

6 Billion's a Crowd?
In the Name of Honor
The Sex Industry Exposed

Volume 9, Number 1
Spring/Summer 2002
\$5.00

SPECIAL
DOUBLE ISSUE



THE AMERICAN FEMINISTSM

Feminists for Life of America[®]



FFL examines international crimes against women in this special double issue.

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST

Feminists for Life of America

"When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we may safely conclude that there is something wrong in society—so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged." — Mattie Brinkerhoff, *The Revolution*, September 2, 1869



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THE AMERICAN FEMINIST The Quarterly Magazine of Feminists for Life of America Editor Laura Ciampa Associate Editor Erin M. Sullivan Copy Editors Donna R. Foster, Karen MacKavanagh

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Feminists for Life of America, founded in 1972, is a member of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, National Women's Coalition for Life, National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women, and Seamless Garment Network.

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Herstory

Worth Repeating



ALTHOUGH WE ALL HAVE OPINIONS, only a few have earned the opportunity to publish them, influencing thousands. Our international cohort, Feminists for Life of Ireland (FFLI) President Breda O'Brien, a writer and broadcaster, uses her opportunities wisely and forcefully. O'Brien is a weekly opinion writer for *The Irish Times*, a position she has held since April 2000.

She is consistently pro-life, earning the applause of the organization People With Disabilities in Ireland for her column against a genetic scanning proposal. She challenged the Irish public, "Why work for peaceful non-violent solutions in the North (Ireland) but simply shrug and declare it to be the lesser of two evils when it comes to abortion?" She proclaimed the "psychological robustness" of single mothers to withstand pressure to abort and brought to light a Finnish study comparing risk factors for suicide: 11.3/100,000 in the general population; 5.9/100,000 after birth of a child; 34.7/100,000 after abortion. She urged her audience to "tackle the reasons for choosing abortion," noting that, "Even though abortion has been legal in the UK for 33 years, (the fact that it) still arouses passion and debate (is) exactly as it should be because it is literally a question of life and death."

She questioned the cause of the high rate of Caesarean sections and called for accurate information for women and their husbands or partners that would allow informed decisions about childbirth procedures, c-sections and home births. She spoke out for fairness when a TV broadcast of allegations of abuse used techniques of tight close-ups, one-sided reporting and constructed visuals. "We tend to believe in an almost naive fashion what we see...the public often forgets that media are a construction, the result of numerous editorial decisions to include or exclude material...It is particularly dangerous when television, with its powerful visual impact, becomes judge and jury." Again, fairness was at issue when various women's groups across Europe wanted a change in funding for representation. For more than a decade the money had been given exclusively to an

umbrella women's organization called the European Women's Lobby. O'Brien advocated that the funding be opened so that other women's organizations could apply for it to raise more voices in the making of policy.

As statistics came out about the ever-increasing number of children in long days of childcare, O'Brien questioned the very structure of her society. Its high mortgages, inflexible workplaces and low priority given to parents to rear their own children were contrary to what most parents wanted. She asked whether Ireland could make it easier for parents to parent full-time, rather than much more difficult. Acknowledge that parenting is work, she pressed, "as valuable as anything done in the paid workforce...society as a whole suffers when the quality of parenting declines."

When Ireland and all of Europe was considering the "Euro" currency, she recommended slowing down to consider the impact of such an exchange rate on Eastern Europe's new and struggling democracies, perhaps giving them time to find alternatives or form alliances with other countries at similar levels of development. Responding to the Sept. 11 tragedy, O'Brien paralleled it with Ireland's violence: "The Islamic world is huge and diverse. The Taliban doesn't represent Islam (just) as those who harassed and terrified small girls on their way to school in the Ardoyne are (not) representative of Protestants." And finally, when Amnesty International published a report on the torture of children in dozens of countries, O'Brien used her column to highlight the violations. "Publishing such atrocities adds to the public awareness...the emerging consciousness is that it is possible to make a difference." In her written word, Breda O'Brien supports that fledgling consciousness as she works to make a difference. ○

