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Research & Action Report, Fall/Winter 2005

Wellesley Centers for Women

Monica Driggers

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A world that is good for women is good for everyone.

Over thirty years ago, the Wellesley Centers for Women began asking new questions about the lives of women.

The answers that grew from our research have been groundbreaking. They have generated changes in policies, practices, and attitudes by presenting new ways of looking at old issues.

SAVE THE DATE!
The Women of Courage Lecture Series, cosponsored by the Wellesley Centers for Women and the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century (BRC), continues its celebration of women who have taken brave stands on issues, including economic justice, nonviolence, environmental ethics, and human rights. On February 1, 2006, Shulamith Fireig, former Executive Director of the People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning, will present the fifth and final program in the series, focusing on the human rights work of Eleanor Roosevelt. Keenie is a 2005 recipient of the U.N. Human Rights Award. The event will be held at the BRC in Cambridge. Details about the lecture will be posted on www.wcwonline.org in late fall/early winter.

A generation of work has taught us that the best answers always begin with the right questions. And that change begins by supporting ideas as they grow.

Be a part of the action—please use the enclosed envelope to support the vital role that the Wellesley Centers for Women plays in shaping a better world for everyone!

Thank you!
There are days when an overwhelming sense of déjà vu engulfs me, days when the past 40 years of work on social justice issues seem to have evaporated into thin air. Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans and surrounding communities, removing any reasonable possibility of further denial of the economic and racial inequalities plaguing our nation. In Iraq, soldiers and civilians die as policy-makers talk of creating a democratic society, all the while standing by as the rights of women are ignored and abandoned. Affordable childcare is still out of reach of the majority of working parents, health care is unattainable for far too many, and the idea of work/family balance sounds almost quaint.

Disheartening news travels fast, makes the headlines, and absorbs our thoughts. But we cannot let it sap our energies. Forty years ago an African-American woman had yet to serve on the federal bench. President Lyndon Johnson appointed Constance Baker Motley to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in 1966. Motley helped to write the legal brief for the Brown school desegregation case and went on to fight for school desegregation, winning numerous landmark cases. A colleague noted that she never gave up, “She just dug in and stayed there until they rolled over.” A role model for generations of women and men, Motley died this past September. I believe we can honor her memory best by remembering her words: “Something which we think is impossible now is not impossible in another decade.”

This reasoned optimism, this refusal to give in to despair in the face of centuries of discrimination and exploitation, must be our model and our motto now. Motley’s insistence on persistence is not the quick fix our culture is so fond of, but it is a long-term strategy that can and does make a difference.

Here at the Wellesley Centers for Women we continue to work on issues of childcare, child well-being, and work/family balance, all hallmark efforts of the Centers since our inception. This issue of Research & Action Report highlights three recent studies that make important recommendations for ensuring quality programming for children. We also highlight work on an approach to gender violence that grows out of the global movement for women’s human rights and represents newer elements of the feminist agenda for a better society for all.

The work has never been easy and it is not so now. According to a study by the Rand Corporation, “female applicants for grants from the [National Institutes of Health] received on average only 63 percent of funding that male applicants received.” Work that is important to women may not be on the top of the political agenda, but it remains at the top of ours.

Around the world—in New Orleans, Iraq, or Anytown, USA—women are the majority of those working to build the fabric of community—the daycare centers, the elder care programs, the schools, and the community councils. This work is crucial, but too often invisible. When it is recognized, women tend to be in the background. As we re-launch the Women’s Review of Books this fall and celebrate the legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt this winter with a lecture by Shulamith Koenig on her work with young community leaders to strengthen human rights, civil society, and democracy, we, too, insist on persistence. Whether it is work on equal childrearing choices for all regardless of gender or socio-economic status, or a better understanding of the factors underlying gendered violence around the world, to name but two of our ongoing areas of work, we continue to shine a spotlight on issues critical to a better, fairer world. It has been said more than once that success is 9/10ths showing up…we thank all of you for enabling us to show up!
New Partnership to Serve Urban Schools

The Open Circle program at the Wellesley Centers for Women has recently begun a new partnership that will enable it to continue to expand and deepen its efforts to foster social and emotional learning (SEL) in urban schools. Over the next three years, Open Circle will work with Project Aspire on an SEL initiative housed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education designed to support teachers, administrators, and other staff in four Boston public schools. The project will bring together the many years of experience, in Boston and other urban schools, of the Open Circle model with the intensive consultation approach developed by Project Aspire.

Empowering Children for Life Awardees Announced

This summer, the Robert S. and Grace W. Stone Primary Prevention Initiatives Grant Program: Empowering Children for Life, established through the Wellesley Centers for Women’s Stone Center, awarded one grant each for research and dissertation. The program supports research and evaluation that advances understanding of the role of relationships in fostering child and adolescent well-being and healthy human development. Proposals for research grounded in Relational-Cultural Theory were encouraged, as were those that give particular attention to the ways findings can be used programmatically to help children. This is the last year that these awards are given under this program. Awardees are:

• Erin E. Seaton from Harvard Graduate School of Education, for her dissertation proposal, “The Story Becomes the Thing: Literacy, Narrative, and Children’s Development of a School Self.” Amount: $100,000 over two years.


Working Toward Statewide Solutions

Nancy Mullin-Rindler was part of the multidisciplinary Safe Schools Initiative task force initiated by the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office. Mullin-Rindler also participated in an educational video about bullying produced by the District Attorney’s Office of Middlesex County, MA.

Monica Driggers testified in front of the Joint Judiciary Committee in Boston on behalf of the Human Rights for All Bill on June 26. Several thematic panels of testimony were organized for the hearing, including global citizenship, economic human rights, women’s rights, and the universality of human rights. Driggers also presented to the Justice and Accountability Committee (JAC) of the Governor’s Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Massachusetts. This presentation was a collaboration with Jamie Sabino, of the Administrative Office of the Trial Courts, with whom Driggers has collaborated to find solutions to the difficulties that plague domestic violence survivors when they become entangled with the courts. In 2003, Sabino’s office issued a report with findings that corroborated many of the findings in the Wellesley Centers for Women’s Report: Media’s Impact on Violence. Driggers also presented to the Justice and Accountability Committee (JAC) of the Governor’s Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Massachusetts. This presentation was a collaboration with Jamie Sabino, of the Administrative Office of the Trial Courts, with whom Driggers has collaborated to find solutions to the difficulties that plague domestic violence survivors when they become entangled with the courts.

WCW Researchers’ Publishing Projects

Two special issues of Violence Against Women: an International Journal are edited by Nanda Aoudeh, Victoria Banyard, and Linda Wiliams. The October and November issues entitled, “Bringing Women’s Voices to the Center: Innovative Methods in Violence Against Women Research” can be ordered through the Sage Publishing website, www.sagepub.com. Dedicated to bringing to light all aspects of violence against women, this international, interdisciplinary journal aims to report and discuss not only more widely known forms of violence but also those lesser known acts such as female circumcision, enslavement and trafficking, dowry murders, and rape as a weapon of war. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) early Childhood Care Research Network, of which Nancy Marshall and Wendy Wagner Robson are members, has edited the recently published book, Child Care and Child Development: Results from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development. To understand the potential benefits and problems associated with early child care, the NICHD study followed a diverse group of more than 1,000 children from infancy through the transition to school, assessing them in multiple domains over time. Taken together, the findings presented in the book yield major insights into how the type, amount, and quality of child care interact with family experiences, socioeconomic variables, and other child and family factors to influence individual trajectories.

A Tenth-Year Celebration

Devoiced practitioners joined researchers, friends, and donors in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Wellesley Centers for Women’s Jean Baker Miller Training Institute (JBTMI) on Friday, June 24, at the Wellesley College Club, Wellesley, MA. The event featured a tribute to Miller whose innovative work led to the establishment of the JBTMI. Along with remarks by several of Miller’s colleagues, the evening included the presentation of a citation from the Massachusetts Senate, the sharing of letters from U.S. Senator John Kerry and Congressman Barney Frank, and a personal reflection by Pulitzer Prize-winner Chris Robbins.

CARE Communities

Katherine Morrison has begun working with the Collaborative for Abuse Prevention in Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities (CARE) Program in Boston, MA. With the assistance of this organization, Morrison will begin to provide workshops and lectures on the topic of intimate partner violence within the African-American community to various women’s groups in the Boston area. In addition, Morrison is currently assisting the CARE Program with the development of a speakers bureau in the greater Boston area. The speakers bureau will feature African-American women who have survived intimate partner violence.
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Nan Stein testified before the Massachusetts House and Senate Joint Committee on Education during a hearing on school safety in September. Stein voiced her support for a proposed bill for which she had offered feedback during the previous year to Senator Jarrett Barrios’ office. During the hearing, she shared her concerns about establishing a threshold when constructing a definition for bullying.

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The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) is proud to announce the re-launch of Women’s Review of Books.

