



Newsletter

MAY 2006

IAWS

Indian Association
for Women's Studies

Contents

Editor's Desk	1
IAWS 2005 -08	
Executive Committee Members	2
REPORTS	
IAWS XIth National Conference	4
Public Hearing for Women with Disabilities	9
Engendering Research and Action :	19
Millennium Development Goals	
CONSULTATION	
Recommendations of the UGC Regional Consultations on Women's Studies	10
PUBLICATIONS :	
Women's Studies Centres and Schools	15
BOOK NEWS	20
BOOK REVIEW	21
OBITUARY	23
RESEARCH BRIEFS	24
CONFERENCE CALL	25
IAWS MEMBERSHIP FORM	27

Editorial Committee: Shefali Moitra
Rajashri Dasgupta
Paromita Chakravarti
Abhijit Sen

Editor: Kavita Panjabi

Editorial Office

School of Women's Studies
Jadavpur University
Kolkata 700 032
email : kavip@vsnl.com

IAWS Central Office

Centre for Women's
Development Studies
25, Bhai Vir Singh Marg
New Delhi 110001
Ph : 23366541 / 23345530
email : iawsgsec@gmail.com

Editor's Desk

This is the first issue of the newsletter after the XIth National IAWS Conference, and of a new term (2005-2008) of the IAWS too; so it carries a summary report of the last conference, as well as brief bio-sketches of the new Executive Committee. A significant development in the last year has been the constitution of the U.G.C. Standing Committee on Women's Studies, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Vina Mazumdar. It has already held consultations on Women's Studies in five regions of India, and this issue carries highlights of the reports from all the regions. The VIIth National Conference of Women's Movements, Towards a Politics of Justice: Affirming Diversities, Resisting Divisiveness, is to be held in Kolkata in September 2006. In view of our commitment to keep renewing the linkages between women's movements and women's studies in South Asia, the Conference Call and tentative schedule released by the National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC) have also been included here, in the hope that there will be a large participation of women's studies scholars too.

There are some new features in this issue. Women's Studies Centres and Schools have been publishing their research, documentation, and retrievals of women's voices for over fifteen years now, but little is known in one institute about the publications of another. With this edition we start carrying publication lists of different centres and schools, on pages perforated for easy removal to facilitate the compilation of individual files. Please send in publication lists of your centres, complete with the publication and contact details as included on the Publications page. If we all co-operate, then in the course of the next few issues every IAWS member can have a comprehensive bibliography of women's studies publications from research bases right across the country! Information about new books from the publishing world too is not easily accessible outside of metropolitan centres; hence the Book News and Book Review pages, and we welcome information about publications from different regions. The Research Briefs page has also been launched in the hope of putting researchers in women's studies and gender studies in touch with each other. If there is a good response, we could eventually launch an IAWS Research Forum on the internet. And of course, as always, do send in Announcements and Reports of women's studies related events, courses and fellowships. This newsletter reaches approximately one thousand women's studies scholars and researchers – let us make the best possible use of it.

Kavita Panjabi; *kavip@vsnl.com*

Executive Committee Members**Sumi Krishna, Bangalore : President & Coordinator**

Southern Region (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Kerala)

Sumi is an independent researcher at the field, programme and policy levels. Her current concerns include the gender dimensions of Natural Resource Management, specially biodiversity, local knowledge systems and resource rights; rural and tribal livelihoods; participatory governance through community institutions; and capacity-building. Her publications include *Environmental Politics: People's Lives and Development Choices* and *Restoring Childhood: Learning, Labour and Gender in South Asia*. She has edited *Livelihood and Gender: Equity in Community Resource Management*, and moderates the e-group *Jivika* for livelihood and gender equity.

iawsresident@gmail.com; sumi_krishna2002@yahoo.com

Aparna Mahanta (Dibrugarh): Vice President, Coordinator North-Eastern Region :

(Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur

Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim) Director (Professor), Centre for Women's Studies, Dibrugarh University. Aparna's interests are women, literature and society. She has published two books in Assamese and writes articles in books and journals. Her Centre specializes in research on rural women in agriculture and related activities. aparnamee@yahoo.com

Mary John (New Delhi): General Secretary

Currently Associate Professor at the Women's Studies Programme, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Mary will join the Centre for Women's Development Studies in May 2006 as its Director. She is engaged in teaching and research in the history of women's studies, feminist theories and methodologies and international — specially Asian — feminisms. Her publications include *Discrepant Dislocations: Feminism, Theory and Postcolonial Histories*, *A Question of Silence? The Sexual Economies of Modern India* (co-edited), *French Feminism: An Indian Anthology* (co-edited) and *Women's Studies In India: A Reader* (forthcoming).

iawsgsec@gmail.com

Joy Deshmukh-Ranadive (New Delhi): Joint Secretary

Country Director of the India office of the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), Joy specializes in gender and development and has over 15 years of experience with premier research organizations in India. She has published widely in the areas of structural adjustment; work; microcredit; empowerment; and economic, social and cultural human rights, conducted training on the right to food and housing, and taught Economics at the University of Mumbai. Prior to joining ICRW, Dr. Deshmukh-Ranadive was a Senior Fellow at the CWDS, New Delhi.

joydr@icrwindia.org

CP Sujaya (New Delhi): Treasurer

Currently a visiting fellow and executive committee member at the Centre for Women's Development Studies, and an Advisor to the Supreme Court Commission on the "right to food" public litigation case, Sujaya retired from the Indian Administrative Service in 2001. She handled the women's bureau in the Ministry of Women and Child Development in the late eighties and has written on policy and "governance" issues relating to women and on social sector planning. Sujaya was the IAWS Joint Secretary during the Mysore Conference.

cpsujaya@gmail.com

Kavita Panjabi (Kolkata): Editor and Coordinator Eastern Region

(West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand) Kavita teaches Comparative Literature and Women's Studies at Jadavpur University, and is Chairperson of the NCERT National Curriculum Framework Review Focus Group on Gender Issues in Education. Currently working on Oral Narratives of Women in the Tebhaga Movement, and the South Asian Women's Oral History Project of the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives, she has written on gender and communalism (including Gujarat 2002), women's responses to violence, and women's testimonial literature in India and Latin America. She was Editor, IAWS, 1996-98.

kavip@vsnl.com

Zarina Bhatti (New Delhi): Coordinator Northern Region

(Delhi, Haryana, Chandigarh, Punjab, UP, Uttaranchal, Himachal, Jammu & Kashmir)

Zarina taught Sociology at the Jesus and Mary College, University of London, and worked with a number of international organisations as a gender specialist. She has designed and written on a course on gender sensitisation for grass root workers in Hindi which has been translated into a number of Indian languages. She has published extensively on women in the unorganized sector and Muslim women. A founder member of IAWS, she has also served as its Treasurer and President in the past.

bhatti@nde.vsnl.net.in

Kamala Ganesh (Mumbai): Coordinator Western Region

(Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan)

Professor at the Dept. of Sociology, University of Mumbai, Kamala has also been Secretary, Commission on Women, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. Her research interests are in the fields of social policy, kinship and culture, and their interface with gender. Her publications include *Boundary Walls: Caste and Women in a Tamil Community*, and she has recently co-edited *Culture and the Making of Identity in Contemporary India* (Sage 2005) and *Culture, Care and Citizenship: Revisiting the Politics of Dutch Welfare* (forthcoming).

ganeshkamala@yahoo.co.in

Nisha Shende (Amravati): Coordinator Central Region

(Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh)

Nisha is a Founder of the Women Professors Forum, Amravati University, the Chetana Mahila Balvikas Sanstha, and the Chetana Family Counselling Centre. She has organised conferences on women in academia and seminars on various women's issues, child labour and the girl child, and secularism. She has also published several articles, delivered speeches, participated in T.V. and radio programmes, and done script writing for video and telefilms relating to these issues. She received the national Woman of Substance Award in 2003.

shendenisha007@yahoo.co.in

Kumud Sharma (New Delhi, ex-officio)

Kumud is currently Vice Chairperson of CWDS and has served as Director from 1991-2000. A sociologist by training, she has published several books, monographs and papers. The recent book is titled *Memory Frames: Oral Narratives* of four first generation WS Scholars. She has worked on issues relating to women and work, women and natural resource management, women and governance, women and democratic decentralisation and Women's Studies and higher education.

kumud@cwds.org

Veena Poonacha (Mumbai, ex-officio)

Professor/Director of the Research Centre for Women's Studies, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, Veena is currently involved in a rural development programme in South Gujarat and in establishing a women's archive. Gender consultant, *Tejaswini Project for the Empowerment of Rural Women* of the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Maharashtra (2004) and research consultant, National Commission for Women (2003), she has also developed teaching material for the *Women's Rights as Human Rights* course of the SNDT Women's University and the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, and published widely.

veena_poonacha@yahoo.co.uk

Address Changes

If your postal address or that of any other IAWS member you know has changed in the last year, or if you have not been receiving your copy of the IAWS Newsletter, then please send the full details of the current postal address to kavip@vsnl.com.

Amendments to the IAWS Constitution

Two amendments, proposed at the General Body Meeting of the XI National Conference on Women's Studies, held at Goa from 3-6 May 2005, have been ratified by a majority of the life members. The amendments to the IAWS Constitution are as follows:

- i) Any member who wishes to be elected to the EC may do so provided she has been a member of the IAWS for at least one year.*
- ii) A member can be elected to the EC only 3 times in her entire life. Of these, only two terms may run consecutively.*

IAWS XIth National Conference : Sovereignty, Citizenship and Gender

The XIth National Conference of the IAWS was held in Goa from the 3rd to the 6th of May, 2005. The theme this year was Sovereignty, Citizenship and Gender. The Conference included four plenaries including one on South Asia, nine sub-themes organised around a variety of issues, two workshops, a parallel series of sessions of documentary films on the main theme of the conference, a photo exhibition, and a march to focus on women's rights in the main thoroughfares of Panjim, with women in wheelchairs being part of the march. It concluded with the adoption of 13 resolutions on a variety of concerns of the women's movement in India. This conference was marked by at least three new features: a sub-theme on Impaired Citizenship with a focus on ageing and disability; another on Education and Citizenship, and a third on the politics of sexuality; all of which have been relatively neglected fields in women's studies conferences.

MAIN THEME PLENARY

The main theme plenary was introduced by its convenor, Uma Chakravarti, who provided a context for the focus of the IAWS conference around the critical issues of sovereignty, and citizenship as seen through a feminist lens. She observed that the changes in the last five years at the global political level have made it imperative for feminists to engage with issues of sovereignty and citizenship from a location on the margins. This will ensure that statist discourses and definitions can be challenged from the point of view of all those groups that have either been excluded, or marginalised, by nation-state ideologies and 'cartographic nationalisms', in India and elsewhere in South Asia.



Ms. Nandita Haksar, human rights lawyer, linked up issues of citizenship across India with the specific history of Goa. She highlighted the emancipatory *potential* of citizenship, which admittedly liberated us as women from community and traditional ties and united us into a political community. Prof. Jayati Ghosh dwelt on questions of economic sovereignty and citizenship, which often appear misplaced in the era of globalisation. The current imperialist globalisation has opened up a range of new forms of work for women but these are typically not characterised by stability or job security; due to this women are being pushed into petty informal trade. Prof. Gopal Guru focused on the cultural dimensions of citizenship through an in depth examination of caste as it is manifest in contemporary Indian society. A central issue in Gopal Guru's presentation was the divide between women: between upper caste and lower caste women, which had not been adequately addressed within the women's movement or in women's studies scholarship.

