



The Center for Research on Women and Gender

Building Research Connections

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CRWG Welcomes New Interim Director and New Associate Director

UIC's Center for Research on Women and Gender warmly welcomes two new staff members: Judith Kegan Gardiner, the Center's new Interim Director; and Claudia Morrissey, Associate Director for the Women in Science and Technology Program and the National Center on Excellence in Women's Health (CoE).

Judith Gardiner is currently Professor of English and Women's Studies and Director of Graduate Studies in the UIC English Department and co-chair of the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women. She received her A.B. from Radcliffe College

and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English literature from Columbia University. In the early 1970s, she was on the editorial collective of Health Rights News, a publication of Medical Committee for Human Rights. A member of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, she helped found the UIC childcare center and the UIC Women's Studies Program. Her first book is about Ben Jonson's poetry; her second, about 20th-century women writers, is Rhys, Stead, Lessing, and the Politics of Empathy. She also edited two volumes, *Provoking Agents: Gender and Agency in Theory and Practice* and *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory*, which came out this year. Other publications address seventeenth-century English literature, Renaissance and twentieth-century women writers, feminist and psychoanalytic theory, and recently masculinity studies and popular culture, including the television series *South Park*. Professor Gardiner is a member of the editorial collective that publishes the interdisciplinary journal *Feminist Studies*, and has held a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities and a residency fellowship through the Rockefeller Foundation. At UIC she has won the Excellence in Teaching Award and held two Humanities Institute fellowships.

Claudia Morrissey, MD, MPH, brings to the Center a background in community organizing, advocacy, program/policy development, and primary care/women's medicine. Morrissey became active in the Women's Self Help Movement in the early 70's organizing and teaching Women's Awareness Workshops covering self-health topics and practices from a women's empowerment perspective. She earned her MD at The Chicago Medical School and completed her Internal Medicine residency at the University of Iowa. She received an MPH in health policy and management from Johns Hopkins and was inducted into the Delta Omega Honor Society in Public Health. In 1995, Morrissey became the Senior Technical Advisor to the USAID's Office of Population, Health and Nutrition assisting with women's health projects. Prior to arriving at the CRWG she worked at a Boston-based public health consulting firm, as the Senior Technical Advisor to a large USAID integrated family health project in Bangladesh, and as the Deputy Director of JSI's Center for Women's Health. Morrissey teaches international public health as an Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at Northwestern University. She is on the Steering Committee of the Consortium for Emergency Contraception and on the International Advisory Board of AMWA's Reproductive Health Initiative.

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Words of Welcome from New CRWG Interim Director Judith Kegan Gardiner

"I'm pleased and honored to be the Interim Director of CRWG. I helped to get the Center going many years ago, and it has developed a wide range of programs and had considerable successes, especially in the fields of health and women in science. Now there is a talented team to carry on this work, including Associate Directors Stacie Geller and Claudia Morrissey, Assistant Director Mary Lynn Dietsche, and all the rest of the wonderful staff at the Center. I'm committed to keeping up the momentum for our current projects and grants, developing our expertise in evaluation, retaining our good connections with community groups, gaining better publicity for CRWG accomplishments, and involving a broader segment of the university from both the East and West sides of campus. I'm also exploring the possibility of some joint projects with other CIC institutions. I encourage all CWRG friends to send me their ideas and suggestions for the coming year."

Words of Introduction from New CRWG Associate Director Claudia Morrissey

"My primary tasks at CRWG will be to direct the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program and to assist with the Leadership and Community Cores of the National Center of Excellence in Women's Health (CoE). The WISE program is charged with increasing the number and improving the retention of female undergraduate/graduate students and faculty in non-traditional fields such as science, technology engineering and math (STEM), by creating a positive educational and professional environment in support of these women.

I've taken many forks in the road to arrive at CRWG. My journey has, however, consistently been directed by my commitment to improving the health and well-being of women. I am very excited to be shepherding the WISE program and helping with other efforts

at the CoE, and I am eager to work with the talented CRWG staff, interested students and faculty."

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CRWG Announces its 2002 Dissertation Award Winners

The Center for Research on Women and Gender is pleased to announce the winners of its first annual Dissertation Research Award Competition. The purpose of the award is to encourage original and significant research about gender and/or women by UIC students. This year's proposals were consistently engaging, innovative and demonstrated excellent scholarship, making it very difficult to select winners. Awards were granted to three proposals. In addition, six submissions received honorable mentions. The award-winning doctoral students and their dissertation projects were:

- Leanne Brecklin (Department of Criminal Justice): "Self-Defense Training and Women's Responses to Rape Attacks";
- Paula (Lori) Watson (Department of Philosophy): "Liberal Democracies, Feminism, and Citizenship";
- Inés Sahagún-Bahena (Department of Spanish, French, Italian & Portuguese): "Space and the City in Mexican Women's Novels, 1980-1990".

