

FAILURE IS IMPOSSIBLE!



Susan B. Anthony

Feminism and Family Studies Section Newsletter
National Council on Family Relations
Number 10, October 1998

Report from the Chair

November, and thus NCFR, is just around the corner! I'm really looking forward to seeing all of you at NCFR—at our great sessions, our business meeting (always fun-filled and exciting!), at the special plenaries, and elsewhere.

By now, you should have received your Conference Program. Be sure to note all of the FFSS events, as indicated in the index. We have some great sessions—topics include *Work and Family Experiences*, *Gendered Dynamics in Intimate Relationships*, *The Use of Power in Academic Relationships: Feminist Reflections*, *Gender Influences on Views of Self and Self in Relationships*, and *Gay and Lesbian Experiences*.

We also have a number of poster sessions and teaching round tables, and be sure to note the *Feminist Mentoring Roundtables*, organized by Brenda Seery and Shelley MacDermid.

Sunday will be a long but interesting day for us—beginning with the worship service at 7:30, which we are co-sponsoring with the Religion and Family and Ethnic Minorities Sections. This global worship experience promises to be exhilarating. Edie Lewis will talk about her Ghanian Renaming Ceremony—people who have already heard Edie describe her experience all say how moving it is.

Our section business meeting is that evening at 9:00—well, we're all cosmopolitan types, right?—so a late meeting will just set the stage for lively discussions both during the meeting and after, at

whatever late-night venues we find. If you have issues you would like me to bring before the group, please let me know.

**1997-1999 Feminism & Family Studies Section
Executive Committee**

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Past Chair & Nominating Chair.....Leigh Leslie
(ll11@umail.umd.edu)

Also note the new Focus Group on Gay/Lesbian Issues, chaired by Ramona Oswald and Batya Hyman, and listed in the box below. I'm glad we got this meeting set for early in the Conference—all are welcome and invited to attend.

Congratulations to our 1998 NCFR Award Winners. Susan C. Harris received the Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective for her proposal titled "Grandmothers Raising Grandchildren: An Ethnography of Family Life and Life in 'The System'." Susan A. Freedman

and Hilary Lips received the Outstanding Contribution to Feminist Scholarship Award for their paper titled "Articulating Feminist Identity Against a Backdrop of Heterosexuality." The Presidential Address and Awards Ceremony will be on Sunday, November 15, at 4:00. The topic of Greer Litton Fox's address is certainly timely: "Families in the Media: Thoughts on the Public Scrutiny of Private Lives." Please plan to attend.

Be sure to bring your checkbooks so you can purchase the new Teaching Resources Packet! I know we're all looking forward to getting our updated version. Remember, this is our fundraiser for the year, with the proceeds going to our Jessie Bernard Endowment Fund.

See you in November!

Donna Sollie

***1998 Milwaukee Conference Preview
Families in a Global Context: Media,
Environment, and Peace***

Saturday, Nov. 14, 8:30 - 10:00 am

Session #105

Work and Family Experiences (Paper Session)

- Coming Home Again: The Challenges and Rewards of Home-based Self-employment, *Debra L. Berke, CFLE.*
- When Employed Mothers Not Only Work but Provide: Implications for Self, Marriage, and Socialization of the Next Generation, *Heather M. Helms-Erikson; Jennifer L. Tanner; Ann C. Crouter.*
- The Emotion Work of Wives and Husbands: Supporting Husbands' Paid Labor, *Margaret M. Manoogian-O'Dell; Lori McGraw; Anisa M. Zvonkovic*
- The Good Providers: Working-class Attitudes and Realities Across the Transition to Parenthood, *William A. Miller; Maureen Perry-Jenkins*