All three speakers, and the convenor, outlined the need for self-reflexivity within the women's movement and the women's studies movement on questions of citizenship, sovereignty and gender.

SOUTH ASIA PLENARY

Citizenship proves to be differential, and has been differently—often negatively—experienced by people in all the countries of South Asia. Whether individual national constitutions are secular or not, the notion of fundamental rights and entitlements being subject to other considerations of caste, community, religion and gender is pervasive across the subcontinent. The speakers at this plenary referred to the critical issues around sovereignty, citizenship and gender raised by Kashmir and the North East of India.

Neloufer de Mel spoke eloquently and powerfully about gender and citizenship in post-Tsunami Sri Lanka, offering pertinent insights on: the status of women's citizenship; the structures of the state; transnational capital and exchange; feminist activism, nationalism and sovereignty. Sara Hossain from Bangladesh gave the example of the two communities... in the country that continue to be excluded. The implications for women's rights in both cases are enormous; she raised the question of whether a focus on inequalities based on religion or race further occluded and reinforced inequalities of gender? Nafisa Shah from Pakistan carried this point much further when she said that the consequences of "tribalisation" of Pakistani society combined with the reinforcement of a frontier or siege mentality, are extremely grave for women. Purna Shrestha emphasised the point that regardless of the prevailing political situation, women are second-class citizens in Nepal in any case.

The questions raised by the speakers included the fragility of the nation-state, the simultaneous porosity and fixity of national borders and the almost continuous presence of refugees in all the countries.

GOA PLENARY

The objective of the plenary session was to present an authentic picture of the experiences of women in Goa in obtaining their citizenship and sovereignty rights.

Maria Aurora Couto, a well-known writer, set the context for the session by tracing Goa's history and women's place in it. With the advent of the Portuguese in 1510, women in some senses experienced liberation, and there were instances where women sought education and became professionals. This quiet confidence is still evident among women in Goa. What perhaps is lacking is knowledge about their rights and adequate employment opportunity to display their talent. Sabina Martins, an activist with the NGO Bailancho Saad, shared her observations about employment opportunities for women in the fishing industry which have gradually decreased. Many women in Goa have become vulnerable to risks of getting infected by communicable diseases. Hema Nayak emphasized that the notion of identity is critical in discussions about women in Goa. Albertina Almeida, a practising lawyer and an activist in Bailancho Saad, shared her observations about the provisions of Family Laws and their practice, which may be more liberal than in other parts of India but ignorance and social conditioning ensure that women do not insist on being treated equally.

The session ended with a peek at a woman-headed household, mirroring the aspirations of women in Goa, their humorous take on migrants (and vice versa) and their search for an identity in a global community. The play *Bhaji Puri* hosted by the Mustard Seed Art Company provided a fitting finale to the session.

WOMEN'S STUDIES PLENARY

Introducing the Plenary, Kumud Sharma observed in her opening remarks that women's studies covers a vast and heterogeneous field and has remained a fluid area of concern with plurality of objectives, agendas and political positions. The Plenary was designed to critically reflect on the mandate drawn up by the early pioneers of women's studies; expansion of women's studies scholarship; institutional spaces; its contribution to content, methods and epistemologies in social sciences; its links and engagement with serious feminist politics and the new challenges posed by the processes of globalization and restructuring of spaces within academic institutions.

Malini Bhattacharya explored the empirical, experimental and disruptive nature of women's studies, and argued that women's studies cannot be confined within academia. She stressed that instead of developing its own 'closures and orthodoxies', Women's Studies should maintain its criticality. Mary John explored the shifting contexts in which women's studies has grown. She pointed out that the hyper-visibility of gender-in-media and development-funding-agencies has run parallel to the feminization of poverty, sexualisation of labour and intensification of violence. Anagha presented a collective experience of working in a UGC sponsored Women's Studies Centre and posed questions to a new generation of Women's Studies practitioners.

SUB-THEME REPORTS

I: Nationalism, Pluralism and Differential Citizenship

Co-ordinator: Anupama Roy

This sub-theme panel was framed with the purpose of outlining the contests and debates that inform the theory and practice of citizenship in contemporary contexts. While identifying the contours of the debate, the panel identified the historically emergent strands that constituted the debate, and the manner in which contending practices of citizenship – the hegemonic state

practices of rule and the countervailing struggles – continually articulate and evolve ‘people’s practices of citizenship’ – rupturing hegemonies, and in the practice, rethinking and rearticulating citizenship, communities and rights. The discussions moved beyond legal-formal frameworks to see how citizenship unfolds substantively in specific contexts, identifying the forces and forms of domination and power, the axes on which they make themselves manifest and the notion of rights articulated at these sites of contest.

Special Session on Gujarat in Sub-theme 1

Co-ordinator: Nandini Manjrekar

This session was directed towards an examination of the experiences of the Muslim community in Gujarat, living under the shadow of violence that was unleashed with state collusion in 2002. The session focused on the manner in which the political project of subjugating the community through violent means has impacted the rights of Muslim women. It highlighted the ways in which contestations around Muslim women’s rights, set in the context of new forms of patriarchal control within the Muslim community, and the uncertainties shrouding judicial redressal for victims of the violence, in particular victims of sexual violence, have thrown up new challenges before the women’s movement in India.

2: Citizenship, Livelihoods, Work and Natural Resource Rights,

Co-ordinator: Sumi Krishna

The session began by considering the historical and geographical processes involved in the marginalisation of communities such as the pastoralists, swidden (slash-and-burn/ shifting) cultivators, fishers, adivasis and other forest-dwellers, and cross-border migrants whose livelihoods and work were closely related to natural resources. It considered the various ways in which coastal, inland and mountain communities in South Asia have been defined and excluded from citizenship and resource-access in colonial and post-colonial times. The session resolved to explore alternative avenues of communication, understand the intermediate (meso-level) linkages, uncover the hidden agenda of institutions at all levels from the community to the state so as to prevent the demolition of rights, and to develop an informed critique of the larger macro framework that is increasingly determining how women’s lives are lived at the micro level.

3: Citizenship and Politics of Sexuality

Co-ordinator: Nandita Gandhi

The presentations in this session focussed on sexual minorities i.e. lesbians, gays, bisexuals and *hijras* in the context of laws, discrimination and organisational support. There was discussion on the problems of lesbians and homosexuals and their need for support. There were views put forward that *hijras* should have their own space, human rights and dignity. On the conceptual side, there was an interesting paper which went into the definition of queer in the context of feminism. Another presentation looked at laws and policies regarding abortion, sex work, and anti-sodomy, using concrete examples from appropriate countries in an effort to look at how these policies translated to different ground realities. The discussion also touched on policies and young people’s sexuality and sexual rights in India.

4: Women in Conflict and Militarization

Co-ordinator: Iliana Sen

This subtheme explored the many interrelated issues relating to the effects of living in conflict situations on women’s physical, emotional and cultural well-being. It also tried to understand the nature of the many kinds of conflict we live amidst today — across borders, and within borders, over issues of citizenship, sovereign rights, as well as rights over natural resources. Women have been brutalized in many of these conflicts, and have held forth as proponents of peace. In some situations there has also been the agency of women in conflict, and these situations also need to be understood in the overall struggle against patriarchy and for a just society.

The consensus was that it was no longer possible for the women’s movement, or for women’s studies to take an essentialist position about the peace loving nature of women. Similarly violence was not a monolithic category to which there could be a monolithic response.

5: Development Induced Displacement: Impact on Women

Co-ordinator: Urmimala Das

The session on Development started with conceptualizing the term ‘development’ in relation to the loss of women’s citizenship rights due to displacement. National treaties and international conventions, and rehabilitation and relief policies were debated keeping in view the sufferings and protest movements of women as well as the repressive role of the state. The group felt that gender justice concerns

must be addressed by the women's movement in India. Our campaigns and struggles need to utilize the mechanisms and instruments at the local, regional, national and international levels, to re-strategise and strengthen across sectors our assertion of gender justice, citizenship and gender perspectives. It was agreed that research in the related issues should be taken up actively in women's studies centres.



6: Borders, Migration And Gender

Co-ordinator : Urvashi Butalia

The session covered a wide range of themes, from the general understanding of migration and borders to a deeper, more nuanced and often more ambivalent understanding, sometimes, as in Kashmir or Goa, within a very local setting. The theme of migration was understood in a broad way, with papers looking at how the rights of migrants and refugees are defined in law, and at more empirical studies that were based on particular experiences. Among the questions that were posed was one of how exactly can migration be defined. A further problematization related to the question of borders: ought we to go on accepting the traditional definition of borders as being merely political, or administratively defined, or can we say that for women the borders lie elsewhere. Here, the example of Tsunami-affected women came up: for them the notion of borders has changed substantially if not completely after the disaster, particularly with the erosion of the borders of home and hearth.

7: Gender, Education And Citizenship

Co-ordinator: Dipta Bhog

Issues of Curriculum and Pedagogy

This session moved through various different sites of education, yet each presentation drew upon the ideas offered by others. Presentations on curriculum included assessments of what the State prescribes at the school level as well as attempts to innovate at the university

level. Pedagogy was analyzed in both formal spaces for training teachers and in non-formal spaces using unconventional media as tools for gender-sensitization.

Important concerns articulated during the discussion included the way gender issues are de-politicized to be made acceptable within curriculum, and the extent to which the teacher is empowered to intervene in the educational process.

Exclusions: The Politics of Difference in Citizenship

This session shared the experiences of groups who have historically experienced non-recognition of their claims, active oppression, or marginalization by the hegemonic collective – same sex desiring people, muslim girls and women and dalit women. It addressed the extent to which educational institutions of the modern state have been able, in every sense of the term, to *represent* citizens – to acknowledge them in discourse, include them in programmes, and to ensure that these work to empower citizens.

Creating Possibilities or Determining Limits? The Role of the State

This final session assessed initiatives by the state to expand women's access to education, the limitations to its vision and thus to the possibility of forming productive partnerships with it. Presentations ranged from the level of policy to grassroots experience, and from university teaching to the need for continuing education in rural areas.

One cannot in the end forget that investment in women's education is vulnerable to whoever is in power, and we must work with an awareness of the political interests to which initiatives for women's education are subject.

8: Impaired Citizenship and Forms of Exclusion (Ageing and disability)

Co-ordinator: Asha Hans

History was made at IAWS with the introduction of this theme. For the first time, in this effort at

mainstreaming, women with disabilities joined an IAWS Conference in large numbers. The contribution of the other sector of the sub-theme covering ageing however was minimal. The question that confronted the sub-theme was whether it fulfilled the designated aim of locating women's voices and experiences, especially those of the disabled and ageing who are excluded from citizenship and the feminist as well as the disabled agendas and movements. As far as their presence and high quality of paper presentations was concerned the aim was fulfilled; what was left unfulfilled perhaps was the physical mainstreaming. The sub-theme drew both disabled and non-disabled speakers but few non-disabled attended the sub-theme, confirming the long road to be travelled.

The theme attempted to underscore the concerns of disabled women in India. Rendered invisible by the structural and attitudinal amnesia, it was felt they have been denied both the traditional choices as well as participation in the labour force. While caste and class are considered significant by Indian feminists, impairment has not been considered as a difference that has analytical importance.

