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Have you wasted hours surfing on the web to track down information that you just cannot find? Do you consistently read hundreds of web pages to find the one that is helpful for the task at hand? A July 1999 study published in Nature reveals that the World Wide Web contains approximately 800 million pages on about 3 million servers[1]. Each day these numbers expand and so
does society's reliance on the web for research information.

If your research focuses on women and girls in the Chicago area or Illinois, then you should seek out a website that can make your internet-based portion of the research more efficient. Since 1997, the Center for Research on Women and Gender has maintained a website for reliable and valid information on women and girls. The web page name is the "Research Information Network for Women and Girls in Illinois" or "RIN" for short. You can explore the website at Research Information Network. It taps into a variety of issues that directly impact the status of women and girls. These topics include caregiving, education, employment, health, violence, policy, and networks.

The RIN project is more than just a website. One of the objectives is to train web novices on how to find information efficiently in these categories on both state and regional levels. With the vast expanse of information on the web, much of it unreliable and biased, it is important to understand how best to seek out high-quality sources of information. Search engines may or may not help an information seeker. Paula Contreras, UIC's Assistant Documents Librarian and RIN co-director, states that "even members of the net-generation can get frustrated or go adrift when utilizing a search engine rather than an ordered directory, such as the RIN."

Internet media have made much information accessible, but bias continues to be an issue. It has been reported that the six major search engines collectively cover about 60% of the web[2]. That means that many of the newer, less popular websites never appear on a search engine list. The RIN attempts to offer web visibility to current information that is high quality yet potentially difficult to find.

If your organization or group would like to learn more about the RIN or how to schedule an Internet training session for research issues that impact women and girls, please contact us via the RIN web page at http:// www.uic.edu/orgs/rin or call (312)413-7342.

Notes
Year 2000 CRWG Seed Grant Recipients

The Center for Research on Women and Gender is pleased to announce the results of the third round of seed grant competitions. The goal of the seed grant program is to support and encourage research at UIC on topics related to women and gender that have the potential of receiving external funding. The review committee selected three projects for funding. The principal investigators are designated as CRWG Research Scholars and will present their research findings at seminars during the 2000-2001 academic year. The three seed grant recipients and research projects are:

Nadine Peacock, Ph.D., Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health. "Exploring young women's intentions and attitudes concerning pregnancy."

Norma Moruzzi, Ph.D., Political Science, Liberal Arts and Sciences. "The question of an Islamic feminism: Iran."

Lisheng Cai, Ph.D. Chemistry, Liberal Arts and Sciences. "Cytotoxic antiestrogens."

National Teleconference for Women in Higher Education

The University of Minnesota will be the host site for the National Teleconference for Women in Higher Education, "Women's Lives, Voices, Solutions." The teleconference will take place on March 27-29, 2000. The national conference is made up of students, faculty, staff, administrators -- men and women -- from all over the United States. The conference is intended to have a significant,
transformative, long-lasting impact on women in higher education and the institutions where they work and learn. The main site, located at the University of Minnesota, will host the three-day conference. There will also be three regional satellite sites and many smaller satellite sites that will have downlinks of the major part of the conference.

The conference will provide a forum for women and men in higher education across the nation to:

* explore ways of accessing women's talents by building upon the strengths of diversity, breaking down barriers, and creating campus environments that allow all people to work to their full potential;
* develop new ways of working together in a multicultural world;
* share best practices and form collaborations and supportive networks;
* discuss how colleges and universities can better support women as teachers, workers, learners, and creators of knowledge;
* create a national agenda for women in higher education.

To learn more about the conference and registration, visit their website at: "Women's Lives, Women's Voices"

**Women in Science and Engineering Projects**

On Halloween weekend, a small group of students ventured down to Indiana University -- Purdue University Indianapolis for the third Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Student Leadership Conference. It was an eventful weekend full of great networking, wonderful and inspirational speakers, and great weather for the haunted house at the Indianapolis Children's Museum.

The weekend included developing the groundwork for the evaluation of the CIC-WISE initiative. The evaluation will entail a site visit in February in which an evaluator will conduct one-on-one interviews and focus groups with faculty, staff, and students.
All those who have taken part in a CIC-WISE program, whether applying for and being awarded a travel grant, attending a Student Leadership Conference or a Best Practice workshop, are encouraged to contact Veronica I. Arreola at (312) 413-1813 or via@uic.edu.

