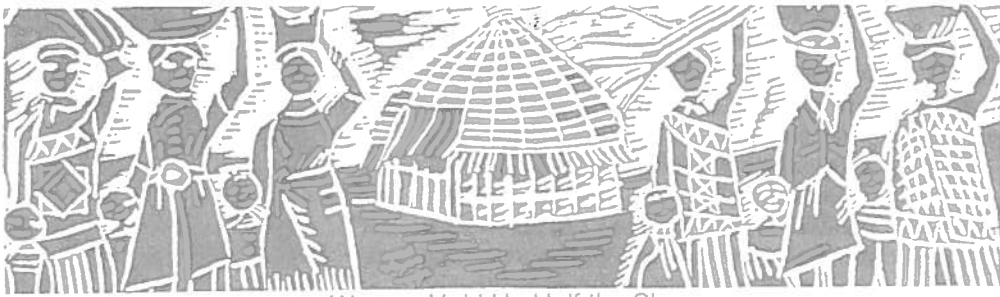


Arstina Helica



Women Hold Up Half the Sky

# WIPHN News

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Women's International  
Public Health Network  
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*Visions are not there  
to be dreamed alone,  
they can be transformed  
into reality.*

*All that is required  
is the power of a  
group sharing this vision.*

*-Madhu Bala North from "and  
Then She stirred" 1994*

## WOMEN WORK AND HEALTH

In rural East Africa, a woman suffers from chronic back pain from repeatedly carrying 50kg - loads of firewood on her back. In northern Mexico, adjacent to the U.S. border, a woman develops numbness and weakness of her hands due to carpal tunnel syndrome - a cumulative trauma disorder resulting from her repetitive movements as an electronics assembly worker. In a Southeast Asia metropolis, a female commercial sex worker contracts gonorrhea, herpes, and then HIV infection as a result of men who refused to wear condoms. In New York, a woman executive experiences anxiety and depression because of the "glass ceiling" that limits the advance of her career in a large corporation. On a farm in Latin America, a woman develops nausea, dizziness, and a confused mental state due to exposure to a pesticide that is also suspected of causing cancer and birth defects. In a factory in Eastern Europe, a pregnant worker and her unborn fetus risk serious neurological and other disorders due to exposure to

lead used in making glass crystal.

These situations represent part of a wide spectrum of occupational health hazards faced by women throughout the world- a world in which a higher percentage of women are working and a higher percentage of the workforce is comprised of women, a world in which labor unions are on the decline, government funding cutbacks and public policy reversals increase health and safety risks in the workplace, and hazardous substances and hazardous industries are increasingly exported from one country to another.



There are still several sources of occupational stressors at work for women. Job discrimination causes women to have less likelihood of getting certain jobs and advancing in them.

Women have less decision-making

power in the workplace and hence less control over their jobs. Women generally earn far less than men for the same job; for example, in the U.S., women, on the average, earn 70 cents for every \$1 that a man earns. Many women work in the informal sector or at home, where they are not officially categorized as workers and not paid for their work. Women are often sexually harassed at work. And women workers are unfairly burdened by having to play multiple roles of homemaker, family caretaker, and wage earner-often without adequate (or any) childcare being available.

In addition to occupational health and safety hazards that all workers face, women are hired much more frequently than men for jobs that present ergonomic hazards and reproductive health hazards. Pregnant workers face special challenges, including problems related to our lack of knowledge about the adverse health effects of many chemicals and physical hazards at work on pregnant women and the developing fetus. Finally, women face additional challenges because work stations, tools and machines, and personal protective equipment have generally been designed primarily for men.

In developing countries, the disproportionate burdens on women, including work-related burdens, are often strikingly apparent. Men often leave their homes in rural areas or small towns to seek jobs in large cities, leaving their wives at home in the countryside to raise the children, serve as homemaker, and tend the fields and animals - often carrying substantial physical and psychological burdens in the process.

What can be done? Women can:

- Better educate themselves and other women about hazards they face at work and what can be done-- and what is being done--to adequately control these hazards;
- Help establish programs that focus on the needs of working women and provide them with information and needed services;
- Advocate for public policies that promote and maintain safe and healthful working conditions for all workers; and
- Advocate for public policies that work to eliminate all kinds of discrimination against women.

Barry Levy MD, Boston USA

Reference: Quinn MM, Woskie SR, Rosenberg BJ. "Women and Work" in Levy B.S. and Wegman DH (Eds.) Occupational Health; Recognizing and Preventing Work-related Disease (3rd edition), Boston: Little Brown 1995,

## MEMORIES OF BEIJING



Excerpts from an NGO Forum Diary

I have now been back for over 2 months from the NGO Forum of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Yet, and here I quote Gertrude Mongella, the Chair of the Conference who spoke recently at Harvard, "I feel like I am still sorting myself out". Each day was like a mix of 10 different mini-conferences, one could spend the whole day on peace issues, health issues, regional issues, legal issues, disability

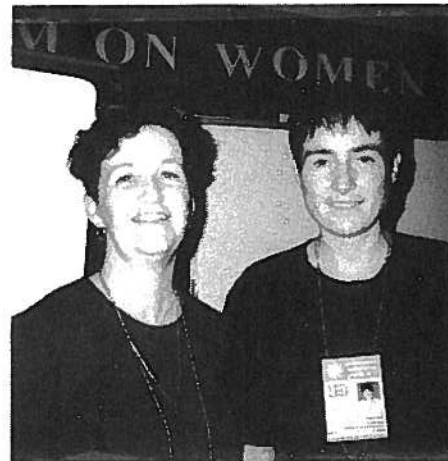
issues, economic issues, and many others. It was very tempting to visit a whole array of sessions that were different from one's own "mainstream" area of work, because there was so much on offer, so may new perspectives and materials.

