

Women's Worlds 2005

Volume 6

<http://www.ww05.org>

Friday, June 24, 2005

Farewell To All Those We Have Embraced

The Farewell Festival of the 9th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women (IICW) was held yesterday evening at the University Stadium of Ewha. Preceding the festival, an elaborate buffet dinner was prepared for all participants at the school cafeteria.

The festival began with Canadian singer Rebecca Campbell's performance of the WW05 theme song "Embracing the Earth."

Hyaе-kyoung Lee Cha (Korea), the Co-Chair of the Culture Committee of the WW05 welcomed the participants by saying "I welcome we, I, she, he, they, and us from all corners of the world." Then Grace Bantebya Kyomuhend (Uganda), the convener of the 8th IICW congratulated the committee for the success of the conference. Kyomuhend and five participants from Uganda sang the song "Mama, I'm not a toy, just because I'm not a boy." The festive mood continued with the poem reading performance "The Butterfly Effect" by two Canadian participants, Susan Hawthorne and Bronwyn Winter.

Next was a performance titled "Culture Night." Two fashion shows were put on stage by Korean designers Young-jin Bae and Ki-yeon Lee. Some participants showed dismay at the event, seeing it as commercialization of women's body. To this, the emcee apologized for not screening the content of the performance carefully enough, as its only intention had been to re-interpret the modern beauty of Korean costume.

The mood was elevated once again, with popular Korean feminist singer Young-ae Han's performance of "I Like the Way You Move" and "Tuning," in which Han invited all the audience to come up on



Photo by You-jin Cho

Participants and performers celebrate the last night of WW05.

stage and join the dance. Then, feminist Singer Hye-kyung Ahn performed a jazz dance with the Latin jazz band La Amason.

For the final event of the evening, all participants held hands and danced Gangkang Suwollae, the traditional Korean dance in a circle. Christina Zumberg (U.S.), a participant, said "It was very touching to see sisters from all the world unite in singing and dancing."

by Mi-ri Kwon

Speakers Change the World with Passion

Thinking over yesterday's plenary session, "Changing Paradigms for the State, Health and Environment," the words "challenges" and "power" come to mind. Each and every speaker presented with passion on how women should respond to changing societies.

It was difficult for participants on the floor to keep track of time as the theme was so broad. However, the 15 minutes that Ito Peng (Canada) took covered the heart of her thesis. She explained that many East Asian countries have been going through radical economic, social, and political changes which have placed tremendous pressure on states to rethink their policies. These changes will be a "positive expansion but on the other hand, a balanced restraint."

Peng gave the baton to Irene Dankelman (Netherlands), leaving the audience with the challenge of carefully monitoring all aspects

of changes. Dankelman's last words, "women should plant the seeds of peace" seemed to resonate with hope for the future.

It seems as if the seeds of peace may be planted through women's achievement of rights and justice, but there should also be partnership between women and men. With respect to this point in application to the AIDS issue in Africa, Njoki Wainaina (Kenya) suggested that "women should be brought up in a culture of equality and mutual respect."

The audience agreed to Wainaina's suggestion and showed great interest in Gloria Bonder's (Argentina) big challenges to include more women in S&T, transform culture, and making valuable S&T research from a gender perspective.

Sandra Harding's (U.S.) cynical but powerful words in her comparison of modernity and tradition left much food for thought on the

heterogeneous and plural aspects of modernity. In response to people's thoughts on separating tradition and modernity, Harding explained, "Modernity reproduces tradition inside modernity itself." Here, women should stitch modernity into local culture and depend on social ties.

