorney General, P.O. Box 40112, Nairobi. □

The Politics of Rape



"They hurled me from one man to another." -- Khursheed Begum



"They were like animals." -- Veena Hayat

The year 1991 in Pakistan has seen an absolutely horrendous increase in rape and violence against women at the hands of the state, particularly the police agencies and specially in Sindh where violence against women is being used as a tool of political repression. The instances are too many to list, but the latest has been the rape and torture of two women in Karachi, Sindh: Khursheed Begum and Veena Hayat. While the government finally has set up a tribunal to investigate the Veena Hayat case which had received considerable international attention, the agony of Khursheed Begum continues.

Khursheed Begum is an unassuming woman who lived a life of quiet struggle in Karachi's Sahabdar goth. Her crime: her husband Essa Baloch was a Pakistan People's Party (PPP) worker activist, paying a price for his political beliefs in jail. Essa was arrested during General Zia-ul-Haq's martial law and kept in jail for 8-1/2 years before finally being released through the amnesty granted to political prisoners by Benazir Bhutto on assuming power. He was rearrested on October 4, 1991. Khursheed's eldest son, 16 year old Zulfikhar who is not involved in politics was also arrested on November 1, 1991 and was not being produced in court. On November 13, Khursheed was returning from her husband's court hearing when she was seized, blindfolded and taken away to a dark room where she was raped and brutalized by men in uniform.

Veena Hayat is a dress designer by profession. Her crime: a long standing friendship with the co-chairperson of the PPP.

The two women were made to pay for these crimes. One in a police station, the other in the hitherto unviolated privacy of her own home. Khursheed Begum alleges rape and torture at the hands of the police, while Veena Hayat was molested and raped by a gang of five armed men who broke into her house. The men were more interested in her links with Bilawal House than they were in her valuables. The story might have come to the usual end at this point but the two women had one more thing in common: the courage to speak about the unspeakable, the will to fight for justice. They refuse to suffer in silence while their assailants go about their business unhindered in the land of the chadar and chardiwari.

Most recently Khursheed Begum was in Lahore to mobilize support and to plead for justice. She indicated that the officials seem to want to make a deal: for her to retract her case against the police in exchange for her son. She wants no compromise and only wants justice, but does not know where to turn and where to go. ☐

Action Alert

We urgently request you to immediately send telegrams/letters of appeal to:

Prime Minister M. Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Islamabad; President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, President's Secretariat, Islamabad; Chief Minister Sindh, Jam Sadiq Ali, Chief Minister's Secretariat, Karachi and copies of the same to the Pakistan ambassador in your country; demanding:

- 1) the immediate arrest of the rapists who Khursheed recognizes and are police officials;*
- 2) the immediate transfer of her son to a hospital;*
- 3) the withdrawal of her son's case from the Special Court, and*
- 4) the disbanding of all parallel courts like the Special Courts, Terrorist Courts, etc.*

Please send copies of your letters to:

Shirkat Gah, 18-A Mian Mir Road, P.O. Mughalpora, Lahore, Pakistan-15. ☐

Solidarity Request

A fourteen year old Irish girl was raped in December 1991 by the father of her best girl friend and became pregnant. Together with her parents the girl decided to go to England for an abortion.

In the Irish Republic, information on where and how to have an abortion in any country is totally forbidden and after a referendum in 1983 the "equal right to life of the woman and the unborn child" was taken up in the Irish Constitution. However, Irish women secretly do go to England for abortion.

The parents had notified the police of the rape and had also inquired if it might be useful to take along some foetal tissue from England as a possible proof of the identity of the rapist. Of its own accord the police notified the Public Prosecutor of the intention of the trip of the parents and their daughter.

Thereupon the Public Prosecutor summoned the girl and her parents to return to Ireland under pen-

alty of imprisonment. After their return to Ireland, the pregnant girl was forbidden by the High Court to leave Ireland during a period of nine months. She was admitted in a hospital since she had announced that she wanted to commit suicide.

Massive protest inside and outside Ireland due to immediate actions by Irish Women's Groups and many protests from outside Ireland, the injunction for the girl to leave Ireland was uplifted two weeks later by the Irish Supreme Court on February 26. The Dublin Well Woman Centre immediately sent out a press release that "they welcomed the decision and that they trusted that the girl and her family could now deal with the matter in complete privacy and with every possible support."

Irish Women's Groups are determined that the equal right to life amendment should be removed from the Irish Constitution to prevent such tragedies. They will start an intensive Campaign to fight for this aim. ☞

Please write in support of their aim to:

**The Irish Parliament
Oireachtas Dail
Leinster House
Dublin 2
Republic of Ireland**

and send copies of these letters to:

**The Dublin Well Woman Centre
73 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2
Republic of Ireland**

If possible, send your financial contributions to:

Bank account "Defend the Clinics" No 366 230 62, Ulster Bank Lmt, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland



Ireland's Shame

In Dublin, Ireland, 10,000 people demonstrated to demand an abortion for the 14 year old Irish girl who was a victim of sexual abuse from a close friend of the family for over two years. (See left photo.)

Thousands of women expressed their anger over the present legal situation and specifically the 1983 Amendment which took away the woman's right to control her body. ☞

Photo and article courtesy of Spare Rib, March 1992. 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R OAT United Kingdom. Tel.: (071) 253 9792; Fax: (071) 251 1773.

