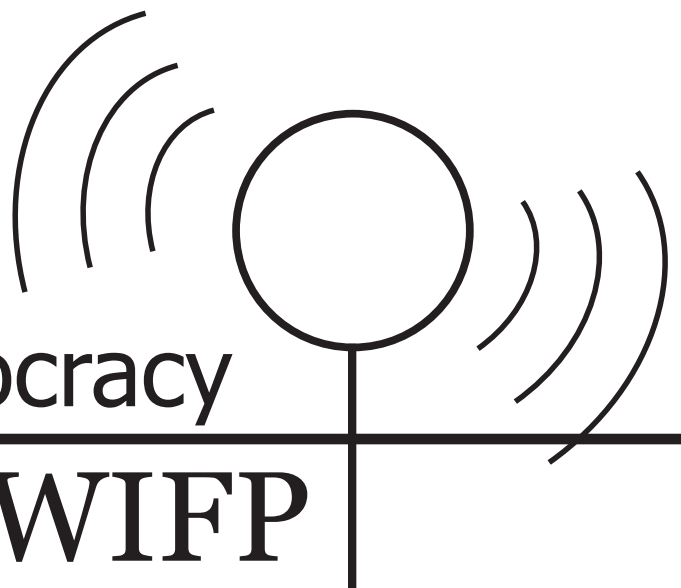


Voices

for Media Democracy

Summer 2008

WIFP



Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press

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The following individuals are some of the hundreds of associates of WIFP. Many have been with us since the early days of the 1970s. Not all of those we work with are Associates, but the network of Associates helps us experience continuity in our endeavors over the years. We've shared projects and ideas. We've lent each other support. We continue to look forward to the energies of the newer Associates joining with us to bring about a radical restructuring of communication that will bring about true democracy in our countries.

Dorothy Abbott
 Jennifer Abod, Ph.D.
 Jo-Ann Huff Albers
 Martha Leslie Allen, Ph.D.
 Joy Allen
 Donna Caledonia Allen
 Mark Allen
 Ana Maria Alvarado
 Emily Ballengee
 Christian Barclay
 Maurine Beasley, Ph.D.
 Julia Beizer
 Carolyn Bennett, Ph.D.
 Farika Fayola Berhane
 Eleanor Biddle
 Eleanor Blalock
 Ester Bloom
 Kathy Bonk
 Marcia Boruta
 Denise Bostrom
 Pamela K. Bradshaw
 Jennifer Braudaway
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 Annie Brown
 Susan Brownmiller
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 Dyannah Byington
 Lilia Cajilog
 Jo Campbell
 Patricia Campbell, Ph.D.
 Lydia Carey
 Bonnie Carlson
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 Danielle Chynoweth
 Elayne G. Clift
 Erin Conroy
 Reverend Cheryl Cornish
 Nikki Craft
 Flora Crater
 Pamela J. Creedon
 Sena Christian
 Thelma Dailey
 Dorothy Dean
 Valerie E. DeMatteo
 Dana Densmore
 Alix Dobkin
 Ariel Dougherty
 Ruth Dropkin
 Madeline Duckles

Valerie Eads
 Jane Esberg
 Caitlin Esch
 Howard Fisher
 Laura Forester
 Jo Freeman
 Sheila Gibbons
 Amanda Glensky
 Sarah Glover
 Grace Goodeagle
 Ruth Gottstein
 Elaine F. Graves
 Heather Grimm
 Elsie Gutchess
 Alison Hardin
 Fann Harding, Ph.D.
 Francesca Harding
 Grace Haring
 Teresa Haring
 Sandy Hayden
 Doris Hess, Ph.D.
 Jamine Hillyer
 Maureen Honey, Ph.D.
 Michael Honey, Ph.D.
 Natalie Hopkinson
 Frankie Hutton, Ph.D.
 Margaret R. Johnston
 Laura Wede Kai
 Deanna Kaplan
 Paula Kassell
 Susan Kaufman, Ph.D.
 Ann M. Keller
 Jean Kilbourne, Ph.D.
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 Andrea Korte
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 Jennifer Lee
 Kristin Lee
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 Karin Lippert
 Joanne Lipson
 Alexis Luckey
 Tatyana Mamonova
 Lisa Kar-Wai Man
 Anyda Marchant
 Lucinda Marshall
 Nora Massignott-Cortese
 Paula McKenzie, Ph.D.

Leila Merl
 Julie Mikalson
 Paul Miller
 Sarah Misailidis
 Virginia Mollenkott, Ph.D.
 Dorinda Moreno
 Robin Morgan
 Karen Mullhauser
 Judy Murphy
 Doug Newsom
 Jenny Odintz
 Rebecca Peterson
 Susan Phillip
 Marge Piercy
 Lana Rakow
 Ramona R. Rush, Ph.D.
 Diana E. H. Russell, Ph.D.
 Corinne Sabo
 Annette Samuels
 Bernice Sandler, Ph.D.
 Anna Sayre
 Nina Shah
 Marie Shear
 Elizabeth Shepard
 Andrea Singer
 Amanda Slaughter
 Willona Sloan
 Ann Snitow
 Calandria Somuah
 David Song
 Gloria Steinem
 Cecily Swanson
 Kate Swift
 Elizabeth Thoman
 Julie Thompson
 Patricia Tobar
 Sister Margaret Traxler
 Emily Trostle
 Anita Varma
 Mary Ellen Verheyden-Hilliard
 Desirè Vincent
 Carmen Delgado Votaw
 Billie Wahlstrom, Ph.D.
 Danna Lynn Walker, Ph.D.
 Betsy Warrior
 Frieda Werden
 Marcia Yudkin
 Jonathan Zeitlin
 Zenia Allen Zeitlin
 Karen Zelermyer
 Ann Zill
 Jan Zimmerman

Some International Associates:

Canada
 Milner Alexander, Ph.D.
 Julia J. Jalloh
 Mary-Catherine McIntosh
 Gertrude Robinson, Ph.D.

Denmark
 Birgitt Jalloh

France
 Shere Hite
 Maryvonne Lecuyer

Germany
 Frauke Richter

Indonesia
 Dorothea Rosa Herliany
 Yasmin Muntaz

Japan
 Haruko Watanabe

Jordan
 Mahasen Al Emam

Mexico
 Diana Murray Watts

Nepal
 Rojee Kattel

Netherlands
 Senay Ozdemir

Palestine
 Benaz Batrawi

Peru
 Silvia Soriano

Poland
 Ewa Fryzowska

Saudi Arabia
 Nourah Al-Khurajji

Scotland
 Bonnie Robertson

South Korea
 Jin-A Yang
 Eun Yung Yi

South Africa
 Kashini Maistry

Ukraine
 Oksana Kuts

United Kingdom
 Margaret Gallagher

Uzbekistan
 Navbahor Imamova

Zambia
 Susan Musukuma

(www.wifp.org/MoreAssociates.html)

JoAnn Albers

Although JoAnn Albers is officially retired, she is still making talks for journalism education programs. She recently spoke, for instance, at the Kentucky Press Association journalism boot camp in Frankfort. She remains active in professional organizations and is attending the UNITY '08 conference (July). She returned to the Cincinnati area to live, after having left it 27 years ago to become a newspaper editor/publisher in Michigan.

Maurine Beasley

Dr. Maurine Beasley will be honored with the prestigious Eleanor Blum Distinguished Service to Research Award at the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication conference in Chicago this August. The Blum Award recognizes an individual for research that has been of service to journalism education. This is an extremely competitive award for which 22 people nominated Beasley.

Maurine Beasley credits *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*, based on the book *Women in Media: A Documentary Source Book*, which was originally published by WIFP, as a significant factor in her receipt of the award. Beasley will be recognized for the award at a special panel presentation, at which time she will be making remarks and will be sure to credit WIFP founder Dr. Donna Allen with being a major inspiration to her.

Beasley has also officially retired, and now serves as the first Professor Emerita of the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland. She will continue to advise Ph.D. students in her new capacity. Beasley also has contracts with academic presses for two books, one on Eleanor Roosevelt as a politician in the White House and one on the history of Washington women journalists.

Carolyn LaDelle Bennett

Dr Carolyn Bennett, author of *Missing News & Views in Paranoid Times*, has come out with another book!

Women's Work and Words Altering World Order: Alternatives to Spin and Inhumanity of Men was recently released. A review appears on page 05.

Carolyn M. Byerly

In April 2008, Dr. Carolyn Byerly was one of four recipients of the "Outstanding Faculty of the Year" Honors & Excellence Award 2008, from the Graduate Student Association, Howard University.

In June 2008, she assumed the role of principal investigator for a "Global Report on Women's Media Employment," for the Washington, DC-based International Women's Media Foundation. The two-year project will

update Margaret Gallagher's 1995 report for UNESCO titled "An Unfinished Story." The present project refines Gallagher's methodology and geographic distribution in its quest to learn what kind of positions women occupy within print, broadcast, cable, and some online media companies around the world.

In August 2008, Dr. Byerly completes a year-long training and mentorship called Journalism (and Mass Comm) Leadership Diversity (JLID), a program sponsored by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). JLID prepares women and minorities in the field to prepare for administrative and other leadership positions in the academic world.

Erin Conroy

Erin Conroy, a former WIFP intern, is currently in Thailand on an undergraduate research award, researching the sexual trafficking of women and children in that country. The culmination of this trip will be a report on her findings that will appear in the International Museum of Women's online exhibition on human trafficking in November.

Erin is also launching LOTUS magazine, the premier issue of which will be published in September of this year. LOTUS is described as "a publication focusing on global women's issues such as: traveling, women in the workplace, spirituality, violence against women, women and international development, and women and the environment. Ultimately, the main purpose of LOTUS magazine is to offer a socially conscious publication dedicated to the enlightenment of women around the globe" (<http://lotusmagazine.org>).

The idea for LOTUS stemmed from the dissatisfaction that Erin and her co-editors, Sara Lehman and Amber McCrady, felt about the current selection and topics covered in magazines widely available to and geared toward women today. In contrast, LOTUS magazine is devoted to helping women "change the world, instead of to change our bodies" and hopes to improve the world for women by exploring the social injustice that they suffer.

Cheryl Cornish

We are excited to announce that Rev. Cheryl Cornish has been chosen to receive the 2008 Yale Divinity School Alumni Award for Distinction in Congregational Ministry. Past recipients of recognition from the school include U.S. Rep. David Price (D-N.C.), the late civil rights and antiwar activist Rev. William Sloane Coffin and Dr. Scott Morris, director of the Church Health Center of Memphis.

Rev. Cornish has been leading her



First Congregational Church community in Memphis, Tennessee, for 20 years, building it up from a small, predominantly elderly congregation to its current 320-member diverse group that includes gay, lesbian, straight and disabled worshippers. Speaking from personal experience, she delivers moving and inspirational sermons. She also does not shy from taking on justice and peace issues. For instance, every Wednesday she joins Women in Black on the church steps to protest the war. She identifies herself as a feminist and activist as well as a pastor.