Thoughts, challenges, and power do not stop here; the projects to develop new paradigms will continue. As Filomina Steady (Sierra Leone) puts it, "Women's work is never done. Feminists' work will never ever be done."

by Eun-joo Lee

Notice Board

The final issue (June 25) of the Daily Newspaper for Women's Worlds 2005 will be published on June 25 online at <http://www.ww05.org>

Today's Schedule

08:30-10:20 Plenary Session

"Celebrating Women's Leadership – the Way Forward" Hiroko Sue Hara, Liu Bohong, Kyung-wha Kang, Ayse Feride Acar, Mary Hartman (Welch-Ryang Auditorium / Daegangdang)

10:30-12:00 Closing Ceremony

Sketch Filming; Congress Report by Hyae-kyung Lee; Closing Address by Pil-wha Chang, Congress Convenor of WW05

Side Events

June 24-25 Forum on ICTs & Gender for "World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) 2005"

Place: CHB Hall, Centennial Hall, Sookmyung Women's University; Gyeonggi Women's Development Center



Photo by Yoo-mi Park

Early morning, participants fill the Welch-Ryang Auditorium for Plenary Sessions.

Women Leadership Proceeds

"Celebrating Women's Leadership – the Way Forward" will be the theme of today's plenary session.

Hiroko Hara (Japan), professor at Josai International University, will present on the "Challenges of Women, Against Women, and for Women in Japan." She will argue that though Japanese women have been working hard to create a gender-equal society, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)'s Gender Empowerment Measure still ranks Japan as low as 39th among UN member countries. Hara will assert that women need to empower themselves in cooperation with stakeholders both domestically and internationally. Therefore, the next goal is to strengthen inter-generational ties within as well as global networks outside Japan.

Liu Bohong (China), professor of the Women's Studies Institute of China, will present her analysis of the positive and negative effects of globalization on women's health in China. According to Bohong, the positive effects of globalization are the women-centered and community-based health policies that have been formulated upon a basic human rights framework, and the rise of Chinese NGOs and social partners which work to promote women's health. On the other hand, negative effects are that the marketization and privatization of public health has led to the decline of access to healthcare by disadvantaged groups, including women. She will argue that in this respect, women are in a more inferior position than before.

Kyung-wha Kang (Korea), former chairperson of the UN Commission on

the Status of Women (CSW), will present on her paper "Women's Leadership at the UN: 10 Years After Beijing." Kang will give an overall account of the 49th CSW, and then discuss her observations about women's leadership at the UN, both in the Secretariat and in the inter-governmental deliberations.

Ayşe Feride Acar (Turkey), former member and chairperson of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), will be speaking on "Why CEDAW Shows the Way Forward for the Women's Movement." Acar will examine CEDAW as the comprehensive instrument for gender equality. She will present the significant aspects of the obligation to implement the Convention and its scope and elements. She will also discuss the process of how the CEDAW Committee examines the government's reports and how women and women's organizations can use the mechanism.

Mary Hartman (U.S.), professor and director of the Institute for Women's Leadership, Rutgers University, will discuss women and power in her book "The Household and the Making of History: A Subversive Interpretation of the Western Past." Hartman will assert that women's networks across national boundaries will be a major part of women's expanded leadership throughout the world. She will point out that a new framework to interpret women in leadership is needed to take a fresh look at how historians and policymakers have understood, or misunderstood, the West in relation to the rest of the world.

by Na-hyun Kim

With Hope for the Future from Young Feminists

"I'm so excited that so many young women are participating in this congress!" says Ayşe Feride Acar (Turkey), a professor in political sociology and gender and women's studies at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara. "In other conferences, more middle-aged people who fought in the 60s and 70s were dominant. Now I see hope for the future."

Acar was the former chair of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, CEDAW defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. She was nominated as a member after she took part in the 1995 Beijing Conference as a government official.

"I did a lot of things in the CEDAW. I traveled to many countries to teach government officials and NGOs, and examined various reports. Actually, Hei-soo Shin (Korea) was the vice-chair while I was the chair, and I examined reports from Korea, too. I also attended other UN conventions to make sure the women's rights movement is not just

limited to CEDAW but also included in other conventions such as Migrant Worker's Conventions, and the Children Convention."