Women Building Chicago Wins Booklist Award

Women Building Chicago 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary (Indiana University Press) was selected as best reference source of 2001 by the editors of Booklist, an American Library association publication. Carolyn Mulac's review describes the book as "a wonderful mosaic depicting the women of Chicago, whose efforts and demands have shaped life in the city as we know it today" (January 1 & 15, 2002). The book is the product of collaboration between the Center for Research on Women and Gender and the Chicago Area Women's History Conference. Co-

editor Rima Lunin Schultz now is interim director of the Near West Side website project housed at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, UIC. Margaret (Peg) Strobel, interim director of the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum and faculty member in Gender and Women's Studies and History, served as an associate editor.

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Direct-to-consumer Advertising to Senior Women: Empowering or Overpowering?

Sarah Shirk, MPH

Center for Research on Women and Gender

Sarah Shirk is a gerontologist at the CRWG with a special interest in medication mismanagement in senior populations. Her current research focuses on consumer behavior surrounding prescription, complementary/alternative medications and how gender may influence those consumer decisions.

Direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising is on the rise. In 1995 U.S. pharmaceutical companies spent \$313 million on DTC advertising, by 1996 that marketing budget had more than doubled to \$655 million.¹ Much of the direct-to consumer advertising, including ads that stress the health benefits of new prescription drugs, is directed to senior women.

What impact do these advertising campaigns have on senior women? We already know that senior women in the U.S. are extremely reliant on prescription medications. Evidence shows that "eight of ten Medicare beneficiaries regularly use prescription medications . . . and older women suffer disproportionately from chronic conditions that require greater use of prescription medications."² In addition, pharmaceutical prevention strategies (such as hormone replacement therapy) are often recommended for women by health care providers. As a result, most women on Medicare use prescription drugs regularly; 29% spend over \$50 a month for medications.³ Pharmaceutical marketing strategies are likely to keep these numbers rising.

Brandeis University's National Center on Women and Aging (NCWA) has been collecting written survey data to examine some of the impact of the DTC advertising. At a consumer health conference targeting senior women, 153 conference attendees responded to the short survey. Preliminary results published by the NCWA indicate that almost all (95%) reported seeing or hearing an ad for a prescription drug in the past month, most often on television (85%) or in magazines (82%). A majority did not think the ad(s) provided helpful information about medical conditions (65%) or about medical treatments (68%).

Some survey comments reflected the pro's and con's of these ads. One woman wrote of the positive consumer education aspect of the DTC ads: "Better to have [the ads] than inaccessible, silent, and hurried physicians." Another comment showed a "buyer beware" attitude: "I find most of them misleading, if not outright inaccurate." Yet another person described how pervasive the ad campaigns can be: "They are creating a lifestyle where everyone feels that they should be taking medication."⁴ These women show great insight into the persuasiveness of these ads, and more research needs to be done to clearly determine if the ads are empowering or overpowering.

Women need to know all the options available. However, with studies showing that nearly one-third of elderly patients report adverse reactions to medications⁵, it seems that more consumer education is needed in the areas of medication management and medication risks. This is especially true for senior women who may unknowingly have liver and kidneys that work less efficiently as they age. As the research described above indicates, it is important that senior women and other consumers not let the persuasiveness of the ads overshadow the advice of their physician or their own healthy skepticism of the "quick fix" to health that so many of these advertisements imply.

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1. *About Women & Marketing*, 1/31/98, 11(1), 7.
 2. Weitz, T., and C. Estes (2001). *Adding Aging and Gender to the Women's Health Agenda*. *Journal of Women & Aging*, 13(2), 3.
 3. Schoen, C. et al. (1998). *Medicare Beneficiaries: A Population at Risk (Findings from the Kaiser/Commonwealth 1997 Survey of Medicare Beneficiaries)*. Washington, DC: Kaiser Family Foundation.

4. *National Center on Women & Aging. (2000). Women & Aging Letter.4 (5), 8.*
5. *Lavizzo-Mourey R. (1990). Practicing Prevention for the Elderly. Philadelphia, PA: Hanley & Belfus, Inc.*

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UIC's National Center of Excellence in Women's Health

CoE Research Director Conducts Follow-up Study of Sexual Identity and Drinking

Tonda Hughes, PhD, RN, FAAN, Director of the Research Core for the UIC CoE, recently received funding from the National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) for her study "Sexual Identity and Drinking: A Longitudinal Follow-up." The study will extend Dr. Hughes' current research focusing on risk and protective factors for heavy drinking and drinking-related problems among 450 lesbians in Chicago. Although it is assumed that lesbians are at high risk for alcohol-related problems, very few studies have addressed risk and protective factors associated with this risk. This research is particularly important because it involves one of the most diverse samples of lesbians ever studied; it is also the first federally funded longitudinal study of lesbian health. The study will be conducted over the next four years.

CoE Impact Survey Results Now Available

In February 2002, the UIC National Center of Excellence (CoE) in Women's Health initiated an on-line impact survey to help evaluate past CoE activities and to target future women's health initiatives. 126 faculty, staff and community members took time to complete the 12-item questionnaire.