September 2: The morning's session choices: Women in Peace, Global Strategy to Stem Increasing Violence against Women, Equality as an Inalienable Part of Democratization, Education for Peace in Preschool, Women's Peace-making in Sudan, Arab Women, Statistics and Trends, Bringing Secondary Education to Rural Women via Distance Learning, Girls and Science, Interned WWW Site on Youth, Images of Women in Bangladesh, Women in Islam, Framing Women's Needs-How Can Law help, Reproductive Health in Africa in context of Youth Issues, and Women Pioneers in Peacemaking. The impossibility of taking it all reminded me how important follow-up will be, including sharing individual experiences and contacts with others.

In a session about "Strategies for Bringing the UN Conventions to the Grassroots", some of the strategies suggested were: use the Internet, simplify UN documents, use common themes such as "Progress for women is progress for all", link up with other international NGOs, give skill training, focus on communication strategies, increase funding for women's communications, and ensure that information and strategies get to the community level. In the evening, I took a look through the overall program, noting some of the common words seen in many of the sessions. Some of the most frequently appearing title words in the sessions: change, education, partner-ships, conflict resolution, leadership, collaboration, nonviolent, progress, equality, peace, communications, violence, empowerment.

The two themes which collected the most sessions were: 1) Human and legal rights, and 2) Peace and human security.

Monday, September 4: In the Plenary of Strategies to Counter the Rise of Conservatism there was an overflow crowd in an auditorium seating 1500 people. I quote from the moderator:



WIPHN members Catherine Briggs and Konya Trouton, Beijing 1995

"The rise of conservatism is the greatest threat today to women's equality and rights", and "... the worldwide women's movements is the most powerful for democracy today"... Another speaker stated "As female activists we need to make connections to combat conservatism, we need strategic networking and alliance building..." A professor of Islamic studies presented her views on a feminist view of the theology of Islam and pointed out that the original writings of the Koran are strongly for the idea of equality between men and women, but later post-Koranic writings have changed the original intent. She felt strongly that a new feminist theology, which sees Islam and human rights as wholly compatible, is the only way to bring change to women in the Muslim world.

A second plenary on the issues of Peace and Security and included a presentation of a woman from Russia who went to Chechnya to try to find her soldier son. She told of, later, being stuck in the basement of a white "palace" while her own Russian army was bombing the area. She ended her talk with "Dear women, let's work to make our planet free of nuclear war, free of trade in women, and ensure each person a dignified life". She also spoke of women's solidarity against an increasingly militarized society, and encouraged all attendees to visit the Peace tent, a "powerful space". In the evening, I made sure to attend the Women in Black demonstration. It was a silent demonstration, with quiet power. Women from every region of the world gathered, dressed in black, some holding candles and others holding signs and posters containing messages speaking out against violence.

September 6th: The First Lady of Lebanon, Mona Hraoni, was a member of the panel discussion relating to Arab women. The needs specified by the speakers were for an "Arab Fund to support Arab women organizations", for all countries to sign CEDA and for more gender-based data bases. The group sent an open letter to all heads of Arab States, which included the following points: we are 50% of the population, it is just that we receive 50% of the resources" and "... refrain from using traditional/religious reasons as a pretext for inequality of Arab women.

In the African tent, the founder of the Greenbelt movement, Professor Wangari Maathai, spoke. Some of her thoughts: "they are making small arms and we are being slaughtered, if we do not die of hunger and diseases" and "... don't give our governments aid until they democratize and give us our rights". An excellent Swahili speaker ended her talk with this plea "Please, northern sisters, help us with your media access, your resources, your support."

A particularly moving memory of the day took place in a gathering on Bosnia, held in the Peace Tent. It was intense since it included a video of the war and personal testimony from women who have lost nearly everyone close to them. One woman told of an encounter in a graveyard ("it seems that every green space is a graveyard") with another woman visiting a new grave. The woman at the grave shared her thoughts, "What is civilization? It is not cars, not things... It is a mother with the wound of a dead son in her heart, but never teaching hate to the other generation." I looked around and the group almost as a whole seemed to be wiping away a tear. A woman from Ireland then sang a beautiful healing song appreciated by everyone.

September 7th: At a session in the morning, I enjoyed meeting one of the founders (Marian Thompson) of La Leche League. Later, I went to a US networking meeting, one of the most well attended sessions I'd seen since the first day. It seemed as if many were there specifically to hear about how American women do their networking!

At another session, the most moving talk came from an Algerian speaker, who spoke about many Algerian women activists who are fighting, not only for their rights and their freedom of speech, but also for their lives (at least 800 women have been murdered in Algeria over the past few

years). "Algerian NGOs despite difficult conditions are working for better conditions for women... We are not in isolation. What is happening to us can happen to any country. We hold our hands out to those organizations doing what they can to help." Later, a session was interrupted by a peaceful demonstration by a large group of Algerian women and their supporters with signs pointing out the number of women and men murdered by Islamic fundamentalists in Algeria.

Talking with women on the plane home, what we seemed to remember the most about the Forum was the energy and appreciation we felt at meeting so many women leaders and activists from all over the world. A high point for me personally, in addition to all the connections made, was hearing "We Shall Overcome," being sung by women together, from all over the world.

After all the experiences and sharing of memories, the big question now is: How can we all - those who attended and those who couldn't attend - work together on follow-up? There were commitments made by many countries at the Conference. One thing we can do is to monitor their implementation. Also, I hope all WIPHN members will be able to see a copy of the Platform for Action when it is published, and focus in on what they can use from it in their work. Again to echo the words of Gertrude Mongella - implementation will be crucial.