Acar has also been involved in the academic side of feminism through her efforts to create the first gender and women's studies program in Turkey. "Turkey is a large country, and is similar to Korea in that while the country is modernized, the people place importance in tradition. In Turkey, women's rights have changed a lot. For instance, women take high positions in financial, journalism, and information and communication technology sectors, but contradictively quite a lot of women are illiterate," says Acar.

She also talked about the "head of the family" policy of Turkey which was abolished two years ago. "I know that there was a similar policy in Korea. The abolishment in Turkey was an advance for women's rights. But abolishing the law is not enough, since the head of family role is still carried out by men."

Acar had some advice for young feminists: "These days, young generations are not interested in feminist movements, thinking much has been achieved already. Don't feel that



Photo by Yoo-mi Park
Ayşe Feride Acar

women now have enough advancement. I've looked through 180 countries and met feminists all over the world, but there is not one place with true equality. Gains will fall back easily if we are not conscious about them. There are many people out there who threaten women's rights in different types of forms."

by Bo-mi Kim

Blossoming Community Work and Research

"People's tendency to look at problems from an international level is simply too far-fetched. The most fundamental infringements of human rights do not arise from nation-to-nation conflicts but from a heavily immoral yet universally embedded notion of gender discrimination," states Ito Peng (Canada), a professor specializing in health care systems and the marginalization of women.

When Peng was six years old, she moved from Taiwan to Japan and immigrated to Canada after seven years. While moving around as a child, Peng encountered various forms of discrimination. It was her past wounds that motivated her to dedicate her life to better the lives of discriminated groups of people, marking the beginning of her long yet meaningful journey into community work and research.

Peng certainly has various community work experience all over the globe – ranging from educational programs to cross-road projects. In Nicaragua, she volunteered to take part in adult education programs. Peng also engaged herself in cross-road programs for women's health projects in Nigeria. While working as a community organizer for the North American Native Community in Canada, Peng had the golden opportunity of coming across great women role models who inspired her and further boosted her passion towards community work aimed to elevate living standards of poverty-stricken people. Throughout her years of community work, however, she realized that there was not much progress or change. Thus, Peng decided to take a different route



Photo by You-jin Cho

Ito Peng

and delve into the world of research to promote the rights of the underprivileged.

As is evident in Peng's recent paper, "State, Health Policies, and Asian Women," which mainly focuses on analyzing how changes in social, economic, and political dynamics in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and China have impacted the directions of health policy reforms, Peng often relates her studies with women and sociology. She has also dealt with topics that receive relatively little attention from researchers such as single mothers in Japan who were often neglected and silenced in society. For approximately 1.4 million

single parents in Japan, who are often ignored, possible solutions addressed by Peng are to recognize the existence of the problem and accept the single family form instead of downgrading and victimizing it.

She also suggests that it is crucial to change the current labor market system where women are discriminated against by taking informal and temporary jobs with terrible working conditions and low wages. Marketization, spurred on by Western capitalism, is likely to single out women by enabling consumer choice and control. "Although they say Western countries are protecting the rights of women better than developing countries, it is important to note that the East should not implement all the policies adopted by the West and avoid mistakes made in the past," said Peng with a determined yet humane ember in her eyes.

by Rhie-young Lim

Dear editor:

I had the opportunity today to be the rapporteur in the Plenary Session "Globalization, Economic Values, and Poverty" with the following participants: Wu Qing (China), Gigi Francisco (Philippines), Nancy Folbre (U.S.), and Joanna Kerr (Canada).

It was an excellent session in which new ideas on the understanding of economics and the impact of globalization were discussed from a feminist perspective. What called my attention and was reaffirmed by the several women I talked with after the session was the perfect connections between one presentation and the other. It was like an orchestra of ideas. Gigi and Joanna contested the common idea that globalization as it is now has come to stay and invited feminists to continue challenging and resisting the whole economic paradigm of marketization. The market-centric paradigm was also contested by Nancy Folbre. Her idea on care economy challenges conventional economics. It was very interesting for the audience and for me to see the importance of understanding how non-market transfers of money and time subsidizes the market economy and the invisibility of this important fact. The necessity of measuring non-market flows is crucial to women and central to the idea of feminist economics.