9: Engendering Legal Education: Citizenship and Entitlements

Co-ordinator: Kamala Shankaran

The importance of legal education in contributing to constructing values of rights and citizenship has been recognized. A growing number of academics, practitioners and activists have been concerned with the manner in which the law has been constructed and interpreted to the disadvantage of women and other section of the people. Thus there is an urgent need for reviewing the content and teaching methodology of legal education in India in order to incorporate gender concerns adequately in the curriculum. This was the rationale behind the present sub-theme.

The discussions that followed focused on the variety of ways in which gender concerns could be incorporated: introducing a separate paper and/or creating critical thinking across the curriculum, tackling institutional barriers in effecting changes, use of placement and internships programmes, the use of networks, and carrying forward the energy and initiative created in this sub-theme forward so that linkages across institutions and courses could be sustained.

IAWS Workshops At Goa

One workshop was on Women's SHGs (Self Help Groups) & Micro Credit organized by Nirantar. It analyzed their conceptual moorings and the implication for the women's movement, and assessed their implications for women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Another was a theme workshop on Issues confronting Women's Studies, which provided an opportunity to take stock of the changes initiated since the early 80s, and the achievements as well the severe constraints within which these centres function within the changed context of higher education in the new millennium.

Resolutions Passed in the General Body Meeting of the XIth National Conference

The Conference concluded with thirteen resolutions passed on — the Current Situation in Gujarat, Democratic Movements, Development Induced Displacement: Impact on Women, SHGs and Micro Credit, Employment Guarantee Act, The Armed Forces Special Powers Act, Sex Selection, Impaired Citizenship and Forms of Exclusion, Suryanelli Support Group, Research and Monitoring of Changes in Education, Linkage between Women's Studies and School Education, Migration, Displacement and Borders, and the Politics of Sexuality.

Films Screened at the Conference

The following films, curated by Uma Chakravarti and Rahul Roy, were screened and discussed at the Conference:

1. **My Mother India** by *Safina Uberoi*
2. **Manjuben Truckdriver** by *Sherna Dastur*
3. **Soldiers in Sarong** by *Lokendra Arambam*
4. **Kitte Milve Mahi** by *Ajay Bharadwaj*
5. **City Beautiful** by *Rahul Roy*
6. **Girl Song** by *Vasudha Joshi*
7. **Night of Prophecy** by *Amar Kanwar*
8. **Shadows of Freedom** by *Sabina Kidwai*
9. **Until When** by *Dahna Abourahme*
10. **Sita's Family** by *Saba Dewan*
11. **Tales of the Night Fairies** by *Shohini Ghosh*

Summarized by Nandini Banerjee

Public Hearing for Women with Disabilities

A Public Hearing for Women with Disability was organised on 10th of March 2006, at the Special Education and HEPSN Cell in collaboration with the School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University. The programme was sponsored by the National Commission for Women, and was attended by distinguished panelists and participants from various organizations like Manovikas Kendra, Turning Point, Association for Women with Disabilities, Cathedral Relief Service, MENTAID, Speech and Hearing Institute and Research Centre. Approximately twenty-six participants with different forms of disabilities (visual, mental, orthopaedical, speech and hearing) talked about their problems and challenges.



Justice Samaresh Banerjea presided over the hearing, and Professor Jasodhara Bagchi, Chairperson, West Bengal State Commission for Women, delivered the inaugural speech. She emphasized the importance of the Public Hearing, and said that such programmes provide a platform to people with disabilities to voice their problems which otherwise remain primarily unaddressed. Even within our educational framework such problems are rarely given due cognizance.

Professor Malini Bhattacharya, Member, National Commission for Women was the next speaker. She talked about the declining sex ratio which reflects the hurdles that a woman has to face even before she is born, and if she is born with a disability then her place in society is considered to be virtually negligible. She said that the objective of a Public Hearing should be to highlight the difficulties faced by women with disabilities, as well to focus on their efforts to lead a normal life by overcoming these disabilities.

Justice Samaresh Banerjea said that women in our society are denied of most of their rights and privileges. Though the Indian Constitution guarantees the Right to Equality to all its citizens, many women unfortunately are deprived of this right. Emphasizing the importance of a Public Hearing he said that women with disabilities can use this platform to make their voices heard. A public hearing gives them the opportunity to place their demands before the government and the society at large.

Professor Shefali Moitra, Director, School of Women's Studies suggested that a module on disability should be

introduced in the orientation/refresher courses that are organized for college and university teachers. In her opinion such a module would sensitize teachers to deal more empathetically with people with disabilities. Secondly, she pointed out that there are various other forms of disability which are not enlisted as disability; dyslexia being one of them. There is a need to review the disability list in order to make it more meaningful

because students suffering from dyslexia need writers during examination. This service is denied to them.

Significant issues that were raised in the Hearing included:

- a) communication problems due to sound pollution,
- b) feeling of insecurity in the public domain due to high levels of intolerance and lack of empathy,
- c) lack of support and co-operation while travelling in public transport,
- d) inability to access seats despite there being reserved seats for people with special?
- e) insensitive behaviour of the bus conductors,
- f) the need to modify the existing transport system, and introducing features such as low flooring, wider space for standing and keeping wheel chairs and so on, to make it easily accessible to challenged people,
- g) stipulation of a proper time frame for the proposed modifications,
- h) the problems of lengthy procedures for obtaining the disability card, denial of the card to mentally ill women, lack of special provisions for the severely challenged people, lack of sheltered workshops and expensive medicines etc.

The session came to an end with the decision that the proceedings of the Public Hearing would be sent to the jury members for their recommendations, and there after the final report would be sent to the National Women's Commission.

*(Paramita Bhattacharya
M.Phil ,1st year, School of Women's Studies, JU)*

U.G.C. Standing Committee on Women's Studies

A U.G.C. Standing Committee was constituted in April 2005 to look into the working of Women's Studies on a continuing basis. It includes Professor Vina Mazumdar (Chairperson), Professor Armaity Desai, Professor Imrana Qadir, Professor Sharmila Rege and Ms. Kameshwari Jandhyalaya . The Committee has been set up to review the current status of Women's Studies in the country and assess the role it has played in consistence with the objectives of the National Policy on Education. It will examine the new role of Women's Studies in the contemporary context with particular reference to the impact of liberalisation policies. It will also review the aims and objectives of Women's Studies in India; problems and issues in institutionalisation; resources and identities within the universities/research institutions; challenges posed by developments within science and technology; challenges of NGO-isation and increasing dependence on external funding, and the role of networks like IAWS. The process involves holding consultations across the country to procure feedback on issues and challenges faced by women's studies centres in different regions. All five regional consultations — Western, Southern, Northern, Eastern and North-Eastern — have already been held, and the following are the highlights from the reports from each region.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UGC REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS ON WOMEN'S STUDIES

WESTERN REGIONAL CONSULTATION SNDT Women's University, 10 September, 2005

1) Developing Guidelines for WS Programmes in the University System

- i) The UGC must develop clear guidelines to consolidate, expand and strengthen the Women's Studies programmes in the country. These guidelines should be based on the consensus arrived at through a process of consultations.
- ii) The guidelines for the development of Women's Studies programmes issued during the 9th Plan period had a greater degree of clarity than those issued for the 10th Plan period, hence the former should be made the basis for discussions on the new guidelines.

- iii) The papers emerging out of the various regional consultations should culminate in a collective perspective paper on 'Doing Women's Studies in the 21st Century: Experiences, Constraints and Possibilities'.

2) Enhancing the Research/Teaching Capabilities of the WSCs

- i) The UGC should issue a directive to universities asking them to admit students with NET/JRF qualifications in Women's Studies into the M.Phil/Ph.D programmes of the discipline in which the candidate has received his/her post-graduate degree too.
- ii) To raise the standard of Women's Studies scholarship, it is necessary to develop in the WSCs a culture of research. The rich data generated by three generations of feminist

scholarship in India needs to be consolidated and examined to delineate its methodology and epistemology. To achieve these aims:

- a) The UGC should sponsor Summer and Winter Institutes comparable to the refresher courses in Women's Studies at the WSCs.
- b) Faculty members who are on contractual appointments, should also be eligible to apply for major and minor research funds of the UGC.
- c) The 9th Plan guidelines had identified some WSCs as nodal centres to promote and strengthen research capacities in the newer centres. Centres, identified as phase three centres under the 9th Plan guidelines, should be given additional grants so that they could network and play a mentoring role for the development of the new WSCs.
- d) The UGC should encourage the various WSCs in each region to collaborate on research projects (similar to the Girl Child Project initiated by the Department of Women and Child, Government of India in 1991) that are of relevance to the region.
- e) The UGC should enable junior researchers to receive fellowships and in-house mentoring for a month in the advanced centres.
- f) Efforts must be made to introduce a compulsory integrated course on issues of human rights, environment and social change from the standpoint of Women's Studies as a foundation course at the undergraduate level. There should also be a compulsory course on feminist theory within the disciplinary framework of each discipline at the post-graduation level and compulsory course work in Women's Studies for those seeking to do M.Phil/Ph.D on topics related to gender issues.
- g) High quality teaching/learning materials should be developed in English and in regional languages to meet the needs of students.

3) Developing Institutional Structures to Enhance Capabilities of the WSCs

- i) Under the UGC grant-in-aid support to the Women's Studies programmes, the various appointments made by the WSCs are on a temporary/ ad-hoc basis. It was hoped that in due course the state governments would give concurrence to these posts. Since this has not happened, the UGC should allot tenured teaching and research positions under its Women's Studies programme.
- ii) If it is not possible to accept the above-mentioned resolution, the UGC should pressurize the various state governments to give concurrence to the faculty positions created by the UGC grant-in-aid programmes.
- iii) To facilitate the development of Women's Studies teaching programmes, the existing WSCs should be brought under a broad-based faculty of interdisciplinary studies and should be given statutory status under the Universities Act applicable for each state.
- iv) Some of the WSCs in each region with a proven track record of work should be given the status of Advanced Centres in Women's Studies.
- v) M.A. level courses and Ph.D. programmes in Women's

Studies should be made possible through special financial grant from the scheme of innovative teaching programmes of the UGC.

- vi) Structural reform should be implemented in the University system to ensure that teachers from other faculties can also be involved in the teaching of Women's Studies courses offered through the WSCs.

4. Documentation, Community Out-reach, Networking and Linkages

- i) Women's Studies scholars should have linkages with the various progressive women's groups and take an active part in promoting the debates on gender issues that emerge out of the movement. The WSCs also need to build their database to facilitate lobbying with the state agencies to improve women's situation, and provide data that would strengthen struggles for gender equality.
- ii) WSCs should have newsletters to disseminate research and teaching data.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

Bangalore University, 6 – 8 December, 2005

I. Academic

Women's Studies: Women's Studies should be considered as a discipline and its social responsibilities should be to improve women's status and facilitate the transformation towards gender equity etc.

Curriculum: There should be a review of curriculum with equal importance given to both theory and practice.

Practice Skills: The curriculum should include a field practice component to improve the employability of women's studies graduates.

Credit and Cafeteria System: If universities and colleges were to shift to the credit and semester system, women's studies could offer several optional courses in various disciplines.

Research: Emphasis should be on research projects, both self-initiated and sponsored, and applied and fundamental. Collaboration should be promoted between universities/colleges in order to develop regional and national databases and recommendations. It is also necessary to have special workshops and to promote quality research.

Field Action Projects (Extension): As academic institutions, our focus is not service but developing knowledge when undertaking such projects. These projects should be innovative, show process, and can have a component of action research followed up by studies a few years after the intervention in order to show impact and sustainability.