An article about her Yale Divinity School Award and the great work she is doing appeared in the Commercial Appeal: www.commercialappeal.com/news/2008/jun/19/mission-of-inclusiveness/
Congratulations, Cheryl, on a well-deserved award!
<http://www.firstcongo.com/>

Ariel Dougherty

Ariel Dougherty will be serving as the Senior Research Consultant and coordinator of "Creating a Women's Media Equity Collaborative: New Funding Models for Feminist Media." With this research, a collaboration of academics and media organization activists will conduct the first-ever survey of the field of women's media justice organizations. Furthermore, the project will map out feminist models of collaboration and sustainable funding to design a new support arm for the collective work of feminist media organizations.

The two academic investigators of the Women's Media Equity Collaborative are Lisa McLaughlin, in communications at Miami University of Ohio and editor of Feminist Media Studies, and Susan Feiner, an economist and director of Women Studies at Maine Southern University. The partnering organizations are "Making Contact"/National Radio Project under executive director Lisa Rudman and Chica Luna Productions under acting director Lillian Jimenez and program coordinator Karly Beaumont. The research is funded by a grant from the Social Science Research Council through their Necessary Knowledge for a Democratic Public Sphere program.

In another capacity, as associate producer for Lynn Hershman's *Women, Art and Revolution*, a documentary on the Feminist Art Movement, Ariel Dougherty was able to facilitate a single \$100,000 contribution. This has allowed editing to proceed in earnest, moving forward this important and lively memoir.

For the past year, Ariel Dougherty has also been involved with the Women's Working Group (WWG), which shepherded the involvement of some 150 grassroots and national women's organizations within the U.S. Social Forum. She has just accepted the co-coordination of the Leadership Circle of WWG as it continues to oversee

a number of collective feminist initiatives and strategize plans for the 2010 U.S. Social Forum.

Ruth Gottstein

Ruth Gottstein, Publisher Emerita of Volcano Press (www.volcanopress.com), is a plenary speaker at the 30th anniversary of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, describing some of the "the early, grass roots days of the battered women's movement."

Volcano Press (www.volcanopress.com) first published *Lesbian/Woman* (1972) by Martin and Lyon and *Battered Wives* (1976) by Del Martin. Her son, Adam Gottstein, is carrying on her work with Volcano Press as the publisher for over six years now, during which time they've released *Surviving Domestic Violence: Voices of Women Who Broke Free*, by Elaine Weiss (2004), and *Family and Friends' Guide to Domestic Violence: How to Listen, Talk, and Take Action When Someone You Care About is Being Abused* (2003). Both books received starred reviews for core collections from Library Journal. In 2006, they published *The Physician's Guide to Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse: A Reference for all Health Care Professionals: How to Ask the Right Questions and Recognize Abuse...Another Way to Save a Life*, an update from a similar title we first published in 1995. The co-editors are Patricia Salber, M.D., and Ellen Taliaferro, M.D. They've also published a compendium from UC Davis called *Child Abuse and Neglect* with contributions from 95 professionals.



Michael Honey



Dr. Michael Honey, Professor at the University of Washington, Tacoma, has received the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award for his book documenting the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike and Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in Memphis, Tennessee. Honey and his book, *Going*

Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign, were recognized at a ceremony in May at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. The Award is given in honor of Robert F. Kennedy's concern for the oppressed and their struggle for justice.

Honey was also the winner of the 2008 Liberty Legacy Foundation Award for his book *Going Down Jericho Road*. Previously, Honey came to Washington to speak on March 31 at the AFL-CIO.

Frankie Hutton

Dr. Frankie Hutton was in Washington, D.C., speaking on a panel “Joining the Grassroots Movements to End Female Genital Mutilation” at the July 19-21 conference of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She is also coming out with a new book: *Rose Lore*. It will be released in August 2008 by Rowman-Littlefield Publishing Group.

<http://www.geocities.com/frankiehutton/rose.html>

Calandria Somuah

Calandria Somuah is freelancing for a local newspaper, *The Sentinel*.

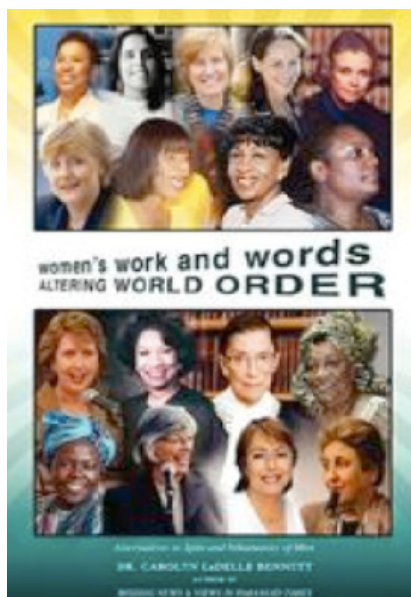
She plans on attending Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies for journalism in Spring 2009. She will also make another trip to Japan next year.

Danna L. Walker

Dr. Danna L. Walker continues in her role as the James B. Simpson Fellow at American University. She was a panelist at the International Communication Association conference in Montreal in May and will be a panelist at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in Chicago in August. She has been awarded a grant through the WIFP to continue research into the relationship between women and news in shaping society since the second wave of the women’s movement.

Women’s Work and Words Altering World Order: Alternatives to Spin and Inhumanity of Men By Dr. Carolyn LaDelle Bennett

Review by Sarah Glover



In the introduction to her book, *Women’s Work and Words Altering World Order*, author Dr. Carolyn LaDelle Bennett recounts a conversation she had with Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press founder Dr. Donna Allen. “People who are wrongheaded or misguided in their actions are not bad people,” Dr. Allen told her, “They just don’t have ‘my information.’” With this piece of advice in mind, Dr. Bennett penned her most recent book in order to supply information that she felt had been neglected by the male-dominated mainstream media.

In order to ensure a “history void of willful error,” Dr. Bennett highlights within the pages of her book those women whose work and words have enormously impacted society, yet whose contributions have been overlooked. Granted, some are names that people have heard before: ranging from Madonna and her humanitarian efforts in Malawi to Cindy Sheehan, who has become the face of the present-day anti-war movement, to Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. But as one might expect, this book exists mainly to discuss those whose names are not known and whose stories have not been told. Such is the case of Claudette Colvin, a young African American girl who refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus long before Rosa Parks performed the same worldchanging act of defiance. Or Rachel Corrie, who took a stand in front of a bulldozer in the Gaza Strip much the same as an unidentified man had done in front of a tank in Tiananmen Square less than two decades previously, except that Corrie was mowed down and killed. Or Wangari Maathai, who plants seeds of peace by planting the seeds of trees in her native Africa.

Seeing the good that these women have done through their work and words, in comparison to the “male dominance [that] increasingly has led with a belligerent foreign policy...leaving in its wake a domestic policy of neglect, class conflict, chasms among people...” has led Dr. Bennett to a single powerful conclusion: “The leader of the free world needs a woman head of state - but a particular woman - with the intellect and presence of mind to ponder action with an eye to the future; a humancenteredness capable of respecting difference and envisioning peaceful cooperation and coexistence with and among nations; a woman unconcerned with showing how tough she is, or how religious she is, or how fashion-setting her wardrobe.”

The women that Dr. Carolyn LaDelle Bennett profiles in *Women’s Work and Words Altering World Order* demonstrate just how that certain woman could and should be. (iUniverse, Inc., NY 2008)

Save the Internet! Net Neutrality and the 2008 Internet Freedom Preservation Act

by Annie Brown

Net neutrality is a network design paradigm that prevents Internet providers from deciding which sites users can access or at what speed certain sites download. It allows small websites, applications and ideas to have the potential to reach the billions of people who access the Internet. Imagine an Internet with no Napster or Google or Youtube, and most certainly no blogs. Without the concept of net neutrality, the Internet would most likely have developed as a sea of phone company-sponsored sites. Often referred to as the first amendment of the Internet, net neutrality is a key design principle that has been around since the Internet's inception. It gives users primary control over the future of the net by protecting sites and applications from corporate interference. When the Internet began in the 1990s, the developers insisted that information networks like the Internet are "most efficient and useful to the public when...less focused on a particular audience and instead attentive to multiple users."* This concept has developed alongside the growth of the Internet, and allowed for "The Information Superhighway" to become the revolutionary (and non-discriminatory) means of communication that it is today.

In a future without network neutrality, it would be very hard for small websites, especially peer-to-peer networks, to leap from the small time to the big time as companies like Google and Napster have done in the past. Also, this concept allows users to upload and download

as they please and users to access information equally. Whether you are looking up news on a local blog or msnbc.com, net neutrality ensures that the sites load at equal speed. For example, if you create a blog that only gets 10 views per day, that site is treated equally by Internet Service Providers to a site that gets a million views per day. However, the freedom Internet users have today is in danger of becoming a thing of the past, a threat once thought impossible due to the sheer size and complexity of the World Wide Web.



Original image found at: <http://www.grit.com/Computing-News/Net-Neutrality-Revived-Again.html>

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are working hard to see network neutrality eliminated from the realms of cyberspace. Non-discriminating policies, ISPs argue, prevent users from getting the most out of their Internet service. As Senior Research Fellow James Gattuso of the Heritage Foundation stated in 2003, "Rather than media monopolies, consumers face a bewildering and unprecedented amount of choice. Instead, the real danger to Americans is that outdated and unnecessary FCC restrictions will limit improvements in media markets and technologies, limiting the benefits they provide." The Federal Communications Commission has taken this viewpoint, stating that the concept of net neutrality is no longer necessary and limits the broadband capacity accessible to users. Using this argument, major Phone and Cable Companies such as AT&T, Verizon and Comcast, who serve the majority of Internet consumers, are lobbying Congress to allow the FCC to eliminate the concept of net neutrality.

Already, some ISPs have been caught completely ignoring network neutrality principles. The FCC held a hearing in February to address claims that Comcast degraded peer-

Net Neutrality

to-peer traffic. Comcast executive David L. Cohen defended Comcast at the hearing, stating, "What we are doing is a limited form of network management, objectively based upon an excessive bandwidth consumptive protocol during limit periods of network congestion." Marvin Ammori, a net neutrality advocate from the general counsel for Free Press, addressed the panel by saying, "This hearing is not about some technical details of managing networks, it's about the future of online television and about the future of the Internet. The facts aren't even disputed. Comcast is deliberately targeting and interfering with legal peer-to-peer technology."