The presentation of Wu Qing was brilliant and moving at the same time. She brought to the plenary "real" women, their life in the community, and their expectations of a better world. Putting together theory and practice, she gave us the vision of rural women empowerment.

Monica Munoz-Vargas (Chile)

Scholars and Practitioners in Grassroots Activism

The panel session, "Grassroots Activism" explored the issue of labor and women's movements in Asian countries.

Michele Ford (Australia) made a presentation on her study, "Organizing the Unorganizable: Unions, NGOs, and Indonesian Foreign Domestic Workers." Studies of organized labor movements in Asia have traditionally focused on trade unions that organize workers in factories, in offices, and on plantations. However, Ford stated that studies of migrant labor have tended to emphasize the demographic features of labor migration flows, or the experiences of migrant workers in either their country of origin or their host society. Ford said foreign domestic workers from countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia are beginning to organize both at home and abroad. She examined the emergence and operation of both migrant labor NGOs and migrant labor associations from a labor movement perspective. She focused on the schism between the theoretical side of labor migration, in which the description of migrant labor NGOs most often appear, and the theory on labor migration. "Scholars and practitioners should recognize the barriers that transnational migrants confront and should engage for further effort," said Ford.

Kyung-hee Shin (Korea) then talked about "Formation of Social Capital through Women's Small Group Activities in Local Communities in Seoul." Shin introduces her study, which analyzes effects of social capital by focusing on women's group activities at local communities in Seoul. She claimed that housewives with a high



Michele Ford (Australia)

Photo by Ji-sun Kim

educational background can be developed as potential social workers through attending group activities. Lifelong learning programs of government sponsored events, play important roles in not only the formation of women's groups but also the acceleration of group activities. She says that community-based women's group activities are in their birth stages in Seoul. Such group activities are for the public. Therefore, she asserts public assistance and intermediary functions are crucial in activating community-based women's group activities.

by Na-hyun Kim

The Future of Women's Network in Asia and Beyond

The session "The Future of Women's Network in Asia" was divided under the moderation of Etsuko Kato (Japan). The session dealt with networking between Asian feminist academics and activists under three concepts: 1. visibility and agency; 2. the poverty and trafficking of women and its clarification; and 3. security – the "basic condition for living safe" and not relying on another's mercy.

Chalidaporn Songsamphan (Thailand) began the session by stating that in order to narrow the gap between genders, it is crucial that academics and activists overcome barriers between themselves. Because there is a lack of communication and many stereotyped beliefs, feminists should arrange more occasions such as WW05 to hold discussions where they can share ideas. She also briefly touched upon the difficulties that feminism faces in Asia due to cultural aspects such as Confucianism. According to Songsamphan, feminism in Asia has become the "f" word because older activists do not encourage young feminists. She proposed that perhaps maternal and parental issues should be eliminated in order to make

issues more accessible to young feminists.

Kuniko Funabashi (Japan) asked, "What is Asia and what is Asian feminism?" Similar to Songsamphan, Funabashi criticized the Japanese education system in training to learn through the perspectives of Western men. Funabashi connected U.S. internationalization with the increasing feminization of migration, in which migrated women are vulnerable to sex work and human trafficking. "We must create internationally strategic networks against gender discrimination and establish new regulations in Japan," she concluded.

In Session two, Zhang Lili (China) introduced her project "ACWF/DFID Partnership in advocacy and skills training for poor adolescent girls." Due to the fact that China focuses mainly on the development of cities, students, and especially uneducated girls in rural areas who fail to adapt to the changes of society, Zhang's project is an inspiration for the academic community in bringing their research to reality. "The scholars around me are excited because we all gained new knowledge. They ask for more opportunities," expressed Zhang.

Irene Tong (China) defined a feminist

activist as an advocate who makes structural changes in society including their own personal politics. She mentioned that in Hong Kong there are still many barriers in society that do not grant academic freedom to scholars. Thus, she feels that it is labor intensive and time consuming for the teacher to focus on activities outside of the classroom. "We are hoping that the UN will put some pressure on our government to make some changes," said Tong.