Publication: Readers/reference lists and annotated bibliographies, as well as reports and publications on field action projects should be prepared as they are important documents and would be useful in teaching and research too.

Focus on Affiliated Colleges: University departments/centres

should work more with the colleges to develop greater awareness on women's issues and develop interest in women's studies.

Faculty Development: Orientation programmes should be developed for teachers in women's studies and also for teachers of other disciplines to focus on the women's perspective in their respective disciplines

2. Administrative/Structural Problems

Place of Women's Studies and its Faculty: Women's Studies as a distinct teaching and research discipline needs to be a department and not a centre in the university. Hence, universities are requested to take necessary action to constitute departments with the Director as a full-time Head, and permanent, full-time Readers and Lecturers. Concurrence should be obtained from the state government for taking over the liability after the plan period, or the university should assure continuance from its own funds. In the colleges, a department can be set up on the approval of the state government/management, since the UGC is not involved in supporting college faculty through its plan grants.

Foundation Courses: The University must introduce a Foundation Course in Women's Studies separately, or develop a course, which integrates human rights, environment and women, as women's issues overlap with both human rights and environment.

Balancing Workloads: While the centres remain temporary, the Faculty Member who is appointed as Director should be given compensation in workload in the parent department.

Space: Adequate space for staff, and the necessary infrastructure, including the furniture, must be provided, as the grant does not include the same. Moreover, the area allocated should be sufficiently prominent so that women's studies will have the necessary visibility.

Channelling Funds: The university/college authorities must facilitate the release of funds, so that the department/centre can carry on its multifarious activities including research and field action projects.

Advertisements: Advertisements for Faculty positions should carry relevant qualifications for teachers in women's studies in the various disciplines as well as in women's studies.

Statutory Bodies and Committees: Heads and Faculty Members of women's studies departments or centres must be represented in university/college statutory bodies and committees.

3. Administrative Matters Related to the UGC

i). *Constitution of Departments:* In the XIth Plan, the UGC must convert all existing centres in universities into departments and institute new Faculty positions. The University must seek the concurrence of the state government or absorb the cost after the plan period.

ii) *Periodicity and Continuity of Grant:* Grants should be issued at regular intervals, and there should also be bridge grants for existing departments/centres from one plan to another until a new scheme comes into existence, to cover the continuing activities.

4. Other General Issues

i) *Networking:* A system of networking be set up between women's studies departments/centres.

ii) *NET and SLET:* Women's studies must be introduced by the state departments of higher education in the State Level Eligibility Test (SLET).

iii) *Distance Education:* Conventional and open universities should use the distance mode to develop programmes in women's studies.

iv) *Union and State Public Service Commissions:* The list of subjects should include women's studies and their advertisement should list the same.

NORTHERN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

Kurukshetra University, 12-14 December, 2005

The participants were of the opinion that regarding Women's Studies Centres and mainstream disciplines, it is vital to overcome the trap of thinking either in terms of 'integration' or 'autonomy'. Innovative combinations of the 'mainstream' and of available 'alternatives' must be attempted if Women's Studies is to deepen its understanding of patterns of gender discrimination. Recommendations made were as follows:

1. Strengthening Institutional Structures

For the UGC

i) XIth Plan UGC Guidelines on Women's Studies must be sent to the Women's Studies Centres well in time in order to give sufficient time to the centre to plan their activities.

ii) A Chair in Women's Studies may be established within the UGC in order to strengthen the focus of the Women's Studies Centres in the UGC.

iii) Members of the UGC Standing Committee on Women's Studies be invited to the Vice-Chancellor's Conference, to explain the vision of the UGC for the Women's Studies Centres in the universities.

iv) The President of the Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS) be a special invitee to the UGC Standing Committee in Women's Studies.

v) The UGC should intervene with the state governments to give concurrence to the Women's Studies Centres.

vi) Sanctioned Positions in the Women's Studies Centres should be made permanent and include a permanent Director and at least two other regular faculty members. Experience has shown that the State Government, principally due to lack of vision and other interests, does not permit or encourage universities to fill such UGC sanctioned positions. The UGC needs to address this problem.

vii) The UGC should give regular positions/posts for the Women's Studies Centres in the XIth plan to the Universities.

viii) The disbursement of grants to the Women's Studies Centres by the UGC be done in a time bound / regular manner in order to streamline the functioning of the Women's Studies Centres.

- ix) The grant for equipment may be made flexible to include furniture, library infrastructure etc.
- x) Library grant and publication grant needs to be enhanced.
- xi) One issue of the University News must be dedicated to "Women's Studies in India".

For the Universities

- i) The UGC may issue a general notification to the universities to include Women's Studies as a component in the mainstream subjects at the undergraduate and post-graduate level.

2. Curriculum Development in Women's Studies

For the UGC

- i) Women's Studies components be incorporated in all subjects of social sciences, humanities and sciences, law, management etc. at the undergraduate and post-graduate level.
- ii) Standard Text books be developed for the suggested courses and Curriculum Development Workshops should be organized by the UGC at the National / Regional level.
- iii) The University Grants Commission should take steps to identify Women's Studies as a subject in the Civil Services examination.

For the Women's Studies Centres

- i) Translations of teaching material in women's studies be done in the regional languages.

3. Teaching / Training in Women's Studies

For the UGC

- i) Introduction of short term and elective courses in Women's Studies for students of physical, biological sciences and engineering in select Universities.
- ii). Incorporate more Refresher Courses in Women's Studies in collaboration with the Academic Staff Colleges.

4. Research in Women's Studies

For the UGC

The UGC should encourage the various Women's Studies Centres in each region to collaborate on a research project that is of relevance to the region.

For the Women's Studies Centres

Research in Women's Studies should be both action and policy research. It should develop a knowledge base for policy planning.

- i) Workshops be organized in 'Feminist Research Methodology'.
- ii) Region-wise data bank of research of Women's Studies be prepared.
- iii) Research conducted in the various Women's Studies Centres be shared mutually.
- iv) There should be evaluation and impact studies of research undertaken by the Women's Studies Centres.

5. Documentation, Networking and Linkages

For the Women's Studies Centres

- i) Networking of Women's Studies Centres should be

extended to other university departments and institutions at the national and international level, government departments, donor agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs) and the media.

- ii). Compilation / Documentation of all published / completed research in Women's Studies Centres.
- iii). Preparation of state-wise directories of women in prominent positions.
- iv) The Centres should encourage the involvement of students in the activities of the Women's Studies Centre for advocacy / consciousness raising, organizing symposiums, street plays, folk theatre etc.
- v). Orientation and academic guidelines must be provided to newly established centres, and older centres must extend their active support to the former.

NORTH-EASTERN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

Women's Studies Research Centre, Gauhati University,
9-10 January, 2006

1. Collective Research Projects and Documentation

- i) Documentation of women's writings and their translation.
- ii) Documentation of women's movements in the North-east.
- iii) Collaborative research on forest and environment, women and peace processes and work participation and women's empowerment.
- iv) Research on women writers of the North-East in collaboration with existing literary organizations.
- v) Preparation of a Women's Studies/Feminist Reader with a regional focus.
- vi) Updating of data bank and Gender Audit of women in the North East
- vii) Impact of migration both internal and external.
- viii) Women in Agriculture in the north east
- ix) Impact of Globalisation on women in the North East

2. Extension

- i) Networking among the centres.
- ii) Cells to be established in every college, and training be organized for college cells and NGOs.
- iii) Collaborative projects involving the centres and women's organizations.

3. Seminars and Workshops

On Women's Writings

- i) To apprise women elected in local bodies, about their powers and functions.
- ii) On capacity building of women in higher education and at other levels
- iii) Women's Studies Centres should collaborate with other departments in organizing such workshops.

4. Teaching and Training

- i) Mandatory foundation courses should be introduced at the Undergraduate level.
- ii) Initiate M.Phil/Certificate courses.
- iii) Curriculum development and development of training and sensitization modules for different levels.
- iv) Development of a broad research methodology course
- v) Teachers to be trained with a view to ensuring conceptual clarity.
- vi) The UGC should open more WSRCs in the region.
- vii) Participants from Manipur and Meghalaya, Assam University and Tezpur University were specially keen on this.
- viii) For the older centres to function more effectively, the guidelines should clarify the position of the Director.
- ix) There need be clear instructions to the university/state government regarding the WSRC posts.

EASTERN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

University of Calcutta, 12-13 January, 2006

1. Institutional Issues

Full time faculty positions in Women's Studies should be instituted.

University Statutes and laws should be amended so that they acknowledge Women's Studies.

There should be rationalization of teaching and work load of the faculties who participate in Women's Studies.

Directors of Women Studies should be present in the Selection Committees for all posts in Women's Studies Centres.

The UGC as well as the universities should acknowledge and take into account work done towards advocacy, extension etc.

2. Documentation and Comparative Study of Women's Writings and Works

Interfacing of the University system and rural women's organizations figured prominently in the discussion, as did the comparative study of women's writings across different regions. It was stressed that interdisciplinarity as a concept has to be taken up and recognized in the Indian academic scenario. The lack of methodology in interdisciplinary studies is still a stumbling block today, and needs urgent attention. Women's Studies centres also need to adopt comparative methodology for research and pedagogy. The work done in this context by the Department of Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University was discussed and cited as a valuable resource for Women's Studies in India. The following recommendations were made:

- i) Networking be initiated between centres for documentation of women's writings and voices in regional languages, and also for translations.

- ii) Multidisciplinarity is not the same as interdisciplinarity – the difference needs to be recognized.
- iii) Comparative Methodology should be adopted for interdisciplinary research and for studying women's writings across India.
- iv) Full time positions and posts be created in the centres for documentation and publication.

3. Teaching and Pedagogy in Women's Studies

- i) A design needs to be produced for Basic Minimum Course Content at different levels.
- ii) Resource Materials should be prepared for teaching and learning.
- iii) The emphasis should be not on service, but on enhancing the academic component in action and advocacy - on research methodology; addressing emergent knowledge systems, and developing alternative models and strategies.
- iv) There is a critical need for designing new and comparative research methodologies, and enriching teaching programmes and encouraging sensitization of faculty, students, university and larger communities regarding the same.
- v) Criteria for acknowledgement of action and advocacy components should be defined.
- vi) The urgent need for space, equipment and infrastructure should be addressed.

4. Transition in UGC Guidelines

There is a significant departure from the Ninth Plan's conceptualization of women's studies in the transition to the Tenth Plan. In this context:

- i) Schemes in Women's Studies should not be left at trends and should be based more on consolidated long-term bases.
- ii) Universities as well as UGC should give priorities to existing centres and requirement of staff when they need and ask for it.
- iii) Permanent and full time faculty positions (at least two), with provisions for promotion, and a full time Director are required for each School/Centre.
- iv) The budget should be made more flexible as in the Ninth Plan Guidelines.
- v) There should be separate guidelines for the working of Women Studies Centres in the colleges.

5. Emerging Issues in Women's Studies, and Women and Science and Technology

- i) The university has always provided a platform for debates and persuasion regarding emerging issues. Such activities should be further encouraged. The word "extension" can be dropped from the Guidelines and the terms dissemination, initiating debates etc. can be used instead.
- ii) Feminist perspectives in science and technology need to be emphasized. More research should be encouraged on the effect of technology on women.