Founded by WCW in 1983, Women’s Review was published monthly for 22 years before suspending publication in December, 2004, due to rising debt. Women’s Review will return in January, 2006, as a bimonthly tabloid.

Women’s Review of Books

“For more than two decades, we proudly published and supported Women’s Review of Books,” says Susan Bailey, WCW’s executive director. “Suspending publication was a very difficult decision for us to make, but it was fiscally necessary. We are delighted that Old City Publishing is collaborating with us, and we look forward to a long, successful relationship and to our first jointly produced edition next winter.”

“I am thrilled,” says Amy Hoffman, returning editor in chief. “Women’s Review readers have always known that they could turn to us for insight into feminist issues, and we are ready to once again provide them with serious and informed discussion of new writing by and about women.”

Like other specialty publications, Women’s Review faced increasing financial debt with the changing publishing environment of the 1990s. Support letters from subscribers and advertisers alike, however, helped to buoy the staff as they met with potential publishing partners throughout the winter and spring. Pledges to advertise and subscribe served as key indicators of the publication’s future success, and OCP has begun processing both renewals and new advertising contracts to cover operating expenses. Holiday gift subscriptions will provide a crucial initial boost to the re-launch.

Ian Mellanby, OCP publishing director, is enthusiastic. “Old City Publishing is confident we can guide the publication beyond even its former levels of success in terms of content, design, and international perspective. Women’s Review will continue to provide a unique view of today’s literary landscape and is the advertising medium of choice for publishers of books by and about women.”

All editorial inquiries, books to be considered for review, and publisher’s catalogues should be directed to Amy Hoffman, Women’s Review of Books, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02481; 781.283.2555; ahoffman@wellesley.edu. Requests for subscriptions or advertising information should be directed to Ian Mellanby, Old City Publishing, 628 North Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123; 215.925.4390; ian@oldcitypublishing.com. Subscription forms can be downloaded directly from www.oldcitypublishing.com.

To find content from back issues and a complete index to Women’s Review of Books, please visit www.wellesley.edu/womenreview.
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To find content from back issues and a complete index to Women’s Review of Books, please visit www.wellesley.edu/womensreview.

Back on the Presses: Women’s Review of Books

As before, Women’s Review will publish in-depth reviews of nonfiction, fiction, and poetry by and about women, as well as essays, poems, and author interviews. Many of the most acclaimed and influential feminist scholars and writers in the country have appeared—and will continue to be featured—in its pages, and the publication will continue to provide a forum where women’s studies scholars and feminist activists can exchange ideas, research, and experience. In a new feature, each issue of Women’s Review will also highlight the work of a photographer or cartoonist.

The re-launch was made possible by a new partnership between WCW and Old City Publishing (OCP), a small publisher of journals and books in Philadelphia. The editorial offices of Women’s Review will continue to be located at WCW, while advertising, subscription fulfillment, and production will move to OCP.

The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) is proud to announce the re-launch of Women’s Review of Books! Founded by WCW in 1983, Women’s Review was published monthly for 22 years before suspending publication in December, 2004, due to rising debt. Women’s Review will return in January, 2006, as a bimonthly tabloid.

Highlights from the Women’s Review of Books

January/February 2006

Comeback issue include:

Dorothy Allison on An Atomic Romance, the new novel by Bobbie Ann Mason.
Linda Goesten on The Sibyl of Self: Thinking about Elizabeth Cary Stanton, by Vivian Gornick.
Farah Jasmine Griffin on With All My Love, by Julia Ruddick’s oral history of Billie Holiday.
Comedian and author of What the f, Kate Clinton, on what happens to a feminist when she joins the talking heads on the evening news.
Carol Lejean on what ‘40s and ‘50s pulp novels, reissued by The Feminist Press, Cleis Press, and others, have to offer today’s readers.
Betina Brandt on the “secret library,” suppressed writings from pre-unification East Germany.
Suzanne Ruta interviews Doha Boraki, the smart and engaging Moroccan feminist, novelist, and translator.
Jasmin Darznik reviews A Bird of Red Flowers: In Search of My Afghanistan, by Nelofer Pazira.
Marguerite Temar Harrison reviews First World Third Class and Other Tales of the Global Mix, by Brazilian writer Regina Rehda.
Plus photography, cartoons, poetry selected by returning Poetry Editor Robin Becker, and the first installment of Women’s Review’s new “What I’m Reading” column, this month by feminist guru Jennifer Pozner.
How did the Battered Mothers’ Testimony Project develop?

The Battered Mothers’ Testimony Project (BMTP) at the Wellesley Centers for Women was started by Carrie Cutlbert and Kim Slote, who had been training battered women’s advocates throughout Massachusetts in human rights principles. BMTP used international human rights principles to address custody and visitation issues in family court cases involving domestic violence. Slote and Cutlbert built a team of experts to test the assertion that using this approach would enable survivors and advocates to effect greater long-term social change than other crisis intervention, criminal justice, and civil rights strategies traditionally used by battered women’s movements in the U.S. The team included Lundy Bancroft, Jay Silverman, Cynthia Mesh, and me.

The findings were based on 40 in-depth interviews with battered women from across the state and a number of people, including judges, who work either for the Massachusetts courts or for the Commonwealth on custody-related matters. The project, which used both qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis, produced the first human rights tribunal on domestic violence. Held at the Massachusetts State House in 2002, the tribunal featured testimonies from some of our participants. The project culminated in our final report, Battered Mothers Speak Out: A Human Rights Report on Domestic Violence and Child Custody in the Massachusetts Family Courts.

What recommendations were made in this report?

Well, our final report was over 100 pages long and nine pages were dedicated solely to next-step recommendations. It was very important for us to provide carefully crafted and well-thought-out recommendations to our readers. Although hindered by limited resources, our efforts to implement these recommendations have continued. Since I’m working alone now, I’ve primarily focused on ensuring that the project maintains visibility with the courts, key members of the legislature, and advocacy groups. Though none of our priority recommendations have been fully implemented, I can say that most of them now enjoy wide support from advocates and policy makers. That was not the case when our final report was first issued. Here are some of the recommendations that have been our priority:

- Custody decisions should not be made by a single person, especially in circumstances where one parent is, or is suspected of being, a batterer. Ideally, the courts should apply a team approach involving judges, guardians ad litem, social workers, family members, and other experts. A team-based, decision-making approach is more likely to produce safe, effective, and long-lasting results—as it has in other types of cases.
- We propose enforcement of what we call the “Family Court User’s Bill of Rights,” which dictates that all people involved in custody disputes should be made aware of their rights with respect to the legal process at the outset of divorce and custody proceedings.
- Domestic violence training for all family court personnel involved in custody disputes should be mandatory and renewed. Currently, this kind of training is not mandatory for Massachusetts judges or any court personnel.
- Courts need to ensure accountability of all court personnel, such as through the development of a results-oriented compliance process. Domestic violence survivors who have been involved in diluting custody battles list court personnel accountability as their top priority in improving the system.

How have conditions improved for survivors of domestic violence?

Unfortunately, conditions for domestic violence survivors involved in custody battles aren’t much better than when we issued our report in 2002. I receive five to ten calls per week from battered women embroiled in custody battles who are still facing the same human rights infringements identified in Battered Mothers Speak Out: A Human Rights Report on Domestic Violence and Child Custody in the Massachusetts Family Courts. Most of the calls are from Massachusetts residents, but an increasing number are national and international inquiries—which tells us that the problems are not isolated to Massachusetts or the U.S.

In some cases, conditions are even worse than before. As a result of the BMTP, several women across the state formed the Massachusetts Protective Parents Association. Shortly after its conception, the group had to stop meeting due to safety concerns—en partners may have been stalking members when they were attending meetings. Women still report concerns for their safety both in and out of court, and of poor treatment from judges and court personnel. The courts have made improvements to the guardian ad litem system and are trying to make safety-oriented improvements to court facilities. But unless and until judges and other court personnel fully understand the scope of the effects of domestic violence, they will not be able to make decisions that protect children from unsafe custody or visitation arrangements. The main
An Update on the Battered Mothers’ Testimony Project

Monica Driggers, research scientist at the Wellesley Centers for Women, has been working on court and criminal justice reform for nearly a decade. Driggers joined the team working on the Battered Mothers’ Testimony Project in 2002 and was one of the authors of its ground-breaking report released that year. She continues to advocate for the reforms proposed in the report. Her current projects include research and reform of female prisoners’ connections to their children.

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What are the challenges and barriers to implementing the recommendations?