The UIC CoE was found to have the greatest impact in three key areas: increased awareness of women's health issues, increased multi-disciplinary collaborations and more opportunities for students interested in women's health issues. Overall, 66% of respondents indicated at least some benefit from increased

awareness and knowledge of women's issues; while 57% indicated at least some benefit from collaboration and networking. Funding resources and research opportunities were also cited as tangible benefits of CoE activities.

Suggestions for new CoE initiatives included campus-wide collaborations such as a women's health "think tank" and more "research roundtable" discussions. City-wide collaborations were also suggested. Recommendations included trying to increase the involvement of community stakeholders and expanding outreach to other CoE's and universities. Overall observations showed that 21% described the CoE as having "a great deal of impact on the UIC community."

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the complete CoE Impact Survey Results contact Evaluation Committee Co-Chair Sarah Shirk at sshirk1@uic.edu.

CoE Hosts Symposium on Women's Leadership

The UIC Center of Excellence (CoE) in Women's Health will host a symposium this fall that examines leadership issues for women faculty in academic medicine. The event, entitled "Beyond Parity: Transforming Academic Medicine through Women's Leadership" will be co-sponsored by all the Region V CoEs with support from the Region V Office of Women's Health, the American Medical Women's Association, and the AMA. Janet Bickel, Associate Vice President for Medical School Affairs, Association of American Medical Colleges, will guide the CoE's efforts to:

- examine the current status of women in academic medicine, nationally and in Region V;
- expose the structural barriers that created and maintain the status quo;
- explore successful efforts to dismantle these barriers;
- embark on redefining "success" beyond the issue of parity.

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CRWG GEM-SET Project Recognized

On Friday, March 22, the UIC Center for Research on Women and Gender was presented an award for its partnership with the Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Girls' Electronic-Mentoring in Science, Engineering and Technology (GEM-SET) Project and its "outstanding leadership in promoting girls' and women's opportunities in the fields of science, engineering and technology." The award was presented by Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao at Loyola University to several GEM-SET participants, including Principal Investigator Sarah Shirk and Project Coordinator and Mentor Denise Harbert. Secretary Chao praised GEM-SET for being both "high tech and high touch," recognized GEM-SET as a program that addresses the skills gap in technology and recognizes the importance of volunteerism. Secretary Chao also recognized several volunteer mentors from Chicago who give time and energy to encourage young women to consider science, engineering, and technology careers. Funding for the GEM-SET program is provided by the Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

Announcements

CRWG Presents CME Course on Osteoporosis in African American Women

The UIC Center for Research on Women and Gender is presenting a Continuing Medical Education (CME) program for primary care physicians on "Osteoporosis in African American Women" at various hospitals and medical centers in Illinois. The course was developed by Mary Kleinman, project coordinator. Programs will be held this spring at UIC, Mt. Sinai Hospital, St. James Hospital at Olympia Fields, Ingalls Memorial Hospital, and St. Francis Hospital in Peoria. Approximately 200 physicians are expected to participate in the course. The Illinois Department of Public Health, Office of Women's Health has provided a development grant. For more information, call 312-413-1924.

Time to Nominate UIC's "Woman of the Year"

The UIC Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women (CCSW) is currently accepting nominations for candidates from the UIC

community for the 2002 "Woman of the Year" Award, sponsored by the CCSW. Established in 1992, this annual award honors a UIC woman who has consistently worked on women's issues beyond the call of duty and who is an exemplary role model. The award criteria include providing service to women at UIC while on the job, responding to issues affecting women, and offering service to women through voluntarism and public support of women's programs. All UIC women employed by the University as of May, 2002 (including civil service and full or part time) are eligible for the award. You may nominate yourself. A committee of CCSW officers and former award winners will make the final selection from among the nominees.

The final date for nominations is Sept 3, 2002. For more information see the CCSW Web page at www.uic.edu/depts/ccsw.

CRWG Welcomes Gender and Women's Studies' New Director

This fall, John D'Emilio, Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and of History here at UIC, will become the new director of the Gender and Women's Studies Program, replacing Sonia Michel. Professor D'Emilio received his Ph.D. in history from Columbia University in 1982. His research interests include gay and lesbian history, sexuality and public policy, and the study of social movements and community activism. His books include *Sexual Politics*, *Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*; *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* [with Estelle Freedman]; and *Creating Change: Sexuality, Public Policy, and Civil Rights* [with William Turner and Urvashi Vaid].

D'Emilio has received fellowships and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Philosophical Society. He has been chair of the board of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and was the founder and first director of its Policy Institute. He is currently completing a biography of Bayard Rustin, a radical pacifist and American civil rights leader. This fall, Duke University Press will publish a collection of pieces he has written on history and politics, *The World Turned: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and Culture*. The CRWG looks forward to new and continuing collaborations with Professor D'Emilio and the Gender and Women's Studies Program.

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