Similar to Comcast's acts of "network management," Time Warner Cable initiated tests of "Internet Metering" or tiered pricing for Internet Access in a small Texas town in early June of 2008. For years users who mainly used the Internet to check e-mail and "heavy" Internet users (defined as users who watch big video and music, upload files, etc.) paid the same monthly price for Internet access. "Internet Metering" means that the heaviest Internet users will be charged more severely. Time Warner asked the customers involved in this test to choose a monthly plan and then pay surcharges when they exceeded their bandwidth, much like a cell phone plan. Not only would this type of system put a higher price-tag on uploading information onto the Web but would also mean that those who want to access more information (watch streaming video, download files, use the internet for research etc.) will also have to pay more. In response to Time Warner's test run in Texas, Vint Cerf, Chief Internet Evangelist and Vice President of Google, (also referred to as "the father of the Internet") wrote, "As soon as you put serious uncertainty as to cost on the table, people's feeling of freedom to predict cost dries up and

so does innovation and trying new applications.”

Thirteen days prior to the Comcast hearings, Congressmen Edward Markey (D-MA) and Chip Pickering (R-MI) introduced the Internet Freedom Preservation Act of 2008 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The full title of the bill reads: “Internet Freedom Preservation Act of 2008: To establish broadband policy and direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a proceeding and public broadband summits to assess competition, consumer protection, and consumer choice issues relating to broadband Internet access services, and for other purposes.” The bill “would establish Internet governance regulations, and then require an examination of the market and its practices.” A similar bill, S.215, was introduced in the Senate in January. The Senate version of the Internet Preservation Act calls for direct action and proposes to amend the 1934 Communications Act to ensure net neutrality. Both of these bills are still in committee. On June 20, The House Committee of Energy and Commerce debated whether a “hands-off approach” similar to that of the FCC would be best to preserve Internet freedoms. Bill sponsor Representative Markey pushed for his bill stating that legislative action and checks on the FCC is the only way to ensure the Internet remains “the most level playing field for commercial opportunity ever invented.”

Grassroots organizations such as SavetheInternet.com support both the Senate and the House Bills, although there are some concerns that ambiguous terms like “unreasonable interference” might allow big corporations to find loopholes within regulations. SavetheInternet.com is a project of the Free Press Action Fund, “a national, nonpartisan organization working to reform the

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media.” Activists of media democracy are passionate about the preservation of net neutrality because of the Internet’s important role in the democratization of communications and political involvement. SavetheInternet.com is working to counteract the lobbying efforts of Internet providers. “These companies have a new vision for the Internet,” SavetheInternet.com explains. “Instead of an even playing field, they want to reserve express lanes for their own content and services -- or those from big corporations that can afford the steep tolls -- and leave the rest of us on a winding dirt road.” On the Save the Internet’s main page you can click links to read the Internet Freedom Preservation Act, e-mail your congressional representatives asking them to support the Bill, access the SavetheInternet.com blog and watch informative videos on the issue.

SavetheInternet.com is a perfect example of the direct impact network management would have on grassroots movements. The media democracy movement itself has exploded thanks to the freedom of communications the Internet provides. Currently, mass e-mail lists, interactive websites, constantly updated information, news footage and educational videos, can be uploaded and downloaded without much expense to the organization or the individual accessing the information. Net neutrality should be at the forefront of not only the media democracy movement, but also all movements. The Internet has revolutionized communications in the grassroots campaigns. Activists from all communities, especially under-represented and minority communities, have the opportunity to get their message out to a larger audience than ever before and spur mass support for their causes.

We cannot take the recent advances

in communication due to the Internet for granted. The public often assumes that the Internet is too big, too accessible for it to become monopolized by a few large companies and suffer a fate similar to that of television and radio. However, now with the encroaching threat of big business Internet Providers, what seemed impossible - control over the Internet - is becoming a reality. To quote Timothy Wu, Columbia Law professor and esteemed authority on net neutrality, “In an ideal world, either competition or enlightened self-interest might drive carriers to design neutral networks. However, when that isn’t the case—when carriers are interested in discriminating for one of various reasons -- matters get more difficult, and a law may be necessary.” Congress must act to prevent Americans from being completely disconnected from the future of the Internet. If we, as a global Internet community, step back and see the Internet as an amazing innovation in human history, one that has the potential to spread awareness, bring communities together, and solve the immense global problems that face us today, we will not hesitate to protect it from FCC ignorance and corporate control.

For More Information on the Bill, Please Visit:

<http://www.opencongress.org/bill/110-h5353/show>

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Stelter, Brian. “To Curb traffic on the Internet, Access Providers Consider Charging by the Gigabyte.” [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/15/technology/15cable.html?_r=2&adxnnl=1&oref=slogin&ref=technology&adxnnlx=1215200530-AbTIHJMRlPBDDHmvYdeZg). 15 June 2008. 4 July 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/15/technology/15cable.html?_r=2&adxnnl=1&oref=slogin&ref=technology&adxnnlx=1215200530-AbTIHJMRlPBDDHmvYdeZg>

Media Democracy is an issue we at Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press are truly passionate about, not because we want to see a radical change for change's sake, but because we see the great potential of mass communication. Through public awareness and access to diverse solutions we could bring an end to human suffering. It is impossible in the media's current state to incorporate the range of views, experiences and knowledge that is required to bring full coverage to the issue of violence. As long as media remains a system of technologies controlled predominately by wealthy white males prioritizing issues according to their companies views, issues of great importance to those not represented, like women, will remain unnoticed. Violence against women persists in our nation and abroad, in more forms than one article or one newsletter could possibly portray.



by Annie Brown, WIFP

We believe that an end to violence is possible, but only if we listen to all voices from all groups, not just the ones media corporations believe to be the "best" representatives of the issue. In the case of violence against women, it is especially crucial that survivors of violence are given the opportunity to speak out to the public. While WIFP recognizes we cannot represent every group in one special feature, we deliberately chose to provide coverage of groups that are drastically underrepresented and/or misrepresented in today's media. Also, in these articles, we are asking our society to rethink the issue of violence within the context of complex systems of silencing women that we must address while pursuing the simple goal of peace. Please consult some of the recommended readings and websites provided at the end of the articles to learn how to get in direct contact with groups working to end violence through women's voices.

by Annie Brown

Using Performance to Break The Silence: About Our Bodies, Domestic Violence, and Feminism Itself

by Deanna Kaplan

Internationally famed playwright Eve Ensler wants to get women talking. She wants women to express the things they need to say but feel they are supposed to keep quiet about.

The popularity of her play *The Vagina Monologues* speaks to the success of her mission. Through a series of monologues about topics like orgasms, bisexuality, pubic hair and harassment, the word "vagina" is said over 100 times. Now translated into 24 languages and performed annually by many colleges and uni-

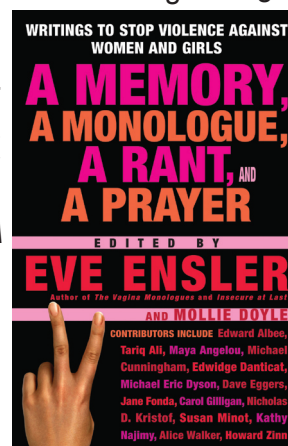
WIFP

versities worldwide, that's a lot of women speaking, screaming, and moaning "vagina" - a word Ensler found difficult to get women to whisper when she first started conducting her interviews.

Last year, Ensler came forward with a new play, and a new set of taboos to break. Entitled *A Memory, A Monologue, A Rant, and A Prayer*, the play aims to get people talking about rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence, widely prevalent issues ignored by politicians, the media, and even women themselves.

Writes Ensler, we need to speak "about violence against women, not

because it is the only issue, but because it is an issue that lives smack in the middle of the world and is still not spoken, not seen, not given weight or significance."



The statistics support Ensler's claim. The UN reports that one third of women are beaten or sexually assaulted in their lifetimes. In the United States, someone is raped every two minutes. Seventy-nine countries do not have legislation protecting women against violence, and among nations who do, less than half of women who actually reported victimization to law enforcement received a satisfactory response.

Ensler's new play features memories, monologues, rants and prayers

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from well-known writers and celebrities, including Jane Fonda, Maya Angelou, Dave Eggers, Howard Zinn, Edward Albee, and Alice Walker. Debuted at the “Until the Violence Stops” festival in New York, it is now being performed across the country on college campuses in “V-Day” celebrations, aimed to raise awareness and open dialogue about violence against women. Performances will be put on by feminist and theatre groups nationwide as well as by “Vagina Warriors,” a feminist college campus organization existing under many different names across the country, aimed at promoting Ensler’s cause.

In putting on productions like *The Vagina Monologues* and *A Memory, A*

Monologue, A Rant, and a Prayer, both the Vagina Warriors and Eve Ensler are achieving a perhaps overlooked consequence. They aren’t just breaking the silence about violence against women. They’re breaking the silence about feminism.

“A lot of women in our culture around my age think that feminism is no longer important, that it’s obsolete,” says Rebecca Beren, a Vagina Warrior at the University of Arizona. Beren is a junior sociology major concentrating in gender studies, and performed in her school’s production of *A Memory, A Monologue, A Rant, and A Prayer* this past spring. Beren says she was incredibly relieved to join the Vagina Warriors because it was “the first time in my life where I could tell a group of people that I’m a feminist without getting an instant response of a feminist joke. I was accepted without having to defend myself.”

Beren says that few young women and even fewer young men would identify themselves as feminists,

but “I think more would if they knew what feminism actually means.” In referring to herself a feminist, Beren runs into frequent stereotypes and misconceptions.

“Thanks to [distorted media coverage], feminists have gotten a reputation as being radical butch man-hating lesbians. I tell people I’m a feminist, and they get confused because I’ve had boyfriends and enjoy being friends with men. A good friend



Found at: <http://rochester.indymedia.org/newswire/display/20019/index.php>

of mine recently mentioned to someone that she’s a feminist. They said, ‘That surprises me, because you don’t look like a feminist.’ My friend, who happens to be very pretty and petite, said, ‘I didn’t know feminists had a distinct look.’”

The negative stereotype of the “radical butch man-hating lesbian” is immeasurably harmful to the reality of the movement, which aims to give women equal opportunities legally and socially. At its core, feminism encourages women to rebel against gender roles they find personally offensive or stifling and strives to protect women against harassment, violence, sexual assault, and loss of reproductive rights.

Yet the typical young person who agrees with the majority of feminist goals may not call themselves a feminist because they believe all feminists must fit this stereotype. Others may avoid using the feminist label because they don’t want to be associated with a negative image.

Despite stereotypes, given that one of every three women are beaten or sexually assaulted, a pervasive belief that feminism is now unnecessary may sound surprising. But even for a generation of women more comfortable in talking about their bodies than ever before, thanks to long-established gender roles, the silence is not entirely shocking.

In Beren’s experience, most people, men and women alike, are astounded by the statistics revealed in Ensler’s play and say they had no idea that domestic violence is so widespread. Beren observes “that women have forced themselves into ignorance. Women have the right to vote and technically, they are supposed to have equal pay. Women want to assume that cultural bounds will disappear with laws in place, but the reality is that we’re fulfilling submissive gender roles every day without realizing it.”