Questioning the Status Quo

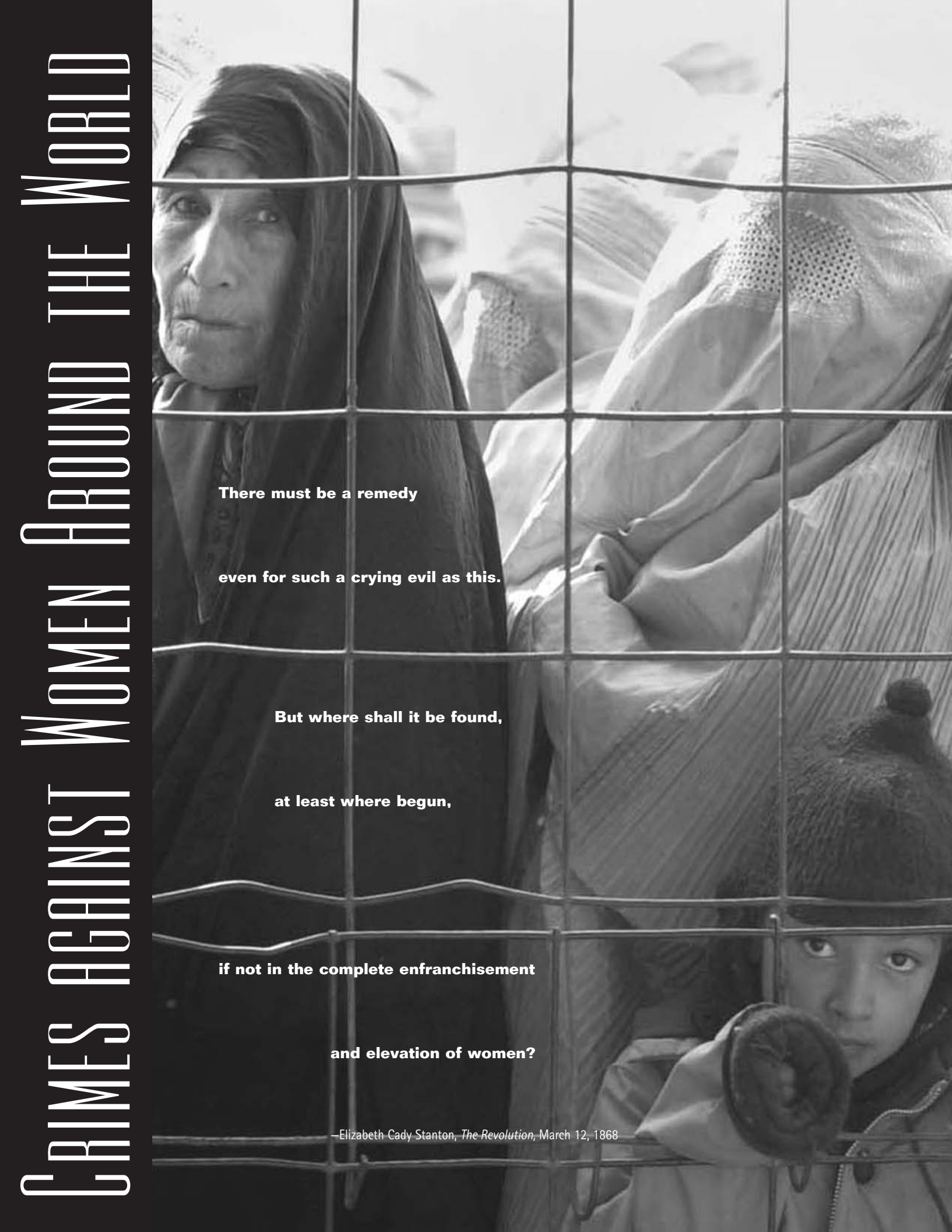


Breda O'Brien

b. 1962

Lisa M. Bellecci-st. romain is an FFL member, author of three books and a public high school social worker who teaches psychology at the high school and college levels.

CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD



**There must be a remedy
even for such a crying evil as this.**


But where shall it be found,

at least where begun,

if not in the complete enfranchisement

and elevation of women?

—Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *The Revolution*, March 12, 1868



ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO, the early American feminists faced conditions similar to those experienced by women in developing countries today. They had no right to vote. They had no right to assemble or free speech. They could not own property or inherit when married. Marital rape was not recognized. They could not sit on a jury. Women had no rights to their own children if divorced—and sometimes when widowed. And no woman had ever gone to college.