Women's Studies Centres and Schools

**CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES,
DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY,
Dibrugarh 786 004.
Ph: 0373 - 2370194
email : duwomenstudies@yahoo.co.in.**

- 1) *Human Rights and Women of North East India*, ed. Aparna Mahanta, Dibrugarh, 2002
- 2) Newsletters, Vol, 1-3

**WOMEN'S STUDIES RESEARCH CENTRE,
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA,
1, Reformatory Street, Kolkata 700027
Ph: 033 -24702861; email: wsrccu@vsnl.net**

1. *Women and Security: Eastern Regional Conference, IAWS (Abstract of Presentations), 2005*, Price: Rs. 10,
2. *Women Across Asia: Issues of Identities*: edited by Lipi Ghosh, Ishita Mukhopadhyay and Suchandra Chakraborty (2006) India, Gyan Publishing House. ISBN: 81-212-0872-6, Copyright: Women's Studies Research Centre, University of Calcutta & Indian Association for Asian and Pacific Studies, Kolkata. Price: Rs. 625.
3. *Women's Studies in the Emergent Indian Scenario*, [WRSC Series No.1] /Edited by Prof. Bharati Ray, 1990.
4. *Women and Science* [WSRC Series No.2] / Edited by Prof. Bharati Ray, 1990.
5. *Detecting Disadvantages: A Pilot Study of Scheduled Caste Women in Two Districts of West Bengal* / Project Director: Prof. Bharati Ray, 1994.
6. *Reflections of Society and Gender in the Nachni Dance* [Lost Voices Series: 1] /Ms. Urmimala Sarkar (Munshi), 2000.
7. *Disenfranchising the Devadasis: Law, Social Reform and the New Culture in the Madras Presidency* [Lost Voices Series: 2] / Dr. Lakshmi Subramanian, 2000.

8. *Marching by Candlelight: Sex workers and Women's Organizations in Calcutta* /Prof. Ratnabali Chatterjee, 2000. [Occasional Paper].

9. Sarala Devi Chowdhurani and Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain: *Stree Siksha and Samaj* [Women's education and organizing women power] /Prof. Bharati Ray, 2000. [Occasional Paper].

10. *Violence Against Women: A Popular Intervention* / Edited by Prof. Ishita Mukhopadhyay, 2002. Vyas Prakashani. Price: Rs.125.00. Limited copies are available in Women's Studies Research Centre.

11. *Women and Security: Eastern Regional Conference*, Indian Association for Women's Studies, 2005.

12. *The Journal of Women's Studies*: K.P. Bagchi. Copies and subscription available with K.P. Bagchi, Kolkata. Vol.1 No. 1 [April-September 1996] to Vol.3 No. 1&2 [April 1998-March 1999].

**SCHOOL OF WOMEN'S STUDIES,
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY,
Kolkata 700032, Ph & Fax : 033-24146531;
e-mail: swsju@rediffmail.com
swsju@yahoo.com**

Women Writers Reprint Series

- 1 *Raibari*, by Giribala Devi. Edited by Subir Roychowdhury and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1991. Reprint 2003, p. xvii+360, Rs. 130.00, ISBN 81-295-0081-7.
- 2 *Jyotirmoyee Devir Rachana Samkalan*. Edited by Subir Roychowdhury and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1991. Reprint 2002, p. [17]+511, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-7090-007-7.
- 3 *Hemantabala Devir Rachana Samkalan*. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1993. p [17]+339, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-7079-196-0.

- 4 *Chhabi Basur Rachana Samkalan*. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1995, p. [15]+443, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-7079-722-5.
- 5 *Satabarshe Ashalata Sen*. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1995, p. vii+95, Rs. 65.00, ISBN 81-85604-07-x.
- 6 *Anindita Devir Rachana Samkalan*. Edited by Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1997, p. [24]+590, Rs. 200.00, ISBN 81-7612-095-2.
- 7 *Purnashashi Devir Nirvachita Rachana*. Edited by Abhijit Sen and Arun Kumar Banerjee. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1998, p. [18]+419, Rs. 150.00, ISBN 81-7612-228-9.
- 8 *Radharani Devir Rachana Samkalan-I*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1999, p. [30]+339, Rs. 150.00, ISBN 81-7612-542-3.
- 9 Priyabala Gupta's autobiography, *Smriti Manjusha*. Edited by Ranjan Gupta. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1999, p. [12]+218, Rs. 85.00, ISBN 81-7612-575-x.
- 10 *Sabitri Rayer Nirbachita Rachana Samkalan*. Edited by Tanika Sarkar and Gargi Chakravarty, Calcutta : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 1999, p. 136, Rs. 60.00, ISBN 81-7612-558-x.
- 11 *Radharani Devir Rachana Samkalan-II*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, Calcutta; School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2000, p. 416, Rs. 150.00, ISBN 81-7612-636-5.
- 12 *Sukhalata Raoer Rachana Sangraha : Volume-I*. Edited by Jayeeta Bagchi. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Thema, 1999, p. 243, Rs. 125.00, ISBN 81-86017-17-8.
- 13 *Swarnakumari Devir Rachana Samkalan*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2000, p. 543, Rs. 220.00, ISBN 81-7612-694-2.
- 14 *Shailabala Ghoshjayar Galpa-Samkalan*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Calcutta : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2000, p. [14]+262, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-7612-693-4.
- 15 *Girindramohini Dasir Gadya-Samgraha*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2000, p. [21]+102, Rs. 50.00, ISBN 81-7612-729-9.
- 16 *Sukhalata Raoer Rachana Sangraha : Volume-II*. Edited by Jayeeta Bagchi, Calcutta, School of Women's Studies and Thema, 2000, p. 280, Rs. 150.00, ISBN 81-86017-18-6.
- 17 Jyotirmala Devi : *Bilet Deshta Matir O Ananya Galpa*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Calcutta : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2001, p. 134, Rs. 60.00, ISBN 81-7612-588-1.
- 18 *Jeevansmriti* by Sudakshina Sen, with an introduction by Sutapa Bhattacharya. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2002, p. 174, Rs. 80.00, ISBN 81-7612-844-9.
- 19 *Anurupa Devir Nirbachita Galpa*. Selected by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, with an introduction by Anuradha Chanda. Calcutta : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2002, p. 200, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-7612-997-6.
- 20 *Asomer Mahila Kathakar : Ekti Samkalan*. Translated by Anjali Lahiri, edited by Pranab Biswas, [a collection of short stories written by Assamese women writers and translated into Bengali]. Calcutta : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2003, p. 174, Rs. 80.00, ISBN 81-295-0126-0.
- 21 *Saraladevi Chaudhuranir Nirbachita Prabandha-Samkalan*. Selected by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, with an introduction by Jasodhara Bagchi. Kolkata: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2004, p. [14]+197, Rs. 125.00, ISBN 81-295-0274-7.
- 22 *Sarasibala Basur Nirbachita Galpo*. Compiled and edited by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Kolkata : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2004, p. 158, Rs. 75.00, ISBN 81-295-0205-4.
- 23 *Manorama* by Hemangini Devi [one of the earliest Bengali novels written by a woman]. Edited by Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta. Kolkata : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co, 2004, p. 76, Rs. 40.00, ISBN 81-295-0214-3.
- 24 *Sukhalata Raoer Rachana Sangraha : Volume-III*. Edited by Jayeeta Bagchi, Kolkata, School of Women's Studies and Thema, 2004, p. 404, Rs. 250.00, ISBN 81-86017-54-2.

25 *Krishnabhavini Daser Nirbachita Prabandha*. Compiled by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri. Kolkata : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co, 2004, p. 200, Rs. 100.00, ISBN 81-295-0318-2.

26 *Kamini Rayer Agranthita Gadyarachana*. Selected by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, with an introduction by Alope Ray. Kolkata : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2005, p. 144, Rs. 80.00, ISBN 81-295-0353-0.

27 Rajlaxmi Devya : *Kedar Badri Bhraman-Kahini o Anyanya Tirthachitra*. Selected by Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, with an introduction by Jayoti Gupta, Kolkata : School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co., 2005, p. 96, Rs. 60.00, ISBN 81-295-0393-x.

28 *Ashalata Singher Galpa-Samkalan* (in 2 volumes). Selected by Tapobrata Ghosh, Abhijit Sen and Anindita Bhaduri, with an introduction by Tapobrata Ghosh. Kolkata: School of Women's Studies and Dey's Publishing Co. (The first volume has been published in April, 2006 (p. 575, Rs. 300.00), the second volume will be out in July, 2006.

English Books

1. *Indian Women : Myth and Reality* (originally in mimeographed form). Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi. Calcutta: Sangam Books, 1995, p. 192 (with plates), Rs. 150.00, ISBN 81-7370-1105.

2. *Women, Heritage and Violence*. Edited by Shefali Moitra. Calcutta : Papyrus, 1996, p. 105 (with plates), Rs. 125.00.

3. *Right to Health: Towards Assuming it Oneself*. A Health Manual (in Bangla) on Women and Child, prepared by Krishna Banerjee. Calcutta: School of Women's Studies, 1996.

4. *What is Patriarchy* by Kamla Bhasin. Translated into Bangla by Paramita Banerjee and Debarati Sengupta, Calcutta : Stree, 1996, p. 43, Rs. 22.00, ISBN 81-85604-08-8.

5. *Loved and Unloved : Girl Child in West Bengal*. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi, Jaba Guha and Piyali Sengupta. Calcutta : Stree, 1997, p. xii+212, Rs. 350.00, ISBN 81-85604-20-7.

6. *The Trauma and the Triumph: Gender and Partition in Eastern India*. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi and Subhoranjan Dasgupta, Calcutta: Stree, 2003, p. vii+272, Rs. 500.00, ISBN 81-85604-55-x.

7. *Talking of Power : Early Writings of Bengali Women from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Edited by Malini Bhattacharya and Abhijit Sen. Calcutta: Stree in association with School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, 2003, p. 168, Rs. 450.00, ISBN 81-85604-66-5.

Occasional Paper Series

1. Occasional Paper 1, *Beneficiary Assessment of Poor Women in Rural West Bengal: The Case of Birbhumi*, Dilip Kumar Ghosh, 1996. (Out of Print).

2. Occasional Paper 2, *Coming of Women into Panchayati Raj*, Ashim Mukhopadhyay, 1996. Reprint 2002, p. 52, Rs. 30.00.

3. *Samakaler Prekshapatey Pritilata Waddedar*, Kanak Mukhopadhyay. Shahid Preetilata Waddedar Memorial Lecture-I, 1999, p. 115, Rs.40.00.

4. Occasional Paper 3, *The Experimental Generation, First Generation Indo-Canadian Women. A Case Study of the Ottawa Region*, Reba Som, 2001, p. 32, Rs. 20.00.

5. Occasional Paper 4, *Intertwining Identities : Gender and Ethnicity in the Politics of the Hill Women's Federation, Bangladesh*, Meghna Guhathakurta, 2001, p. 20, Rs. 20.00.

6. Occasional Paper 5, *Effects on Children Who Witnessed Abuse of Their Mothers*, Shampa Sengupta, 2001. Reprint 2005, p. 32, Rs. 30.00.

7. Occasional Paper 6, *Services for Girls and Young Women with Disabilities in Kolkata*, Jeeja Ghosh, 2003. p. 32, Rs. 25.00. (Out of Print)

8. Occasional Paper 7, *Articles on Women's Issues in the Economic and Political Weekly, 1997-2002: An Index*, Shrabani Majumdar (Compiled by), 2003, p. 40, Rs. 30.00.