Like Beren, most gender sociologists recognize the profound affect that both the media and society have on the way people act. Many sociologists believe that the amount of female submission seen in the media, coupled with the often submissive roles women see their female relatives and friends play, make them far more likely to be submissive in their own relations with men, romantic or otherwise. Socialized to see the dominant male as normal, women fail to notice that they are fulfilling a gender role even when it is a role they are unhappy with.

According to Beren, “Women of my generation grew up learning that men are going to do things like harass us verbally or try to coerce us into sex, but we must walk away with our chins up because that’s just the way men are...These roles are seen as so normal that it doesn’t always occur to the woman that she

can say something back. Men hit their girlfriends and wives and the women justify it in their mind by telling themselves, 'He loves me. He's just being a man.'"

Beren's statement echoes a recent survey by the World Health Organization, in which one half of women said that it is acceptable for a man to beat his wife in some situations. Beren believes that plays like Enslers are important because they remind women that they don't have to keep quiet – that, yes, they can say something to the guy on the street corner, their boyfriends and husbands, their friends and their co-workers. Enslers' monologues model for women what the media fails to: that it is acceptable to tell their stories, to rebel against gender roles, and, yes, to be a feminist.

A Memory, A Monologue, A Rant, and A Prayer offers a reminder that feminism isn't just about women. It is about preventing people from getting hurt; further, it's about gender roles, and therefore just as much about men and masculinity as well.

A play evocative enough to get so many people talking has the potential to help reshape these roles and change perceptions of feminism altogether. And in the hands of the boisterous Vagina Warriors, it just might.

Anybody can host a V-Day performance event. To find a local event or to learn how to organize an event yourself, visit <http://v10.org/take-action>.

See Also:

Amnesty International, launch report, "It's in Our Hands: Stop Violence Against Women," 2004.

Amnesty International report, "The State of the World's Human Rights," 2006.

World Health Organization, "Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women," 2005.

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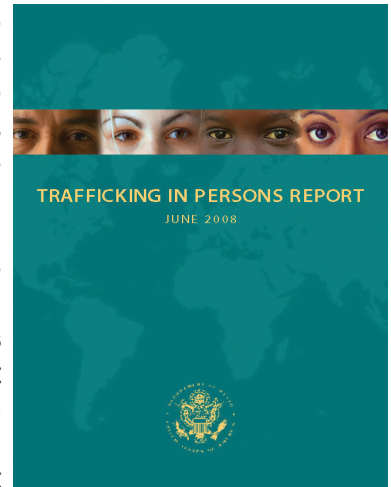
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Women's Voices in the Fight Against Sexual Slavery: Indian Anti-Trafficking Group Highlights Limited Perspective of State Department's 2008 Trafficking-In Persons Report at NGO Briefing

by Annie Brown

This year, The Department of State released its eighth annual Trafficking-In Persons Report. On June 6, 2008 The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press along with other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) attended the NGO briefing of the 2008 report followed by a presentation by Ruchira Gupta of Apne Aap, a survivor-led anti-trafficking group based in India. Sex Trafficking is defined in the report as "trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age." First distributed in 2001, the Trafficking-In Persons Report is a long overdue response to the cries of citizens and NGOs for U.S. government involvement in the growing global problem of Sex Trafficking. However, this was hardly a two-way meeting. Except for a limited Q&A and Ruchira Gupta's enlightening presentation at the very end, this was a briefing of a statistical report, with a heavy, and often counteractive, focus on law enforcement.



Pulled from: The Eighth Annual Trafficking-In Persons Report.

Ambassador Mark P. Lagon began the briefing by addressing the NGOs. "We stand on your shoulders," he said. Appointed by President Bush in February 2007, Lagon is the Ambassador-at-Large and Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Lagon had a noticeable, and surprising, passion for the cause. While briefing on the themes and statistics found in the report, his commentary showed a true dedication to ending trafficking worldwide. He referred to sex trafficking between and within nations as "the contemporary incarnation of slavery." He also told the audience he has worked relentlessly over the past year to make sure that nations who continue sexual slavery would be "held accountable." However, the ignorant policies and superficial solutions found in the report clouded his strong words and obvious belief in the cause.

As the information was presented to the audience, it seemed like something was being left out. Lagon presented the report standing at a podium with blown-up images from the report behind him. The most striking of the posters was a picture of two Indian prostitutes with their eyes blurred out. It is understandable that the government might want to protect these women's identi-

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ties, but many other photos throughout the report were left uncensored. The photo was blurred and highlighted at the briefing for an emotional effect, rather than any protective reason. As the briefing continued, this image, more than Lagon's



Pulled from: The Eighth Annual Trafficking-In Persons Report.

passionate words, seemed to accurately reflect the United States' attitude towards women in sexual slavery. Just as the identities of the women in that photo were erased, the voices of those who had experienced the horrors of sex slavery were absent from the report. Occasionally there would be an anecdote in a small box within the report, but these were always from the perspective of a government official observing their surroundings. In fact, it seemed little of the actual report had anything to do with the people being trafficked at all.

The main focus of the report was law enforcement. Law enforcement as a solution and law enforcement as a means of ranking countries' efforts to combat sexual slavery. Within the report, 170 countries are placed within one of four "Tiers": Tier One, Tier Two, Tier Two Watchlist and Tier Three. The ranking of a nation depends on how well a nation complies with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 2000. According to the report, "A country that fails to make significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons, as outlined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), receives a 'Tier Three' assessment in this report," and continues, "such an assessment could trigger the withholding by the United States of non-humanitarian, non-trade related

foreign assistance." The United States is conveniently absent from any of these ranked lists, although a brief summary of U.S. policies on trafficking can be found at the front of the report.

The main section of the report summarizes the reasoning behind the rankings of nations by evaluating each nation's anti-trafficking efforts. For example, India is on the Tier Two Watchlist, because "The Government of India does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so." Compliance is discussed in three different sections: prosecution, protection and prevention. In all three of these categories the enforcement of law according to U.S. standards is the central theme. In the introduction to the Indian evaluation, the report states, "A critical challenge overall is the lack of punishment of traffickers, effectively resulting in impunity for acts of human trafficking." This wholehearted belief that lax governments or corrupt police systems are the source of the perpetuation of sex trafficking colored the whole of the report. The sections on protection mainly discuss the laws (or lack of laws) that would force government involvement in "victim" assistance. "Victim" is placed in quotes here to emphasize how the focus on law enforcement as a solution to sex trafficking relies on viewing women

as victims needing to be saved. Nowhere in the report (or in the briefing for that matter) are these women discussed as individuals worthy of respect and empowerment. This view of women inhibits the U.S. government's "minimum standards" for prevention to go beyond government advertisement about the criminal aspect of trafficking in publications or creation of laws to diminish demand.

Law enforcement is emphasized as the main route to preventing sexual slavery. In a documentary clip shown to the group of NGOs after the briefing entitled "Not My Life," Mark Lagon was interviewed, and with great fervor stated, "The punishment has to be enough to deter the problem." Yet no evidence was provided in the documentary or in the report that punishment is an effective deterrent for this problem. The report, the documentary, the blown-up photographs and Ambassador Lagon's remarks all promise that if only we arrest more traffickers sexual slavery will end. Increasing incidences of sexual slavery in nations throughout the world raise the question whether United States's current policies are the answer to this global problem.

Sex trafficking is a complex issue that involves criminal behavior but also power relations, economics, women's roles and more. This is a problem that cannot be solved with a one-dimensional solution like that proposed by Congress. Law enforcement is important, but so is understanding the deeper issues behind trafficking's existence and expansion. If we are ever going to eradicate women's enslavement, the U.S. government cannot place so much emphasis on law enforcement officers "saving victims." Emphasis on persecution reinforces stereotypes of women as weak, childlike and needing to be saved. These are the

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same stereotypes that rob women of the power to control their bodies and lives. Phrases like “victim” and the emotionally charged photographs used by the U.S. to evoke sympathy for the cause make women of developing nations look like powerless, faceless children waiting to be rescued by male police officers. The U.S. government must continue to persecute the traffickers responsible but also change their view of women and promote methods that get to the root of women’s disempowerment in order to save future generations from enslavement.

While there was no recognition of women’s disenfranchisement as a source of the problem found in the report or the briefing, Ruchira Gupta, founder of the Indian NGO Apne Aap, brought this issue to the forefront of the session with refreshing clarity. For those who wished to stay after the briefing, the State Department had invited Ruchira Gupta to speak to the group about her work to end trafficking in Indian Red Light Districts. At this time, Gupta presented her multi-dimensional approach to ending sex trafficking that went far beyond law enforcement. Apne Aap is a survivor-led organization that builds community centers within red light districts in India. Founded in 1998, Gupta’s group provides counseling, economic options and legal representation to women. Apne Aap also works with local police and governments, but their method ensures that trafficked women are actors in the process of enforcing and enacting laws.

As Gupta stated, “We first approach the women as mothers.” Apne Aap tells these women to examine their own lives, filled with abuse and sexual violence, and asks if this is what they want for their daughters. From this perspective, the women become activists against sex trafficking. The group uses the term “survivor-led”

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because the women form their smaller anti-trafficking groups that they run and manage. In the process of fighting for the futures of their daughters, these trafficked women become empowered themselves and gain the courage and community support necessary to demand freedom from their pimps and traffickers. Gupta went on to explain that Apne Aap also provides educational services to young boys within the Red Light Districts who are at risk for recruitment by sex traffickers. Women of Apne Aap show these boys first hand that women are worthy of respect and should not be exploited and that there are better options for both boys and girls outside the red light district life. Gupta commented on the major successes they have had in these districts and the joy she gets from seeing women actively change their communities. After an hour-long briefing about laws, police officers and government officials, finally the women directly affected by the continuation of sex trafficking were discussed as individuals, NOT as victims, with their own voice and agency.

Another successful project of Apne Aap that especially impressed us here at the Institute was Gupta’s self-published Red Light Despatch, a modest newsletter written and edited by the trafficked women of Indian communities. Much of the newsletter discusses the need for women to “control their own bodies,” and as Gupta explained, “to have a choice means to have more than one option.” Filled with poetry, news articles and stories as well as letters to committees, this newsletter is a true embodiment of the women’s voice and empowerment that Apne Aap promotes as an integral part in eliminating sexual enslavement.



by Anna Wagner

Rendering of Ruchira Gupta of Apne Aap

In the question-and-answer segment that followed Gupta’s presentation, several of the NGOs commended Apne Aap’s attention to women’s empowerment as a key aspect of ending sexual slavery. Even Ambassador Lagon made the comment that governments should consider this direct work with women as a “form of prevention.” One NGO representative asked Gupta what the possibilities were for “governments to sponsor larger programs of empowering women.” Gupta responded that the Indian government does not recognize women in its laws and fails to prioritize the issue of sex trafficking on the national agenda. Women must be empowered within their communities if they are to be empowered within larger society. By giving women a voice and a stake in their own futures, not to mention expanding their choices beyond a life of prostitution, Apne Aap is working for a permanent solution using methods that acknowledge and address the larger problem of national devaluation of women.