FIFTH CALL FOR ACTION

International Day of Action for Women's Health
May 28, 1992

Campaign for the Prevention of Maternal Mortality and Morbidity

The decision to start the campaign on Women's Health was first taken at the fifth International and Health Meeting (IWHM) in Costa Rica in May 1987. At the members' meeting of the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR), which took place on May 28, 1987, after the IWHM, May 28 was chosen as the International Day of Action for Women's Health.

Since then, May 28 has become the day on which an increasing number of women's groups and national and regional Women's Health Networks organize a variety of activities focusing on different aspects of the campaign and women's health. For many groups May 28 is the start of new activities that continue for a long time. For others it is the culmination of discussions, meetings and the development of plans that precede May 28.

In 1988 the central focus of the campaign was Maternal Mortality. Since 1989, Maternal Morbidity has also been included. In the fourth call for action in 1991, special attention was given to the role of Health Services.

This year the call for action is focused on the issue of Teenage Pregnancies, which is another important cause of maternal mortality and morbidity.

Special call for information on teenage pregnancies


The WGNRR who is coordinating the campaign would like to receive articles about teenage pregnancies and about existing or proposed policies on the subject. It would also like to find out details of projects set up for or by teenage women on reproductive health, pregnancy, sexuality, contraception, abortion, special services for teenagers, etc. It plans to publish some of these materials in their newsletter and in the campaign report at the end of the year.

Campaign sponsors

This year's sponsors are the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, Isis Internacional, Chile; Association of African Women for Research and Development; Catholics for a Free Choice; Women Living under Muslim Laws; Women's International Public Health Network; Boston Women's Health Collective; and Isis International Philippines.

What you can do

- Use the International Day of Action to publicize the causes and consequences of teenage pregnancies. Explain what changes are necessary to give teenage girls a better chance in life.
- Join women's groups and women's health networks around the world in organizing activities on May 28.
- Get copies of the call for action leaflets for distribution in your country and translate it into your local language.

Join the campaign and join all the other women's health groups that are fighting for a better and healthier life for women. 

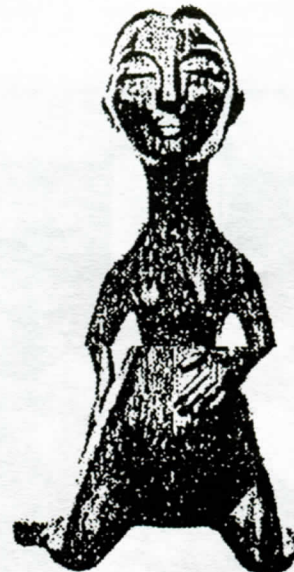
For more information about the WGNRR, write or call:

NZ Voorburgwal 32, 1012 RZ

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Tel.: (31-20) 620 96 72

Fax: (31-20) 622 24 50



Communicators meet on Global Communication and Justice

From January 8 to 15, 1992 journalists and experts in the fields of sociology, religion and education attended an eight-day consultation in Quezon City, Philippines, on Global Communication and Justice.

The 25 participants who represented eight countries in Asia and North America came to examine in-depth the issues of global communication and justice and to devise a plan of action to change communication policies in structures of governments, development agencies and religious institutions.

La Rainne Abad-Sarmiento and Eliz Reyes-Martinez, coordinator and program officer, respectively, of Isis International Manila were invited to give a presentation on media messages and values from the context of Asia and the experience of women in the global community. In the session, "Taking Control: Media Education and Awareness," the Isis resource speakers gave their inputs on what is being done by women to raise awareness about the images and content of the portrayal of women in media and specifically the impact of media in stereotyping, consumerism, sexism, racism, etc.

As the world moves towards a global village there is a growing concern over how the media is communicating to the people. Along with the messages of buy and sell, there is a message of domination from those controlling the media and the new communication technologies.

North America is recognized as one of the cultural dominators. It not only exports form and content but western economic-based theories of media regulation that serve the interests of the transnational corporations rather than those of the people - especially women, the *dalits* (outcasts) in India, the indigenous people in Asia as well as

the marginalised groups in North America.

The consultation allowed the participants to examine how the transformation of communication impacts on us and our communities.

Participants in the consultation had intense discussions with local grassroots organizers from the fishing and farm communities, labor movement and urban poor. They also visited the various communication agencies. These visits, together with the research papers presented helped participants to see firsthand how the communication process is being used and abused.

Participants called on communicators and educators in both North America and Asia to work together for a more just global communication environment.

Religious authorities were called on to see the impact of communication as an object of social action and reform and take the lead in promoting change and justice.

The participants also recommended that an Asia-North America forum be held in the next three years to conduct studies, work on the building of a resource network, and organize the exchange of resources.

The consultation was sponsored by Intermedia, Asia Region-World Association of Christian Communication (AR-WACC), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) in cooperation with National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) USA, Asian Social Institute (ASI), People in Communication (PIC) and National Council of Churches Philippines (NCCP). ☾

Source: Article based on press release written by Shala Koshy and Jeneane Jones.

David Bridell, director of Intermedia of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, New York and a member of the planning group of the Interregional Consultation on Global Communication and Justice (See above story) visited the Isis International office in Manila after the consultation. David was responsible for coordinating the participation of Isis in the consultation. ☾



During the International Peace Festival in the Philippines (IPFP) which was held last 4 to 17 September 1991 at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, Laguna, Philippines, a workshop on Socialism and Feminism sponsored by the Asian Women's Human Rights Council was held from 10 to 12 September. Following are the resolutions at the conclusion of the three-day workshop.