Elizabeth Kristi Poerwandari (Indonesia) exemplified the Domestic Violence Act, which formed a names advocacy network for the elimination of violence against women. Participants held discussions on the biases of the legal system, lobbied for the Empowerment of Women, and proposed a Domestic Violence Act, sending their draft to the government. In September 2004, the "Act of Eliminating Violence in the Family" was ratified. Poerwandari concluded by saying, "Cooperation and network is a must to synergize different potentials of women's studies in order to promote equity, peace, and life with dignity for women."

by Soo-hyun Kim

Leadership Needs Practice for Confidence

A roundtable "Embracing the Earth for Women's Leadership: Comparing Women's Leadership Development Programs in the East and the West: Theories and Challenges of Women's Leadership Development" was held in view of discussing the future of developing leadership programs for women.

Carmen Amber (U.S.) spoke on her experiences as the dean of the Douglass College and described the challenges Western women face and the programs that were invented to overcome the challenges in the college. She asserted that women need to develop skills through different training programs in order to enter into areas such as science, business, politics where "women lack progress." She believes that scholars need to help young women understand what they need.

Hyong Cho (Korea) spoke about Ewha's programs which specialize in young women's leadership. She spoke of the difference of Ewha's curriculum from



Photo by You-jin Cho

The speakers passionately discuss female leadership.

other universities and institutions and the challenges Ewha is facing as a university in the East. She asserted that the "School for Leadership Development has been able to grow as the best and unique institution providing women with leadership development opportunities in such a short period of time, two years" – as a result of efforts contributed in the hopes of realizing Ewha's goal of educating one million female leaders.

Pil-wha Chang (Korea) added to Hyong

Cho's presentation the outcome of the training leadership program in Ewha. She also stated, "The experience of being the organizer, the organizing committee itself was a very good training in leadership for most of us."

Mary Hartman (U.S.) spoke of her personal background, experiences of leadership in Douglass College and introduced various female leaders.

After the presentations, various questions and comments helped to define the importance of female leadership, and the reason for the presence of women's universities. "A women's university is the only place where we can actually have the opportunity to practice leadership. They take that practice in the confidence that comes with success. This is because confidence comes from the opportunity to practice and students take those skills and apply them in co-ed environments," marked Ambar.

by Tae-yeon Kim

Marking the New Era for Young Feminism in Asia

The session "Young Forum: The Rise of 'Young' Feminists' Power in Asia-Being Feminists, Doing Feminisms: For Sustainable Efforts as Feminists," offered presentations covering various types of feminism movements in Asia performed by the so-called "young" feminists.

Moderator and organizer of the forum, Ji-hye Joh (Korea) who works for Unninet, a feminist website launched in 2000, explained the current trends in young feminist movements in Korea in context of her daily life and work. Unninet first began under the subtitle of "Cultural webzine for women" and was a web magazine company, not an organization for women. Later on, however, the webzine underwent changes and became an online organization addressing women issues in politics, economics, and culture. Joh comments that all these issues are relevant to women's daily lives. Besides publishing stimulating articles on the webzine, Unninet has also created a cyber community for members to interact and discuss feminist ideas. Because Unninet provides an online space for women to cooperate to fully attain respect for women in society, it can be considered a new form of "young" feminism – something that could not have been possible in the past without the advancement of information technology.

Emi Ochial (Japan) talked about the organization she worked for called "Project of the person is political (PPP)." This is a young feminists' project which was set up by graduate students of Ochanomizu University in 2004 to promulgate to the public that everyone is an actor of social and political change both domestically and internationally. PPP sells pop and political feminist goods in collaboration with the designer Mitahal.