There is an obvious difference between the Apne Aap approach and the State Department approach. Proven success of their methods, as well as the inclusion of women’s voices, were aspects of Gupta’s presentation that seemed to be glaringly absent from the State Department’s report. From Gupta’s perspective, women were never referred to as victims or in need of being saved. They were individuals capable of speaking for themselves and making change. When Gupta was speaking, I found myself hoping that Ambassador Lagon was listening with careful attention. If Lagon and the U.S. Government truly wish to

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Untold Crimes: Violence Against Native Americans

by Deanna Kaplan

“ultimately abolish the egregious crime of human trafficking,” then the next TIP report should expand its focus beyond law enforcement. The U.S. should advise other governments to sponsor programs like Apne Aap on a nation-wide scale. The “Tier System” should be based on not only a nation’s efforts to punish traffickers but also efforts to raise women’s place in the social structure. Apne Aap provides a successful model for programs that could be put in place in communities worldwide. If Lagon and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons would take the initiative to re-evaluate the Trafficking Protection Act and its focus on punishment rather than the status of women, then the U.S. could, with NGOs like Apne Aap, make headway towards ending sexual slavery.

The media must be an integral part of this shifting view. The habit of presenting women, especially women in developing nations, as weak and in need of rescue is not exclusive to the U.S. government. The image of the helpless “third world” woman has pervaded the mass media as well as American policies. Media coverage of the issue of sex trafficking needs to follow the lead of The Red Light Despatch. We should listen to the women who have seen first-hand the dehumanization caused by sexual slavery and have been presented with the opportunity to speak, to be empowered, and to take back the control that was stolen from them. The media can spur this change. The media has the power and resources to present these women’s stories. Unless there is a change in both the media and government, all the efforts of passionate officials like Ambassador Lagon will only continue to work for an incomplete and superficial solution to this awful (and growing) violation of human rights. Our government and the mass media cannot be hesitant to expand its current view on sex trafficking and look to the women being trafficked for leadership.

To help Apne Aap’s Current Campaigns, please visit: <http://www.equalitynow.org>
Website for viewing the Full Text of the Trafficking-In Persons Report Online: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/>
Recommended Reading: Sold By Patricia McCormick (for more information on the book visit: www.pattymccormick.com)

Lost among sporadic hype about Native American alcoholism, drug abuse, and economic woes lurks an even more deadly and devastating problem, largely ignored by the media: violence against Native Americans.

According to Linda Logan, executive director of the Native American Children’s Alliance, violence in Native American communities is a persistent threat in the



lives of all Native Americans – men, women, and children. Yet, “it’s one of the least reported crimes in the United States. Who wants to talk about rape, hate crimes and child sexual abuse? Everybody wants to ignore it.”

In response to advocates like Logan, the U.S. Department of Justice last investigated this issue in 2002 and discovered that American Indians are victims of violence at more than twice the national average rate: On average, one in every ten American Indians twelve or older has experienced some form of violent crime. Native American women were found to be more than twice as likely to be victims of violent crimes than non-Native women are. In 66% of crimes against American Indians, Natives report that the perpetrator was of a non-Native descent. This number drastically increases in sexual assault crimes, in which four out of five perpetrators are

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described as white.

Logan, like many other Native American advocates, believes that these already unsettling estimates may be low and that Native Americans – particularly women and children – are dealing with unspoken domestic violence at immeasurable rates.

With an estimate of one Native woman being violated every hour, Karen Artichoker, director of Sacred Circle National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women, has declared violence against Native women to be “a national crisis.” No statistics are available on the rates of physical and sexual violence against American Indian children. Advocacy organizations like NACA who deal with claims and witness tribal struggles know that rates are disturbingly high. To Logan, this is more evidence of how much this issue is “under-researched and under-funded.”

But why all the violence against this demographic? The root causes of violence are complex and deeply interlinked. “As for Indian on Indian crime, it is completely linked to historical trauma. There has been a tremendous breakdown of culture over the years,” says Logan.

Abuse was virtually unheard of until the European invasion. The combination of extensive relocation, enslavement, lack of rights, and forced assimilation into “American” culture caused this breakdown. As cultural beliefs and traditions that emphasized communalism, pacifism, and reverence of women dissolved, inter-tribe violence skyrocketed. The Department of Justice has also found alcoholism and drug abuse to be closely linked with violent crime, neither of which were present before forced assimilation.

However, the vast majority of Ameri-WIFP

can Indians are victimized by non-Indians. Many of these crimes are hate crimes, fueled by negative stereotypes created by the media and by vulnerability.

Many social programs available to states are unavailable to tribal governments. These include health-care, education, substance abuse, adoption, and welfare programs, all of which Logan says are severely under-funded. According to Sacred Circle, though there are over 570 Indian Nations, there are only around 30 shelters designed to serve Native women in the entire nation. Many states alone have this number of shelters available to non-Native women.

Individuals who are uneducated or suffering from a health problem, abuse problem, or cannot afford to take care of themselves are much more vulnerable to attack. For Native Americans, these problems have been a widespread crisis.

The vulnerability does not end here. As tribal governments are struggling to protect their members, tribal courts are also battling for control. “Judicial protection is very poor,” says Logan.

At present federal law dictates that legal issues involving Native Americans can be heard in two types of courts: tribal courts or state courts. Tribal courts may hear cases only in which a non-Native consensually engages in a transaction with a tribal member (*Montana v. United States*, 1981). The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 additionally provided tribal courts power to give protection

orders in cases involving sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. In recent years, VAWA has continued to propose new programs and funding to fight victimization of American Indians.

However, despite these positive Congressional steps, these court rights have recently become endangered. Currently under review by the Supreme Court is *Plains Commerce Bank v. Long Family Land & Cattle Co.*, a case spurred by problems between a Native American family who took out a loan and the non-Native-affiliated bank that provided

it. The bank has appealed to decrease the jurisdiction of tribal courts, and the ability that the tribal courts have to protect Native Americans once again rests in the Supreme Court’s hands.

Because of the multi-faceted nature of the causes of violence, ad-

vocacy organizations like Sacred Circle suggest that it must be fought in several different ways. Hate crime legislation must be enforced. Government funding must be increased so that social programs and other resources can be improved and made more readily available. Traditional, non-violent cultural values must be re-taught and remembered. Tribal courts must continue to be able to fairly and justly protect the tribes they represent.

For more information, or to find out how to get involved, visit: Native Children’s Alliance (www.nativechildalliance.org), Sacred Circle (www.sacred-circle.com), and the National Congress of American Indians (www.ncai.org).



Found at: <http://www.sacred-circle.com/>

Supreme Court Sides With Murderer; Media is Silent

by Bonnie Carlson

Dwayne Giles murdered his girlfriend, Brenda Avie on September 29, 2002. After shooting her six times, he fled the scene. Two weeks later, he was apprehended by police and charged with murder. The prosecution uncovered a taped phone conversation between Brenda Avie and a police officer that was made three weeks before she was killed. In this taped phone call, Avie was crying and told the police officer that her boyfriend, Dwayne Giles, was physically abusing her and had threatened to kill her. This phone conversation was used by the prosecution to demonstrate Giles's history of violence.

In a district court, Giles was found guilty by a jury of his peers and appealed the decision to the California Court of Appeal and then the California Supreme Court, both of which upheld the conviction. Giles claimed that the courts' use of Avie's taped phone conversation with the police violated his Sixth Amendment right to face his accuser; since Giles did not have the opportunity to question Avie regarding her accusations against him, Giles felt that his conviction was unjustified. His case was heard by the United States Supreme Court in April of 2008. In a six-three decision for *Giles v. California*, the Court sided with Giles, ruling that he had indeed been stripped of his Sixth Amendment right to face his accuser. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the California state courts for a retrial without the use of the taped conversation.

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote the majority opinion for the Court. He claimed that while Sixth Amendment rights can be forfeited by wrongdoing,

this exception does not apply in Giles's case. Scalia wrote that the mere fact that Giles murdered Avie was not enough evidence to forfeit his Sixth Amendment rights; in order to give up his right to face his accuser, Scalia claimed the prosecution would have to have proven that Giles committed the murder with the intention of preventing her from testifying against him. Since it was unclear throughout the trial whether or not Giles knew that Avie had informed the police of his behavior, Scalia reasoned that he did not necessarily kill her to keep her from bringing charges against him or testifying against him. Thus, he had not forfeited his right to face Avie for the accusations she made against him.

Scalia concluded with remarks regarding the rights of victims versus the rights of the accused. He made strong appeals for defending the rights of the accused, claiming that people accused of crimes must be awarded all rights delegated to them in the Constitution. He wrote that "domestic violence is an intolerable offense that legislatures may choose to combat through any means... But for that serious crime, as for others, abridging the constitutional rights of criminal defendants is not in the State's arsenal" (Scalia 23). The majority of the Court, then, ruled that protecting the rights of the accused must take precedence in criminal trials.

Writing for the dissent, Justice Stephen Breyer took issue with Scalia's interpretation with the application of the forfeiture by wrongdoing clause of the Sixth Amendment. Breyer argued that it is legally unacceptable for a criminal to benefit from his or

her own wrongdoings. Quoting the author of the original treatise on the forfeiture clause, Breyer wrote that a defendant "shall never be admitted to



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shelter himself by such evil Practices on the Witness, that being to give him Advantage of his own Wrong" (Breyer 35). Giles should not be permitted to benefit from murdering Avie, and thus should not benefit from the rights of the Sixth Amendment

Breyer continues by noting that Giles' intent behind killing Avie is insignificant in this case and places an undue burden on the prosecution. Whether or not Giles was specifically acting to silence Avie the end result was the same. Also, Breyer claims that requiring the prosecution to definitively determine Giles' thought process before and during the murder is unrealistic and impossible and gives criminals an undue benefit. He writes that "a constitutional evidentiary requirement that insists upon a showing of purpose (rather than simply a probabilistic knowledge) may permit the domestic partner who made the threats, caused the violence, or even murdered the victim to avoid confrontation for earlier crimes by taking advantage of later ones" (Breyer 57-58). In other words, this type of burden on the prosecution will serve only to allow perpetrators of domestic violence to benefit from further harming their victims.

Clearly, this case holds major implications in the realm of domestic violence. Recognizing this, the Battered Women's Justice Project filed a brief to the U.S. Supreme Court urging them to uphold Giles's conviction.