Our biggest barrier is finding the financial resources to sustain the project. Changing state policy is a slow process and will not happen unless we are able to keep the project visible and dynamic. Initially, the project was funded in large part by the Ford Foundation, with support from a number of small foundations and by the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW). Unfortunately, the Ford Foundation discontinued its funding in 2003, shortly after the final report was published. WCW has been providing support for a limited continuation of the BMTP since that time, with the focus of repackaging and keeping the project’s recommendations on the policy radar screen in Massachusetts. It is important to note that although the Ford Foundation did not continue funding the BMTP, the foundation has cited the BMTP as a model domestic human rights project and featured it in its 2004 report on the need for expanding domestic human rights work, Close to Home. The foundation also requested our participation in its first-ever domestic human rights forum in June, 2004. Another challenge was that when first released, the BMTP report was met with strong resistance from survivors is that they feel as though they are trapped in endless litigation that they cannot afford financially or emotionally. But since the safety of their children is on the line, they persist. As one survivor recently told us, “I either have to do something proactive with this or die. This is my legacy to my children.”

What is human rights fact-finding?

As detailed in Battered Mothers Speak Out: A Human Rights Report on Domestic Violence and Child Custody in the Massachusetts Family Courts, the BMTP “instituted a multi-year, four-phase study utilizing a variety of research approaches in which human rights fact-finding was complemented by qualitative and quantitative social science research methodologies. [H]uman rights fact-finding aims to uncover patterns of state practices that may indicate where human rights violations are occurring, who is responsible for the violations, and who is affected by them. The ultimate, and explicit, goal is to expose human rights violations in ways that prompt governments to implement changes that rectify the violating practices.” Based on various methodologies and non-random sampling, this human rights audit does not claim to be a rigorous scientific study.

Why look only at women?

The BMTP team acknowledges that battering does not discriminate between women, men, girls, and boys. As noted in the BMTP’s human rights report, however, “Current research data demonstrate that the majority of partner abuse cases involved male violence against female partners; this project therefore chose to limit its primary interviews to female victims of partner abuse.”

BMTP Publications:


*These publications are available through the WCW publications office at 781.283.2510 or via the WCW website, www.wcwonline.org.

What’s next for the Battered Mothers’ Testimony Project?

I have developed a proposal to start us on the road to creating a national version of the BMTP because I think the next step is to investigate how widespread the problem is. This proposal has three major goals: (1) to produce a follow-up report to the original BMTP, (2) to hold a national human rights tribunal on battered women, child custody, and the courts, and (3) to develop a national research and advocacy plan with the participation of researchers and advocates from across the country.

I believe that a national BMTP, and even the process of creating such a project, will help educate policymakers about the domestic violence human rights movement.

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• give state court systems greater incentives to create internal changes. The prospect of national results that compare states to each other would, in all likelihood, generate competition between states.

• show that human rights can be used successfully in the U.S. to facilitate change in the court system, which is often regarded as the branch of government that is most tied to traditional practices, and therefore the most resistant to change.

As an institution, the courts are in the midst of major systemic and cultural changes. Even as recent as the 1980s we talked very little of things like victim participation and restorative justice. Now those ideas have become mainstream. The iron is hot—it’s a good time to introduce the human rights paradigm to the new problem-solving approach to justice.
What are the challenges and barriers to implementing the recommendations?

Our biggest barrier is finding the financial resources to sustain the project. Changing state policy is a slow process and will not happen unless we are able to keep the project visible and dynamic. Initially, the project was funded in large part by the Ford Foundation, with support from a number of small foundations and by the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW). Unfortunately, the Ford Foundation discontinued its funding in 2003, shortly after the final report was published. WCW has been providing support for a limited continuation of the BMTP since that time, with the focus of regaining funding and keeping the project’s recommendations on the policy radar screen in Massachusetts. It is important to note that although the Ford Foundation did not continue funding for the BMTP, the foundation has cited the BMTP as a model domestic human rights project and featured it in the 2004 report on the need for expanding domestic human rights funding for the BMTP, the foundation has cited the BMTP as a model domestic human rights forum in June, 2004.

An ever-present barrier when dealing with issues of domestic violence is that many people (including policy-makers) are squeamish about the topic. Even though society has come a long way in recognizing the problem of domestic violence, we are still reluctant to deal with the fall-out from abusive relationships. Getting people to focus on what happens to women after they separate from an abuser—and not look at it simply as a one-dimensional problem confined within the walls of a home—has been a very difficult task. Most people still think that once a woman has left her abuser the trouble is over. In fact, her most difficult times may have just begun.

Have you seen some success despite these challenges?

Yes, I would say that we’ve made some significant progress. Despite their initial negative reaction, the courts conducted their own assessment of how they deal with domestic violence and their research supported the findings of the BMTP. I am now working with the courts to find ways to implement some of our recommendations. The Executive Branch is dealing with the issue via the Governor’s Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence. Legislators and advocates alike have taken note of the success and benefits of a human rights approach to domestic violence: Perhaps most importantly, the project has been replicated in other states. Just as it was important to document what happens to battered women in court, it is crucial that we show that this is not a problem confined to a limited number of women in only one state.

How are other communities across the country utilizing this work?

Representations from Michigan, North Carolina, Alaska, Hawaii, Wisconsin, Florida, and Maine have contacted me for information on how to replicate the project. The most notable replication to date was done by the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which conducted a modified version of the BMTP in 2002 and 2003, resulting in published findings very similar to those of the Massachusetts BMTP. Now California has a similar approach and analysis of how they deal with domestic violence and child custody cases. This method, in which the victims of the California family courts were asked to participate, has been replicated in other states. The California BMTP’s plans for the future also include holding a human rights tribunal, modeled after the Massachusetts tribunal, in which the victims of the California family courts will testify about their experiences publicly.


What is human rights fact-finding?

As detailed in Battered Mothers Speak Out: A Human Rights Report on Domestic Violence and Child Custody in the Massachusetts Family Courts, the BMTP instituted a multi-year, four-phase study using a variety of research approaches in which human rights fact-finding was complemented by qualitative and quantitative social science research methodologies. Human rights fact-finding aims to uncover patterns of state practices that may indicate where human rights violations are occurring, who is responsible for the violations, and who is affected by them. The ultimate, and explicit, goal is to expose human rights violations in ways that prompt governments to implement changes that rectify the violating practices. Based on various methodologies and non-random sampling, this human rights audit does not claim to be a rigorous scientific study.

Why look only at women?

The BMTP team acknowledges that battering does not discriminate between women, men, girls, and boys. As noted in the BMTP’s human rights report, however, “Current research data demonstrate that the majority of partner abuse cases involved male violence against female partners; this project therefore chose to limit its primary interviews to female victims of partner abuse.”

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Q & A

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• help educate policy-makers about the domestic violence human rights movement,
• give state court systems greater incentives to create internal changes. The prospect of national results that compare states to each other would, in all likelihood, generate competition between states,
• show that human rights can be used successfully in the U.S. to facilitate change in the court system, which is often regarded as the branch of government that is most tied to traditional practices, and therefore the most reluctant to change.

As an institution, the courts are in the midst of major systemic and cultural changes. Even as recent as the 1980s we talked very little of things like victim participation and restorative justice. Now those ideas have become mainstream. The irony is—just is it a good time to introduce the human rights paradigm to the new problems-solving approach to justice.
Relational-Cultural Research in the Real World

This past June, the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute (JBMTI) at the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) held Research Forum 2005, a professional development program that showcased “Relational-Cultural Research in the Real World” and provided resources for investigators who seek practical examples to inform and advance their work.

The Research Forum is very helpful for practitioners and researchers,” says Linda Hartling, associate director of the JBMTI. “Professionals aren’t just presenting their findings; they’re discussing the latest methodologies for conducting relational-cultural research in the real world and are leaving us ready to put these into action.” As part of the JBMTI annual Summer Institute, the Forum featured an important keynote address, “Coping with Complexity in Relational Research: Some statistical strategies,” by Allison Tracy, methodologist at WCW. Acknowledging that there are several complexities inherent in research on Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT), Tracy provided strategies for analysis that not only allows the researcher to cope with these complexities, but also enables better examination of important elements of the RCT model. Focusing primarily on quantitative research, she emphasized that RCT is ripe for rigorous empirical testing—both to legitimate the model and intervention efforts, as well as to identify areas requiring further theoretical development.

“I felt that the Forum marked an important moment in the ongoing development of RCT in that we were taking a critical look at how well the theory works or doesn’t work in the real world,” reports Anne Noonan, research scientist at WCW, who presented on a study that examines social class and relational health. “The research presented highlighted the theory’s viability with populations we have given less attention to, such as urban high school students.” Noonan’s presentation was one of three that demonstrated how RCT is integrated into research examining critical issues that impact the lives of adolescents and young adults. These studies included:

- “Where I Come From: Urban high school students talk about social class and relationships at work,” by Noonan, which shared findings of a qualitative analysis currently being conducted in an ongoing study with 30 Boston Public High School students participating in school-to-career programs.
- “The Effect of Relational-Cultural Inspired Strategies of Intervention on White Eighth-grade Adolescent Racism,” by Laura Catullo from Nova Southeastern University, in Florida, which explored the effectiveness of relational-cultural inspired methods of intervention in reducing racism and increasing white eighth-grade adolescent race identity awareness and attitudes toward other racial groups.
- “Racial Differences in the Relational Health and Depressive Symptoms of College Women,” by Natalie Arce from the University of Florida Counseling Center, which examined the relationships among peer, mentor, and community relational health and depressive symptoms in a racially diverse sample of college women; this program also determined whether racial differences exist among the levels of depression and relational health in college women.