Catherine Briggs, MD  
Massachusetts, US



### BEIJING REPORT

At the Prepcom in New York, the infant formula companies were barred from participating in Beijing via a binding resolution that barred companies with a commercial interest from exhibiting or participating in the Beijing Conference and Forum. The infant formula companies were not stymied for

long by this resolution, however, They contacted prominent women in Southeast Asia and offered to pay their expenses, including transportation to and from the conference, rental cars while at the conference, and fancy hotel rooms. In return the women were asked to attend the Forum and "just" present the point of view that while breastfeeding might be best for the first 6 months, after that women need to have infant formula available.

As luck would have it, one of the first people these women ran into at the Conference was a lactation consultant from Hong Kong, who informed these unofficial "ambassadors" for the infant formula companies about the companies' typical tactics in undermining breastfeeding and co-opting respected professionals to promote infant formula. With this lesson in exploitative marketing, the women refused to be used and proceeded to participate in the conference as breastfeeding advocates instead!

Jan Richter, Action News, Washington

### MIME PERFORMANCES



World Alliance of Breastfeeding Associations( WABA) sponsored a mime troupe (with contributions from many) in Beijing. This was a brilliant idea as mime not only transcended the language barrier, but it also attracted many people who would not even have thought about attending a workshop on breastfeeding. In addition to the concept, the application was terrific. A 20 minute piece on the plight of a new mother and father who are encouraged to give up

breastfeeding by a doctor who has been 'bought' by the formula industry. They soon realize that bottle feeding is not the liberating experience promoted by the doctor, and the mime ends with their feeling themselves from the 'chains' of the bottle feeding. People 'got it', whether Chinese or African, French or Tamil speaking, young or old.

Karlyn Sturmer

## LAWS ARE NOT ENOUGH

Under Nepalese Law, the sixth amendment of the civil code, a person having sold someone is liable to 20 years imprisonment, while those who profit most aiders, and abettors, receive half the sentence. It is estimated that at least 200,000 girls and women of Nepali origin are currently working as prostitutes in Indian brothels and about 5,000 arrive annually. Parents sell daughters and husbands sell wives.

In Japan a large number of women forced to work as prostitutes are Thai and Filipino sold to *mama-sans*. There is no way of escape. They are locked eight to a room, often in bleak semi-agricultural dormitory towns and only allowed to go to "love hotels" or "soaplands". The Asian women's shelter HELP, based in Tokyo, offers some relief to the women who manage to escape the sex trade, often possessing nothing but the clothes they wear.



## WOMEN ARE NOT FREE

In Pilibhit India Bangladeshi refugees were promised citizenship certificates by family planning doctors who frantically try to meet the required sterilization target. More than 30,000 adults have been forcibly sterilized by government officials.

From: Health for the Millions, VHA India.  
Editorial comment: The doctors who do this should be held accountable.

## KILLER WOMEN: Rwanda



Not so Innocent; When Women Become Killers women's active participation in the 1994 genocide and murder of political opponents in Rwanda is examined. A substantial number of women, even girls were involved in the slaughter in countless ways, inflicting extraordinary cruelty on other women, as well as children and men.

Women of every social category took part in the killings. Government ministers, civil servants, journalists, doctors, nurses, academics, school teachers and inspectors, students, housewives, domestic servants, traders, nuns, the staff of local NGOs and the employees of international agencies were involved in the slaughter. But the burden of responsibility lies with the educated women who took part; they used their education, experience and standing in the community to urge less fortunate women to commit genocide. If everyone was involved, directly or indirectly, there would be no one to point an accusing finger.

Not all women participated of course, and neither did all men.

Many women as well as men refused to kill and took risks to save people they knew, as well as many they did not know. But thousands of women contributed to the murder of their neighbors, colleagues, friends, and relatives as well as strangers.

A number of educated women-including political activists-were known as extremists long before 1994. Others

succumbed, like men because of fear and pressure, or because of deeply ingrained habit in Rwanda of obeying official orders. Many were motivated by greed; they believed the promise of politicians, ideologues, journalists and local government officials that those who killed would receive material rewards, particularly that they would be able to inherit the land of the Tutsis. They were encouraged to loot the possessions of people driven out of their homes.

Some women killed with their own hands. On the hilltop of Kabuye, commune in Ndora in Butare, a former gendarme shot at thousands of unarmed people and threw grenades at them. One elderly grandmother in Gitaeama is accused of murdering dozens of Tutsi baby boys.

Scores of other women who did not use a gun or a machete nevertheless played a crucial and direct role. Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, the Minister for Women and the Family, visited places of refuge in Butare at night-time and supervised the selection of refugees to be executed. Several female councillors in Kigali led the militia who abducted refugees from their hiding places. Lists of people to be eliminated were drawn up and kept in their homes; weapons and ammunition were also distributed in their houses.

Women and girls in their teens joined the crowds that surrounded churches, hospitals and other places of refuge. Wielding machetes and nail-studded clubs, they excelled as "cheerleaders" of the genocide, undulating the killers into action. They entered churches, schools, football stadiums and hospitals to finish off the wounded, hacking women, children and even men to death. Some women have been accused of killing or betraying their own husbands and children. Above all, women and girls stripped the dead- and the barely living-stealing their jewelry, money and clothes. Other women told the killers where people were hiding, often screaming out their names as the terrified quarry ran for their lives. Some

women, including a nun currently hiding in Belgium, provided the petrol with which people were burnt alive. Some women and girls were seen at road-blocks, checking ID cards, a prelude to the slaughter of thousands of people incriminated by the fact that their ID said "Tutsi."

There is no evidence that women were more willing to give refuge to the hunted than men. Some mothers and grandchildren even refused to hide their own Tutsi children and grandchildren.

Some women forced out people taken in by their husbands. Many nurses at the CHI Hospital in Kigali and at Butare's University Hospital gave the militia and soldiers lists of patients, colleagues and refugees to be killed.