Realizing that the oppression of women persists in varying degrees in all countries of the world,

While it is recognized that gains have been achieved by women in all countries where strong women's movements exist and in socialist countries, patriarchy still manifests itself in the family, in religion, in traditions and customs and in the economic and political structures,

Whereas the multiple oppression of women is determined by factors of class, gender, nationality, race and ethnicity,

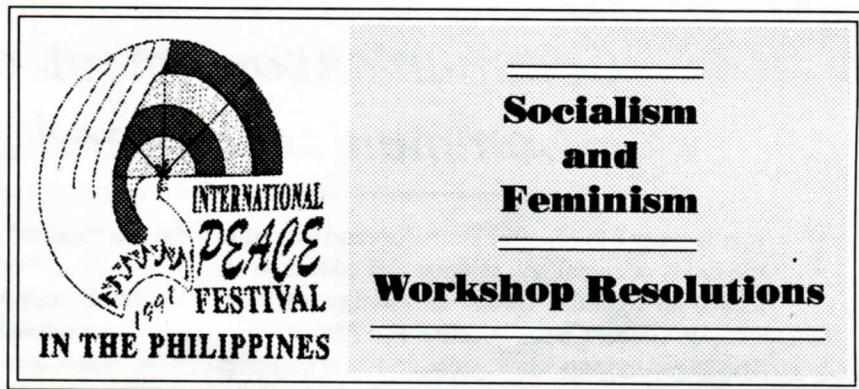
Recognizing that the "new world order" has exacerbated the poverty and oppression of Third World women giving rise to new forms of slavery such as the sex trafficking of women,

Realizing that the bodies of women have become the raw materials for big business in their bid to amass more profits,

While this "new world order" is slowly taking back the gains achieved by the women's movement in the First World through the cutbacks in budgets for women's support services, denial of women's reproductive rights, worsening unemployment and the feminization of poverty,

Whereas under this situation of worsening poverty, injustice and inequity, violence against women is intensified and continues to present itself in the home, the workplace, and in the society in general,

Recognizing that violence



against women in the form of rape, incest, domestic battering, political repression and sexualized torture of women,

Realizing that in socialist countries in which substantial gains for women have been achieved through legislation and the provision of the state of support systems for women, socialization of housework and childcare, there is a noticeable trend towards bringing back women to the confines of the home and remolded within the patriarchal traditions and culture,

Whereas with the magnitude and persistence of problems and issues confronting them, women have organized and developed their own distinct movements dictated by conditions obtained in their respective countries,

While from this wealth of experience, the women's movement in the Third World has synthesized its vital and integral role in the struggle for national liberation while maintaining its distinct character,

Whereas the imperative for national liberation movements to carry as its own the agenda of women for liberation is slowly being recognized,

Firmly believing that socialism remains a genuine alternative for the oppressed as long as it comprehensively addresses the issues of women,

Realizing that socialism is perceived as an important phase in bringing about women's liberation, it is likewise imperative for the women's movement to continue to protect the gains achieved for women and further push the goal of women's emancipation,

Noting with sadness, however, that sexism persists even within progressive and revolutionary movements which urges us to continuously challenge our brothers, and to a certain extent our sisters as well, to rid themselves of this. We would like to underscore the fact that even in international conferences of progressive movements such as the one we are holding today, sexual harassment and molestation of women happen,

With great courage and high hopes that we bring the women's agenda to this historical gathering of women and men from different parts of the globe,

Taking into account that peace is a noble goal for which every human being should strive, and,

Yet, cognizant that peace would remain an elusive goal for women, as long as the conditions for women's oppression exist and the particular women's problems are not addressed,

We, the participants of the International Peace Festival in the Philippines 1991:

1. Urge each other and every delegate to seriously take up the cause of women in every sphere of our lives: in our relationships, in our homes, in our workplace, and in our political work,

2. Urge socialist states to continue advancing the cause of women's emancipation by equally addressing concerns of women in the productive and reproductive spheres,

3. Call on our sisters to continue to build solidarity based on common issues even as we respect the particularity of each other's struggles because of our different cultures, historical conditions and experiences, and,

4. Call on all delegates to continue and build mutual support and solidarity and bring to completion the goals of women's emancipation and to continuously thwart any attempt at subverting whatever gains have been achieved by the women's struggle.

The IPFP conducted 36 workshops for the 169 foreign and 206 local delegates who attended the event. The workshop on Socialism and Feminism was geared specifically towards the needs of women, but other issues such as trafficking of women, women and children, ecology and development, the plight of the indigenous peoples were equally important to the women delegates.

It was recognized that the women's struggle is part of the broader struggle for global peace, justice and sovereignty among all the nations.



Source: Documents of the Peace Festival in the Philippines 1991. Publisher: BAYAN. IPFP '91 Proceedings, P.O. Box 190, 1099 Manila, Philippines. Telefax: (632) 999-437; 922-02-17.

Health Meeting scheduled in October

An Asia regional meeting on *Women's Perspectives on the Introduction of Fertility Regulation Technologies* will be held in Manila, Philippines from 5-9 October 1992. It is sponsored by World Health Organization (WHO).

Preparatory to the October meeting, Isis International Manila helped organize and facilitate consultations with Philippine women's health advocacy groups to discuss the country paper presentation of the Philippines. Aside from the host country, Bangladesh, India and Indonesia will also be represented at the meeting.