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The brief decries the potential harm were the court to decide in favor of Giles, stating, “by its nature, a batterer’s violent and coercive course of conduct carries with it an intent to silence his significant other. Indeed, domestic violence homicide is the ultimate act of silencing. A specific intent requirement would only further the batterer’s campaign to silence his murdered victim’s voice trammeling on fundamental principles of equality” (12). Just as Breyer wrote in his dissent, then, advocates for victims of domestic violence recognized the danger of a decision supporting Giles’s case. Future prosecutors in domestic violence cases must operate under the assumption that the highest court in the land will be more inclined to support criminal rights than to support victim rights.

If you are wondering why this Supreme Court case does not sound familiar, it is probably because it does not. The mainstream media all but ignored this decision and its behemoth implications for victims of domestic violence. In order to fully grasp the dearth of media attention surrounding this case, let’s examine the coverage from the nation’s three most widely circulated newspapers: *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times*. Between these three publications, *USA Today* was the only one to run a full-length news story after the decision was handed down from the Supreme Court. The online edition of the *Wall Street Journal* contained only a two-sentence summary of the decision, listed with forty-five other case summaries. The *New York Times* squeezed in a three-paragraph summary of the case at the end of an article about another Supreme Court case. None of these papers contained an opinion piece agreeing with either side of the decision. Obviously, the mainstream media did not believe that the Giles case was worth their attention.

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In the few instances where the big media corporations decided to cover this case, the coverage itself did little to convey the seriousness of the decision and its implications for victims of domestic violence. An examination of several news story headlines makes it clear that the gravity of the decision was lost on members of the mainstream media. For example, in the one article that *USA Today* published regarding the case, the headline read “Court Affirms Right to Confront Witnesses.” In a similar tone, the *Washington Post* ran an article about the case with the headline reading “Right to Face Accusers Is Affirmed in Unusual Case.” Even when the media did cover this case, then, the coverage itself was problematic and did little to alert people to the potential consequences of the decision.

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Giles v. California* marks a historic low in the fight against domestic violence. The highest court in the nation has declared the importance of defendant’s rights over victims’ rights, and the face of domestic violence prosecution has been permanently altered. Fortunately, there continue to be women activists who recognize such threats and work daily to overcome them. This July, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence hosted its thirtieth anniversary conference to discuss the continuing problem of domestic violence in the United States. For this Supreme Court case, unfortunately, the decision itself is not the only injustice. Rather than alerting people to the true nature of this case, the mainstream media has instead chosen to allow this story to remain unheard by the majority of the population. The minimal coverage that major newspapers did publish was itself problematic and masked the true nature of the decision. The manner in which the corporate media handled this case is almost as inexcusable

as the decision itself; it serves as yet another bleak warning for the need to keep ourselves informed and make our voices heard.

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Sex Workers’ Art Show: A Highlight

by Sarah Glover

In January and February 2008, the twelfth annual tour of the Sex Workers’ Art Show traveled across the nation, seeking to dispel the myth that sex workers “are anything short of artists, innovators, and geniuses¹.” This cabaret-style show is composed of people from all areas of the sex industry who use dance, spoken word, music, poetry, and narrative to make statements on a wide range of socioeconomic issues including class, race, gender, labor, and sexuality. The show’s organizer Annie Oakley describes the mission of the Sex Workers’ Art Show “to demystify the industry, to humanize the people who work in it. The goal is not to glorify the work, but to help present the whole complicated messy picture²... I hope the show gets America to understand that prostitutes are people who deserve to be treated with respect and dignity³.”

(Endnotes)

1 *Sex Workers’ Art Show* <<http://www.sexworkersartshow.com/about.html>>.

2 Elisabeth Suicide, “2005 Sex Workers’ Art Show,” *Suicide Girls*, 23 Feb. 2005 <<http://suicidegirls.com/interviews/2005%2Bsex%2BWorkers%27%2Bart%2Bshow/>>.

3 David Henry Sterry, “Sexual Free-for-all Lets It All Hang Out,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 Jan. 2004 <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2004/01/11/LVG1J459UG1.DTL>>.

Media Democracy Highlights and Current Events

The Center for Media Justice

by Deanna Kaplan

The organization formerly known as the Youth Media Council has spread its wings and is now the Center for Media Justice. Based out of Oakland, California, CMJ is a national media strategy development organization that aims to promote youth rights and racial justice.

CMJ works closely with youth and racial justice organizations nationwide to help these organizations network with each other and develop the necessary skills to reach their goals. CMJ believes that the media has the potential to be a strong tool to transform society and enhance people's opportunities and lives, but only if everyone has equal access to the press – regardless of skin color, age, or economic status.

The Center for Media Justice offers many services, including media strategy and planning consultations, a variety of media-related trainings and presentations, and media-related toolkits and worksheets that can be printed off their website. All services are designed to help organizations and individuals express themselves with clarity, advertise themselves effectively, and meet their mission goals.

Interested in receiving services, becoming a partner, or joining CMJ? Call 510-444-0640 or visit <http://www.youthmediacouncil.org> to help achieve media justice.

Some Books on Violence Against Women by Survivors

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

by Maya Angelou

Kiss Daddy Goodnight

by Louise Armstrong

The Laid Daughter

by Helen Bonner

Desert Flower

by Waris Dirie and Cathleen Miller

Undying Will

by Donna Ferres

Telling: A Memoir of Rape and Recovery

by Patricia Weaver Francisco

My Father's House

by Sylvia Fraser

Working With Available Light

by Jamie Klaven

I Am the Central Park Jogger

by Trisha Meili

Slave

by Mende Nazer

This is About Incest

by Margaret Randall

After Silence: Rape & My Journey Back

by Nancy Venable Raine

Where I Stopped

by Martha Ramsey

Lucky

by Alice Sebold

Because I Remember Terror, Father, I Remember You

by Sue William Silverman

Burned Alive; A Survivor of an "Honor Killing" Speaks Out

by Souad

Unto the Daughters

by Karen Tintori

Voices Staff 2008



Left Photograph [The Summer-Only Staff] from bottom left to bottom right: Sarah Glover, Martha Allen (WIFP Director), Annie Brown, Deanna Kaplan, Bonnie Carlson, Amy Buck

Right Photograph from left to right: Andrea Korte (Summer and Fall 2008), Amy Buck, Martha Allen (WIFP Director), Christine DeLoatch (Fall 2008), Bonnie Carlson, Sarah Glover, Deanna Kaplan



Media Democracy Highlights and Current Events

Media Spotlight on *off our backs*

by Andrea Korte

After 38 years of continuous publication, *off our backs* faces the threat of closing down. The rising cost of printing means that funding is available for only one more issue, but in order to continue printing, the women behind the periodical are seeking help from the readers they have engaged throughout the years. To make sure that this issue will not be their last, see www.offourbacks.org to make a donation. Any contribution will fund a continuing tradition of content that is “by, for, and about women.”

Since their founding in 1970, the collectively run newsjournal has maintained a stalwart presence among feminist voices. While the publication covers a range of topics from current events to culture in both news and feature pieces, *off our backs* has presented particularly strong coverage of pressing and troubling issues involving women and media. A recent article called “A Chilling Effect” exposed threats and violence faced by women journalists around the world, illuminating the repercussions – ranging from online harassment to murder – faced by women speaking out against injustice. Another piece titled “Flesh and Bones” interpreted representations of women in both pornography, in which femininity is exaggerated and demeaned, and high fashion, an industry that erases any semblance of womanhood – an analysis that contrasted the implications of the two mediums while calling attention to the anti-feminist humiliation inherent in their imagery.

Throughout their history, *off our backs* has highlighted news that is ignored by mainstream media and turned a critical eye toward issues relevant to women, and readers can help ensure that such crucial coverage is not silenced.

WIFP Petitions the FCC: Preserving Designated Entities for Minority Media Justice

by Deanna Kaplan and Annie Brown

The FCC recently removed further checks against media consolidation, and the affected minority and women’s groups are responding with appeal. The FCC’s decision, which changed rules concerning “Designated Entity” participation in auctions for wireless radio channels, has been met by a joint petition. This case reveals the conservative attitude of the current FCC towards the free press and the importance of media minority groups nationwide.

The Designated Entity Program

The Designated Entity Program was formed under the Communications Act of 1934 with the intended purpose of promoting “diversity of ownership and competition.” Designated Entities (DEs) are primarily comprised of small businesses owned by minorities and women. Under the program, DEs had the right to participate in auctions for media outlet access regardless of financing, and the FCC was required to aid under-funded groups in the bidding process.

If properly enforced, the program would work to encourage media diversity by enabling everyone to gain access to media outlets regardless of socio-economic status, thereby preventing further media consolidation by corporations dominated by white males. However, the program has become inefficient in recent years due to lack of proper support and attention by the Federal Communications Commission.

Most recently, the FCC issued a mandate drastically altering the framework of the program. Now DEs are required to hold licenses for ten years if they wish to participate in auctions and retain Designated Entity benefits. Since these rule changes, several minority and women’s media groups including have lost auction funding. No longer able to participate, these groups lost access to valuable wireless channels.

The Petition

The Designated Entity Program is a crucial measure for ensuring that money is not the determining factor in media access. Alterations to this program could lead to a media that offers only the perspective of those able to afford it. Such a media would be saturated with omissions,

would not be reflective of the issues affecting the American people, and would be a poor source of information. Therefore, the FCC’s decision to alter this program is being met by a joint petition.

In June 2008, the Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press joined several other minority media groups in supporting Council Tree Communications, Bethel Native Corporation, and The Minority Media Council in their petition for review of orders of the FCC. Other supporters include the National Hispanic Media Coalition, the National Indian Telecom Institute, the Asian American Justice Center, and the NAACP.

The petition argues that not only were these rules adopted without proper notice or procedure, but they undermine the effectiveness of the diversity initiatives intended by the Designated Entity Program.

Associate Bonnie Carlson, representing WIFP, contributed a section to the petition against the FCC in which she summarized the importance of media democracy for women. The section states that the FCC has not only failed to fulfill its obligation to women-owned media

Media Democracy Highlights and Current Events

organizations, but it has also actively prevented women from participating equally in mass communications. Carlson's brief also finds citizens are harmed by a male dominated media that lacks female perspective. The WIFP section of the brief can be found at the end of this article, leading onto page 20.

WIFP maintains that a fair, balanced, and accurate media cannot exist without newsrooms that directly reflect the nation it reports on: both sexes, all races, and all socioeconomic classes. The Designated Entity Program is a key component of fair media licensing, and in the brief time that it has been partially suspended, several small media groups have already lost radio access. The majority of these small media groups are minority and women's rights organizations – the voices our media is lacking most. Media diversity cannot be maintained and enhanced if programs like The Designated Entity Program are not preserved.

Minority Media Justice

As minority groups and women continue to struggle to get their voices heard, limits placed on designated entities by the FCC are only one of many legislative challenges. According to a 2007 survey done by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) of paper and internet newsrooms, print newsrooms in the United States are 86.38% white. ASNE additionally found that 392 newspapers have an all-white staff. A 2007 survey conducted by the Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) found that radio newsrooms are 93.8% white, and television newsrooms are 78.5% white. According to RTNDA, television stations are 60.1% male, and radio stations are 75.6% male.