Ryo-whoa Lee (Korea) emphasized the differences between Japanese and Korean feminist movements. Lee stated that Korean feminist groups tend to be more visible, political and public whereas the Japanese ones are more inclined to be individualistic. The passivity of the feminist movement in Japan, according to Lee, is due to the generation gap among feminists, negative feedback from academic fields, and the lack of urgency to promote women's rights due to better living standards.

A representative from Project 'L' came to share her lesbian art organization's effort to hold lesbian exhibitions despite blatant discrimination against homosexuality in Korean society. So far, Project 'L' exhibitions have been held six times, making the movement noticeable to the public.

A participant on the floor commented that young feminism should not be considered only in biological terms but also in regards to the new challenges and new cultures entailed by the younger generation.

by Rhie-young Lim



Photo by Yoo-mi Park

The translator and the representative of Project 'L' explain the presentation.

Active Devotion to Enhancement of Rural Women

Wu Qing (China), the laureate of the 2001 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service, says she is "a verb. Not a noun, not an adjective, but an active verb."

Growing up, she says, she never felt inferior to her male counterparts. "My mother always told me I was a human being first, and a woman second," said Wu. It wasn't until in the early 1980s that she started to see herself as a feminist. It was a time of change for China. The country started to open up, and women began to work. "All of a sudden, there were slogans saying that women should go back home. Even sociologists supported them, blaming women employment for causing social problems like rape," said Wu. So she and the women professors at the Beijing Foreign Language University formed "Women's Forum," which was one of the earliest feminist groups in China.

Then her career took a turn to politics. A slot was open for her at the Haidian District People's Congress in 1984. Since then, she has been serving her 6th term at the district level and her 4th term at the municipal level. "Laws and policies of today are incomplete, because women's voices have

not been heard," explained Wu. In 1989, Wu helped launch China's first university course on feminism, and in 1990, Wu set up a hotline to help women with problems like divorce or sexual harassment.

However, it was the devotion and contribution to the rural women of China that have been her life-long project since 1999.

"I saw poverty," said Wu. "Water shortage was serious. Sometimes it took them a whole day to get a bottle of water. Children were bare-footed, families shared one blanket, and there was not enough to eat." Overwhelmed by the appalling sight, Wu vowed she would spend the rest of her life working for them.

So with Xie Li Hua, Editor of Chinese Women's News, they published a magazine called "Rural Women Knowing All." It featured inspiring success stories of women, innovative farming technologies, and information about child care. After launching of the magazine, Wu realized the biggest problem was the women's high illiteracy rate.

So in 1998, she built the Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women, the first non-profit school for public welfare in China. The school trains rural women liveli-



Photo by Ji-sun Kim
Wu Qing

hood skills for economic independence like computer skills. They also teach them about decision-making, how to read and write, and most importantly, the value of education.

"If you teach women, you teach their children and the whole generations to come," added Wu, "And I believe that this little spark we started today, will one day turn into a prairie fire."

by Mi-ri Kwon

Feminism and Economics: Two Compatible Ideas

Economics and feminism seem to have little in common. One deals with money and growth rates, while the other focuses on gender roles and the glass ceiling. The fact that economic restraints are the most frequently used argument in depreciating the value of the human rights movement within the feminism movement, is a clear illustration of how people tend to segregate the two issues.

However, Nancy Folbre (U.S.), Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, explores the interface between economics and feminist theory, creating a new field of study that is now being called "Feminist Economics."

"I'm against dividing feminist issues or human rights issues with economics issues," says Folbre. "After all, economic security should also be considered a human right." But she says that she does not believe that economic growth comes before basic rights. "You can't have a successful economic system unless people's human rights are guaranteed." Folbre points out the problem: many women are not granted or recognized enough for their labor under the current economic system.



Photo by You-jin Cho
Nancy Folbre

"I think any group, whether it consists of gender, class, or nationality, develops an interpretation of the world that serves their own interest. That view almost always distorts reality slightly," said Folbre. Feminist economics to her, is one of the many pieces of the picture that serves as an alternative in representing the dis-empowered groups.