Some women have been arrested in Rwanda, thousands more are at liberty, confident that their deeds will never be revealed. Many of them are in government service, working as nurses, teachers and civil servants, sometimes in the very institutions where they committed unspeakable crimes. Some have gone to live where they are unknown. Many of the educated women most directly implicated in the killings are living in comfortable exile in Africa and Europe.

Rakiya Omaar and Alex de Waal  
London, United Kingdom

NOTE: Not so Innocent : When Women Become Killers can be obtained from African Rights for nine pounds plus postage. The address is 11 Marshalsea Road, London SE1 1EP, England.

## Cyber Communication and WIPHN



Communication by email, participation in listservs and news groups, gopher searches, and World Wide Web use are increasingly parts of the ways that we keep up with

colleagues, friends, issues, and news. It is widely reported that Internet users number at least 20 million, with numbers increasing by 105 or more per month.

WIPHN would like to join the interconnectivity revolution! We would like to begin by adding email addresses, for those members who have them, to our mailing list information. Member contact information, including email information, will be collected and published in an informal directory of members which will be available in early 1996. **Please send or fax your business card with your email address noted to the WIPHN office, or email the information to Catherine Briggs at [pifp@igc.apc.org](mailto:pifp@igc.apc.org).**

Additionally, if you have any listserv, Web site, or conference (newsgroup) that you have found particularly useful in your work or as information site, please let us know those details as well so that we can share it with the membership in a future newsletter. As a beginning, a few of the many sites which may be of interest include:

### A SAMPLING OF LISTSERVS

- BEIJING95-L, a UN Fourth World Conference on Women discussion exchange, open to both women and men. A second list, BEIJING95-WOMEN is open only to women. To subscribe, send an email message to [listserv@netcom.com](mailto:listserv@netcom.com) and leave the subject line blank, then type: subscribe beijing95-l [or type: subscribe beijing95-women] <your first name><your last name><your email address>. If you have any problems with the subscription procedure, email Jennifer Gagliardi at [gaglijn@netcom.com](mailto:gaglijn@netcom.com).
- BEIJING-CONF, another Beijing mailing list, moderated. To subscribe: write [majordomo@tristam.edc.org](mailto:majordomo@tristam.edc.org) and write in the body of the message, subscribe beijing-conf. To reach the moderator, write to [beij-mod@tristam.edc.org](mailto:beij-mod@tristam.edc.org).
- CITNET-W, the Healthy Cities Women's Network. Send subscription write [listserv@indycms.iupui.edu](mailto:listserv@indycms.iupui.edu). To subscribe type the following in the email message: subscribe CITNET-W To <your first name><your last name>.
- INTERNET-WOMEN-HELP, designed to provide women with a forum for specific questions and answers about internet use. (There is also an INTERNET-WOMEN-INFO list for general information on the internet). To

subscribe, email: [majordomo@best.com](mailto:majordomo@best.com) ; in the body type only these words: subscribe internet-women-help. For help with subscribing, email [Women-Online@agoodloe.vip.best.com](mailto:Women-Online@agoodloe.vip.best.com).

- SAWNET, the South Asian Women's Net (topics include women's health, domestic violence, electronic resources for women and others). To subscribe: send a message to [sawnet@qiclab.scn.rain.com](mailto:sawnet@qiclab.scn.rain.com) with the subject <Sawnet subscription request>.

### SAMPLING OF WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

AHSL (Arizona) Public Health Info Guide-<http://128.196.106.42/ph-hp.html>  
WHO server- <http://www.who.ch/> (leads to WHO gopher)

ADIS/HIV information: (HIVNET) - <http://www.hivnet.org/> (also leads to gopher)

International women's issues- <http://www.contact.org/women.htm>  
The Foundation Center - <http://fdncenter.org>; Non-profit information-<http://www.human.com/inc/>

### WOMENSNET

WomensNet, an online network for women, has recently been set up on the APC (Association for Progressive Communication) international network. APC provided online access to participants at both the NGO Forum and the Beijing Conference. For information about joining WomensNet, contact them at 18 DeBoom Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.US; Tel (415)442-0220; Fax:(415)546-1794; or email: [womensnet@igc.npc.org](mailto:womensnet@igc.npc.org). They will be able to give you information on how to best "connect" from your own location. Alternatively, contact Sally Burch, Coordinator, APC Women's Networking Support Program, at email: [sally@alai.ccx.apc.org](mailto:sally@alai.ccx.apc.org); Tel (593-2)-505074; Fax:(593-2)505073; address c/o Intercom/Ecuanex, Casilla 17-12-566, Quito, Ecuador.

Note: by joining one of the APC networks such as WomensNet one is able to take advantage of the other useful networks which they coordinate, including PeaceNet, EcoNet and ConflictNet. A sampling of some of the many electronic "conferences" available include: [africa.forum](mailto:africa.forum) (discussion of events all over Africa); [dev.worldbank](mailto:dev.worldbank) (discussion of World Bank activities and



their impact); **susag.calendar** (events related to promoting sustainable agriculture); **aidstreatment** (AIDS Treatment News, atwice monthly newsletter); **women.health** (information regarding women's health and related issues); **women.violence** (news/info/discussion relating to violence against women); **list.hmatrix**. (discussion regarding online health resources); and **hr.women** (human rights issues specific to women). A few conferences are specific to APC networks, others are available on the Internet. Another good resource available through the APC network is the Center for Women's global Leadership at Rutgers university; their email address is- [cwgl@igc.apc.org](mailto:cwgl@igc.apc.org).

#### Other online communications

Forums for discussions also exist on the commercial online services. Compuserve is one service that connects internationally with Forums such as "World Community" and "Women's Wire" as areas where discussions relating to women and health can occur. In addition, there are professional forums and a wide variety of informational resources available.