Fighting legislative battles is not the only way to get involved. Though all demographics are not represented

by the common media, most are represented by advocacy organizations. Listed below are profiles of several minority and women's media organizations and how to contact them. The following organizations are dedicated to combating a homogenous media and enriching the perspective of the information to which Americans have access:

Free Press: Promotes media diversity, independent ownership, and deconsolidation. Free Press has several active, issue-specific campaigns across the country and offers a wide variety of ways for anyone to get involved. www.freepress.net

UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc.: Represents all minority groups and promotes newsroom diversity. UNITY hopes to achieve a nation of newsrooms reflective of the communities they cover, and therefore a nation of people with an accurate understanding of current events from multiple perspectives. They offer a variety of workshops, conferences, fellowships, awards, and courses for others with the same goal. www.unityjournalists.org

National Federation of Press Women: An organization of students, professionals, and retirees, offers conferences, networking opportunities, education grants, competitions, and current events newsletters to its members. NFPW Aims to support women working in the communications field. www.nfpw.org

There are several associations that support, encourage, and advocate for minorities working in journalism and media-related fields. These organizations work to expand the number of minorities in journalism in order to promote the fair and balanced coverage of issues affecting minority groups. These organizations additionally offer scholarships, internships, fellowships, workshops,

conferences, and networking opportunities for students and professionals alike. For more information, visit:

The National Association of Black Journalists. <http://www.nabj.org>

The Asian American Journalists Association. <http://www.aaaja.org>

The Native American Journalism Association. <http://www.naja.com>

The National Association of Hispanic Journalists. <http://www.nahj.org>

There are many more organizations working to achieve a diverse, accurate, and free press. WIFP maintains a database of these organizations and how to get in touch with them. Visit www.wifp.org/communication-news.html for more information.

FCC Brief

by Bonnie Carlson

Specifically in regards to the rights of women-owned media corporations, it is imperative that the rights of Designated Entities be retained. In recent years, Congress has made it explicitly clear that media licensing and ownership is to be maintained by a variety of American citizens. A hindrance to this rule that places an excessive burden upon women and minority-owned media corporations is not only unjustified but is outside the scope of the Communications Act itself. These excessive burdens harm the women and minority groups who seek their share of media access but also distort the media representations to which all American citizens are exposed.

In 2007, the Free Press published the findings of two studies conducted during the previous year. They found that, despite women representing fifty-one percent of the population of the United States, women own just six percent of full-power commercial broadcast radio stations and

Media Democracy Highlights and Current Events

fewer than six percent of all commercial television stations. One of the studies, entitled “Off the Dial,” states that “allowing further industry consolidation will unquestionably diminish the number of female- and minority-owned stations.”¹ The other study, entitled “Out of the Picture,” notes that “if just a handful of female and minority-owned stations were lost to consolidation, these already anemic numbers would fall precipitously.”² The rules created by the FCC against Designated Entities are conducive to a consolidated media market and will inevitably lead to a further decrease in the number of female-owned media corporations. Unless these rules are repealed, the media market will continue to cater only to the needs of well-established, white male-owned media groups.

While the new FCC rules are clearly harmful to women seeking media control, the regulations also harm the general American public. Public exposure to the media shapes public opinion on a variety of issues. As noted by the LCCREF,

“The way the public looks at issues – and whether or not the public is even aware of certain issues like fair housing and voter discrimination – is directly related to the way these issues are covered by the media. The way that media covers these issues is directly related to who is employed by the media – the reporters, producers and anchors who tell the stories. Who is employed by the media is directly related to who owns the media. And

who owns the media is directly related to policies that determine who gets a federal license to operate and who does not.”³

Media ownership, then, has an incredible influence on public opinion and even on public awareness. With media ownership consolidated primarily among men, men have a unique and insurmountable advantage over women to influence public opinion. In turn, the general public is exposed to unrepresentative news coverage. Stories important to women’s lives are often left undiscussed in the mass media because they are deemed insignificant by male media corporations. To be truly representative and impart a representative influence on public opinion, media ownership must reflect the demographics of the United States.

One telling example of the skewed media coverage resulting from primarily male media ownership is the misrepresentation or lack of representation for female political candidates. The White House Project conducted a study in 1999 in the months preceding the race for the Republican presidential nomination for 2000. The candidates vying for the nomination were Elizabeth Dole, George W. Bush, John McCain, and Steve Forbes. The study examined newspaper coverage of all four candidates and found that Elizabeth Dole received far less coverage pertaining to political issues than did her opponents. On average, thirty-two percent of the newspaper coverage of Bush, McCain, and Forbes focused on political issues; only seventeen percent of the newspaper coverage of Dole was focused on issue coverage. In contrast, Dole received much more

news coverage of her personal life than did her opponents.⁴ The study also found that Bush, McCain, and Forbes were far more likely than Dole to have their words directly quotes. Dole, on the other hand, had her words paraphrased approximately fifty-five percent of the time, compared to thirty-eight percent for her opponents. Each of the newspapers examined for this study was male-dominated, and it is clear that this dominance influenced the nature of the written news reports. In order to ensure fair news coverage, it is essential that news organizations themselves be diversified.

The aforementioned 2007 Free Press study found that female and minority-owned radio stations led to a more diverse program content in the markets in which they aired. Diversity of media ownership, then, results in diversity of content available to listeners. As the study notes, “Policymakers have forgotten the reason behind ownership rules and limits on consolidations: Increasing diversity and localism in ownership will produce more diverse speech, more choice for listeners, and more owners who are responsive to their local communities.”⁵ Only through this type of diverse media coverage can citizens be ensured a complete understanding of current events. Not only must the Federal Communications Commission uphold its obligation to women and minority-owned media groups, it also must meet its responsibility to the broader population to guarantee diverse media coverage.

4 <http://www.thewhitehouseproject.org/culture/researchandpolls/Devitt, James. 1998. The White House Project.>

5 http://www.freepress.net/files/off_the_dial_summary.pdf

Turner, Derek S. *Off The Dial: Female and Minority Radio Station Ownership in the United States*. 2007.

1 http://www.freepress.net/files/off_the_dial_summary.pdf

Turner, Derek S. *Off The Dial: Female and Minority Radio Station Ownership in the United States*. 2007. Free Press.

2 <http://www.freepress.net/files/otp2007.pdf>

Turner, Derek S. *Out of The Picture 2007: Minority and Female TV Station Ownership in the United States*. 2007. Free Press.

3 <http://www.civilrights.org/assets/pdfs/media-justice-activist-toolkit.pdf>

Media Diversity Matters. Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund.

Women's International News Gathering Service (WINGS)

by Bonnie Carlson

Founded in 1986, the Women's International News Gathering Service (WINGS) is dedicated to broadcasting women's issues over the radio. According to its mission statement, WINGS is "an all-woman network of reporters producing and distributing news and current affairs programs by and about women around the world."

The group's biggest undertaking is its weekly news radio program. This weekly segment features international news items pertaining to women. The program's topics range from a piece on Sonia Jacobs, the only female death-row inmate of Florida, to an anti-violence speech given by Chung Hyun Kyung, a Korean feminist theologian. WINGS also accepts guest contributions to its radio program in the form of written or recorded news stories. An archive of past radio segments is hosted by the University of South Florida Department of Women's Studies and is available through the WINGS website.

Once a year WINGS also produces an hour-long radio program called the Women's News Roundup to feature the "hottest women's radio news stories of the year." Recordings of this annual broadcast are also archived and available online.

For more information visit www.wings.org or subscribe to their mailing list by contacting wings@wings.org.

Feminist International Radio Endeavor (FIRE)

by Bonnie Carlson

The Feminist International Radio Endeavor (FIRE), is a Latin American feminist media organization that was developed from an initiative by feminist Genevieve Vaughn in 1991. The stated objective of the organization is "connecting voices, technologies and actions...giving a voice to the voiceless." The organization began with a world-wide shortwave radio program but has since evolved with new media developments. In 1998, FIRE shifted to an Internet-based radio broadcast, the first feminist program of its kind. According to its website "FIRE works to disseminate new forms of communication, contributing to shift the international flow of information, providing access to women's perspectives by using traditional and new technologies to develop a new concept of radio."

Currently, FIRE is involved with several exciting projects. Most recently, they have participated in the 2008 Women's World Congress, held in July of this year in Madrid, Spain. FIRE provided media coverage of the conference, which featured well-known feminist activist Nawal El Saadawi, among many other speakers. FIRE also planned three sessions for the Congress pertaining to international women's radio. FIRE co-director María Suárez Toro also hosted a panel discussion about her new book entitled *Mujeres: Metamorfosis del Efecto Mariposa (Women: Metamorphosis of the Butterfly Effect)*.

The FIRE website contains archives of all its radio programs since 1998 as well as important news stories pertaining to women's equality. Check them out at <http://www.fire.or.cr/indexeng.htm>.

WIFP

Radio Warriors Strike Back

by Andrea Korte

Pirate radio may conjure up ideas of stations broadcasting illicitly from offshore, but current operators of low-power radio stations don't quite fit with this outlaw image. Instead, these radio warriors are fighting legally against media conglomerates as part of a greater localism movement committed to putting local media in local hands. Low-power radio is an ideal avenue for those broadcasters – including local activist groups with little chance of attaining a traditional FCC-designated license – seeking to reach a concentrated group of individuals instead of covering a wide-ranging area. Though low-power radio stations may not possess the same licenses held by a Clear Channel-owned outfit, their efforts are not outside the boundaries of the law. In 2000, the FCC created a restricted broadcast license for non-commercial stations operating with fewer than 100 watts. Thousands of applications were submitted after the implementation of the Low-Power FM (LPFM) service and several hundred licenses were awarded; however, the window for applications was only open briefly, restricting legal community broadcasting outside the grip of consolidated media. Yet groups like Prometheus Radio Project are committed to making radio a viable independent media source, recognizing that the current system for distributing licenses hinders local communities. The highest bidder may win, but the public loses.

Sources:

Adams, Michael H. and Steven Phipps. "Low-Power Radio/Microradio." *Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopedia of Radio*. www.freepress.net/lpfm
<http://prometheusradio.org>

Independence and Innovation in the Golden Age: Learning from Radio's History

by Andrea Korte

When wireless operators at sea were stunned to hear voices amid Morse code beeps during the world's first radio broadcast in 1906, the broadcast was just a novelty. It would be fifteen years before corporations recognized the power and potential of the new medium, but radio eventually would come to dominate public life by the middle of the century. However, space available on radio bands was finite, and a developing interest in radio caused the airwaves to grow crowded. In an era not long after the implementation of the antitrust laws of the early 1900s, the Federal Radio Commission deemed it necessary to enforce the number of stations that could be owned by corporations in the interest of format diversity.