And as a solution, Nancy Folbre introduces the concept of "Invisible Heart" as opposed to the "invisible hand" of Adam

Smith. "The invisible hand represents the forces of supply and demand in competitive markets. The invisible heart represents family values of love, obligation, and reciprocity. The invisible hand is about achievement. The invisible heart is about care for others. The hand and the heart are interdependent, but they are also in conflict. The only way to balance them successfully is to find fair ways of rewarding those who care for other people," explains Folbre, in her much-acclaimed book "The Invisible Heart."

Her latest goal is to ensure that feminist economic ideas are spread to the younger generation of both economists and feminists. As an academic, she is not actively involved in activism. Instead, she turned to lecturing and writing books to the mass public. "I think that popular education is a powerful tool. I try to engage the so-called "non-economics" to my studies, using visual methods like illustration or comics strips," says Folbre, "and I believe this conference would be a great chance for me to meet and reach out to the young feminists."

by Mi-ri Kwon

Frances Raday: An Advocate of Feminist-Humanism

Frances Raday (Israel) is a former Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) expert (2000~2003), and is currently working as a labor law professor at Hebrew University, as well as a lawyer in Jerusalem. She has participated in WW05 as the moderator of Wednesday's plenary session and was a speaker at the panel session, "CEDAW and Women's Human Rights."

Raday has not always had a feminist consciousness: "It was after marriage that I realized the problem," says Raday. Born and raised in England as a third generation Jewish person, she was a prominent student who got a scholarship to the London School of Economics. She had the impression that there are no barriers for females until when she got married in Jerusalem, where she moved to study for her doctorate degree. Raday was startled to see that the Israeli marriage laws were very patriarchal. "Israel is an egalitarian society where there are women in the army, with a woman prime minister, and female judges in the Supreme Court, but the patriarchal marriage laws?" she asks in amazement and began to explore women's situations.

Raday explains that women experience an extra dimension of exploitation stating, "I am

heartbroken for the men who can't make their living, as well as the women. But, I say that women who can't make their living have an extra disadvantage." She states that women who are exploited in the workplace also suffer in patriarchal homes where husbands often take out their own frustrations on them. However, she found out that economic approaches toward prejudice and stereotypes against women are not effective. There are problems beyond equality in promotion, remuneration, and retirement. "It is a matter of the values of economic system, which we have to change," she adds.

Raday argues that people seem to believe that money can buy everything and that wealth is the benchmark of society, as well as individuals. The best example of the extremes of such commodification are trafficked women who are totally exposed to abusive sexual use. Raday claims that when talking about prostitution, the concept of 'client' is purely capitalistic. She says, "The idea that they can pay for this intimacy is nonsense!" She explains the new law of the Swedish model, which rules guilty on the pimp, or the client for the behavior, rather than the prostitute, for they have encouraged socially undesirable acts. To make desirable conditions in society, Raday believes that



Photo by You-jin Cho
Frances L. Raday

standards and norms are very important. "If there is no standard, how would you prove that you are being discriminated?" says she.

Another concept that Raday emphasizes is a partnership between men and women. To achieve a vision to live in a world, which has progress, and human satisfaction in the environment, it is indispensable. She says, "This partnership will dignify the respectful basis of human life. And on top of that, we need to educate the feminist and humanist value, as I call it 'feminist-humanism.'"

by Chae-gyung Jun

A Lifetime Dedicated to a Safer World for Women

"Violence is all around us, whether on the streets, or a dangerous uncle, it is something we all face as women. It makes me wonder, what is inside the soul of men who can perpetrate such a crime?" comments Monica Munoz-Vargas (Chile), who identifies herself as a feminist, a Latin American woman, a sociologist, and a mother of two. The former Chief of the Latina American and Caribbean section for the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and consultant for the UN, is now engaged in an active feminist group in Brazil.

Munoz's passion for women's rights was a gradual process in her life. "I fought for my rights and independence since childhood. It was in college when I began to realize that something wasn't right, something had to be done." A switch in this process took place in England in the 1970s. "Despite my education, I became a traditional housewife. While my husband and I were both working toward our Ph.D.s, I realized that it was so much easier for my husband. So I distributed the housework, and this was a landmark of change in my life."