9. *Bharater Sashastra Swadhinata Sangramey Banglar Biranganara (1905-39)*. Tirtha Mondal, Shahid Preetilata Waddedar Memorial Lecture-4, 2003, p. 48, Rs. 20.00.

10. *Aguner Parashmoni : Bharater Astra-Aine Dandita Pratham Nari Dukoribala Devi*, edited by Arun Chaudhury. Calcutta : Ababhas, in association with School of Women's Studies, 2003, p. 61, Rs. 35.00.

11. *Prachin Bharate Nari*, Ratnabali Chattopadhyay and Preeta Bhattacharya, *Samparka* : Sathik Itihasheer Khonje Series 1. Kolkata : Ababhas, in association with School of Women's Studies, 2004, p. 28, Rs. 20.00.

12. *Panchayat Prangane – Gram Panchayater Mohila Sadasyader Artho-Samajik Abosthan, Sangram o Mulyayan* by Ashim Mukhopadhyay, 2005, p. 79, Rs. 50.00.

13. Occasional Paper 8, *An Investigation into the Inter-Relationship Between Women's Empowement and Trafficking in Women and Children* by Bela Bandyopadhyay in association with Ramaprasad Bhattacharya, 2005, p. 88, Rs. 100.00.

Monographs (in English)

Kolkata for Women : A Critical Directory of Organizations Working on Women Within Municipal Kolkata. Edited by Jasodhara Bagchi, Debjani Sarkar, Manjula Bose and Jaba Guha. Revised and updated under the supervision of Malini Bhattacharya, School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, August 2004, p. 144, Rs. 100.00.

Mimeographs

1 A select list of the holdings of Women's Studies in the Jadavpur University Central Library has

been published in a mimeographed form (1990).

2 *Proceedings of the National Seminar on Curriculum Development in Women's Studies : An Interdisciplinary Approach* (held in March 1990) was brought out in mimeographed form in 1991. Compiled and edited by Shivani Banerjee Chakravorty.

3 A bibliography of the School's holdings on the Girl Child was brought out in September 1998 to commemorate the United Nations Week of the Girl Child. Prepared by Sarbani Goswami and Samita Ghosh Chakravorty.

4 A checklist on *Women and Globalisation*. Prepared by Sarbani Goswami and Shrabani Majumdar, 2001.

Newsletter

Nineteen volumes of the School of Women's Studies *Newsletter* have been published highlighting the School's activities, faculty research and teaching, and features by students and faculty members. The *Newsletter* has greatly facilitated the networking objectives of the School and has acted as a catalyst for generating research and discussion on Women's Studies among faculty and students within Jadavpur University.

We are also in the process of publishing an annual volume in collaboration with Tulika, New Delhi, entitled *Perspectives in Women's Studies*. The first in the series was published in 2004 entitled *Globalization*, edited by Malini Bhattacharya, p. xi + 173, Rs. 295.00, ISBN 81-85229-87-2.

Call for Publication Lists of Women's Studies Centres and Schools

All Centres and Schools of Women's Studies are requested to e-mail a list of their publications, complete with ISBN no. (if any), no. of pages and price, to kavip@vsnl.com. Please include the address, phone number and e-mail address of the School or Centre to be contacted for procuring these publications.

Engendering Research and Action :Millenium Development Goals

Women's Studies Research Centre, University of Calcutta

A workshop was held at Women's Studies Research Centre, University of Calcutta on December 17, 2005 on "Engendering MDGs", to discuss the future course of research and action on the MDGs.

The Millennium Development Goals(MDG), which world leaders accepted and adopted at the September 2000 UN Millennium Summit, represents a vision for improving the lives of the world's people. Eight MDGs were targeted to be achieved by 2015. The goals were as follows:

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

The Millennium Declaration has the potential to carry forward the Beijing Agenda and also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The development of women and children is specifically mentioned in Goal 3. Discussions have already been initiated throughout the world regarding gender considerations relating to all the other goals too. Assessments of whether gender and development agenda are fully captured in the goals, and of their applicability in developing economies, are also under way. The keynote address was given by Prof. Pam Rajput. A paper on Women's Empowerment was presented by Dr. Mukul Mukherjee, WSRC; on Property Rights and Women by Dr. Nandini Bhattacharya Panda, WSRC; and on Work and Property Rights by Prof. Sanchari Roy Mukherjee of North Bengal

University. Issues centering around Problems of Engendering were discussed by Prof. Rooprekha Verma of Lucknow University, Prof. Archana Sharma of Guwahati University, Prof. Ishita Mukhopadhyay of University of Calcutta, and Dr. Dipankar Sinha of University of Calcutta.

A framework for research was proposed at the workshop. Participants agreed to work on it further, and meet at a dissemination seminar in 2006.

The following is the framework on the basis of which the research will be undertaken.

1. Conceptualising Development and Engendered Development.

- a. Critique of the Development Approach in terms of Macroeconomic Growth Strategy designed in MDGs and substantiation of the critique from examples.
- b. Towards the Alternative View of Development keeping in mind the emerging alternative towards Approach towards Development throughout the globe.

2. Evaluating the Status on The Question of Gender with Respect to Goals 1-7.

- a. Conceptualising poverty and alternative approach towards poverty. (Goal 1)
- b. Quality, Structure, Content and Coverage of education to be discussed extensively.(Goal 2)
- c. Evaluation of the Policy Approaches towards Women Empowerment in India and elsewhere and redefining the whole question of women empowerment from the analysis.(Goal 3)
- d. Right to survival, life and health.(Goal 4,5, 6)
- e. Sustainability of environment

The goal of global partnership is to be critiqued on the ground that partnership in the form of hegemony is not partnership, but a story of subordination and domination. Hence it is to be reviewed in terms of the impact of market and global forces on engendered development.

Call for Announcements and Reports

Announcements or Reports of courses, fellowships, seminars, conferences, consultations, hearings, workshops, etc. related to Women's Studies are welcome for publication in the IAWS Newsletter. Please send them to kavip@vsnl.com , and do try to keep them brief (usually approx.350 words), or they may have to be edited. The Editorial Committee will select the most relevant submissions for each issue.

BOOK NEWS

Fluid Bonds: Views on Gender and Water

Edited by Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt

Divided into four parts, the book considers global discourses on water; water culture and the economy; water, time and place; and water, women and agency. It highlights the achievements and failures, in both developed countries and developing countries, and urges the mainstreaming of gender in the water sector.

Stree/Samya; Demy octavo hb 504pp

ISBN 81-85604-70-3 Rs 650

Harvest Song: A Novel on the Tebhaga Movement by Sabitri Roy

Translated by Chandrima Bhattacharya and Adrita Mukherjee, Foreword by Tanika Sarkar

Sabitri Roy's trilogy, *Paka Dhaner Gan*, translated for the first time into English, provides an epic panorama of rural Bengal of the late 1930s and 1940s, encompassing the freedom movement, war and the Tebhaga movement. While focusing on a momentous social revolt, Roy weaves in the lives of young women and men wrestling with political commitment and the search for personal fulfilment.

Stree/Samya; Demy octavo pbk 390 pp

ISBN 81-85604-50-9 Rs. 350

Naishabda Bhenge: Atmakathane Bharatiya Nari,

Ishita Chakravarti, Barnali Pain and Krishna Bandyopadhyay

An anthology presenting memoirs and writings by women, of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, translated for the first time from other Indian languages into Bengali.

Stree/Samya with Khoj Ekhon; Demy octavo pbk

ISBN 81-85604-83-5 Rs150

Torn from the Roots: a Partition memoir, Kamla Patel

Translated by Uma Randeria from the original Gujarati

A first-hand account by Kamla Patel of Operation Recovery, which was carried out by the newly constituted governments of India and Pakistan in 1947, to recover women and children who had been abducted in the riots during the Partition. This is a memoir of the three years that she spent in Pakistan and the camps she ran for rescued women in Lahore, Amritsar and Jalandhar.

Women Unlimited; Demy 8vo pp 262 Hb

Rs. 350 ISBN: 81-88965-27-8

Men's Laws, Women's Lives: A constitutional perspective on religion, common law and culture in South Asia,

Edited by Indira Jaising

In all five countries of South Asia, constitutional guarantees of equality and non-discrimination are confounded by discriminatory personal laws that institutionalise gender inequality. The essays in this volume highlight the striking

universality of women's inequality in South Asia, and the failure of our states to secure socio-economic, political and human rights for their female citizens.

Women Unlimited; Demy 8vo 400pp Hb

Rs. 500 ISBN: 81-88965-07-3

Issues In Contemporary Indian Feminism: Gender & Censorship

Edited by Brinda Bose

The debate on censorship in India has hinged primarily on two issues—the depiction of sex in the various media, and the representation of events that could, potentially, lead to violent communal clashes. This volume traces the trajectory of debates over the last 25 years around the issue of gender and censorship.

Women Unlimited; Demy 8vo pp 368 Hb

ISBN: 81-88965-14-6 Rs. 495

Feminist Futures: Re-imagining Women, Culture and Development

Edited by Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Johan Foran and Priya Kurian

As globalization and the failure of development have led to the feminization of poverty, and endangered the environment, global peace and security, development studies has reached a theoretical impasse. The contributors to this book articulate a new theoretical framework — Women, Culture and Development — and apply it to a range of issues; and through shorter think pieces, present their ideas for the future.

Zubaan; 328 pp, hardcover,

ISBN 81 89013 61 0, Rs 495.00

The Women, Gender & Development Reader

Edited by Nalini Visvanathan, Lynn Duggan, Laurie Nisonoff and Nan Wieggersma

Third World studies were long the undervalued and ignored actors in the development process but are recognized by scholars, practitioners and policy makers alike as playing a critical role. As the first comprehensive reader for undergraduates and development practitioners, this book presents a wide ranging selection of the now vast body of literature that has grown up alongside this acknowledgment.

Zubaan; 410 pp, hardcover,

ISBN 81 89013 32 7, Rs 595.00

Fragments of a Life: A Family Archive

Mythili Sivaraman

This painstakingly researched narrative of Mythili Sivaraman's grandmother, Subbalakshmi, married at 11 and a mother by 14, reflects both the wider context and the intimate details of her life. It sheds light on early twentieth century Tamil Brahmin culture and its strong silencing of women's voices. It explains the way in which silence and secrecy become an armour and a survival strategy for women.

Zubaan; 222 pp, hardcover,

ISBN 81 89013 11 4, Rs 385.00

Memories, Personal and Political

1. Vidya Munsu *In Retrospect: War time Memories and Thoughts on Women's Movement*. Kolkata: Manisha, 2006. Pp. 272. Price: Rs. 250.00.
2. Ashoka Gupta *In the Path of Service: Memories of a Changing Century*. Translated from the Bengali by Sipra Bhattacharya with Ranjana Dasgupta. Kolkata: Stree, 2005. Pp. x+254. Price : Rs. 450.00.
3. J. Devika (Translated from the Malayalam and edited) *Her-self: Gender and Early Malayalam Writings of Malayalee Women*. Kolkata: Stree, 2005. Pp. xxxi+181. Price: Rs. 450.00

Women's autobiographies, particularly those dating from the nineteenth century, have been sharply distinguished from men's, the latter staking claim to the genre of history, *caritra*, individualised biographies of the nation, while the former had more modest ambitions as testimonies of an interiorised faith. *Women Writing In India* brought to light the full range of subject positions and writing styles that women occupied even in this period, and it is perhaps a sign of the significance of feminist thought in the Indian public sphere that such distinctions are increasingly difficult to maintain for the twentieth century.