The topics will include:

- Users' perspectives on the appropriateness of particular methods of fertility regulation for particular settings in Asia.
- Women's reproductive health in the context of their broader realities of life: linking health rights to general status, including aspects such as violence, prostitution, employment and political rights. Women's perception of reproductive health services, problems, needs and possibilities.
- Policy considerations taken into account in a government's elaboration of its population policy and program, including goals, resource allocation, priorities in research and the relationship between the public and private sectors.
- Policy maker perspective on the selection and introduction of fertility regulation technologies into family planning programs in some Asian contexts, and on the participation of women in those efforts.
- Providers' perspectives of service-related issues, including quality of care, training, counselling and information.
- Description and analysis of the experiences in introducing fertility regulation methods into a country.

Aside from the plenary sessions and country paper presentations, working groups will prepare recommendations and proposals in order to be able to address priority areas for research and program implementation and consequently women's concerns and realities in fertility regulation technologies.



The Second Asian Women's Conference

by Belinda Giron Arcilla and Cristina Bontuyan

AWRAN (Asian Women's Research and Action Network) together with several women's groups in Asia organized the Second Asian Women's Conference with the theme "Recreating Women's Asia 1992." The conference opened on April 2, 1992 at the National Women's Educational Center Auditorium in Japan. Hema Goonatilake of Sri Lanka, Irene Santiago of UNIFEM and Kuniko Funabashi of the Organizing Committee opened the conference.

Aside from AWRAN, making the conference a reality were: International Women's Studies Association; Women's Studies Association of Japan; Women's Studies Group; Women's Studies Society of Japan; Yokohama Women's Forum; Sakai Women's Organization; Sendai City; Hiroshima Asian Women's Conference; Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women; Asian Women's Conference in Osaka.

Participants to the conference were approximately 300 Japanese women and 20 overseas participants from Australia, Guam, Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. Most of the participants were women's studies students, women's organization members, labor party members, local government officials, writers, artists, housewives, etc.

Isis International Manila participants to the conference were Belinda Arcilla and Cristina Bontuyan.

At the opening ceremony, there were 14 resource persons from 12 different Asian countries. Each of them

presented sociopolitical profiles of their respective countries and their insights on the women's movement in Asia.

The speakers were: Teresita Quintos Deles (Philippines), Anjana Suvarnananda (Thailand), Shumeng Ng (Laos), Duong Thi Duyen (Vietnam), Prabha Thacker (Nepal), Tati



(Left to right): Cristy, Kuniko and Belyn.

Krisnawaty (Indonesia), Jiraporn Chimpimai (Thailand), Farecha Zafar (Pakistan), Rohana Ariffin (Malaysia), Manju Baroi (Bangladesh), Rita Monteiro (India), Connie Jan Maraang (Philippines), Ku Yenlin (Taiwan), and Zeng Bi Jun (China).

Twelve workshops were offered during the conference: women and politics, women and education, women's studies in Asia, women and labor, sexuality, patriarchy and violence against women, women in media, women and representation, war and

women's sexuality, and prostitution in Asia.

Highlights of the draft resolution cited by the participants at the end of the conference:

- they recognize the great advancement of women's consciousness and the expansion of women's movements and solidarity in Asian countries;

- they recognize the fact that women are not treated equally despite their important contribution to the histories and cultures of Asian countries, and

- they recognize that they are deprived of the right of living by the triple oppression of race, class and gender that is often concealed by socio-cultural structures;

- they recognize the fact that Japan has neglected the Asian perspective with its orientation towards the west, and

- they recognize that Japanese economic prosperity is deeply interrelated with the life of other Asians.

The resolution also recognized that the participants valued the historical significance and benefits gained from the conference. They shared a common Asian perspective for the future, and agreed that something should be done in order to find the direction in which Asian women can advance together and promote the movement as one unified group. □

For more information about the conference, write: Asian Women's Conference Organizing Committee
22-17 Nishikubo-cho, Tokiwadaira,
Matsudo City, Chiba 270, Japan.
Telefax: 81-473-87-7800

"Recreating Women's Asia 1992"

H *Heart Link* was written for the Second Asian Women's Conference in Japan by Ochiei Keiko. It was the theme song of the conference and was sung by the participants (right photo) on opening day and throughout the conference.

Below are the lyrics of *Heart Link* in three languages: the first was translated by Sarah Pradt; the second is the original text by Ochiei Keiko and the third version was translated by Malee Benyagusal.



Heart-Link

Heart-Link

*Our lives intersect,
Yours and mine
The joy of this occasion
The dreams we can't fulfill alone,
You and I can fulfill together
All of us can fulfill together
Heart-Link Heart-Link*

*Our lives intersect,
Yours and mine
This rich diversity
We go beyond words
We draw together
In Sisterhood
Heart-Link Heart-Link
A time for minds to open*

*Our lives intersect,
Yours and mine
We share the excitement
See one another for what we are
Meet without the barriers we have
known
Heart-Link Heart-Link
A bridge reaching tomorrow*

こころをつながるとき 落合恵子

1.
あなたがいる
わたしがいる
ここに在るよろこび
ふたりのできること
みんなでできること
ひとりでしたいこと
Heart-Link Heart-Link
こころつながるこのとき

2.
あなたがいる
わたしがいる
ここにいま集う充実
言葉を超えるとき
思いが寄り添うとき
In Sisterhood
Heart-Link Heart-Link
こころ深まるこのとき