Noonan’s and Catullo’s projects received funding from the Robert S. and Grace W. Stone Primary Prevention Initiatives Grant Program.

Sponsored by the JBMTI Research Network, the Forum also featured the presentation of the Irene Siter Dissertation Award to Maureen Streff, associate professor at Regis College in Massachusetts. This year, the Network sought to highlight research applications of RCT in community and/or clinical settings and Streff’s dissertation was singled out. She shared her findings in, “Perceptions of the Present and Future: An assessment of relational experiences, social support, and personal resources by women 63 and older.” Her work included both qualitative and quantitative data, including information collected through the Mental Psychological Development Questionnaire, which was developed at the Stone Center at WCW by Nancy Genero, JoAnn Baker Miller, and Janet Surrey, and which had never been used with older women prior to this initiative. The Posters Session, coordinated by Streff, featured a wide range of examples of recent RCT research and action projects. These included:

- “Meeting the Health Needs of Immigrant and Refugee Women in Canada: A Relational-cultural perspective,” by Catherine Chan from St. Joseph’s Health Centre, Ontario;
- “Living Outside the Box: Relational challenges of Lesbians in love with men,” by Ellen Schechter from the Stone Center Counseling Center at WCW;
- “Respect-At-Work,” by Barb MacQuarrie, Jude Fairweather, and Mandy Bonastre from the Center for Research on Violence Against Women and Children, Ontario;
- “Perception of Mutuality Between College Women and Their Parents,” by Jennifer Sanfor from Slippery Rock University, PA, and Mary Tanillo from Unity Health System, NY;
- “Women Speak about the Experience of Brief Relational-Cultural Therapy: Preliminary qualitative results of a comprehensive two-year outcome study,” by Anne Oakley, Shirley Addis, and Joyce Curry from Women’s College Ambulatory Care Centre, Ontario, and Christine Dunbar from the Brief Psychotherapy Centre for Women, Ontario; and
- “Relational Development Needs of Adolescent Boys,” by Ricky Pelach-Goll from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.


“I anticipate that we’ll be hearing more and more from practitioners on how they have been able to conduct research based on Relational-Cultural Theory and how the model has positively impacted their work,” says Judith Jordan, co-director of the JBMTI. “It’s very important that we demonstrate how effective this model is in many environments so that it can be used to its greatest potential.”
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The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) at the Wellesley Centers for Women recently completed work on a comprehensive, three-year study on afterschool programs in Massachusetts, in partnership with the Intercultural Center for Research in Education (INCRE). One of the first studies of this scope nationally, the Massachusetts Afterschool Research Study (MARS) stands as a primary opportunity for researchers to examine the relationships between program characteristics and indicators of program quality, and how these relate to youth development outcomes.

The United Way of Massachusetts Bay collaborated with the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services to sponsor this three-year study which was conducted by NIOST and INCRE. MARS aimed to identify the elements of program quality, features, and participation that contribute to positive outcomes for youth, so that funders, providers, advocates, and policy-makers are better prepared to expand the quality and availability of afterschool programs. The study was conducted in 78 afterschool program sites across Massachusetts. Data for the study were collected from classroom teachers, afterschool teachers and staff, and from children and youth participating in afterschool programs.

As a national leader in afterschool program research, consultation, training, and evaluation, NIOST has begun the process of sharing the results of the study. The findings are being disseminated through various channels, including publications, presentations, and workshops. The report is expected to provide valuable insights into the best practices for afterschool programming and will guide future research and practice in this field.

Defining Quality Afterschool Programming:
NIOST completes three-year study

The Commonwealth is committed to continuing Massachusetts’ mixed delivery system that provides access to preschool in centers, public school settings, Head Start programs and family child care homes. WCW researchers stress that workforce issues must be addressed in each setting so that programs effectively promote children’s school readiness.

Early Education Workforce Central to Efforts to Expand EEC in Massachusetts

Like other states in the nation, Massachusetts is at a critical juncture in advancing its commitment to young children. Last year, the State created the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to administer Massachusetts’ early education and care system, laying the groundwork for universal access to voluntary, high-quality programs for the Commonwealth’s preschool-aged children. The new department became active on July 1, 2005, and researchers at the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) have recommended a vital first step—an investment in workforce development.

According to findings from two Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Briefs which WCW released this past spring—Characteristics of the Current Early Education and Care Workforce and Workforce Characteristics of Centers, Family Child Care Homes and Early Head Start Programs Serving Infants and Toddlers—WCW researchers argue that the Commonwealth needs to provide support for the current workforce to increase their education and training, and to recruit and retain new, qualified teachers and providers. These briefs provide research-based evidence of the magnitude of the task of workforce development.

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Quality Programming for Kids:

Three studies identify key workforce and environment factors

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... findings of MARS to nurture and support the afterschool program field. Findings from MARS point to several major considerations in designing and sustaining afterschool programs. In the study, group size and staff-child ratios were highly related to program quality. Programs that were able to maintain smaller staff-child ratios and/or small group sizes for program activities were better able to deliver high quality experiences and promote higher youth engagement in activities. This finding was not related to program size or overall enrollment, however.

Staff and youth are most engaged in program activities. This finding was not related to program size or overall enrollment, however.

These findings build NIOST’s understanding of how to create and maintain afterschool programs that will help youth achieve a wide range of positive outcomes. Widely disseminated by the United Way with assistance from NIOST and INCORE, the results of MARS come at an opportune time in Massachusetts policy-making. This year, Massachusetts reorganized the Office of Child Care Services and other state offices to form the new Department of Early Education and Care. Soon after, a special Commission on After School and Out-of-School Time was established to make recommendations on how the state can better coordinate, expand, finance, and improve quality out-of-school-time programming for children. NIOST will continue to encourage and advise how the work accomplished through MARS and its comprehensive findings will shape state policies and funding related to strengthening after-school program opportunities for Massachusetts children and youth. NIOST believes that these experiences are essential to the healthy development of children and youth, who can become effective and capable members of society. NIOST team members who worked on the MARS project were: Julie Dennisby, Georgia Hall, Berth Miller, and Joyce Shortt. A free download of this report is available from the WCW website, www.wcwonline.org/mars/index.html.

Early Education Workforce Characteristics Raise Concerns in Massachusetts

Currently, the majority of Massachusetts children participating in preschool and infant-toddler programs are in centers. While many of the teachers in centers exceed the minimal requirements set by the Department of Early Education and Care—with 53 percent of teachers holding a child development associate (CDA) credential or college degree in early childhood education (ECE) or a related field—many current center teachers will need additional education or training to raise the quality of these programs. Only 13 percent of infant teachers and 17 percent of toddler teachers in centers hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, while 28 percent of preschool teachers in centers hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, suggesting that centers place their better-educated teachers in the preschool classroom, rather than with infants or toddlers.

Teachers in public school preschool classrooms are required to hold at least a bachelor’s degree and research shows teachers who have additional training in ECE provide higher quality programs. However, preschool classrooms in Massachusetts’ public schools currently serve fewer than 20 percent of preschool-aged children in the state. Family child care providers are a significant and important sector of Massachusetts’ mixed delivery system of early education and care, serving more young children than public school preschool programs and Head Start programs. Many of these family child care homes meet accepted standards of quality programming. Yet, only 27 percent of family child care providers have a CDA or college degree. WCW research findings indicate

Establishing sharing, supporting, sustaining, informing relationships with school principals, teachers, student support personnel, and families can have a measurable benefit on youth outcomes.

The Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief: Characteristics of Centers, Family Child Care Homes and Early Head Start Programs Serving Infants and Toddlers: A research brief that will report on the Massachusetts higher education system’s ability to meet the workforce training needs of early education and care workforce, the reports assert that it will be necessary to address issues of compensation and turnover. Compensation currently varies by education level and by sector of Massachusetts’ mixed delivery system. Within a sector, more-qualified individuals receive higher compensation. However, a center teacher with a bachelor’s degree in the field is paid less than a comparably educated public school preschool teacher. Center teachers with a bachelor’s degree in ECE earn an average of $11.91/hour in 2002, compared to the lowest paid, full-time public school preschool teachers who earn an average of $26/hour. According to the annual State of Preschool Yearbook published by the National Institute of Early Education Research, pre-kindergarten initiatives in 15 states nationally require teachers to be paid on a public school salary scale. Massachusetts is not one of them.