Of the books under review, Vidya Munsu's is a collection of writings that record a full public life, subordinating all private details to the historical narrative of great moments such as the world war and the international struggles of the Communist Party. Ashoka Gupta, on the contrary, records every little detail of her private life since it constituted her public life in fundamental ways up to the present day. Devika's selection of writings by 29 Malayalee women between the 1890s and the 1930s testifies to the new public space that was being claimed in Kerala on questions that were deeply personal: however, only two of the chosen writings are autobiographical, (Manntaraveetil Lakshmy Amma and Vatakkecharuvil P.K.Kalyani) of which the latter is an appeal to join the Vaikam Satyagraha (1924-25), the rest polemical or exhortatory.

Vidya Munsu's politicisation occurred amidst the privileges of being a student in Britain in the period leading to World War II, a member of the Indian Student's group in London. Politicisation altered her life forever, and she realised that being a communist was not compatible with being a doctor (p. 254). In her

memoirs, which include writings from about the 1980s to the present, (dates of the writings are nowhere given) she is always compelled to defend the role of the communists in the wartime by speaking of their sacrifice (the account of Frank Thompson's martyrdom in Bulgaria is one such attempt, pp. 31-38). Her own politicisation occurred through initiatives from above, through participation in the communist youth festivals, international congresses, and women's commissions.

There is an unselfconscious assumption of privilege in Munsu's writings, though the spirit of internationalism she recreates is truly of the past. Equally interesting is the gradual loosening of the frames within which she views the problems faced by women world over: in her early writings there is no mention of the term patriarchy and women's experience of all forms of domestic tyranny (for instance) is described as "feudal vestiges" (p.66) or "medieval backwardness" (p.80). Only long after her descriptions of visits to various socialist countries, from Cuba to Hanoi, which are uniformly praised for their achievements, does she reveal a shift in her understanding of the women's question, by acknowledging the importance of patriarchy as a concept which "has survived capitalism and seems even capable of surviving socialism." (p.266) Yet Munsu, though bending a little towards the insights and struggles of the autonomous women's movements is steadfast in her primary loyalty to the communist movement. This is revealed in the most interesting part of the book, a long interview with Samita Sen.

No wonder the extraordinary mobilisation of European women during the World War, and the social arrangements that were made to aid this "industrial reserve army", are merely mentioned in passing by Munsu. Many women in Kerala, however, as Devika's book shows, were deeply inspired and emboldened by

the multiple roles that women performed even in the first world war. The visibility of women during both the world wars was useful ammunition against the many anti-feminist writings that proliferated in the early twentieth century.

Ashoka Gupta's autobiography strikes a different note, one that is detailed in its description of the private, is relatively untouched by ideology, and yet is a deep and touching reflection on the transformations in her own conception of the women's question, primarily through an engagement with social work. Gupta, whose early training as a Girl Guide was to stand her in good stead through the hard times of the Bengal famine, the communal riots of 1946 and partition, is a fascinating figure because she emerges from the privileges and protections of the large household to develop a work ethic that does not as occasion demands, hesitate to put family concerns aside. During the seven months that she spent in Noakhali in 1946-7, she was accompanied by her youngest daughter, but left two other children in the care of her husband at Chittagong. (In Noakhali, 1947, she even absent mindedly forgot to pick up her daughter from where she had left her! p.109) Although her life too was relatively privileged, some hardships notwithstanding, there is warmth and empathy in her reports on the trauma of abducted girls, (p. 108); a touching sense of shock at the passing over of Subhas Chandra Bose's election in 1938 "Just like that! Before our eyes!" (p. 63); openly voiced regret about the fate of women who have no paid employment (p. 216) and frank admission of failure despite the fullness of this life (p.108).

Gupta employs no large theoretical categories, whether of class or ideology, yet is penetrating in her insights about the upper class background of the AIWC women (p. 84); the inequities in the distribution of central aid between Punjab and Bengal; and social dignity and status, rather than fear for life, as the chief reasons for Hindu migration away from E. Pakistan.

These two accounts point to very different forms of individuation, one that is shaped by and even subordinated to a broader, and not necessarily feminist, ideology, whose inadequacies in understanding the women question are acknowledged, the other which is unashamed of viewing the "merry go round" of domestic duties as the training ground for a life of service to the wider community.

The Kerala narratives are much more varied in social background, class and caste, and include accounts of

Christian, Muslim and Ezhava women. The overwhelming number of writings here are fiercely polemical, words of women finding a voice to combat a growing opposition to women's education, property rights, or freedom of movement. Despite the difficulties in tracking the authors of some writings, whose sharp edge and reasoned argument have even led some to assume that they were written by men, Devika maintains that "what makes these texts interesting ultimately is not so much the femaleness of the authors as the fact that they all make appeals to speak on behalf of or espouse a politics allegedly of "Women" as a distinct group, with recognisable commonness of inclination, interests and rights." (p. xxx) Most of the women belong to the Nair community, easily among the castes that witnessed some of the most dramatic changes to family and private life. These writings however retain no illusions about matriliney having favoured women, or about the promises the changes held out; and the most systematic demystification of matriliney is in Anna Chandy's "On Women's Liberation" (1929).

There is in these writings striking and frequent reference to the Puranic literature (and this is true of even writers such as Anna Chandy) and role models such as Sita, Savitri, and Sheelavati, as exemplars who deserve to be severely critiqued, but on the idea of a classical past where "women were honoured" there is less doubt. It is striking that in a society that has long had significant populations of Christians and Muslims, there are no "universal models" from those religious traditions. Even so, the debates on whether "swantantryam" (which the translator renders as "self means for freedom" rather than the simpler "freedom") is to be attained or already attained compel women to define it on their own terms, rather than on those set by the men (p. 61). These discussions, which may not be about a classical past, are far from complacent about the ready rewards of education of women.

The books point to very different paths that have been struck by women in the fashioning of the self throughout the twentieth century. Publishers such as Stree must be congratulated for their selections of authors and elegant production. The same cannot be said about the book by Munsri, which in addition to being replete with errors, typographical and factual, nowhere provides the dates of the articles, and leaves the reader wondering about the logic of their selection.

Janaki Nair ; jnair4@vsnl.net

*Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences,
Kolkata*

Betty Friedan

Betty Friedan (born 1921) who passed away on 5th February 2006 is acknowledged to be one of the founding mothers of the Second Wave of Western Feminism. Friedan's fame rests primarily on her first book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). She also wrote an autobiography, *It Changed My Life* (1976) and *The Second Stage* (1982). Friedan was the co-founder and the first president of National Organization for Women (NOW), which was set up in 1966 with the aim of attaining economic and civic equality. Interestingly, Friedan opposed vociferously the introduction of sexuality and lesbianism as political issues in the agenda of NOW in 1969, but subsequently acknowledged her error. At the 1977 conference held in Houston, Texas, to ratify the United Nations 'Platform for Women' she seconded the motion supporting lesbian rights. The motion was passed in what became a historic moment for lesbian rights and the U.S. Women's movement.

The Feminine Mystique epitomizes the Radical Feminist belief, "the personal is political", by drawing upon the personal experience of American housewives of the 50's, to analyze how capitalism and patriarchy colluded in the oppression of women through the construction of a certain notion of ideal femininity. An entire generation of apparently bright university educated middle-class young women had jettisoned their intellectual ambitions and professional careers for marriage and motherhood because they had internalized the patriarchal ideology that true feminine fulfillment lay in being the suburban housewife, proud of bonny babies, a successful husband and a picture-perfect home. However, within this claustrophobic domesticity women began to suffer from sleeplessness, nervous disorder and depression; they went to marriage counsellors and psychiatrists to cure "the problem that had no name"—the title of the 1st chapter of Friedan's book. *The Feminine Mystique* changed the lives of thousands of American women, and inspired them to join the women's movement¹. In *The Second Stage* Friedan took up a radically different position, advocating that feminists reclaim the family and draw more men into the movement by addressing child care, parental leave, and flexible work schedules.

Feminists, like Rosemary Tongs and Bell Hooks², have criticized *The Feminine Mystique* for its blinkered vision that focuses solely on the experience of white middle class heterosexual educated women and turns it into a universal condition of women's oppression. According to them Friedan ignored the problems and needs of millions of working class, poor, non-white women as well as lesbians or women who chose to be single. Friedan's politics is therefore seen as liberal-bourgeois and reactionary. It is noteworthy that during her

student days Friedan was active in radical left politics. Recounting her engagement in politics of the late 40's, she had written that to be a radical in 1949 implied concern about "the Negroes and the working class, the Un- American Activities Committee and McCarthy and loyalty oaths, and Communist splits and schisms... but you certainly didn't think about being a woman, politically."³ Yet within fourteen years Friedan had executed a U turn from this radical position and focussed her attention exclusively on the oppression of middle class women. It has been argued however that Friedan's moderate liberal bourgeois politics has to be understood in the context of the Communist witch-hunt of McCarthy's regime — Friedan's position was a canny defense of the women's movement, which would otherwise have been jeopardized.⁴ In the nineties Friedan shifted focus again, to issues of ageism and economic empowerment, indicating that women as a separate interest group were not her concern anymore.

“ By the mid-fifties, 60 percent dropped out of college to marry because they were afraid too much education would be a marriage bar. Colleges built dormitories for 'married students', but the students were almost always the husbands. A new degree was instituted for the wives-PhT (putting husbands through) ”

The Feminine Mystique.

The debate about the paradoxes that characterize Friedan's politics may not have much relevance for the working class woman or the contemporary feminist academic alike, but the issues raised by *The Feminine Mystique* continue to have bearings for a large number of middle-class educated women who still remain enchanted by the mystique of marriage in the hope of "feminine fulfillment".

Swati Ganguly; swati33_g@yahoo.co.uk
Sr Lecturer in English, Department of English & Other Modern European Languages, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

(Footnotes)

¹ Anne Quindlen, Introduction to *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), p.x.

² Bell Hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), pp. 1-2 and Rosemary Tong, *Feminist Thought* (Boulder, Coloumbia: Westview Press, 1998), p. 26

³ Betty Friedan, "The Way We Were...1949" in *It Changed My Life: Writings on the Women's Movement* (New York: Dell, 1976), p. 27

⁴ Daniel Horowitz, *Betty Friedan and the Making of The Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War and Modern Feminism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), pp. 241-3, p. 322

Current Research in Women's Studies

Searching the Cyberspace: A Gendered Subjectivity?

This study explores the space of virtual reality, virtual (or real?) relationships, and the virtual world, as well as the ways in which their modes of representation mediate between the Self and the Other, the State and the Citizen, and between Patriarchy and the Individual. Focussing on India, it analyses the ways in which these relationships are worked out through this space, through the applications we use, and through the tools provided by the 'benevolent' system. What is the politics of this space, and what is the interplay between identities? If the internet creates its own subject, then what is its gender politics? The play between genders in a chat room will be an area of special interest. I examine how the system of representation on screen, the methods of participation, and the tools provided by the web developer are themselves gendered. This work also assesses how this space works for peripheral communities such as those of the trans or homosexual.