The student organization AWISE Chic is planning a WISE Awareness Week for February 28 - March 3, 2000. This will include lunch meetings on the east and west sides of campus as well as a possible evening social event. For more information contact Yonna Tyler at ytyler1@uic.edu.

The next round of CIC-WISE student travel grants will be held in the spring of this year. Applications will be available February 1, 2000 and are due in March. Awardees will be announced April 1, 2000. Awardees for the fall round were not available yet.

The "CIC Directory of Women in Science and Engineering Ph.D. Candidates and Recipients, and Postdoctoral Appointees" is now available! A review copy is available in the CRWG office (1640 W. Roosevelt Rd., IIDD Building, 5th floor). To purchase a copy of the directory send $20.00 plus $5.00 shipping and handling to the CIC, 302 East John Street, Suite 1705, Champaign, IL 61820; telephone (217) 244-5565.

Women's Studies & CRWG Brown Bag Spring 2000 Series

The informal brown bag series on gender research hosted by Women's Studies and CRWG continues! The schedule of talks for Spring 2000 is listed below. Except where noted, seminars will be held from 12-1 pm in the OSSR conference room, basement of BSB.

*March 9, Thursday -- Bhama Srinivasan, Dept. of Mathematics
"Women and Mathematics: An International Perspective"
*March 22, Wednesday -- Mark Liechty, Dept. of Anthropology
"Women and Pornography in Kathmandu: Negotiating the "Modern Woman" in a New Consumer Society."
*April 11, Wednesday -- Anita Hurtig, Dept. of Pediatrics
"Intersexuality: Psychological, Medical, and Ethical Challenges from a Post-Modern Perspective."

*April (Date TBA): Anna Roosevelt, Dept. of Anthropology and Field Museum of Natural History. "Gender in Human Evolution: Sociobiology Revisited and Revised."

Feminist Ethnography and Participatory Research

Janise D. Hurtig, Ph.D., Center for Research on Women and Gender

Over the past two decades, an interdisciplinary discussion has developed among feminists scholars concerned with the politics of ethnography. Ethnography refers to the research, analysis, interpretation, and representation of social and cultural processes. The dialogue has included anthropologists, for whom ethnography is the principal methodology and narrative form of the discipline, as well as sociologists, psychologists, and other feminist researchers who incorporate cultural inquiry into their studies of gender and sexuality. Among the issues raised by feminist critiques are the androcentrism (male-centeredness) of the analytic categories, "master" theories, and modes of representation found in ethnographic research and writing. Here I review some of the concerns feminists have raised about the politics of ethnography as a methodology, and then propose that the incorporation of participatory research methods into ethnographic fieldwork may be one way of addressing, if not resolving, the problems ethnography poses for feminist inquiry.

Historically, feminist anthropologists have sought to modify ethnographic research methods, recognizing, as Rayna Reiter put it in her "Introduction" to Toward and Anthropology of Women, that "male bias is carried into field research." However, they never suggested that a fundamental compatibility might exist between ethnography as a research methodology and the principles or ethics of feminist research. In fact, for many feminist ethnographers, ethnography -- with its emphasis on recovering "local knowledge", its methodological flexibility, and its interactive, dialogic orientation -- has seemed particularly suitable to the egalitarian, reciprocal, and inter-subjective principles of feminist research.
This apparent compatibility was challenged with particular force and directness by the sociologist Judith Stacey, in her article "Can there be a feminist ethnography?" Stacey drew upon her fieldwork experience for a study of family and gender relationships in California's Silicon Valley to discuss the contradictions she encountered between feminist principles and ethnographic methods. Stacey suggested that the engagement and attachment between researcher and researched that the ethnographic research process entails, creates an exploitative research relationship, blurring the boundaries between relationships of friendship and research. She also claimed that in ethnographic research and writing, the apparently reciprocal, collaborative search for understanding is disingenuous, since the ethnographic product is inevitably a written document produced by the ethnographer and for an academic audience, whether or not it is influenced or modified by her informants.