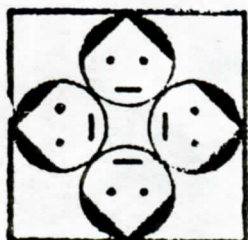
3.
あなたがいる
わたしがいる
いま分かち合うときめき
あなたのあるがまま
まるごとであうとき
Heart-Link Heart-Link
明日に架ける橋になる

มีเธอ
มีฉัน
อินสตีที่ได้รวมกัน
ที่เราทำได้
ที่ทุกคนทำได้
ที่ฉันอยากทำ
heart-link, heart-link
ความสัมพันธ์ขยายขึ้น

มีเธอ
มีฉัน
อิมเมปที่ได้มารวมกัน
ข้ามพันปีหวาวัฒนธรรม
นำใจมารวมกัน
In sisterhood
heart-link, heart-link
ความสัมพันธ์ฝังลึกขึ้น

มีเธอ
มีฉัน
คืนแดนที่ได้มารวมกัน
ตัวตนของเธอ
ตัวตนของฉัน
ความเป็นจริงที่ได้พบกัน
heart-link, heart-link
เพื่อจะอยู่ร่วมกันในอนาคต

Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG) (India)



અગણ્ય

Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG) started working in January 1981 as a branch of Foundation for Public Interest. It has been the group's endeavor to establish women's equality in all walks of life and thus ensure their equal participation in the development of the country. The group aims to raise women's image in society by protesting elements which demean the image of women.

AWAG undertakes a number of awareness building activities such as: doing projects and studies related to the well being, security and education of women; putting up exhibitions, organising meetings and seminars; organising marches and protests against violence against women; participating in meetings and seminars that other groups organise, both in and outside the Gujarat region; contributing to dailies and weeklies; participating in television discussions; running a counselling centre and assisting women in taking legal action.

AWAG runs a counseling center for women centered counseling problems on marital discord, family disputes and other related matters. The center also organizes classes on family life education in schools, colleges and women's groups. It also serves as a field work placement center for training studies.

For more information, write:
48, Somnath Nagar, Vijaynagar Road,
Naranpura, Ahmedabad 380 013
tel. 47 00 36



Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) (Zimbabwe)



The **ZWRCN** is a newly established non-governmental organization (NGO) which has as its main objective the enhancement of the position of women in Zimbabwean society. It is a resource centre and a network with documents and information on Women in Development (WID). The Centre functions as a library where documents and information on gender issues are systematically organized for a wide variety of users. The Network links people active in the women and development field, with a view to eliminating duplication of efforts.

The **ZWRCN** collects documents, data, reports and information on women in development issues from various (non)-governmental organizations on a regular basis, and makes this available to users in the Centre. It produces fact sheets with interesting data for NGOs, women's organizations, ministries, donors and other groups to use.

The **ZWRCN** repackages and translates information for the use of grassroots women. The organization also maintains and continuously updates a data base on organizations and people working in the WID field and ongoing WID research. It facilitates debates and provides a platform to discuss current WID issues in Zimbabwe with policy makers and beneficiaries.

For further information, write to:
Stemar House, Room 203
Corner Speke Avenue and Kagwi Street
Harare, Zimbabwe



Women for Women Political Prisoners (Jerusalem)

Women for Women Political Prisoners is made up of women volunteers who work with the objective of protecting the human rights of women who are detained in prisons in Israel because of their struggle against the occupation, and of bringing the methods of interrogation and the torture going on in the Shin-Bet wing, to the attention of the public. WOFPP-Jerusalem members are active in the following activities:

- Finding out the identity of the prisoners (especially at the Russian Compound), and giving them some basic aid;
- Hiring a lawyer on behalf of the organization, to monitor conditions of imprisonment, to protect detainees from harassment in the detention center, and to ensure that they get medical and other aid;
- Providing clothing necessities, newspapers, and food through the prison canteen;
- Appealing to public opinion and to public bodies in Israel and abroad in cases of gross human rights violations, torture, sexual humiliation, and collective punishment;
- Maintaining contact with the prisoners' families and lawyers;
- Visiting released prisoners to obtain first-hand testimony about prison conditions and their treatment in prison;
- Being present at court sessions.

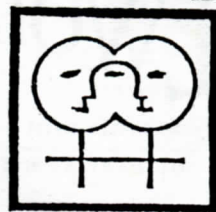
*For further information, please write or call:
P.O. Box 8537, Jerusalem 91083
Tel.: (02)-255382 or (02)-241159
Fax: (02)-251614 or (02)-253151*

Donations for legal assistance to the prisoners can be sent to:

*Israel Discount Bank
4 Queen Shlomzion Street
Jerusalem (Branch # 63)
Account number 707317*

Wo Men Zhi Jian (Taiwan)

FEMALE
CLUB



我們之間

Wo Men Zhi Jian, the first lesbian group in Taiwan, was formed on February 23, 1990. Its name was taken from the French film, "Entre Nous," a film about lesbians.

As its first task, the founders started networking and letting other lesbians know about the group. It has also published friendly articles in the local press. In January, barely a year after it was formed, the group published its first newsletter and currently has more than 100 women on its mailing list.