Spandana Bhowmik (2005-07) 98311 40861

spandana_139@yahoo.co.in

M.Phil, School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University

Portrayal of Women in HIV/AIDS Campaign in West Bengal: A Social Analysis

HIV/AIDS is much more than a disease today; it is a global 'pandemic'. It poses development problems, which deepen social and gender inequities. So dissemination of information calls for a people-inclusive approach that goes beyond just medical intervention, is rigorous and integrated, and focuses on specific issues of sexuality, gender inequality, stigma and discrimination, economic progress and others. In recent years what has further complicated the problem of AIDS is that it has become 'feminised' globally. Women are especially vulnerable to HIV not only because of their anatomies but also due to the social, economic, cultural and political specificities of their lives. My research attempts to explore the portrayal of women in HIV/AIDS campaigns in West Bengal, through a focus on 'Buladi', the most pervasive campaign on this issue in the mass media in West Bengal. Woman, in this campaign, is portrayed in multiple roles including that of a key educator. This study will address these images / portraits of women in the larger context of social status, health and other development

factors in West Bengal.

Sreerupa Sengupta, 98301 56940; puplisen@rediffmail.com

M.Phil, School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University

A Comparative Study of the Literary Representation of Sexworkers in Bangla and Hindi Fiction and their Self-Representation in Oral Narratives (1947 onwards)

My Ph.D thesis begins with a discussion on the socio-cultural and historical background of sex work in Lucknow, Delhi and Calcutta in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It then maps the construction of sex-workers in literary discourse in Hindi and Bangla fiction and analyses the constructions of self and multiple identities in the oral narratives of sex-workers. It concludes with a comparative analysis of the trajectory of Hindi and Bangla literary production after 1947 both in relation to each other, and in relation to the oral narratives. As comparative feminist literary scholarship, this study foregrounds the sex-worker's representations of herself and the society she inhabits, and aims to create a political space for women sex-workers' perspectives within the social and literary constructions of knowledge.

Seemantini Gupta, 98301 88341; seemantini@rediffmail.com

Guest Lecturer in Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University

Partition, Migration and Resettlement : The Experience of Women in Bengal 1947-1964

This Ph.D thesis focuses on Bengal in the years immediately following the Partition of India in 1947, and the first waves of migration of the 'refugees' from East Pakistan into India — into the city of Calcutta and the *mofussils*. It explores the way the undivided Communist Party of India (C.P.I.) entered into the daily lives of the migrants and the role of the refugee women in this process. It focuses on the experiences of women as victims of the violence, of displacement, and then of resettlement. It also addresses how women who joined the C.P.I. perceived their role as part of the C.P.I. — and assesses whether they saw it as an extended version of their domestic roles, or whether it constituted a public domain for them.

Tista Das, 98317 37307; das.tista@gmail.com

Fellow, Dept. of History, Calcutta University

Call for Research Briefs

Please send brief summaries of ongoing research in Women's Studies to kavip@vsnl.com We specially welcome submissions from Ph.D and M.Phil scholars and research students, as the aim is to create a research forum in which young scholars can share their work and experiences of doing research in Women's Studies with each other. Teachers and supervisors are requested to encourage their researchers in Women's Studies to send in synopses of their theses/projects to the Newsletter. Each entry should be of approximately 125-150 words, and carry in addition the title of the thesis/research project as well as the name, institutional affiliation, e-mail address and phone number of the scholar.

CONFERENCE CALL

THE SEVENTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS **Towards a Politics of Justice: Affirming Diversities, Resisting Divisiveness** *Venue: Salt Lake Stadium, Kolkata , 9-12 September, 2006*

A Call to ALL Women

We, women from various women's groups and movements invite you ALL to the 7th National Conference to be held in Kolkata from 9-12 September, 2006. We are women from different caste, class, sexuality, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds having different feminist, political persuasions coming together to collectively shape the conference.

The National Conferences have a vision of an alternative society — a society that is free from violence and discrimination, and upholds gender, caste and class equality, social justice, diversity, dignity and peace. Over the years the conferences have evolved as a space in which we come together and jointly share and express our ideas, concerns, politics, struggles and campaigns. Since 1980, when the first National Conference was held in Mumbai, we have witnessed six National Conferences. The subsequent meetings have evolved with growing numbers and strength, and have sharpened our politics while traversing different regions/ cities from Mumbai, Patna, Calicut and Tirupati to Ranchi.

In 2006, we gather again to share and reflect on our experiences and hopes, take note of changes, recollect struggles and collectively map the landscape of the coming times. We hope that this conference will be a reflection of the history of the women's movements and other social movements in India and give visibility to the continuing resistances and struggles for justice, equality and liberation.

While we believe that as women we share common interests, struggles and goals we also realize that our caste, class, religion, ethnicity, sexuality etc. as social constructs interplay and create multiple identities for many of us. Hence, we remain committed to recognizing these multiple identities and the commonalities that we share while resisting the marginalization, divisions and contradictions created by the politics of identity.

The National Conference calls on all women who are struggling against different forms of oppressions to affirm diversities, resist divisions and collectively evolve a vision of equality and social justice.

ABOUT US

We are part of the autonomous groups, formed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which began their political journey with the anti rape, dowry murders and amniocentesis campaigns. We define autonomy in terms of maintaining institutional and ideological independence from political parties, governments and funding agencies that have only seen women either as a constituency; as agents of their agendas and as beneficiaries and recipients of their welfare/development/empowerment programmes.



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DAY 1 - Afternoon

Opening Plenary
History of the National Conference
Cultural Performances

DAY 2

Parallel Sessions - Thematic Discussions

Main focal themes - Globalisation, Fundamentalism, Family and Violence .

Identity based groups along certain axes of oppression include:

- Religious Minorities
- Workers: Agricultural/ Informal/ Formal Sector and Unpaid Labour
- Caste Groups
- Displaced People
- Women in Sex Work/ Prostitution
- Women Living Under State Violence
- Differently Abled Persons
- Survivors of Violence
- Sexual Minorities
- Ethnic Groups
- Indigenous People

DAY 3

Parallel Sessions – Thematic Discussions

On Resistances and Strategies.

Groups will be formed based on the four main themes and sub themes.

DAY 4 - BUS RALLY

The National Conference does not have a permanent structure but is re-formed every 3 to 5 years for the purpose of holding the next conference and then disbands itself. It consists of a larger body representing the Conference and a smaller working group called the National Coordinating Committee or NCC. Prior to every conference, the NCC reconvenes and collectively inducts new members. Fund raising for the Conference is done by the committee with the help of other organizations through donations and registration fees.

The National Conference does not directly seek or accept funds from any funding agency. Funds are raised through donation and registration fee. You could also contribute to the process by collecting donations. Send your contributions through Demand Drafts/ Money Orders drawn in the name of "Sanlaap, A/c 7th National Conference of Autonomous Women's Movements in India". In order to participate you are required to register.

The last Date for Registrations is 15th August 2006
The Registration fee is Rs 500 for 3 nights and 4 days with accommodation in dormitories, food and conference spaces. The Registration forms are available with the Pre-Registration Committee at :

JAGORI

B-114 Shivalik , Malviya Nagar , New Delhi- 110017
 .Tel: 91 11 26691219 ;
 Telefax: 91 11 26691221;
 Email: nationalconference_2006@yahoo.com

Please send the completed forms to the above address. Please do not send cheques or cash. JAGORI will send you a receipt and registration number, which you need to show when you come to the Conference venue.

BOOKSAND CRAFTS STALLS

Participants are invited to book stalls for displaying their books and products. There will be a renting charge per stall. Please contact: Sanhita@cal.vsnl.net.in

VIDEOANDTHEATRE

Participants can feature their videos, theatre performances and songs at the conference by booking space and time. Please contact: pointofview@vsnl.com

The NCC raises funds for the National Conference through donations and registration fees. There will be a nominal charge for booking stalls and space for performances. As a policy we do not seek corporate sponsorships and donor agency grants.

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Name/s _____

Organisation_____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Fax/Telephone No _____

Number of Participants _____

Nature of Organisation _____

Per Person Registration Fee is Rs.500/-

The fee amount covers accommodation in dormitories, food and conference spaces. Registration Fees for Non Indians is Rs 1000 for all 4 days, inclusive of food but without accommodation

No. of Participants _____

Total Amount _____

- Please make a demand draft in favour of: "Sanlaap, A/c 7th National Conference of Autonomous Women's Movements in India" and mail it to:
 JAGORI
 B-114 Shivalik
 Malviya Nagar
 New Delhi- 110017
 Tel: 91 11 26691219
 Telefax: 91 11 26691221
 Email: nationalconference_2006@yahoo.co.in
- Please do not send cheques or cash. JAGORI will send you a receipt and registration number, which you need to show when you come to the Conference venue.

IAWS Membership Form

Name (in full) :

Address for Communication :

City Pin Code State

Telephones (Office/Home/Mobile)

E-mail :

Education:

Affiliation / Vocation :

Interest in Women's Studies (Please tick categories applicable)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Organisation and Activism | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Media and Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other (please specify) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Administration of Programmes | |

Type of Membership (Please tick category applicable)

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary | <input type="checkbox"/> Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional (Ordinary) | <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional (Life) | |

Membership

Individual Ordinary

Individual Life

Institutional Ordinary

Institutional Life

Student (Age limit 18-25)

SAARC Region

Friends of the Association

Subscription

Rs.700/- for 3 years

Rs.1,500/-

Rs.5,000/- for 3 years

Rs.10,000/-

Rs.250/- for 3 years (*Proof of age and student identification to be attached.*)

US Dollars equivalent of Rs.700/- for 3 years

US dollars 100 will be welcome

The ordinary/student memberships run from 1st April of year one to 31st March of year three.

Subscriptions must be made out to the '**Indian Association for Women's Studies**' through a Money Order/ Demand Draft (or a cheque payable at par in New Delhi). Please ensure that the Membership form is completed in all respects and that it is sent to the following address:

C. P. Sujaya

IAWS Treasurer

c/o Centre for Women's Deelopment Studies 25, Bhai Vir Singh Marg, New Delhi 110001.

Details of subscription amount paid (e.g. DD no., amount and date)

Place:

Date:

Signature:

THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES (IAWS)

The Indian Association for Women's Studies was established in 1982 by a resolution adopted by the first National Conference of Women's Studies, held in Mumbai in April 1981. IAWS is registered under the Registrar of Societies (No.S/12936 New Delhi) and under FCRA. The Association provides a forum for interaction among institutions and individuals engaged in teaching, research or action. The membership includes educational and social welfare organisations, and individual academics, researchers, students, activists, social workers, media persons and others concerned with women's issues, and with women's development and empowerment.

One of the major activities of IAWS is organising a National Conference of Women's Studies once every two / three years focusing on a particular theme and several sub-themes. Hundreds of members from all-over India and some from other countries in South Asia attend the National Conference. Ten Conferences have been held at: Mumbai, Thiruvanthapuram, Chandigarh, Waltair (Vishakapatnam), Jadavpur (Kolkata), Mysore, Jaipur, Pune, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar and Dona Paula (Goa). Themes have included: 'Women's Struggles and Movements', 'Women's Perspectives on Public Policies', 'Sustaining Democracy: Challenges in the New Millenium' etc.

Membership :

IAWS members can

- II** *initiate activities along with the Association in an effort to augment IAWS interaction, networking, research, documentation and dissemination objectives;*
- II** *participate in various activities and conferences organised by the Association;*
- II** *participate in running the Association by voting on the membership of the Executive Committee and standing for the elected offices;*
- II** *contribute to and receive a periodic Newsletter that disseminates information about Association activities in different parts of the country, explores gender issues, and may include book reviews, announcements, seminar/ workshop reports and lots more.*

Designed and Printed by

Print dot Com
A - 13/2 PURBASHA
160 Maniktala Main Road
Kolkata 700 054
Ph : 9830135383 2358-6183