Other feminist methodologists have responded to both the celebrations and critiques of ethnography by suggesting that no single research method is inherently feminist. Rather, what is important is that feminist theoretical frameworks and research ethics inform how we use particular research methods. This insight challenges feminist ethnographers to conduct research that encourages an equal relationship to knowledge between researcher and researched, that are collaborative at every stage of the research process, and that benefits the research subjects as well as the researcher. One way to do this is to design ethnographic research as participatory research. Participatory research refers to research in which the researcher and members of the community share in the way research is designed, carried out, and brought to bear on particular life circumstances. By shifting the object of study from people, to practices or social problems, participatory research obviates the objectivizing tendency of doing research "on people." Moreover, participatory research, like feminist research, is critical, focusing on the structures of power that produce gender and other social inequalities. However, where feminist ethnography is often exploratory in nature, participatory research has an explicit "action" agenda, using research as a basis for developing programs or policies aimed at social change. The incorporation of participatory methods into ethnographic research allows feminist ethnographers to pursue their inquiry into and analysis of the cultural production of gender and sexuality with community members, through the process of applying their findings toward the
development of programs aimed at transforming structures of gender inequality.

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**UIC's National Center of Excellence in Women's Health: Update**

**Regional Resource Inventory List**
The Center of Excellence in Women's Health is in the finishing stage of developing a Regional Resource Inventory List, a web accessible database available to the public. The Regional Resource Inventory List (R.R.I.) database contains contact information about women's health services and related resources, agencies, and programs available to women and their families in the Chicagoland and Illinois areas. Resources range from advocacy, homeless and domestic violence shelters, support groups, community health centers, and other informative websites or links. The database will eventually list similar resources for women in Minnesota. The R.R.I. will be available for use some time in the new year, at the Center of Excellence in Women's Health -- Women's Health Exchange, housed in UIC's new Outpatient Care Center. If your organization would like to be listed in the database, or if you know of any services that should be included in this comprehensive database of women's health-related services, please e-mail, fax or mail your contributions to us at: UIC-Center of Excellence in Women's Health, 1640 W. Roosevelt Road, Fifth Floor, Chicago, IL 60608.

**1999 Illinois Women's Health Conference: "Women's Health: Trends versus Trendy"**
The UIC Center of Excellence in Women's Health was represented at the First Annual Conference in Women's Health, which took place in Springfield, Illinois on November 2-3, 1999. The conference was sponsored by the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Public Health Association, and Southern Illinois University. The CoE presented an exhibit promoting the Center and the services offered to women at the UIC Women's Health Clinic. The conference provided the opportunity to begin informing health professionals about the ways in which the CoE links health resources within the university to the community.
The conference also included two general session presentations. Marianne J. Legato, M.D., FACP, Director of the Partnership for Women's Health at Columbia University, spoke on the importance of gender-specific medicine. Dr. Sandra Steingraber, a visiting professor with Cornell University's Program on Breast Cancer Environmental Risk Factors, gave a presentation based on her highly acclaimed book, Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment. Dr. Steingraber, formerly a CRWG visiting scholar, is a biologist, poet and cancer survivor who has done extensive research and writing on the environmental links to breast cancer.

CoE Participates in Study of Illinois Women's Health Programs
The Center of Excellence in Women's Health is assisting the Illinois Lieutenant Governor's Office with a survey of state programs in Women's Health. Over 100 programs offering services, education, or funding for women's health have been identified by the Office of Women's Health in the Illinois Dept of Public Health. Information gathered in interviews with program directors will give a more complete picture of what resources are available throughout the state, and what populations are served. This project is coordinated by Julie Strauss, a recent PhD in Political Science from Northwestern University. She is assisted by two graduate students in the UIC School of Public Health: Jessica Levie and Idong Ekandem.

New Space for the CoE
The Center of Excellence in Women's Health has moved into newly renovated space on the fifth floor of the IIDD building (1640 W. Roosevelt). The Center's Research Core will occupy two of the offices. The graduate students who staff various COEWH project will work in the third office. CoE staff, room and phone numbers are as follows:
Research Core Co-director Jacqueline Walcott-McQuigg, Room 548 312-413-4251.
Research Core Staff, Suzanne Wason, Danielle Jackson, Room 550, 312-413-4255.
Graduate Assistant Erika Allen, Room 552, 312-413-4253.

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Evaluation Program Updates
The CRWG Evaluation Program continues to expand its projects and activities. In December 1999, Alice Dan and Janise Hurtig ran a workshop on evaluation for the Girl Scouts of America DuPage County Council. Dr. Hurtig continues her evaluation work with Lorri Clark, a University of Chicago Anthropology graduate student. Currently they are evaluating the incorporation of a writing workshops into the employment training program of the Chicago Community Kitchen work development project.