In accordance with the 1927 Radio Act and the Communications Act of 1934, limits were set on the number of stations that could be owned by any one corporation: one AM and one FM station in a local area and seven of each on a national level, a "Rule of Seven" that was the rule of thumb for many years. The limitation placed upon licensing reflected the role that the newly renamed Federal Communications Commission envisioned for radio: public trustee. In order to best serve the public, the FCC enforced ownership limits to ensure the greatest format diversity, an idea that guided the commission through radio's first 60 years, an era that spans the medium's golden age.

The predominance of independently owned stations during the early years of radio resulted in an environment that allowed Lisa Sergio's career to flourish. Sergio was an Italian-born journalist who got her start broad-

casting under Mussolini, though she was ousted from her position after altering translations of propaganda for broadcast. She fled to the United States and secured a job commenting for NBC, but she was given a narrow range of subjects to cover on account of her gender. Sergio was restricted to softer "women's news," but with World War II looming, she sought to transition to commenting on politics and reading hard news. Even after more than a decade in broadcasting and considerable experience in politics thanks to her work in Italy, Sergio was not seen as a viable newsreader and commentator, jobs that were mostly the domain of men. Instead, she left NBC for WQXR, a station in New York whose independent programming philosophy made room for greater experimentation, defying the conventions of the era that insisted upon gendered division existing in radio programming and credibility as synonymous with masculinity.

At the independent station, Sergio's reports aired during the morning slot (seen traditionally as the domain of women's news), but she also broadcasted during the prime evening spot. Drawing upon her own experiences in Europe without resorting to the blatantly opinionated work of her less-worldly peers, Sergio read and commented on the news without any concern for whether her audience consisted of men or women, going against the established policies of network radio.

This environment of the independently owned station that encouraged innovation and excellence regardless of established network

norms changed with new FCC regulations regarding station ownership.

In the late 20th century, the FCC moved away from their view of radio as a public trustee, transitioning instead to a free market model. Eliminating limits on the number of stations one corporation could own on a national level was a response to the new guiding philosophy, one that assumes market forces will regulate format diversity. Today, after the implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, ownership limita-

tions have been relaxed and a trend of media consolidation persists. Though in the name of increased format diversity, deregulation has resulted in an oligopoly-dominated industry, one with 34 percent fewer station owners since the act was instated.

The development of new media frequently results in a re-evaluation of an older medium, eliciting changes so that it may continue to thrive in a changed environment. When radio was first threatened by the emergence of television, radio responded by specializing in local coverage, something that continues today with the localism movement, which fights to reclaim diverse local radio programming from nationally consolidated stations owned by media conglomerates. Yet even as old technologies learn from the new and adapt to stay afloat in a changing media environment, newer technologies can also learn from the past mistakes of older forms of media. As Michael J. Copps of the FCC has noted, there is "something of a model to look at as we attempt to analyze what eliminating concentration protections might do to the media – namely, the radio industry." The battles of radio, seemingly finished but still being fought, take on new significance in the Internet age. Though web content is unbound by the limitations of radio



Photograph of Lisa Sergio, found at <http://library.georgetown.edu/dept/speccoll/sergiobg.jpg>

bands, consolidated media is still an obstacle for independent voices. Remembering the history of radio – and its successes with independently driven content – means not repeating it and preserving the democratic aspects of a medium with unlimited potential.

Sources:

Copps, Michael J. “The ‘Vast Wasteland’ Revisited: Headed for More of the Same.” *Federal Communications Law Journal*.

Polinsky, Heather. “The Factors Affecting Radio Format Diversity After the Telecommunications Act of 1996: Ownership Concentration, Stations and Audience.” *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*.

Spaulding, Stacy. “Lisa Sergio’s Column of the Air: *An Examination of the Gendered History of Radio*.” *American Journalism*.

<http://www.californiahistoricalradio.com>

Structures of Italian Media: A Selection from “Hooking Up: An International Study”

by Amy Buck



Found at: <http://bloggingdottie.blogspot.com/>

As we know, in America all types of media strongly shape each individual. As women are more exposed to scantily clad images of women who resemble the likeliness of Twiggy, they are more likely to feel great expectations to be thin and promiscuous. Just as men, when they see images of strong male expectations, are more likely to feel the need to be strong – emotionally and physically. In Italy, the media has many of the same effects. Although their media is severely corrupt – and controlled mainly by governmental figures who are corrupt¹ – the pressures from the media are still present. One of the reasons that Italian culture has stayed intact so long without becoming globalized is because of the fascist rulings of the 1920s that prevented more than a small percentage of non-Italian films from infiltrating Italian cinemas. Although Italian cinema does not hold the same grandeur as America’s Hollywood, the Cinecitta (Cinema City) of Italy held its ground for years when proper funding was provided and when cinematic schools were highly esteemed. The Italian government has also (and still does) prevented many non-governmental radio stations and TV channels from gaining long-held success.²

With the presence of cable television

¹ Stille, Alexander. “Silvio’s Shadow” *Columbia Journalism Review*. New York: Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism, September 2006.

² Ortoleva, Peppino. “Geography of the Media since 1945.” *Italian Cultural Studies*. Ed. D. Forgacs and R. Lumley. Oxford University Press, 1996.

Media Consolidation

in Italy, media control has become less of a problem, but it is still prevalent as conservative Italians attempt to keep traditional Italian ways intact. Despite systematic efforts to keep all media under governmental control, there has been lasting success of television:

“The long-lasting success of television in Italy can be explained by the fact that networks and channels were able to meet the demands of Italian people, in different periods of time and circumstance, with an offer of programs and scheduling criteria which have something in common. In spite of restrictive rules and the heavy influence of political parties and leaders, men and women who were in charge of television, at different times and in both private and public television, were able to play a relatively autonomous role and to make television work quite well on a daily basis.”³

Because American culture has only been widely introduced to most Italians recently, there is a huge trend of American pop culture imitation. A small example that is present in most cities is the trend of drinking Coca-Cola. Italians love to drink Coca-Cola because it is such an American thing (although Italians are only ever likely to be seen drinking traditional Coca-Cola; they have not caught on yet to the popularity of diet soda and brands of soda that are not Coca-Cola). Although this trend may have come from stereotypes and hearsay about Americans, American media that has been dubbed in Italian was likely to have an influence on the infiltration of Coca-Cola into Italian society. Just as soda has made its way into the list of acceptable Italian beverages, belief systems and trends of young Americans are also

³ Bechelloni, Giovanni. “Italy.” *The Museum of Broadcast Communications*. 1990.

Websites worth looking into!

<http://www.wikinews.org/>

<http://www.wowwomen.com/tapestry/guidelines.html>

<http://www.jaws.org/blogroll/howto.html>

<http://northxeast.com/general/nxe's-fifty-most-influential-female-bloggers/#more-204>

www.publishaletter.com

<http://www.transom.org>

infiltrating Italian culture. Italians always watch television – it is the most likely form of media that Italians will consume – and one of the most popular channels for younger generations is Italia MTV. Both Italian and American music videos are played on this channel, and both Italian and American shows are played on this channel. One of the more talked-about American shows is “The Hills.” This show was inspired by FOX’s “The OC” that was once one of the most popular teen dramas that America has ever seen. This new show documents the professional and social life of a young working woman named LC (Lauren Conrad). Even though Italia MTV does not play the latest episodes, re-runs from past seasons that have been dubbed in Italian are extremely popular in Italy. This show is not exactly a replica of American culture, but Italians see it as such and are beginning to jump on the opportunity to lead a glamorous “American” lifestyle that is filled with partying, alcohol, casual sex, failed relationships, and institutionalized sexism.

Even though Italians are being exposed to American-made media, they are not being exposed directly to American slang and language. There is a trend in Italy in which non-Italian films are rarely subtitled but more commonly dubbed over. When the government was visibly in control of mass media, and was preventing non-Italian influences from infiltrating the media, dubbing became extremely popular and has since held its position as the norm for non-Italian films and television shows. This is one tradition that has had staying power through the decades. It is normal for Italian television and cinemas to have only Italian programs, even if the program is originally made in another language. Dubbing is so prevalent that famous actors and actresses who are not Italian have their own Italian WIFP

counterpart who is designated to dub over their voice for every film or show that they star in that is brought over to Italy. For Italians, it would be extremely difficult to now switch to subtitles instead of dubbing, and the individuals who dub for famous actors and actresses would lose their respectable professions.⁴

This lack of exposure to non-Italian languages in media prevents Italians from being influenced by slang that is popularly used in American media. Although Italians may pick up actions and characteristics of popular American media that have now become equally popular in Italy, the language barrier is still prevalent, and Italians will be very unlikely to pick up American slang because it is not regularly heard in Italy with the exception of Americans who study in Italy but who still speak English instead of Italian. The influences of these Americans is generally seen in larger Italian cities and does not really affect Italians because these Americans are not likely to converse with Italians because they will tend to stick with other Americans or English-speaking foreigners who are studying in the same cities.

Another aspect of traditional cultures that affects both American and Italian trends is the ever-present existence of religion. Most Italians have been strongly affected by Christian traditions, expectations and ethics.⁵ Even if Italians are becoming less and less likely to be avid churchgoers, traditional ideas of family, femininity, gender roles, and monogamy are much more present in the daily lives of Italians than in most lives of Americans because of the permeation of Catholicism in Italian culture. While American women are making progress in moving out of the house and into the workplace, even when

4 Ortoleva, Peppino.

5 Pratt, Jeff. “Catholic Culture.” *Italian Cultural Studies*. Ed. D. Forgacs and R. Lumley. Oxford University Press, 1996.

they have children, it is extremely taboo and unwelcome (specifically in smaller Italian cities) for a woman to hold a career once she has had children. Although it is never explicitly stated, there are extreme amounts of guilt that are placed on a mother who still works – because she is seen as placing her career before her children. Despite this pressure for Italian women to become mothers without careers, younger Italian women are pressured to get out of their home and succeed in the real world much sooner than men are.

Italian men are babied by most of their Italian mamas, and there is actually currently a cultural problem in which Italian men are staying in their homes until their early to mid-30s if not later. Although this may seem skewed because in the family the woman is expected to do all of the in-house work and the male is expected to be the sole bread winner despite the fact that younger women are more successful with their careers, this makes sense to Italians because the women are really just in training to be successful and forceful in their homes. The Italian father figure is the loving character of the family, while the mother is the strict rule-bearer. When given more household power over men, women are more likely to be more secure in their homes but not in the public arena or workplace.⁶ With a lack of older women in the workplace in Italy, there is an extreme deprivation of women in high authority positions in the work world. Without truly being given an opportunity by their bosses and their communities to continue working once children have been born, Italian women are fighting not only for equality within the workplace but for the equality and opportunity to work.

6 Saraceno, Chiara. “The Italian Family from the 1960s to the Present.” *Modern Italy*, vol. 9, no. 1, May 2004, 47-57.