Current goals of the group

Its current goals are:

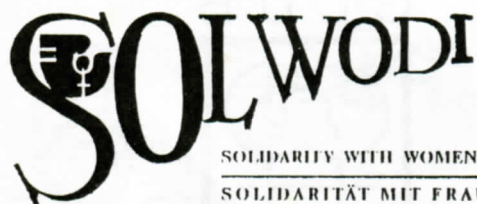
- primarily to serve as a support group for lesbians and to provide a place for lesbians to meet, talk and socialize with other lesbians.
- to provide a forum for cultural activities which include reading and discussing books, watching films, and discussing lesbian identity.
- in the future, to pursue more public goals such as equal rights and treatment in the political process, the law, the workplace, marriage and mass media.

Wo Men Zhi Jian is only two years old, but its existence in a country where the feminist movement is still in its inception stage is in itself remarkable.

*For further information, write:
P.O. Box 10464, Taipei, Taiwan.*

SOLWODI

(Germany and Kenya)



SOLWODI (Solidarity with Women in Distress), is an information center that helps foreign women who encounter problems with the German language and culture, with their residence permits, with the law for foreigners, with partnerships and matrimony.

One example is the case of Linda who comes from a formerly Communist Eastern country. **SOLWODI** took up Linda's case and helped her through the intricacies of the German legal system. They discovered that Linda's husband had brought other women to Germany, employing them illegally and without pay. **SOLWODI** had inadvertently uncovered a dealer in women.

This is just one of many cases that **SOLWODI** takes on. They provide support and assistance to women who are often outside the boundaries of the law and because of their illegal status have little chance of fighting their case in court alone.

For more information, please contact:

SOLWODI

PO Box 3741

6500 Mainz

Germany

Tel. 06131/22 22 24 (Mainz)

Tel. 06741/2232 (Boppard)

Tel 0228/108248 (SKF/Bonn)

SOLWODI

Catholic Parish Makupa

P.O. Box 86823

Mombasa, Kenya



The Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW)

(Japan)



A new forum for women has been established in Japan: **The Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW)**. The **KFAW** was established by the City of Kitakyushu as part of a "Hometown Revitalization Plan". The idea behind it is to improve women's status and eventually through this to aim at an international improvement in equality, development and world peace. The **KFAW** believes that the condition of women is one of human dignity. It is a social issue and should be addressed by both men and women. In this way a wider contribution can be made towards an equal and stable community.

The **KFAW** hopes to achieve its aims by participating in cultural exchange programs, sponsoring training programs and seminars to cultivate a better understanding of Asia; studying past and present women's problems, accumulating and distributing information by networking with both domestic and overseas groups, and working together with volunteers and civic groups.

The **KFAW** publishes a newsletter, "Asian Breeze," four times a year.

For further information, please write:

Hisako Takahashi, **KFAW** President

Kitakyushu International Conference Center

Asano 3-9-30, Kokura-Kita

Kitakyushu, 802 Japan

Tel.: (093) 551-1220

Fax: (093) 551-7535

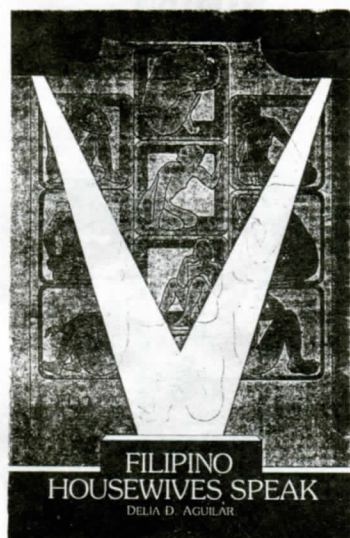


Books

Aguilar, Delia. *Filipino Housewives Speak*. Manila: Institute of Women's Studies, 1991.

During the summer of 1984, Aguilar conducted ten interviews with women in Metro Manila. The interviews cover their lives, their work, their families and their struggles. Aguilar analyzes the commonalities within a Marxist feminist perspective.

The author offers the book as a "contribution toward building the theoretical framework which would articulate feminism into the revolutionary agenda in the Philippines. I have undertaken this work because no other institution has been the object of mystification than the family." ☐



EDITED BY
Laura Claridge
AND
Elizabeth Langland



Claridge, Laura and Langland, Elizabeth. eds. *Out of Bounds: Male Writers and Gender(ed) Criticism*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990.

This collection of papers grew out of a Modern Language Association session, entitled "Male Feminist Voices", which the editors organized in 1986. They and the contributors work from the idea that 'patriarchy' is a complex term for a gender system and is not synonymous with 'male' alone. During the session the editors came to understand that male writers attempting a gender perspective could not necessarily be called feminist--hence the title of the book was evolved. The contributors are professors at universities in the US. The works of Milton, the Romantics, the Victorians and Faulkner are among the subjects treated. ☐

Communications for progress

*A guide to international
e-mail*

Graham Lane

Lane, Graham. *Communications for Progress: A guide to international e-mail.* London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1990.

Unlike a fax, e-mail (electronic mail) does not tie up a phone line continually, costs little more to send multiple transmissions and does not require special expensive equipment. Using a computer and modem, e-mail users link with a central "host" computer and exchange information in local, regional or international systems.

It is particularly useful in developing countries which may have unreliable and/or expensive telephone systems. Some of e-mail's drawbacks are that it is not well suited for urgent messages, it can be cheaper than fax or telex but still is substantial cost for some NGOs, and because it involves a complex process there is more room for mishaps. The author of this book provides a clear and thorough explanation of e-mail, its uses and drawbacks, and addresses the needs of organizations located in the South and the North. All technical terms are explained and the focus is on time and cost efficiency.