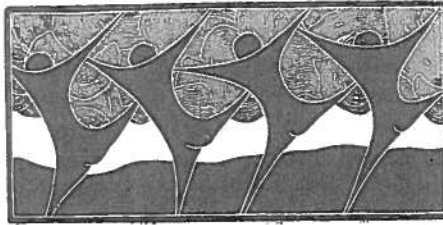
#### Access issues

The issue of equal access to online resources and electronic communication is a concern. Needed hardware, telephone access at a reasonable price, and other access constraints are all potential barriers to use. Satellite access to Internet communications and resources is a possibility for otherwise hard-to-reach areas and we hope to provide further information on such developments. Groups such as the Boston Computer Society try to help facilitate the use of still-workable but second hand computers for nonprofit groups and others for whom access is a problem. We would be interested in hearing if members have suggestions, or needs, in this area.

Catherine Briggs  
Massachusetts



## Hats off to "Baby Friendly" Hospitals



Some hospital administrators unfortunately view free formula supplies as a benefit for low-income patients, failing to recognize the future health and financial costs of bottlefeeding that such practices encourage. But some hospitals have gotten a wake up call!

The following medical centers have instituted their own "Baby Friendly" practices by refusing to accept free donations of infant formula: Evergreen and Kirkland Hospitals, Washington; Midland Regional Medical Center, Midland, Michigan; Methodist Hospital Health System, Minneapolis, Minnesota. These medical centers weaned themselves from the typical cozy relationship with the infant formula companies by applying the same standards when buying infant formula supplies as for other medical supplies. Contracts with formula companies prohibit them to advertise in hospitals, give free gift packs to new mothers, or use the health care system to endorse infant formula.

According to Bonny Skovbroten, a WIPHN member of the Methodist Hospital in Minnesota, the additional costs are minimal. Methodist, which delivers 3000 babies a year, pays less than \$4000 out of a multi-million dollar annual budget. The results, Skovbroten says, speak for themselves-76 to 80% of their new mothers are breastfeeding.

We urge maternity centers and hospitals to end their endorsement of bottle feeding through the distribution of free infant formula and close their doors to all the formula logos, advertisements, and photos of chubby bottlefed babies.

Jan Richter, Action News

## NESTLE IS VIOLATING THE CODE... AGAIN!

Nestle has bought and is now pushing Poland Spring water. Here is an excerpt from one of their advertisements: "Every mother wants to give her baby the best-it's only natural. That's why so many new moms can depend on the natural fresh taste of Poland Spring Natural Spring Water instead of filtered tap water.

"After all, our pure spring water stems from Mother Nature herself-from a protected natural spring, far from people and pollutants. We test our water to make sure it not only meets our exceeds tough governmental standards but also measures up to our own very stringent requirements.

"Lots of new mothers are discovering great tasting Poland Spring Natural Spring Water is a 'natural' for mixing with formula or serving straight from our bottle to baby's bottle?"

Blanca Keogan



WOMEN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Alcoholism had been a health, social and development problem in Gadchiroli, a remote area in central India. Through a mass movement led by young people and given support by village women anti-alcoholism groups sprung up (liberation from Alcohol); village meetings banned alcohol; village women locked up drunken men overnight and later publicly humiliated them and finally the government closed 60 alcohol shops in the area. Alcohol consumption has been reduced by 60%, more money available for family basics and there is less domestic violence.

Abbay and Rani Bang, India  
Source: Artag issue (#11), 1995



## **WIPHN Editorial**

This year, much activity has centered around the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women.

The challenge now is to use the platform of action to get governments to improve women's status and health. This will not happen unless women unite and present a solid front, organize and demand funding to enable them to achieve the goals agreed on.

In Beijing violence against women was recognized as a prevailing universal problem; wage and job discrimination coupled with the glass ceiling keep women at lower status than men; lack of reproductive rights in most countries and lack of adequate education and childcare further adds to women's low social status. The platform recognizes the monetary value of women's unpaid work including childcare and housework which economists have routinely ignored. Women are still being sold into sexual slavery and despite new laws promulgated -the problem is lack of enabling enforcement.

Worldwide violence has escalated and the savagery and violent murder of holocaust genocide notoriety has been emulated and perpetuated. It has spread to Bosnia and Rwanda on a grand scale and to a lesser degree it is continued throughout the world. In a nation one people against the other Indians against Mexicans ; Zulus against Xosas; blacks against whites or vice versa, one religion against the other brother against sister and sister against sister but never has it been so manifest.

We no longer only have battered women we now have battered nations. There is an absolute need to hold religious and national bodies

accountable. Children must learn to be more tolerant to reduce violence and hatred from generation to generation. Until the perpetrators of these vicious deeds are punished severely there will be no end to such denial of human rights. Women and children unfortunately are the ones to suffer most. Have we reached a new stage where crime pays. Where men in war rape and kill women and girls as if its their right.

The most important outcome of the meeting was connection, the recognition that for the struggle women need to be united and share strategies for change. Women are breaking the silence and women are supporting other women in their struggles. As this increases so will the critical mass of women who will forcibly make it possible for women to walk the streets without being raped; girls will be given the same opportunities as boys; women will hold positions that will give them more control over funding so that policies furthering womens unmet needs can be funded.

The struggle has just begun. Public health must come before private profit.

Naomi Baumslag

President WIPHN News

Please send us your comments and suggestions.

### **CRITICAL AREAS FOR CONCERN IN THE ACTION PLATFORM OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN BEIJING**

- tackles the increasing burden of on women of poverty or promotes womens access in education at all levels;
- improves access to health care;
- prevents all forms of violence against women, and improve support for those who have suffered such violence;

- meet the needs of women living in war or other forms of conflict;
- ensure womens access to and participation in economic structures;
- set up effective mechanisms to promote the advancement of women;
- promote and protect women's human rights;
- promote women's participation in , and positive representation in the media;
- promote women's involvement in the achievement and protection of a safe environment; and,
- protect the girl child from discrimination and promote their advancement in society.