Discussant: *Renate M. Houts*

President: *Leslie Richards*

Recorder: *Julianne M. Serovich*

Saturday, Nov. 14, 12:30 - 2:00 pm

Session #117

Gay/Lesbian Issues Focus Group

Presiders: *Ramona F. Oswald, Batya Hyman,*
Focus Group Co-chairs

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2:15 - 3:45 pm

Session #121

**Gendered Dynamics in Intimate Relationships
(Paper Session)**

- Promises, Promises: Gendered Discourses of Family Power Among the Promisekeepers, *John P. Bartkowski.*
- The Discourse of Romance and Violence, *Sally A. Lloyd; Beth C. Emery*
- The Effect of Emotion Work Balance on Relationship Satisfaction of Couples Seeking Therapy Services, *Kristen E. Holm; Ronald J. Werner-Wilson; Alicia S. Cook; Peggy S. Berger.*
- Components of Gender Identity as Predictors of Gender-related Instrumental Behavior for Premarital Couples, *Terri J. Swim; Catherine A. Surra.*

Discussant: *Leigh A. Leslie*

President: *Michael P. Johnson*

Recorder: *Jodie L. Hertzog*

Sunday, Nov. 15, 7:30 - 8:30 am

Session #202

WORSHIP SERVICE

Ghanian Renaming Ceremony, Edith A. Lewis
Sponsored by the NCFR Religion and Family,
Ethnic Minorities, and Feminism and Family
Studies Sections. Special music celebrating our
global theme.

President: *Judy Watson Tiesel*

All attendees are welcome. Participate in an
enlightening, global worship experience.

Sunday, Nov. 15, 8:30 - 10:00 am

Session #204

The Use of Power in Academic Relationships:
Feminist Reflections

Leaders: *Joan A. Jurich; Brenda L. Seery,
Katherine R. Allen, CFLE;*

Shelley M. MacDermid, Mark A. Fine

Chair: *Joan A. Jurich*

Discussant: *Lee Ann DeReus*

Recorder: *Laura A. Cobb*

Sunday, Nov. 15, 2:15 - 3:45 pm

Session #221

Experiencing the Process of Cooperative
Learning: A Hands-on Workshop for Feminist
Teachers (Workshop co-sponsored by
Students/New Professionals)

Leaders: *Katherine R. Allen, CFLE; Kaitilin Stevens
O'Shea, Karen L. Wilcox, Karla Soukup*

Chair: *Katherine R. Allen, CFLE*

Session #222

Work and Family Issues: Macro and Micro
Policy Implications (Symposium sponsored by
Family Policy Section, and co-sponsored by the
Feminism and Family Studies Section)

- Does Social Policy Compromise Family Financial Security?: Implications for Families With Small Family Businesses, *Catherine A. Huddleston-Casas; Sharon M. Danes*
- The Influences of Gender, Family Involvement, and Work-family Conflict on Managers' Preferences for Family Oriented Benefit. *Jane Olsert, Phyllis J. Johnson*
- An Analysis of Family and Medical Leave Benefits in Canada, *Eileen Trzcinski*
- "Welfare Mothers" Welcome Reform, Urge Compassion, *Karen Seccombe*

Discussant: *Lynet Uttal*

Presider: *Debra L. Berke, CFLE*

Recorder: *Ruth Sorensen*

Sunday, Nov. 15, 9:00 - 10:15 pm

Session #237

FFS SECTION MEMBER MEETING

Presider: *Donna L. Sollie, Section Chair*

Monday, Nov. 16, 2:15 - 3:45 pm

Session #319

Gender Influences on Views of Self and Self in
Relationships (Paper Session)

- In Her Own Voice: Goals and Possible Selves of Rural African-American and Caucasian Adolescent Girls, *Amy D. Claborn, Jennifer L. Kerpelmar, Allie Mendelsohn-Moore, Paul L. Schvaneveldt*
- Critical Events in African-American and European-American Women's Identity Development, *Lee Ann DeReus, Mary Kay DeGenova, CFLE; Eileen MaloneBeach*
- Personal Growth Vs. Intimate Relationships: A Qualitative Study of Women's Decisions, *Anne R. Mahoney*
- The Outsider Within: Sense of Self in Jewish Feminist Women. Gender Influences on Views of Self and Self in Relationships, *Phyllis A. Greenberg*