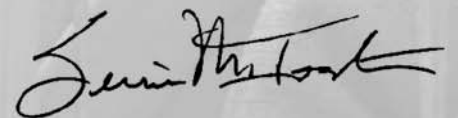
It is even more dire for women in some parts of the world today.

In the aftermath of 9-11, we turned our attention outside ourselves only to learn that women in Afghanistan had been living a nightmare every day since the Taliban seized power. Forced to don the burqa, women were transformed into lavender ghosts and only noticed when they were beaten publicly for exposing a hand while begging—or executed before a cheering crowd of men in a soccer field built by U.N. funding.


Forced abortions and sterilizations in China. Bride burning, acid burnings, sex-selection abortion and female infanticide in India. Female genital mutilation performed with rusty knives on little girls pinned down by men in Africa. Women enslaved by organized crime in the former Soviet Union and smuggled into the U.S. for sex work. Asian women trapped in sweatshops for days, months, years on end. Little girls as young as five months old being raped in South Africa by relatives believing that sex with a virgin will cure AIDS. The capacity for cruelty is beyond comprehension.

As the veil is lifted from women in Afghanistan, we need to ask ourselves what hope do we offer? When women cry out for food and clean water for their children's empty stomachs, will America offer to empty their wombs through legal abortion? Will the West convince women in developing countries that immunization for their children against disease won't be necessary if your children are never born at all? Or will we propose a women-centered plan that embraces motherhood and helps lift them from their despair.

Like many women in developing countries today, the early American suffragists knew that women frequently died in childbirth and half the children died before age five. Women had virtually no power within the political sphere, but they did not believe that abortion was the answer. Their rights did not come at the expense of their own unborn children. These women celebrated their life-giving capacity and defended the right of the unborn to be born. They successfully expanded the rights of women and simultaneously established legal protection for women and children from abortion. Let us shine a light on our rich, pro-woman, pro-life heritage and share it with women around the world who deserve much better than trading one form of violence and exploitation for another. ○



Serrin M. Foster
President



ACCORDING TO a recent United Nations report, intervention by international aid agencies helped drastically reduce population growth in developing nations in the last quarter century. However, the report fails to mention the unlawful approaches many countries take to achieve this goal, including forced abortion, mandatory sterilization, compulsory implantation of birth control devices and selective abortion of female fetuses.

SIX BILLION

Moreover, the role Western nations play in support of these brutal practices is disturbing. Relief organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) have raised no public objections to the illicit methods used in poorer nations to control population growth. In more than 40 countries, monetary bribes, job loss and the threat of incarceration lead many women to abort their children, agree to sterilization or consent to using birth control devices that often cause infection and permanent reproductive disorders.

These blatantly racist practices, sanctioned by numerous medical experts in the West, are reminiscent of eugenic campaigns waged against the poor, illiterate and minorities in the U.S. in the early twentieth century to curtail what proponents identified as a burgeoning population of inferior genetic strains. While these campaigns are viewed with horror today, in their day they won support from doctors and policy makers. A century later, women of color in developing nations have become the targets of similarly bigoted population control agendas.

In India, half of the married women living in cities have had a tubal ligation and incentives such as priority housing, loans and land are offered to couples who limit their families to two children. Poorer women are routinely forced into chemical sterilization with a drug called quinacrine, which irreversibly scars the fallopian tubes and prevents pregnancy. Banned in India in 1998, this drug has proven to cause cancer and can be excruciatingly painful. Yet, it is still used on women in rural areas whose political voices are rarely heard. Mobile sterilization teams go door-to-door in the poorest districts of Bangladesh. Health care workers must meet a

quota by year's end or lose their jobs. Women who fail to comply with the teams' arbitrary recommendations—sterilization, forced abortion or the insertion of a birth control device such as an IUD or Norplant (which can cause nausea, ovarian cysts and hair loss)—lose essential government food subsidies.

After the Holocaust, the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal classified such reproductive abuses as crimes against humanity. Nevertheless, scores of countries in the half-century following the trials have continued to carry out these procedures with impunity.

In fact, China earned an award in 1983 from the UNFPA "for the most outstanding contribution to the awareness of population questions," despite numerous reports of reproductive abuses perpetrated against women.