With the new year, the evaluation program has initiated two new projects. The first is an evaluation of a health education curriculum that St. Benedict the African Academy has incorporated into its curriculum. The second is a training program run by the Chicago Abused Women Coalition (CAWC), which aims to improve health care practitioners' service to abused women. Joining the evaluation team are Josephine Ruiz (Art Therapy) Wendy Botswick (Public Health), and Manorama Khare, a recent Ph.D. from the School of Public Health at UIC.

**Chicago Gears Up For Beijing +5**

In September 1995 the United Nations held the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. Out of this conference came the Platform for Action that was adopted by 189 government delegations. The Platform sets out goals and a guide to improve the lives of women and girls internationally, nationally, and locally. On December 6, 1999, at the Chicago Cultural Center, a meeting was held to discuss how the Platform has been enacted. This meeting was a prelude to a larger Beijing +5 UN Special Session of the General Assembly that will take place June 5-9, 2000.

There are twelve critical areas of concern that the Platform addresses. They are: Women and Poverty; Education and Training of Women; Women and Health; Violence against Women; Women and Armed Conflict; Women and the Economy; Women in Power and Decision-making; Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women; Human Rights of Women; Women and the Media; Women and the Environment; The Girl-child. To learn more about the UN Special Session, visit these websites: Women Action and Womenwatch at the United Nations.
CRWG to Be Represented at Feminist Expo 2000

Veronica I. Arreola will be representing the Center for Research on Women and Gender at the Feminist Expo 2000 to be held March 30 - April 2, 2000 in Baltimore, Maryland. The second feminist exposition and convention will feature 6000+ feminists, 400 national and global co-sponsors, 137 delegations, and 79 campus delegations.

The convention highlights include 4 general assemblies, 100+ symposia, roundtables, training seminars, and workshops. More than 350 feminist speakers will be on hand, including: Gloria Steinem; Gloria Feldt, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Marcia Ann Gillespie, Editor-in-Chief of Ms. Magazine; Dolores Huerta, Secretary Treasurer and Co-Founder of the United Farm Workers and board member of The Feminist Majority Foundation; Patricia Ireland, President of the National Organization for Women; and Carol Mosely-Braun, former Illinois Senator and recently-approved Ambassador to New Zealand. On Friday evening there will be an ERA reunion.

To find out more about the convention and to register on-line, visit their website at: Feminist Exp 2000.

NCRW Conference at United Nations Headquarters

"Choosing to Lead: Women's and Girls' Visions for the Next Century," the 1999 Annual Conference of the National Council for Research on Women, was held at the United Nations in New York City, December 9 - 11, 1999. The conference theme was stated by Constance Buchanan, author of Choosing to Lead: Women and the Crisis of American Values: "Women are poised to shape American values publicly on a scale to which they have never before had access. Much is riding on whether and how they choose to lead."
At this watershed moment, when we face an election in the U.S. and the Beijing +5 review in the U.N., women from across the country and the globe gathered to take stock of women's leadership and its transformative potential.

Presentations included such topics as Women and the Future of the World Economy, Social Change and Reform in Higher Education through Women's Leadership, Women Creating Corporate Change, Women Shaping Technology and Innovation. Particular emphasis was placed on Women's Rights as Human Rights.

Awards to Women Leaders Who Make a Difference included Gloria Steinem, founder of Ms. Magazine; Lisa Sullivan, founder of Listen, Inc. for inspiring urban youth; Nafis Sadik, Director of the UN Population Fund; Shirley Malcom, Director of Education and Human Resources at the American Association for the Advancement of Science; Jacki Hoffman-Zehner, Managing Director of Goldman, Sachs & Co.; Eve Ensler, feminist performance artist and author of The Vagina Monologues; and Mariam Chamberlain, feminist scholar, economist and founder of NCRW. Alice Dan, CRWG Director, is a member of the Board of Directors of NCRW.

Welcoming New Staff to the CRWG

The Center for Research on Women and Gender has added several new staff members. Julie Strauss, Ph.D., has been hired as project director for a survey regarding services for women in State of Illinois agencies. Suzanne Wason (Nursing) has joined the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health as research assistant. Wendy Bostwick (Public Health), Josephine Ruiz (Art Therapy), and Idong Ekandem (Public Health) will be working as research assistants on various evaluation projects. Manorama Khare (Ph.D., Public Health) will be working with the Center's evaluation program as a research associate.