After returning to Brazil, Munoz acted out some of her feminist theories by joining a small feminist group. She later became the coordinator for a women's program at UNICEF, followed by the position in UNIFEM. "I have been privileged to work with women, and although I have retired from these positions now, I will always carry them inside my soul. My work is my life," she says.

Munoz remarks more research is needed to find out the cause of gender based violence, its relationship with violence of other forms,

and the actions needed to eradicate it. "There is a lack of institutional support and balance of power between genders. Sometimes we are not the victims, but have partnered with violence - this has to do with education. We must rethink strategies that can broadly reach women. Forms of media are one way, but working with media is difficult."

However, Munoz is optimistic about the future. "There hasn't been a more important social movement in the past century than the women's movement; it's the only global movement that has the strength that we have. Look at what we have achieved; we are more on the positive side, than the negative." Finally, to the question on why Munoz herself chose to become a part of this movement, she answered, "Because I was a woman. I chose to be there. The opportunity was given, but I also looked for it. It's a process. There is still a long road, unpaved to be walked, and I'll be there until I die."

by Eun-a Lee



Photo by Yoo-mi Park
Monica Munoz



Suzanne Jamieson
(Australia / participant)

“There are many ways of understanding feminism, not just one. In one of the sessions I participated, it was interesting how there were subtle differences in feminism between different Asian countries.”



Vladimir Tikhonov
(Norway / participant)

“In Norway, we are accustomed to not differentiating women from men. I understand women not as females but as colleagues.”



Elizabeth Philipose
(U.S. / participant)

“Being a feminist is to talk about one’s thoughts, claims, and perspectives bravely and directly to society.”



At the end of the Farewell Festival, participants form a “train” and clap each other’s hands in unity.



Carolyn Sobritchea
(Philippines / participant)

“The topics were very relevant as they tackled emerging problems in the context of globalization. I think the conference was successful.”



Seung-sook Lee
(Korea / volunteer)

“Foreigners are so gentle and polite and they always express appreciation when I help them. As an Ewha graduate (’74, English Lang. & Lit.), I can recall my college days. I was so glad to meet many of my friends and alumnae who have become professors here at Ewha!”

Interviews by Ji-young Kim, Hye-won Song, Keum-jo Shim, Kyu-rhee Lee

Photo by You-jin Cho, Ji-sun Kim



Kunle Ajayi
(Nigeria / participant)

“I feel out of place being surrounded by women here. So few men have participated. We should invite many men because it is we, men, that are marginalizing women.”



Olcay Canbulat
(Turkey / participant)

“The arrangement was almost perfect. As for the problems, there were so many sessions, so people could not concentrate where to go. I think it would have been better if we had big workshops and discussions to have a chance to know everybody more freely. But overall, I am really glad to be a part of it. The volunteers were really helpful and hospitable!”

Ewha Voice Staff

Ewha Womans University, 11-1 Daehyeon-dong Seodaemun-gu, Seoul, Korea 120-750
Tel: (02) 3277-3169 Fax: (02) 313-5194 Email: evoice@ewha.ac.kr Homepage: <http://evoice.ewha.ac.kr>

Publisher: Organizing Committee of Women’s Worlds 2005
Editing Coordinator: Seo-my Kang / Editor-in-Chief: Sook-young Park / Senior Editors: Mi-ri Kwon, Chae-gyung Jun, Youn-seung Lee / Editors: Bo-mi Kim, Soo-hyun Kim, Eun-joo Lee / Staff Reporters: Na-hyun Kim, Tae-yeon Kim, Eun-a Lee, Rhie-young Lim / Cub Reporters: Ji-young Kim, Hye-won Song, Keum-jo Shim, Kyu-rhee Lee / Photographers: Yoo-mi Park, You-jin Cho, Ji-sun Kim
Copy Editors: Hannah Chang, Johndre Jennings