The low wages associated with employment in centers are directly related to staff turnover. In fact, turnover among teaching staff in centers is significantly higher than national averages for all employees working in education. Directors reported that 26 percent of their teaching staff had left in the previous year, nationally, the annual turnover rate for 2003-2004 in education services was only 9.8 percent. Turnover is costly—the Commonwealth loses on its investment when highly trained teachers leave the field, and young children lose when they experience unstable care.

Massachusetts has carefully and appropriately set guidelines for staffing patterns that limit the number of children in classrooms and centers, as well as the ratios of children to adults in each setting. WCW researchers note that efforts to raise the bar for teacher and provider qualifications, and to ensure adequate compensation, must not jeopardize these important standards. The WCW research reports have been widely distributed across Massachusetts. The Boston Globe relied on the findings of the Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief: Characteristics of the Current Early Education and Care Workforce when it took its position in the editorial, “Upgrading Preschool,” published on August 23, 2005. Citing the WCW researchers’ findings, the editorial defined the insights as “crucial for Massachusetts as officials build a universal system of early education and care.”
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Staff and youth are most engaged in program environments that are perceived to be relaxed and flexible. Whatever the program goals, creating a comfortable, friendly, and welcoming environment is desirable for all involved.

The study asserts that decisions about staffing are important. Having at least some staff with strong educational backgrounds and appropriate training is key to program quality. A highly qualified program director can set the foundation for building a program that promotes staff and youth engagement, with strong general activities and homework assistance.

Findings indicate that partnerships with schools and families will support good outcomes for children and youth. Establishing sharing, supporting, sustaining, informing relationships with school principals, teachers, student support personnel, and families can have a measurable benefit on youth outcomes.

These findings build NIOST’s understanding of how to create and maintain afterschool programs that will help youth achieve a wide range of positive outcomes. Widely disseminated by the United Way with assistance from NIOST and INCHE, the results of MARS come at an opportune time in Massachusetts policy-making. This year, Massachusetts reorganized the Office of Child Care Services and other state offices to form the new Department of Early Education and Care. Soon after, a special Commission on After School and Out-of-School Time was established to make recommendations on how the state can better coordinate, expand, finance, and improve quality out-of-school time programming for children. NIOST will continue to encourage and advise how the work accomplished through MARS and its comprehensive findings will shape state policies and funding related to strengthening after-school program opportunities for Massachusetts children and youth. NIOST believes that these experiences are essential to the healthy development of children and youth, who can become effective and capable members of society.

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Teachers in public school preschool classrooms are required to hold at least a bachelor’s degree and research shows teachers who have additional training in ECE provide higher quality programs. However, preschool classrooms in Massachusetts’ public schools currently serve fewer than 20 percent of preschool-aged children in centers. Family child care providers are a significant and important sector of Massachusetts’ mixed delivery system of early education and care, serving more young children than public school preschool programs and Head Start programs. Many of these family child care homes meet accepted standards of quality programming. Yet, only 27 percent of family child care providers have a CDA or college degree; WCW research findings indicate providers without a CDA or higher formal education are less likely to provide high quality early education and care.

To recruit and maintain a qualified early education and care workforce, the reports assert that it will be necessary to address issues of compensation and turnover. Compensation currently varies by education level and by sector of Massachusetts’ mixed delivery system. Within a sector, more-qualified individuals receive higher compensation. However, a center teacher with a bachelor’s degree in the field is paid less than a comparably educated public school preschool teacher. Center teachers with a bachelor’s degree in ECE earn an average of $11.91/hour in 2002, compared to the lowest paid, full-time public school preschool teachers who earn an average of $26/hour. According to the annual State of Preschool Yearbook published by the National Institute of Early Education Research, pre-kindergarten initiatives in 15 states nationally require teachers to be paid on a public school salary scale. Massachusetts is not one of them.

The low wages associated with employment in centers are directly related to staff turnover. In fact, turnover among teaching staff in centers is significantly higher than national averages for all employees working in education. Directors reported that 26 percent of their teaching staff had left in the previous year; nationally, the annual turnover rate for 2003-2004 in education services was only 9.8 percent. Turnover is costly—the Commonwealth loses on its investment when highly trained teachers leave the field, and young children lose when they experience unstable care.

Massachusetts has carefully and appropriately set guidelines for staffing patterns that limit the number of children in classrooms and centers, as well as the ratios of children to adults in each setting. WCW researchers note that efforts to raise the bar for teacher and provider qualifications, and to ensure adequate compensation, must not jeopardize these important standards. The WCW research reports have been widely distributed across Massachusetts. The Boston Globe relied on the findings of the Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief: Characteristics of the Current Early Education and Care Workforce when it took its position in the editorial, “Upgrading Preschool,” published on August 23, 2005. Citing the WCW researchers’ findings, the editorial defined the insights as “crucial for Massachusetts as officials build a universal system of early education and care.”
Global Connections

West Learns from East in Korea
Peggy McIntosh presented a paper at the Women’s Worlds Conference in Seoul, Korea, held June 20-24, 2005. Her paper was entitled, “West Learns from East: A Western feminist scholar discusses learning from Asian Women’s Studies.” As an editorial board member of the Asian Journal of Women’s Studies, McIntosh met with other members of the board, as well as 64 scholars she had met in previous visits abroad. She also conferred with academic administrators at Ewha Womans University in Seoul about their proposed translation of more of her work into Korean. McIntosh has also been invited to return to the Women’s Studies Center at Dalian University in China and will make the trip with other visiting scholars she had met in previous visits abroad.

Humiliation Conference in Germany
Linda Hartling was a presenter and facilitator at the fifth annual international meeting of the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies Network entitled, “Beyond Humiliation: Encouraging human dignity in the lives and work of all people,” in Berlin, Germany, in September, 2005. The Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies Network is comprised of academics and practitioners committed to reducing, and ultimately eliminating, destructive disrespect and humiliating practices globally.

Women’s Rights Conference in Bangkok

Women’s Rights Conference in Berlin
Linda Hartling was a presenter and facilitator at the American Public Health Association 133rd Annual Meeting. For more information, please visit www.apha.org/meetings/.

Gender-Based Violence in South Africa
Nan Stein, Jasmine Waddell, and Linda Williams presented at the third South African Gender-Based Violence and Health Conference, designed to bring together researchers, clinicians, program managers, and policy-makers to discuss topics such as HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, vulnerable children, barrier methods, contraception, gender, and gender-based violence among others. This conference, recognized in Africa as one of the major platforms for discussion on research findings, has been adopted as a flagship for the newly established World Health Organization-funded African Research and Training Network for Reproductive Health and HIV. At the conference, Stein presented, “Rising Rates of Sexual Assaults in US Schools: What ever happened to plain old sexual harassment.” Waddell presented the poster session, “Unsafe Schools: Trends in the literature on school-related gender-based violence in developing countries,” and Williams presented her paper, “Sexual and Physical Violence Perpetrated Against Intimate Partners: Theory and recent research from a three-year follow-up study.” The conference was held in Stellenbosch, South Africa, October 16-19, 2005.

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Women’s Rights Conference in Bangkok

Jasmine Waddell traveled to Bangkok, Thailand, October 27-30, 2005, to attend the tenth Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) International Forum where the urgent question, “How does change happen?” was debated. AWID is an international membership organization that connects, informs, and mobilizes people and institutions committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development, and women’s human rights.

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Marriage as a Bogus Cure for Poverty: Keeping low-income women safe is in our hands

Story after story of former welfare recipients who now hold jobs have created the dominant media metaphor—women formerly leading hopeless, dead-end lives are required by welfare reform to become employed and now are shielded with their independence and new sense of self-worth. But the public is little aware of the upcoming reauthorization of the 1996 "Welfare Reform Act"—formally the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). This Act replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children assistance to poor and low-income women with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

Public attention has moved away from a debate about our welfare system, especially since the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the launch of the war on terrorism. Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has quietly begun to fund "faith-based" projects to increase marriage and to provide them with marriage counseling, paid for with federal funds. To date, the Bush Administration (not Congress) has allocated marriage promotion funds to be spent by the states on welfare recipients, so only welfare recipients are being counseled.

Every week I read another article about our welfare system, especially since the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the launch of the war on terrorism. Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has quietly begun to fund "faith-based" projects to increase marriage and to provide them with marriage counseling, paid for with federal funds. To date, the Bush Administration (not Congress) has allocated marriage promotion funds to be spent by the states on welfare recipients, so only welfare recipients are being counseled.

The argument for marriage in low-income populations, as it has evolved in the intervening years, is that when low-income women with children marry, the family becomes stable and benefits from two incomes, sons have a father figure at home to instill them in the ways of manhood, and welfare is no longer needed. The same rationale applies to divorce. Rightists claim that divorce does irrevocable harm to children, increases their likelihood of being troubled as teens and adults, and leaves now-single women and mothers in poverty.