Discussant: *Karen R. Blaisure*

Presider: *Guy E. Cunningham*

Recorder: *Julie C. Law*

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 8:30 - 10:00 am

Session #406

Gay and Lesbian Experiences (Paper Session)

- Through the Kaleidoscope of Media and Culture: The Developmental Experiences of Lesbian and Gay Youth, *Kaitilin Stevens O'Shea*
- "It's So Hard to Jam Yourself Into the Closet for a Day": GLBT Experiences at Family Weddings, *Ramona F. Oswald*
- Lesbian Mothers at Work, *Renate Reimann*
- Invisible in the Media and Erased in School: The Experiences of Children of Lesbians Stranded in a Heterosexist Environment, *Janet M. Wright*

Discussant: *Karen L. Wilcox*

Presider: *Batya Hyman*

Plus there are many posters, round tables, and teaching round tables sponsored by the FFS Section.

WOMEN'S STUDIES LIST SERV

Jacqueline Haessly, Ms. Ed., CFLE

If your passion for Family Studies is matched by your passion for Feminist Studies, check out the Women's Studies list serv. Women (and some men) from all continents regularly engage in informative dialogue on topics of interest to women studies scholars, researchers, and practitioners. "The Women's Studies list serv (WMST-L) is intended to primarily serve the academic needs of people involved with Women's Studies as researchers, teachers, librarians, and/or program administrators."

What can NCFR members expect to find on the WMST-L List serv? The interdisciplinary nature of both Women's Studies and Family Studies provides a rich opportunity to academics in both areas "to ask questions and exchange information about teaching strategies, useful texts and films, innovative courses, current research, funding sources, . . .graduate programs, relations between Women's Studies and other 'minority studies' programs, . . . and announcements about relevant conferences, calls for papers, job opportunities, and publications." WMST-L also "serves as a repository for syllabi, bibliographies, and other files related to Women's Studies."

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this list serve is provided in the exchanges that occur when a subscriber posts a question for research, or for resources. When feminist scholars and practitioners from six continents request and exchange information on topics that range from female genital mutilation, to incest, feminist leadership qualities, to empowerment literature for young girls, to feminist pedagogy, androgogy, and gynogogy, and do so from a cross-cultural perspective, new information is shared, new insights develop, and new ways of addressing topics of importance to women and their families and communities are imagined. And in the process, new collegial and friendship relations are formed.

Subscribe by sending the following message to
listserv@umdd.umd.edu
subscribe wmst-l name

(All quotes are taken from the WMST-L User's Guide prepared by Joan Korenman at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.)

WOMEN'S STUDIES INTERNET RESOURCES

Aine M. Humble, MSc, CFLE, PHEc

In conjunction with her impeccably-run Women's Studies list serv, Joan Korenman also has several web pages with valuable information for all those involved in feminist education. The following gives a brief review of four web pages owned by Dr. Korenman and one other web site on syllabi.

First, to give you an idea of how well the Women's Studies list serv is run, check out the WMST-L User's Guide <http://www-unix.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/user-guide.html>

- This lists all the information you will receive by email once you subscribe to the list serv.
- There is a wealth of information in here, including topics such as (1) format of message, (2) stopping mail temporarily, (3) accessing archives, (4) when and when not to send messages to the list, and (5) receiving an edited digest version (very helpful due to the high volume of mail).
- Every month Joan posts sections of this user's guide to help remind subscribers of proper list serv protocol.

Second, if you are interested in locating internet sources on various topics related to women and families, then take a look at the Women's Studies/Women's Issues Resource Site: <http://www-unix.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links.html>

- This annotated list has more than 300 sites (with links to them, of course) which will be useful for anyone teaching in academic women's studies programs or teaching courses cross-listed with Women's Studies programs.

- Sites are listed alphabetically or they can be searched by general topic. Topics include areas such as (1) activism, (2) girls and young children, (3) women of color, (4) science and technology, and (5) net info (help on getting around the net).

- This site is updated on a regular basis.