The Action Platform promotes public information on the benefits of breastfeeding; examines ways and means of implementing fully the WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.



### ***The Mexican Maquiladora and Anencephaly***

Mexican border workers have more malformed children. The maquiladoras (factories) crowd much of the 2000 mile border between Mexico and the United States. This legacy of unchecked investment is palpable; workers work in production rooms with few accessible fire exits and almost no ventilation, often spraying industrial lacquer and soldering with hazardous substances that are illegal in the US. Menstrual irregularities and miscarriage are common.

Nearly seven in 10 maquiladora workers are female, as signs in Tijuana suggest; "Se Solicita, Sexo; Femenino" (help wanted, women only). Employers say they prize female personnel for their supposedly

delicate musculature and their willingness to work for lower wages than men.

Hourly wages range from the equivalent of 70 US cents to \$1.25, which can buy one litre of oil or a couple of eight-ounce cans of condensed milk. Along the border, a number of communities are plagued with near-epidemic rates of anencephaly, a birth defect that causes infants to be born without a brain and die immediately. Mexico has one of the highest rates of anencephaly in the world, with the highest rates in the border region. Preliminary research has linked this defect to the rivers of raw chemical waste known as "aguas negras" (black waters) that flow from bluffs dense with maquiladoras and trickle down to the colonias, or settlements, covering the hillsides and valleys below.

Source: Womens Global Network for Reproductive Rights. Newsletter No.48, Oct.-Dec 1994, Populi, by the UNFPA, USA, June 1994.

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A Welcome for Every child. How France Protects Maternal and Child Health - A New Frame of Reference for the United States, G.Richardson. French American Foundation, 41 East 72nd Street, New York, NY 10021 US.

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Breastfeeding Papers of the Month, June 1995, Body Mass Index on Lactation Performance, A.M. Prentice et al. Even mothers who are very thin produce adequate volumes of breastmilk. New York, Nutrition Section, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, US, 212-326-7000.

The Cairo Consensus: The Right Agenda for the Right Time, A. Germain, R. Kyte -The International Women's Health Coalition, 24 East 21 Street, New York, NY 10010, US, (212) 979-8500 :fax (212) 979-9009, email: Internet iwhc@igc.apc.org.

Church Women ACT and Church Women INFORM, Vol. XI, No. 4, Church Women United, 110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, US, 202-544-8747.

The Fourth World Journal, Vol. 27, No. 3, September 1995, Fourth World Movement, 7600 Willow Hill Drive, Landover, MD 20875, US, (301) 336-9489.

Free Reduced Rate Periodicals for Peace Corps Volunteers, 1995, RE007, Information and Collection Exchange (ICE), 1990 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20526, US.

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Hesperian Foundation News, Fall 1995, 2796 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306, US.

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N.W., Suite 302, Washington, D.C. 20036, US, 202-797-0007 and fax 202-797-0020, email: icrw@igc.apc.org.

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Network News, Vol. 10, No. 1, August 1995, a newsletter published by the Global Link for Midlife and Older Women, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049, US. (202) 434-2402 and fax (202) 434-6494.

Newsletter 50, published by the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, April-June 1995, NZ Voorbugwal 32, 1012 RZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands, (3120) 620 96 72 and fax (31-20) 622 24 50.

NU, Tuberculosis and HIV, News on Health Care in Developing Countries, 1/1995, Vol. 9, and Community-based rehabilitation (CBR), 2/1995, Vol. 9, published by Unit for International Child Health, Department of Pediatrics, Uppsala University, University Hospital, Entrance 11, S-751 85 Uppsala, Sweden, 018-66 59 96 and fax 018-50 80 13.

NWEC Newsletter, Vol. 12, No. 1, May 1995, biannual publication of the National Women's Education Centre of Japan, Sugaya 728, Ranzan-machi, Hiki-gun, Saitama 355-02, Japan, +81-493-62-6711 and fax +81-493-62-6721.

The resurgence of infectious diseases by Ann Platt, July/August World Watch, World Watch Institute 1776 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC. 20036 Phone: 202 4521992 EX 545 FAX 202- 296- 7365.

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Quarterly Newsletter, No. 15, August 1995, Women's Health Project, Centre for Health Policy, P.O. Box 1038, 2000 Johannesburg, Rep. of South Africa, phone; (011)489-9917 and fax (011)489-9922.

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Street Children, Problems or Persons?, S. Vanistendael, International Catholic Child Bureau, 63-65, rue de Lausanne, CH - 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, (41-22)731 32 48 and fax (41-22) 731 77 93.

Treatment of Common Non-Cancerous Uterine Conditions: Issues for Research, conference summary, July 1995, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, ACHPR, Executive Office Center, Suite 501, 2101 East Jefferson Street, Rockville, Maryland, US.

Update, The IHMEC Newsletter, Summer 1995, Vol. 5, No. 2, Office of International Studies and Programs, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Box 980439, Omaha, NE 68198-0439.

WABA Link, Issue 11, June 1995, World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, P.O. Box 1200, 10850 Penang, Malaysia, 60-4-6572655.

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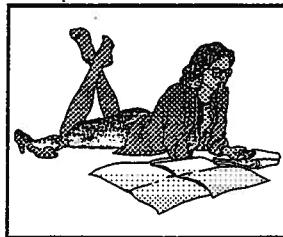
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Women's Linkage Caucus, Recommendations on Bracketed Text in the WCW Draft Platform for Action,

(conference held on 24 May), 1995, July 1, 1995, WEDO, 845 Third Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10022, US, (212) 759-7982 and fax (212) 759-8647, email: wedo@igc.apc.org.