But research to support these assertions is inconclusive at best. We know only a few things for certain—that low-income women tend to marry low-income men, and many low-income women have been married and are wary of it, having learned that often the woman loses a certain amount of control over her children to her husband, but at the same time must now assume responsibility for his wellbeing as well as that of the children. Many low-income women who have been married also have experienced violence against themselves and their children. The one "cure" for poverty that is unequivocal- ly supported by research is education; yet it is possible that access to education will be more difficult for welfare recipients after the reauthorization of PRWORA.

To date, the Bush Administration (not Congress) has allocated marriage promotion funds to be spent by the states on welfare recipients, so only welfare recipients are being encouraged (in some cases coerced) to attend marriage and divorce counseling, paid for with these funds. If such counseling were neutral—that is, its goal was to help the family (whatever its makeup) determine the best course for its future—I as a feminist would applaud this expenditure of public money to help low-income women. But when the counseling has a pre-determined goal to promote marriage and discourage divorce, I begin to worry. Those who specialize in this sort of counseling, organizations such as Marriage Life Ministry of Austin, TX, or The Marriage Makers of Orlando, FL, are conservative Christian organizations that believe marriage is ordained by God and therefore sacred. Given the close relationship between the Republican Party that now controls the federal bureaucracy and conservative and fundamentalist Christian groups, it seems clear that these groups will receive the lion’s share of federal money to provide counseling services to welfare recipients.

I experienced this conservative, traditionalist belief when I began to work on the issue of battered women in the 1970s. Priests, ministers, rabbis, and even many social workers usually counseled battered women that their marriage must be saved, and the woman’s job was to be a better wife. They advised that she must work with her batterer to maintain peace in the home and to protect her children. Courts turned a cold shoulder to women who wanted to end the marriage because they "asserted" that they were physically or emotionally abused. Thank goodness, I so often think, those days are behind us.

They ended, we hoped, with the passage of The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994. It seemed then that activists, who had worked so hard to bring domestic violence out of the closet of shame and dismissal, had experienced notable success. VAWA allocates federal dollars for domestic violence shelters, campaigns to educate the public about domestic violence, a national hotline, legal services, and training programs for police and prosecutors on domestic violence issues. Violence against women activists thought that the principles and policies represented by VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched; surely the assaults on VAWA could not be touched. Surely.

The attacks on VAWA, as well as the "marriage promotion" funding contained within the proposed reauthorization of PRWORA represent a double threat to poor women, yet they are seldom discussed in the media. This oversight is in keeping with the general neglect of issues of poverty in our ultra-conservative era. We know that low-income relationships are not always characterized by violence against women. Poverty breeds remarkable survival skills, as we see every day in the ability of poor women to nurture and provide for their families. But many low-income relationships are at risk of violence, both in the streets and in the home. Poverty can lead to stress, alcoholism, and drug abuse. The quick fix of marriage does almost nothing to address these problems.

Poverty must be addressed with genuine solutions, such as education, jobs, housing, and childcare—far more expensive solutions than counseling women to get married. But first, society has an obligation to keep women safe. This is often presented as a truism by liberals and conservatives alike when said about women in Muslim societies, in third world countries, or when referring to traffic in women. Yet, here in the United States, we are losing sight of the horror of women remaining in unsafe relationships.

The expenditure of large amounts of federal money to convince women to marry or to stay married should inspire an outcry by all women—not just those at risk.
Marriage as a Bogus Cure for Poverty: Keeping low-income women safe is in our hands

It is said that the policy of marriage as a cure for poverty is has been around since the creation. But the real reason for this policy is to control the behavior of low-income women. The policy has been in place for many years, and it has been successful in keeping women in poverty as well as increasing their likelihood of being troubled as their children marry, the family becomes stable and marriage because they “asserted” that they were dead-end lives required by welfare reform to marry and to provide them with marriage counseling, to be used to encourage welfare recipients to marry low-income men, and many low-income women have been married and are wary of it, that these groups will receive the lion’s share of federal money to provide counseling services to welfare recipients. I experienced this conservative, traditionalist belief when I began to work on the issue of battered women in the 1970s. Priests, ministers, rabbis, and even many social workers usually counseled battered women that their marriage must be saved, and the woman’s job was to be a better wife. They advised that she must work with her batterer to maintain peace in the home and to protect her children. Courts turned a cold shoulder to women who wanted to end the marriage because they “asserted” that they were physically or emotionally abused. Thank goodness, I so often think, those days are behind us. We know that low-income relationships are not always characterized by violence against women. Poverty breeds remarkable survival skills, as we see every day in the ability of poor women to nurture and provide for their families. But many low-income relationships are at risk of violence, both in the streets and in the home. Poverty can lead to stress, alcoholism, and drug abuse. The quick fix of marriage does almost nothing to address these problems.

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Spotlight on New Research

Beyond Anecdote to Informed Discussion: Women and Girls in STEM Fields

**Project Directors:** Susan McGee Bailey and Patricia Campbell
**Funded by:** The National Science Foundation

This project will develop and widely disseminate a series of tools to help ensure that educators, students, parents, and others understand what is and what isn’t known about sex differences and similarities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and why misconceptions such as “the male math gene” persist despite their mythical nature. The purpose of the tools and their dissemination is to help STEM advocates become more grounded in the research and to help researchers get the message out. It is expected that the resulting increase in understanding will provide more accurate information to both policy makers and the general public.

Impact of Work Organization on Women’s Postpartum Health

**Project Director:** Nancy Marshall
**Funded by:** The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The purpose of this project is to estimate a model relating the organization of work, hours of paid work, family workload, employment patterns, and work-family conflict, to maternal health at critical points in time after childbirth. The research model is grounded in ecological systems theory, and integrates research on organization and health, multiple roles, and emerging research on employed women’s postpartum health. The study uses existing data from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, collected at one-month post-partum and at three-month intervals from three to 36 months post-partum. Results from this study will provide important information on employed women’s health during the critical three years following childbirth.

The study findings will identify aspects of the organization of work that support or place at risk women’s health. Knowledge of these factors will facilitate the design and testing of policies and interventions relevant to employers, policy makers, and occupational health providers.

Capacity of Massachusetts Higher Education to Prepare the OST Workforce

**Project Directors:** Nancy Marshall and Ellen Gannett
**Funded by:** The Boston Foundation

The Massachusetts Capacity Study, which is funded by the National Institute for Early Education Research with additional funding from Strategies for Children, is a study of the early education and care workforce in Massachusetts and the capacity of the state’s institutions of higher education to train a qualified workforce. This additional funding allows the expansion of the Massachusetts Capacity Study to include the out-of-school-time workforce in school-age and youth work programs.

Pittsburgh Conference for After School Stakeholders and the Cross Cities Network

**Project Director:** Joyce Shortt
**Funded by:** The Heinz Endowments

The Cross Cities Network brings together leaders from 25 afterschool initiatives in major cities across the United States to develop a network of peer leadership. Pittsburgh will host the first national conference for after-school program leaders to strengthen partnerships and work toward expansion of the Massachusetts Capacity Study. The conference will focus on the development of a national capacity building strategy for the OST field.

Additional Funding

**Susan McGee Bailey** received additional contract funding from the United States Agency for International Development through a contract from Development and Training Services for continued work on an update to Unleash School: A Literature Review of School-Related Gender-Based Violence in Developing Countries, a report which was researched and written at the Wellesley Centers for Women in 2003.

**Ellen Gannett** received additional funding from the Massachusetts Department of Education for the Human Side of Quality training series for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, and renewal funding for the fiscal year running from July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006. She also received additional funding from the Massachusetts Department of Education for a third year of the After School and Out-of-School Time Evaluation project, and funding from Th Enterprise Foundation, Inc. for after-school program assessment.

**Georgia Hall** received funding from the Non-Profit Finance Fund to write a background paper, “School Programs and Youth Sports: Bridging the Divide,” and from New Jersey After 3, Inc. to prepare a staff manual and provide general consultation.

**Nancy Marshall and Joanne Roberts** received additional funding from an anonymous donor through the Bosse-Tartt Wilson Children’s Foundation to expand the Massachusetts Child Care Voucher Study beyond the current focus on centers serving children with vouchers. The additional funds will allow for study of family child care providers serving children with vouchers and the experiences of child care Resource and Referral agencies.

**Peggy McIntosh** received additional funding from the Anna Imery Hanson Charitable Trust for the Anna Wilder Phelps fund which supported the Massachusetts Child Care Voucher Study. The study findings will identify aspects of the organization of work that support or place at risk women’s health. Knowledge of these factors will facilitate the design and testing of policies and interventions relevant to employers, policy makers, and occupational health providers.

**Sumru Erkut** received funding from the National Institute on Out-of-School Time for a four-week, learn-by-doing workshop for school-based youth program leaders to expand her research on strategic partnerships.

**Michelle Seligson** received funding from the Non-Profit Finance Fund to write a background paper, “School Programs and Youth Sports: Bridging the Divide,” and from New Jersey After 3, Inc. to prepare a staff manual and provide general consultation.