Third, if you are looking for a particular women's studies program, department, or resource center, you may be able to find it at: **Women's Studies Programs, Departments, and Resource Centers:** <http://www-unix.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/programs.html>

- This site contains links to more than 350 program, department, or resource center sites throughout the United States, Canada, and other countries.

- You can link to this site from the "Women's Studies/Women's Issues Resource Site" as well.

- Programs or departments with graduate degrees or concentrations are noted.

- There is a link to a site which lists programs in gender and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies in Canada and the U.S.

Fourth, if you are interested in electronic forums related to more specific topics, then browse through Gender-related electronic forums <http://research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/forums.html>

- This annotated list has over 300 links to other e-mail lists related to women or gender issues, and can be searched alphabetically or by topic.

- General list topics include (1) motherhood, (2) activist, (3) health, (4) women of color, (5) sexuality/sexual orientation, and (6) social sciences.

- There is a link to a site which has more extensive list of gay, lesbian, bi, and transsexual e-mail lists.

- Information on this site changes frequently and is therefore updated frequently. You can check to make sure you have the most recent copy by clicking on a conveniently located link.

- If you are interested in creating your own e-mail list, there are valuable links to helpful sites for getting started.

Finally, another internet source which may be of interest to NCFR members is the **inforM Women's Studies: Syllabi**

<http://www.inform.umd.edu:8080/EdRes/Topic/WomensStudies/Syllabi/>

- This page is not owned by Joan Korenman (she owns the four previous pages listed).

- This is part of the Women's Studies database at the University of Maryland College Park campus.

- This includes syllabi on topics such as (1) education and feminist pedagogy, (2) feminist theory, (3) intersections of race, class, and gender, (4) sexuality, and (5) women and families.

- Each topic lists anywhere from 1 syllabi to 22 syllabi (such as the language and literature section).

- The topic "Women and families" only has 3 listed, and these are dated from 1985, 1991, and 1992. Perhaps it's time to get some of our syllabi on the net so that people find out that yes, indeed, there are actually people out there who teach family studies from a feminist perspective!

- The dates of the syllabi tend to cluster around the mid 1990s.

- This homepage is owned by Larissa Kofman, but interested NCFR members can submit a syllabi for inclusion in the homepage by contacting Priya Sridharan at priya@info.umd.edu

- **Reminder:** We have only browsed through some of these pages. Therefore, internet users are encouraged to read internet material critically for verification of authenticity and/or accuracy of information.

Erratum: In the March 1998 newsletter, Pam Lerner's name was unfortunately omitted from the list of FFSS Award Committee members for 1997. We regret the error.

1997 FFSS BEST PAPER AWARD

The Politics of Reproductive Benefits: Insurance Coverage of Contraceptive and Infertility Treatments, by *Leslie King* and *Madonna Harrington Meyer*.

Summary. Recent changes in access to infertility treatments have heightened existing class cleavages surrounding reproductive health care benefits. We began this research with the realization that employees of the state of Illinois have broad coverage of infertility treatments but no coverage of contraception; yet Illinois women insured by Medicaid receive benefits in just the opposite configuration. We set out to determine whether access to benefits is similarly unequal in the U.S. as a whole and to discover how this unequal distribution of benefits came about.

Using data gleaned from government testimonies, public documents, and telephone interviews, we found that poor women have broad access to contraceptive coverage but very little access to infertility treatments, while working and middle-class women have increasingly broad coverage of infertility treatments but sparse coverage of contraceptives. In fact, during the 1980s and 1990s, state-mandated insurance coverage of infertility for the working and middle classes expanded while Medicaid coverage of infertility, already very sparse, was retracted.

Class differences in access to reproductive services reflect a dualistic, albeit unstated, fertility policy in the U.S. whereby births among working and middle-class families are encouraged and births among the poor, particularly those on Medicaid, are discouraged. It appears that deeply held beliefs about who should and should not have children have contributed to the emergence of this bifurcated, de facto policy.

We believe that all women should have the right and the means to control their reproductivity; this requires access to a full range of reproductive services regardless of employment, marital or socioeconomic status.