Also, eight case examples are presented of specific e-mail systems, with comments by the users on its usefulness and problems. This is an excellent resource book for anyone investigating e-mail. ☐

Lefkowitz, Mary R. *Women in Greek Myth.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

Lefkowitz studies the experience of women as portrayed in Greek myth, finding both early stories of women's struggle as well as a capacity for understanding which was not present in another influential mythological tradition, the Old and New Testaments. The study covers Amazons, Chosen Women, Women without Men, Wives, Influential Women, Martyrs and Misogyny.

The author says, "The notions--now presumably obsolete--that a man should be active and aggressive, a woman passive and subject... are expressed in virtually every Greek myth." ☐

WOMEN IN GREEK MYTH

Mary R. Lefkowitz



Journals

Australian Feminist Studies, published twice yearly by The Research Centre for Women's Studies, University of Adelaide. GPO Box 498, Adelaide 5001, South Australia.

This journal publishes material in the fields of women's studies and feminist scholarship. This includes both feminist scholarship and critique based within mainstream academic disciplines, and research and discussion that transcend the conventional boundaries between academic disciplines.



Australian Feminist Studies



No. 12 Summer 1990

ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT



March 1991
GERMAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Number 36
DVV

Adult Education and Development, Published twice yearly, in English by the German Adult Education Association. Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, Fachstelle Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Rheinallee 1, D-5300 Bonn 2, Germany.

The Adult Education and Development journal provides a forum for dialogue and exchange of information among adult educators in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The March 1991 issue focuses on the centrality of the issue of development to agricultural extension, training and literacy programs in the North and South.

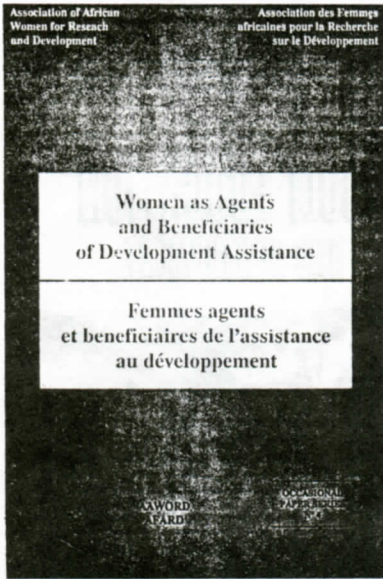


Booklets/Papers:

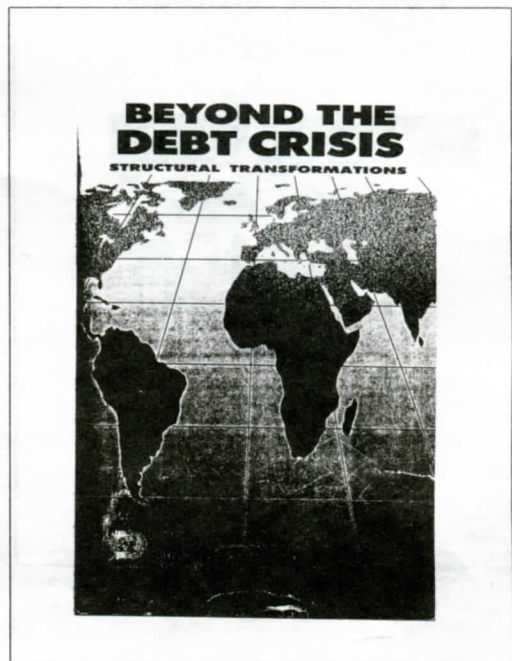
"Beyond the Debt Crisis: Structural Transformations", Final report of the International Women's Seminar of the United Nations (23-25 April 1990).

Women scholars, grassroots activists, development workers and development educators from 27 countries participated in this seminar which began as a women's alternative economic seminar, held five years after Nairobi. Seeking to bring together diverse experiences of working on the debt crisis, the papers included in this booklet summarize the situation in the Caribbean, Appalachia (USA), the Philippines, Kenya, Bangladesh, Hungary, Peru and Egypt. In addition, there are summaries of small-group discussions of structural analysis, envisioning economic alternatives and strategies for future action. A resource guide and list of participants are included.

Copies are available from United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service DC2, Room 1103, New York, NY 10017 USA . Tel.: (212) 963-3125



Association of African Women for Research and Development - Occasional Paper Series. Published by AAWORD, B.P. 11007 CD Annexe, Dakar, Senegal.



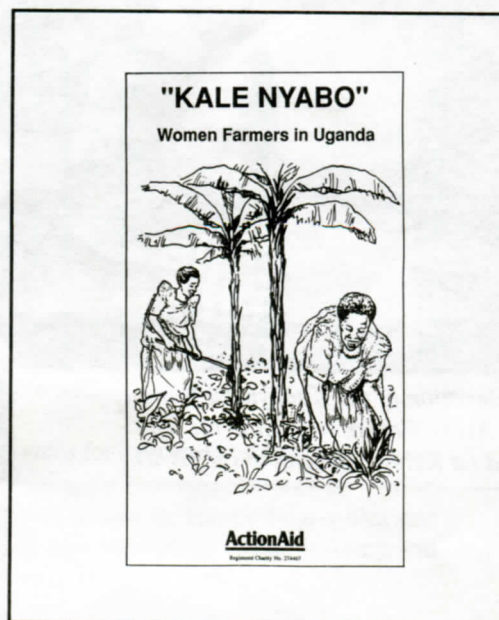
AAWORD is an NGO dedicated to research, networking and exchange of resources and information among African women researchers and those concerned with problems of development in Africa. The Occasional Paper series is published in bilingual (French/English) editions. Number four in the series is titled "Women as Agents and Beneficiaries of Development Assistance" and includes papers by Staneala Beckley, Seynabou Gueye-Tall and Takiyuaa Manuh.

National Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) Women's Health Strategy. Published for the Office of the Status of Women by the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991.

Prepared by Caroline Alcorso and Toni Schofield of the Centre for Women's Health Studies, Cumberland College of Health Sciences, The University of Sydney, this book bound paper discusses the particular health concerns and status of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) women and explores strategies for developing and implementing a model to improve NESB women's access to quality health care. The paper provides much data and concrete policy recommendations.

For further information, write: Australian Government Publishing Service, GPO Box 84, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia. ☐

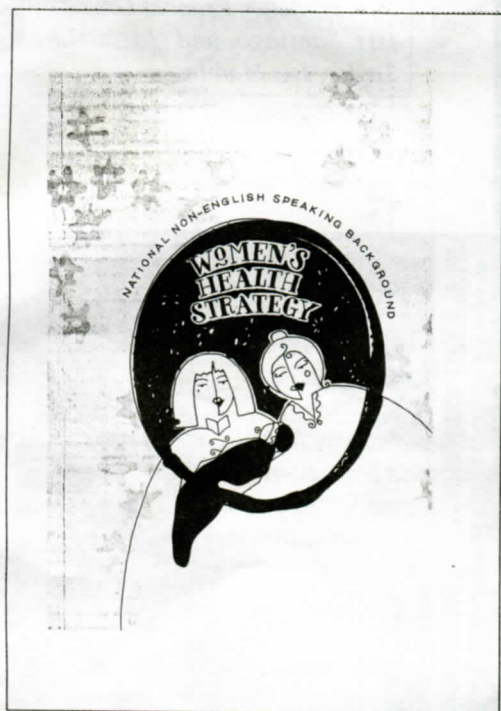
Video



"Kale Nyabo" - Women Farmers in Uganda. Producer: Action Aid. ☐


Kale Nyabo is a respectful form of *thank you* and is a mark of respect given to women subsistence farmers in central Uganda. In the video, farmers are presented in many of the roles which they undertake to support themselves and their families. The video is divided into seven parts: *Hope and Optimism, Women Farmers, Woman's Work is Never Done, Selling Food, Women Working for Export, Helping Women, and In Their Hands.* Produced by Action Aid of Britain, the video comes with a teaching pack and is designed for use within the public school curriculum. However, the video and numerous 8 x 10 black and white prints which are included in the packet could be useful in other ways as well.

The video and teaching pack is available for 10 pounds (UK), including postage and handling, from Kate Turner, Action Aid, Old Church House, Church Steps, Frome, Somerset BA11 1PL UK. Tel. 0373 61623. Make checks payable to "ActionAid GCSE Costs". ☐







*Isis
International
Visitors and
Workers*


 *Delegation of the Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women with Eliz (far left) and La Rainne (second to the right).*



(L to r): Belyn, Frances Lowndes, Isis Santiago and Jacqueline Taylor, Isis Manila. 



 *Luchie and Jean Grossholtz, Professor, Women's Studies Program, Mount Holyoke College, MA, USA.*

Bel and Hilda Saeed, member of Women's Action Forum and managing director of National Health, Pakistan. 



Isis International is an international non-governmental women's organization providing information and communication services to women worldwide. Since 1974, Isis International has been working to promote women's empowerment through information, communication, networking and skills sharing.

Isis International Resource Center

Our Resource Center houses a unique collection of information and resource materials, most of it coming from women's groups, organizations and networks and from people's and development organizations. It documents the history and growth of the women's movement worldwide, its strengths and achievements, its problems and debates, and the many ways women are organizing.

The resource collection contains: over 830 women's periodicals; books, pamphlets, reports, bibliographies, directories; posters and other graphics by women; a Human Resources Data Base with 4000 names and addresses of women's groups and networks and of individuals and institutions supporting women's activities around the world.

The Resource Center offers: computerized library services for efficient and fast information access and retrieval. You may use these services by visiting the resource center or by writing for information on a specific issue; information packets on key issues; bibliographies and reading lists; training in computer literacy and use of new technologies; and training and assistance in setting up and organizing women's resource centers.

Isis International Publications

Women in Action is a quarterly magazine about women's experiences, ideas, organizing activities, resource materials, groups, meetings and conferences. It is a communication channel for women to share and network with each other, to learn how women are organizing and taking action. It gives women the space to tell their stories, define their issues and agendas, and learn how other women are organizing and taking action.

The Isis International book series focus on key issues that lead to women's empowerment. Each book brings together contributions from women around the world.

Health Networking

Because health is a key issue for women, Isis International's health networking program:

- promotes networking, consultations and meetings among women's health groups, organizations and networks;
- provides information and bibliographies on health issues from the Isis International special collection of resource materials on health;
- promotes regional and interregional health information campaigns;
- publishes an international **Women and Health Journal** with features and highlights of health research; interviews and discussions with women on their experiences, reflections and positions on women and health issues; sharing of women's experiences in organizing health groups and activities; resource listings; information on conferences and meetings; health campaign information.

Skills Sharing

Isis International provides opportunities for sharing information and communication skills through: internships, in-service training and worker exchanges with other women's groups, organizations and networks; training courses; organization of meetings and consultations; and technical assistance.