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Spotlight on New Research

Beyond Anecdote to Informed Discussion: Women and Girls in STEM Fields

Project Directors: Susan McGee Bailey and Patricia Campbell
Funded by the National Science Foundation

This project will develop and widely disseminate a series of tools to help ensure that educators, students, parents, and others understand what is and what isn’t known about sex differences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and why misconceptions such as “the male math gene” persist despite their mythical nature. The purpose of the tools and their dissemination is to help STEM advocates become more grounded in the research and to help researchers get the message out. It is expected that the resulting increase in understanding will provide more accurate information to both policy makers and the general public.

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Setting the Stage for the YDA: A National Scan of Credentials for Youth Workers

Project Director, Ellen Gannett
Funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health

The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development Phase IV

Project Directors: Kathleen McCartney and Wendy Wagner-Robson
Funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health

The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development has followed the development of over 1300 children from birth. During Phase IV of this study, the goals are: 1) to investigate how earlier functioning and experiences, in concert with contextual and maturational factors in adolescence, influence social relationships, health, adjustment, and intellectual and academic development during middle adolescence; and 2) to extend into middle adolescence an intensive and extensive study of patterns of health and human development from infancy onward, which can be used by the broader scientific community to study a wide range of basic and applied questions.

Impact of Work Organization on Women’s Postpartum Health

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Project Directors: Nancy Marshall and Ellen Gannett
Funded by the Boston Foundation

The Massachusetts Capacity Study, which is funded by the National Institute for Early Education Research with additional funding from Strategies for Children, is a study of the early education and care workforce in Massachusetts and the capacity of the state’s institutions of higher education to train a qualified workforce. This additional funding allows the expansion of the Massachusetts Capacity Study to include the out-of-school-time workforce in school-age and youth work programs.

Pittsburgh Conference for After School Stakeholders and the Cross Cities Network

Project Director: Joyce Shortt
Funded by The Heinz Endowments

The Cross Cities Network brings together leaders from 25 afterschool initiatives in major cities across the United States for peer learning and consultation. The Pittsburgh Conference will allow key Pittsburgh area stakeholders to tap into a valuable network of useful information from the field as well as peer consultation from leaders of large-scale afterschool initiatives; before the implementation of a regional structure/system for Pennsylvania’s Department of Education afterschool programs.

Additional Funding

Susan McGee Bailey received additional contract funding from the United States Agency for International Development through a contract from Development and Training Services for continued work on an update to Unleash School: A Literature Review of School-Related Gender-Based Violence in Developing Countries, a report which was researched and written at the Wellesley Centers for Women in 2003.

Ellen Gannett received funding from the Massachusetts Department of Education for the Human Side of Quality training series for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, and renewal funding for the fiscal year running from July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006. She also received additional funding from the Massachusetts Department of Education for a third year of the After School and Out-of-School Time Evaluation project, and funding from The Enterprise Foundation, Inc. for after school program assessment.

Georgia Hall received funding from the Non-Profit Finance Fund to write a background paper, “Afterschool Programs and Youth Sports: Bridging the Divide,” and from New Jersey After 3, Inc. to prepare a staff manual and provide general consultation.

Nancy Marshall and Joanne Roberts received additional funding from an anonymous donor through the Bosse Tart Wilcox Children’s Foundation to expand the Massachusetts Child Care Voucher Study beyond the current focus on centers serving children with vouchers. The additional funds will allow for study of family child care providers serving children with vouchers and the experiences of child care resource and referral agencies.

Peggy McIntosh received the first installment of a three-year pledge from the Anna Emery Harris Charitable Trust for the Anna Wilder Phelps fund which supports the National SEED Project. McIntosh also received additional funding from the Schott Foundation for Public Education for Gender Equity in Model Sites project.

Nancy Mullin-Rindler received a contract from Clemson University to provide training and consultation for state and national Training of Trainer events on the Okeechobee Bullying Prevention program.

Pamela Seiple and the Open Circle program received a gift from Riche Brothers Supermarkets, Inc. gifts from Open Circle’s Advisory Board and various individuals, and continuing funding from the E. Franklin Robbins Charitable Trust for an expansion of Open Circle curriculum training in New Jersey in 2005-2006 to establish new training sites and staff support.

Nan Stain received funding from Caliber Associates, Inc. for consultation on the evaluation of the Girl Power Program of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, and also received a gift to provide training on bullying and sexual harassment prevention in a Delaware school.

Linda Williams received additional funding from the Department of Defense to assess options and make recommendations in a written report for an Office of Victim’s Advocate within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time received funding for trainings and consultations: in Boston sponsored by Massachusetts School-Age Coalition; in Westchester County, NY, sponsored by Work Family Directions and IMR; for the City of Cambridge, MA, Agenda for Children Project; in Bloomington, IN, sponsored by Illinois School-Age Child Care Network; in Shrewsbury, MA, for Child Care Circuit; in Pittsfield, MA, sponsored by Girls Inc. of the Berkshires; for the Independence Public Schools in Independence, MO, from The Center for Nonprofit Resources / GNOCDC for work with the Afterschool Partnership; from the New Jersey School-Age Child Care Coalition; from Harris County Department of Education in Houston, TX, for Building Educated Leaders for Life to be conducted in both Boston and New York City. Directed individual and private fund gifts were awarded to: the Same-sex Marriage Project, directed by Sumru Erkut, and Michelle Seigle, for a PhDenthusy and Film Project Consultation.
Project directors and researchers at the Wellesley Centers for Women regularly present their work at conferences, workshops, and professional meetings. Listed below are some recent highlights.

James Vetter presented, “Open Circle Program: Getting to the Heart of Learning,” at the New Jersey Department of Education and Safe and Drug-Free Schools Promising Practices Showcase on May 17, 2005, at the Atlantic City Convention Center in New Jersey. The Open Circle Social Competency Program counseled the Courage to Teach Retreat Series for Elementary Classroom Teachers this summer. Held at the Wellesley College Club in Wellesley, MA, the retreat was made possible by a grant from the Dillahay Foundation.

Jean Hardisty was a presenter at the Democracy Funding Circle in New York, NY, sponsored by the Ms. Foundation, on June 1, 2005. Hardisty was a guest speaker at the National Network of Abortion Funds conference in Atlanta, GA, on June 10, 2005. On September 26, 2005, Hardisty participated in the opening panel at the fall 2005 conference on the New Jersey Project on Inclusive Scholarship, Curriculum, and Teaching, at the College of Saint Elizabeth in Morristown, NJ. Hardisty was a luncheon panelist at the Environmental Grantmakers Association annual retreat in New Paltz, NY, on October 25, 2005.

On June 20, Sumru Erkult participated in a panel discussion, “Gender-Specific Versus Gender-Neutral Programming,” at the 2005 American Association of University Women convention held in Washington, D.C. Erkult also participated in a panel presentation, “Gender Synergy and Teamwork,” at the 2005 Build Boston conference, held in New Paltz, NY, on November 15, in Massachusetts.


Nancy Mullin-Rindler presented, “Confronting Teasing and Bullying” at the Educational Information and Research Center of New Jersey training for Child Assault Prevention Program on September 29, 2005, as a panelist at the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Harassment conference. On August 18, 2005, Stein participated in a panel on teen dating violence at the US Department of Education conference, Safe and Drug-free schools, in Washington, D.C. In September, Stein spoke at a conference sponsored by the Sunrise Center for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, in raising school district administrators and staff from the Sunrise Center in Dade City, FL.


Jasmine Wadudell presented, “I Do: Political and personal perspectives on the struggle for same-sex marriage in North America,” at the 205 Centennial Reunion of the Rhodes Scholars of the Americas held in Philadelphia, PA in August.

At the South Asian Women RISE UP Against Violence conference held in New Brunswick, NJ, on September 9, 2005, Meena Hewett presented, “Men’s Initiative: Men speak out to stop violence against women.” Manavi, a non-profit organization for South Asian women, with the mission of increasing awareness of women’s rights in society and encouraging social change to end all violence against them, helped organize the conference with the Violence Against Women Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

American Psychological Association 2005 Convention

Sumru Erkult and Michelle Bragg present “Ambiguous Realities: How social impacts child and family outcomes,” as part of the Fathers and Social Fates Symposium at the American Psychological Association (APA) 113th annual convention in Washington, D.C., on August 21. Members of the Same-Sex Marriage Study Group presented a paper, “What I Did for Love, or Benefits, or . . . Same-Sex Marriage” also at the APA convention. During this program, Anne Noonan presented, “Gain to the Chapel?: Couples’ religious/spiritual perspectives on legal same-sex marriage,” Konjit Page presented, “Transgender: Marriage Relationship dynamics in the post-legalization period”; Diane Purvin and Michelle Porche present “Stephen and His Boyfriend: The Context of Social Change in Massachusetts”; and Georgia Hall presented “Having Parents Like Mine.” The symposium panel was chaired by Connie Chan, from the University of Massachusetts, and Sumru Erkult, and included comments by from Log Cabin Republicans Political Director, Chris Barron. Further details about the Exploratory Study of Same-Sex Marriage will be featured in the Spring/Summer 2006 Research & Action Report.
Conferences and Presentations

Project directors and researchers at the Wellesley Centers for Women regularly present their work at conferences, workshops, and professional meetings. Listed below are some recent highlights.