Women on the Move, 1995, No. 8, United Nations, Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women, 2 United Nations Plaza, DC2-1234, New York, NY 10017, US, 212-963-8385 and fax 212-963-3463. email: Internet fwcw@undp.org, daw@undp.org; Bitnet

Health Action. Community Education. Issue 11 December 1994-Feb 1995 Artag 29-35 Farringdon Road, London EC1M3JB



WOMEN, INK, Books on Women and Development. A great resource for new books by and for women. Includes books on development resource material. Contact Person: Rosemary Kalapurakal 777, United Nations Plaza, New York, New York 10017 USA. Phone: (212) 687 8633

In Touch Publication of The Jacobs Institute of Women's Health 409 12th street SW washington DC 20024-2188

## NEW ORGANIZATIONS LINKED WITH WIPHN



MELPOMENE INSTITUTE - is a non-profit, membership based organization created in 1982. Their goal is to help women and girls of all ages link health and physical activity through research, education, and publication. 1010 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, US, (612) 642-1951 and fax (612) 642-1871.

PARTNERS IN HEALTH INC. - is a worldwide philanthropic organization that assists people worldwide in creating solutions to issues that affect the quality of their lives and health. Institutionally fosters the building of partnerships and effective collaboration. Provides consulting services which focus on women, adolescent and childrens preventive health services. Contact person Joanne Weinman Tel/Fax 703 883-8015

MIDRS - Midwives Information and Resource Services 7 Elmdale Road Clifton, Bristol BS8 1SL United Kingdom

NABA - National Alliance for Breastfeeding Advocacy is dedicated to support promotion and protection of breastfeeding as an integral part of wellness for the US. The mission of NABA is to coordinate efforts by organizations, agencies, institutions and individuals towards the development of strategic plans, policies and goals for breastfeeding reform in the US. Contact person; Marsha Walker phone; 617-893-3553 or 617-893-8608.



## MEETINGS

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF BREASTFEEDING AND HUMAN LACTATION, 11-14 January, 1996, Hotel Royal Plaza, Walt Disney World Village, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, US, Contact: Health Education Associates Inc., 8 Jan Sebastian Way #13, Sandwich, MA 02563, US.

6TH INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONGRESS ON WOMEN, Adelaide, Australia, 22-26 April, 1996. Contact: Festival City Conventions, P.O. Box 986, Kent Town, South Australia 5071, 61-8 363 1307 and fax 61-8 363 1604.

THE 24TH ANNUAL SEMINAR FOR PHYSICIANS ON BREASTFEEDING July 18-20, 1996 San Diego Contact LLLI Department of Education, P.O. Box Schaumburg, IL, US. 60168-4079 ext 218.

**NEW WORLD ORDER: THREATS ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH** in Annercy, France from June 7-9, 1996. Participants from major international health care organizations, ministries of health, NGOs, WHO, alumnae and students will be attending. Contact person: Ricky Fine, Director Alumni Affairs and Governmental relations office, Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health FAX: 410-614-2405; Phone: 410 955-5194.

**2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS** October 3-5, 1996 to be held at Harvard University. The focus will be on the practical experience and lessons learned in the field of health and human rights. Contact person: Mary Pat McCabe phone: 617-496-4378; FAX- 617-496-4380.

## COURSES

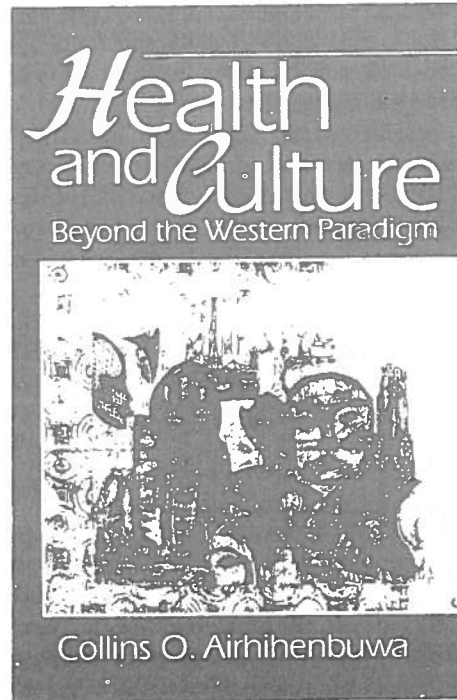
**BREASTFEEDING: PRACTICE AND POLICY** 1-26TH 1996 Certificate course. Centre for International Child Health. Institute of Child Health and Great Ormond Street for Children NHS Trust 30, Guilford Street, London WC1N 1EH, Phone: 44-171 829 8692 fax: 44- 171 831 0488.

PLEASE NOTE WIPHN IS IN NO WAY ASSOCIATED WITH the Global Alliance for Womens Health (or its president Elaine Wulfson) as she had two formula company representatives on her womens health panel in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

**CESAREAN SECTION - NEW IDEAS**  
A new technique for caesarean section- the Misgav Ladach Method has recently been introduced in Jerusalem at the Misgav Ladach hospital. The new method is simpler, quicker and less painful. Source: NU News on Health care in Developing Countries Vol 3, 1995 obtainable from ICH University Hospital, S-751 85 Uppsala, Sweden.

## BOOKS

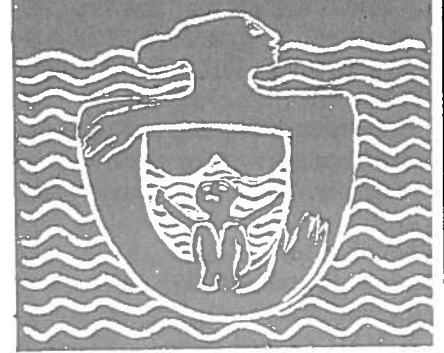
**HEALTH AND CULTURE** Beyond the Western Paradigm by Collins O Airihenuwa. Sage Publications Inc. 1995 PO Box 5084 Thousand Oaks Ca. 91359-9924.