Section Summary—1997 Conference

Women Through the Life Course

Submitted by Corinna Jenkins Tucker

This symposium, attended by 13 people, included both qualitative and quantitative studies of women's lives.

“Moving beyond behaviors: The construction of adolescent girls' relational beliefs following parental divorce,” presented by Meghan Raymond, focused on how parental divorce may influence girls' views of marriage and their ideas about their fathers through mothers' negative talk about their ex-husbands. This analysis revealed that the majority of mothers talk negatively about their ex-husbands, but this talk did not predict girls' attitudes towards marriage, and it influenced daughters' feelings towards their fathers only when the girls exhibited low levels of emotional autonomy.

“Single mothers by choice and the larger social context,” presented by Valerie Mannis, drew on interviews with 10 adult, educated, and financially autonomous women who actively chose to become single mothers. Analysis suggested a variety of contextual influences on their decision, along with evidence of their own purposeful movement towards motherhood.

“The social construction of Christmas: Women's emotion work,” presented by Brenda Seery, centered on 25 women's work, effort, and activities to create the “magic” of Christmas. This study highlighted that as women coordinate the holiday festivities to invoke a sense of family and of the holiday itself, they are “doing gender.”

“Women and retirement: Role and status change among single women during the retirement process,” by Margaret Manoogian O'Dell, drew on in-depth interviews of 10 woman and uncovered four themes: feelings of loss, looking for new ways to find status, discovering new ways to feel valued, and active agency in negotiating personal validation.

Discussant William Aquilino suggested two themes that connected the papers: First, all four papers advocated greater use of qualitative methodology in exploring the life course, as in-depth interviews provide insights into the meanings that participants give to their lives. Second, using a feminist perspective leads these researchers to highlight the active role that individuals assume in shaping their own life course.

Editor's Corner

As I wrap up this issue of the newsletter and stare at nearly two columns of unclaimed space, I know in a flash what to do with it. I want to tell you about my mom, who died 9 days ago in Miami Beach at the age of 90. Her name was Golda Marks, and I think it's fair to say that she was not a feminist. I wish she had been; I think my growing up would have come swifter if she had given herself more of her own bright light that was forever turned to the service of my father. Perhaps I would have learned sooner that women, too, have needs, and I might have seen instances of my father, my sister, and I scurrying about to meet them.

The truth is that I can't recall a single such instance. My mom tried her best to find herself within my father's domain, and attending to his ever-expanding realm was a full-time job. "But surely she resisted!", you protest, and indeed she did. She read and read and read. My father couldn't stop her, nor could he stop her outpouring of poetry—filled with curiosity about everything around her, and down-home philosophizing, and gladness, and loneliness and despair, and yearning, and craving, as in the one about her fondness for chocolate, which I read at her funeral.

It saddened me that so few people came to her funeral. She had hardly any friends, because she didn't have the emotional time to cultivate friendship, but her caregivers all came to the service and then to the graveside, and they cried

harder than anyone as her birch casket with a Jewish star on top was lowered into the ground. In her final two years, these South American women were her lifeline. She rewarded them for their care with constant expressions of wide-eyed appreciation and unbounded good cheer. They will find it difficult, for a time, to go on without the gift of those expressions, and they knew it, so they wept.

When my mom was not lonely or harried, she could wax enthusiastic about virtually anything, and her enchantment with the world was almost palpable. Still up and around until a couple of years ago, she was given to celebrating her surroundings with song. When I would walk with her the $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile around San Marino Island, she would bellow out the 2nd verse that nobody knows from the Star Spangled Banner, and she would stop to pluck a red hibiscus from a neighbor's bush just to hold it in her hand as we walked. And when we'd get to the big royal poinciana tree half way around the island, she sang the same short ode to it each day. I wish I could sing her greeting for you, as the lyrics alone cannot capture the moment:

Hello Tree.

I'd like to take you home with me,
I'd like to take you home.

My mom was not a feminist, but she had a thing or two to teach us about using one's voice.

Stephen Marks
Erev Rosh Hashonah
September 19, 1998

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Next Deadline: Feb. 15, 1999

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and/or comments to:

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