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Jean Hardisty was a presenter at the Democracy Funding Circle in New York, NY, sponsored by the Ms. Foundation, on June 1, 2005. Hardisty was a guest speaker at the Environmental Change Institute at the College of St. Rose in Albany, NY, on October 21, 2005.


On August 15, 2005, Maureen Walker presented at the 11th Annual CEO Conference for Planned Parenthood Federation of America in San Diego, CA. Maureen also gave a presentation to students and ran a workshop for teachers on developing competencies for multicultural communities at Georgetown Visitation High School in Washington, D.C, on October 18, 2005.

On August 15, 2005, Nancy Mullin-Rindler presented, “Confronting Traising and Bullying” at the Educational Information and Research Center of New Jersey training for Child Assault Prevention Program on September 29, 2005, as well as at the Illinois Coalition Against Violence Conference held on October 25. Mullin-Rindler also served as a presenter at the second annual National Bullying Prevention Conference held in Atlanta, GA, held October 27-28, 2005.

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### New and Notable Publications

**Social-Emotional Climate and the Success of New Teachers: A new look at the ongoing challenge of new teacher retention (2005)**  
_Jacob Murray and the Open Circle Program_  
*Price: $10.00*  
Order WCW 9

Despite a heightened focus in recent years on the need to more effectively prepare, support, and retain new teachers, teachers in their first five years in the classroom continue to leave the profession in alarming numbers. This report suggests that current teacher education programs and school induction efforts commonly undervalue or overlook a potentially pivotal aspect—how the social-emotional climate in classrooms and schools impacts new teachers' attitudes toward work and their decisions about whether to remain in the profession. In response, this report reviews relevant research with a specific focus on these influences on new teachers.

**Living Outside the Box: Relational challenges of lesbians in love with men (2005)**  
_Ellen Schecter_  
*Price: $10.00*  
Paper 420

This paper uses the lens of Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT) to analyze data from a qualitative study of sexual fluidity in long-time lesbians who became intimately partnered with men. The analysis illuminated processes of shame, disconnection, authenticity, and connection. As RCT would predict, severe disconnection from individuals and community through silencing, shaming, and marginalizing resulted in psychological pain, while authenticity and connection served to promote or restore well-being. Rigidly categorical models of sexual identity that are unable to accommodate sexual fluidity likely contribute to the oppression of sexual minorities in both heterosexual and sexual minority cultures.

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### Home Study Programs Available through WCW

**Women’s Growth in Connection**  
7 CEs  
*Price: $79.00 (with book), $60.00 (without book)*  
Order HS 1

The learning objectives of this home study program are:  
- to explore a relational model of women’s psychological development, which leads to new understandings of women’s health and well being; and to examine the impact of disconnections and the vital benefits of connections characterized by authenticity, mutual empathy, mutual empowerment, and mutuality.

**Toward a New Psychology of Women**  
5 CEs  
*Price: $65.00 (with book), $50.00 (without book)*  
Order HS 2

The learning objectives of this home study program are:  
- to examine a revolutionary understanding of women’s psychological development that has dramatically influenced the fields of psychology, social work, counseling, medicine, and education among others; to explore the critical issues that continue to impact the lives of women, including the dynamics of power and conflict; and to enlarge understandings of women’s specific strengths and abilities to create positive change in their lives.

**How Connections Heal: Stories from Relational Cultural Therapy**  
6 CEs  
*Price: $75.00 (with book), $55.00 (without book)*  
Order HS 3

The learning objectives of this home study program are:  
- to illustrate how Relational-Cultural Theory translates into practice using case examples from a variety of therapeutic venues; to explain the decisional frameworks that guide therapeutic interventions; and to clarify distinctions between the core concepts and practices of Relational-Cultural Theory and customary practices of traditional therapeutic models.

**The Complexity of Connection**  
6 CEs  
*Price: $75.00 (with book), $55.00 (without book)*  
Order HS 4

The learning objectives of this home study program are:  
- to explore effective approaches to relational-cultural practice, including encouraging authenticity, transforming shame and humiliation, enhancing competence, and building resilience; to integrate core Relational-Cultural Theory concepts with an analysis of culture, race, and power dynamics; and to investigate new therapeutic applications of Relational-Cultural Theory to work with individuals, couples, and groups.
New and Notable Publications

*Please note that prices do not include shipping and handling.

The publications listed here may be purchased from the WCW publications office by calling 781.283.2510 or by visiting www.wcwonline.org/o-browse.html.

JACOB MURRAY AND THE OPEN CIRCLE PROGRAM
Price: $10.00
Order WCW 9

Despite a heightened focus in recent years on the need to more effectively prepare, support, and retain new teachers, teachers in their first five years in the classroom continue to leave the profession in alarming numbers. This report suggests that current teacher education programs and school induction efforts commonly undervalue or overlook a potentially pivotal aspect—how the social-emotional climate in classrooms and schools impacts new teachers' attitudes toward work and their decisions about whether to remain in the profession. In response, this report reviews relevant research with a specific focus on these influences on new teachers.

Living Outside the Box: Relational challenges of lesbians in love with men (2005)
ELLEN SCHESTER
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Paper 420

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WCW Postdoctoral Fellowship Opening Anticipated

The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) anticipates openings for one or more full-time postdoctoral fellowships for training in child- and adolescent research. The program is designed to mentor candidates who will develop successful careers in externally funded research programs on underrepresented populations of children and adolescents.

A primary goal is to generate culturally informed research programs carried out by researchers from the same underrepresented groups.

These positions, funded through an institutional training grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, are open to both new and experienced researchers with doctorates in the social and behavioral sciences (Ph.D., M.D., Dr.P.H., Ed.D., or equivalent). Appointments are for a minimum of two years; fellows may apply to continue for a third year. Stipend is determined by a government scale based on the number of years since obtaining a doctorate, with $40,000 being the minimum.

Candidates are encouraged to read more about the postdoctoral program at http://www.wcwonline.org/postdoc/index.html before completing their application. Candidates must be citizens of the U.S. or have permanent resident status; individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible. The application should include a short introductory letter accompanied by:

1. a three- to four-page (double-spaced) statement of research goals and how specific aspects of the WCW program will help meet them;
2. three letters of recommendation, including one from a dissertation advisor;
3. current curriculum vitae;
4. one copy each of no more than three peer-reviewed publications; and
5. a copy of a doctoral diploma or letter from a department chair confirming that the candidate has met (or will meet) all requirements for the doctoral degree by the anticipated start date.

These should be mailed to Director of Postdoctoral Program, Wellesley Centers for Women, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA, 02481. The deadline for submission is January 1, 2006. The earliest date of appointment is May 1, 2006.

Wellesley College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action educational institution and employer. Successful candidates must be able to work effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Applications from women, minorities, veterans, and candidates with disabilities are encouraged.
Research & Action Report is published in the spring and fall by the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW).

For more than three decades, WCW has been a driving force, both behind the scenes and in the spotlight, promoting positive change for women and families. The world's largest women's research center, WCW is the powerful alliance of the Center for Research on Women and the Stone Center at Wellesley College.

The work at WCW is grounded in the perspectives of women from diverse backgrounds. Our research and action projects lead to creative solutions to a range of pressing social concerns and to innovative policy alternatives.

Wellesley Centers for Women
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SAVE THE DATE!
The Women of Courage Lecture Series, cosponsored by the Wellesley Centers for Women and the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century (BRC), continues its celebration of women who have taken brave stands on issues, including economic justice, nonviolence, environmental ethics, and human rights. On February 1, 2006, Shulamith Keeing, former Executive Director of the People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning, will present the fifth and final program in the series, focusing on the human rights work of Eleanor Roosevelt. Keeing is a 2003 recipient of the U.N. Human Rights Award. The event will be held at the BRC in Cambridge. Details about the lecture will be posted on www.wcwonline.org in late fall/early winter.

A world that is good for women is good for everyone.

Over thirty years ago, the Wellesley Centers for Women began asking new questions about the lives of women.

The answers that grew from our research have been groundbreaking. They have generated changes in policies, practices, and attitudes by presenting new ways of looking at old issues.

A generation of work has taught us that the best answers always begin with the right questions. And that change begins by supporting ideas as they grow.

Be a part of the action—please use the enclosed envelope to support the vital role that the Wellesley Centers for Women plays in shaping a better world for everyone!

Thank you!