Breastfeeding Papers of the Month, August, 1995, Experimental Studies of infant-parent co-sleeping: mutual physiological and behavioral influences and their relevance to SIDE, laboratory research is beginning to indicate that sleeping together has valuable physiological effects on the baby which diminish risk of SIDE, UNICEF New York, Nutrition Section, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, US, 212-326-7000.

### FABRIC OF WOMEN: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Please send to WIPHN any interesting information on cloth production by women, stories about cloth, how women make cloth print, wave, embroider, samples of cloth (we will pay a reasonable fee if needed), occupational hazards etc. We are trying to write a lovely, illustrated book on this subject from a woman's perspective. Credit will be given to contributors.



Coming Soon ....

### Milk, Money & Madness: the culture and politics of breastfeeding

by Naomi Baumslag, MD, MPH and  
Dia L. Michels  
Bergin & Garvey, 288 pgs, \$26.95

*A "must read" for new mothers, lactation specialists and everyone interested in maternal and infant health*

Breastfeeding is a beautiful process. It involves the participation of both mother and child — and cannot be duplicated by a glass bottle and rubber nipple.

Breastmilk is a biological fluid that has yet to be equaled by any laboratory concoction of cow's milk. Milk, Money & Madness shows how women have been deceived into believing that cow's milk is as good for human infants as breastmilk. Filled with fascinating information and stunning illustrations and charts, the authors examine the history, culture, biology, and politics of breastfeeding. By describing worldwide breastfeeding practices, showing the magic of the mammary system, and explaining strategies used to undermine it, *Milk, Money & Madness* increases our knowledge and appreciation of the unique importance of breastfeeding.

*"I commend the authors of Milk, Money and Madness for the considerable contribution they have made by voicing their opinions, contributing their knowledge, stimulating debate and challenging conventional wisdom."*

Dr. Richard Jolly

Acting Executive Director, UNICEF

*Milk, Money & Madness* is available from the Women's International Public Health Network. Members receive a 20% discount and may request autographed copies. Please send shipping instructions and \$21.50 (\$2.50 s/h for one book within the US, \$1.50 extra for each additional book or overseas address) to WIPHN, 7100 Oak Forest Lane, Bethesda, MD 20817.



**WIPHN  
REQUEST FOR ARTICLES**

WIPHN needs to hear from you. Please write a small piece about your organization and what work you are doing in women's health. The article should be no more than one and a half pages long, double spaced. Photos and/or drawings will be welcomed. Letters, comments and let's change this communications are being sought.

**MIDWIFE WANTED**

A volunteer midwife, bilingual (Spanish/English) is needed to work with the local midwives in order to help them upgrade their skills and confront increasing neonatal/maternal morbidity and mortality. The setting is rural Nicaragua. Living conditions are "rustic" A minimum commitment of three months is required. Room and board will be provided. Volunteers are responsible for transportation to and from Nicaragua. If interested please contact (WIPHN member) Dorothy Granada, Coordinator of Health Services, El Centro De Mujeres Maria Luisa Ortiz, Apartado R.P. 10, Managua, Nicaragua CA.

**CRY FOR HELP**

Mekonnen Temsgen of Ethiopia, a WIPHN member, works in an integrated community health and development project run by Cheshire Foundation - Ethiopia, (a local NGO for the welfare of disabled children and youth) which also provides home based care and institutional services. Activities are focused on: maternal and child health, community development, day care service, HIV/AIDS prevention and rehabilitation for the disabled. Send educational materials such as newsletters, video cassettes, and other teaching aids for the project to Mekonnen Temsgen, Cheshire H10 Project PO Box 31938, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia.



**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH NETWORK (WIPHN)**

7100 Oak Forest Lane, Bethesda, MD 20817, USA

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

To join, please fill in this form (print clearly) and include your membership fee: \$25 for individuals, \$50 for organizations. Organizations or individuals in developing countries who cannot afford the fee, please send cloth or artwork of the same value as the fee.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Telex \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interests \_\_\_\_\_



Remember to renew your membership. We depend on your subscription to produce the newsletter. Our next issue will be on Violence. Please send us your opinions, concerns and especially examples of efforts being made in your area for change. Do so as soon as possible so we can include your contribution in the next issue of the WIPHN News.



## The Women's International Public Health Network

The Women's International Public Health Network was founded as a grass-roots movement at the World Federation of Public Health Association Meeting in Mexico City, March 1987, to provide all women in the field of public health with an opportunity to work together to improve women's health worldwide.

### Who Is It For?

Any woman working in public health.

### What Are the Objective?

To serve as a resource network and umbrella organization for women's groups throughout the world in health or health related areas. Through this educational support and communication network, women in public health will be able to maximize their resources and work together more effectively to promote better health for all women.

### What Do We Do?

- Provide support to colleagues in the field of public health. Groups in each country share information, experiences, ideas and resources. Colleagues visiting from other countries will find a network of friends.
- Promote women in international public health and identify women's issues such as: safe motherhood and health rights.
- Network with other women's organizations.
- Publish a newsletter that addresses international women's health issues, programs and opportunities.
- Participate in policy development related to women's health and publish position papers on specific issues.
- Serve as a exchange forum.
- Maintain a speakers bureau and sponsor programs, panels, and meetings at conferences.
- Provide technical assistance.
- Offer information on existing training resources and materials for identified needs.

- Act as a resource for funding information and opportunities for members.
- Research neglected women's health areas.
- Provide employment information through a job bank.

### WIPHN News Editorial Staff

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