To publicize and address the abuses of these atrocious population control campaigns, pro-life leaders in the U.S. House, Reps. Henry Hyde (R-IL) and Christopher Smith (R-NJ), convened a Congressional hearing in October 2001, called

"Coercive Population Control in China: New Evidence of Forced Abortion and Forced Sterilization." The purpose was to seek a repeal of the \$46.5 million the U.S. had just authorized for the UNFPA. Testimony from Gao Xiaoduan, a former senior official of China's "family planning" clinics, described the Chinese government's tactics as "Taliban-like." She indicted the UNFPA



Gao Xiaoduan, former population control office administrator in China, testified before the House International Relations Committee on forced abortions in China.

'S A C R O W D ?

Check out the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network website for information about Peru's ongoing campaign to stop reproductive violence against women www.reddesalud.web.cl/ingles.html.

Show your support for Reps. Henry Hyde and Christopher Smith's work regarding the repeal of funding for the UNFPA. E-mail them at www.house.gov or call (202) 225-4561.

Find excellent information about alternatives to abusive population control programs at the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment's website www.cwpe.org.

Contact President Bush about granting political asylum to women escaping reproductive violence. Write to: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500 or e-mail him at www.whitehouse.gov.

for its "monetary support and systematic whitewashing of the crimes of forced abortion and sterilization."

Xiaoduan reported that paid informants turn in women who have "unauthorized" children, meaning more than the one-child limit enforced by the Chinese government. Women are arrested by population control cadres in nighttime raids and taken to clinics where they are forcibly sterilized or compelled to undergo abortions. Women who resist are imprisoned, and punishments can include the razing of their home or the loss of a family member's job. Often, the offending woman's village is fined.

China insists that the one-child policy is the only feasible solution for a congested population in a country with limited land and natural resources. Chinese dissident Harry Wu understands how convincing this hypothesis may seem but blames China's misguided political and economic policies for the country's developmental crises. Wu asserts, "To give birth is a basic human right. Violently punishing a woman and her unborn child for natural consequences that are beyond her control is the epitome of cruelty. And to hold such power in the hands of a central totalitarian regime invites far too many human rights abuses to terrify the masses." The one-child policy is also contributing to a significant change in the male-to-female ratio.

Aborting female fetuses is a common practice in China and other developing countries. While the gender decision is made voluntarily, explicit sexism compels many parents to prefer male children. This is also compounded in China by the expectation that male children support aging parents, perpetuating the belief that having a daughter could condemn a couple to poverty in old age. China's population policy has already

resulted in 5 to 10 million abortions, and 80 to 90 percent of the aborted fetuses were girls, according to Stephen Mosher of the Population Research Institute. This practice invites further oppression of women in the years to come, as trafficking of women and sexual violence could increase due to a disproportionate female-to-male ratio.

Fortunately, many groups around the world are addressing these crimes against women. A coalition of Peruvian women's organizations recently dismantled a "family planning" program in Lima responsible for the coerced sterilization of more than 140,000 women in a two-year period. Human rights groups in the U.S. are petitioning the Bush administration to allow political asylum for pregnant women facing mandatory abortion or sterilization. The Committee on Women, Population and the Environment (CWPE), an international alliance that promotes the social and economic empowerment of women in a context of global peace and justice, organizes conferences and publishes information on abusive population policies that treat women as objects of control. Although the group supports abortion, it is "strongly opposed to demographic-driven population policies."

Rep. Smith opened the population control hearing last October with the following statement: "Those who are the most vulnerable bring out the kindness in every society, and also the cruelty." FFL believes it is time to break the silence surrounding the euphemistic rhetoric of "family planning," promoted by international aid agencies and funded by U.S. tax dollars, concealing tragic accounts of violence and abuse against women and the unborn. ○

Ellen Kennedy Johnson teaches English at Arizona State University.

ONE-CHILD POLICY PLAY

"OneFamilyOneChildOneDoor," is a black comedy that premiered at the Bank Street Theater in Greenwich Village in New York City Sept. 27, 2001. This fictional story tells of Chang, a father who has to contend with China's one-child policy when his wife becomes pregnant with their second child. According to its website, the comedy "allows a glimpse into the lives of ordinary citizens who have to contend with a system that leads to forced sterilization, partial-birth and late-term abortions, and the abandonment and outright destruction of baby girls." Find out more about the play and the playwright, Dr. Joanna Chan, at www.maryknoll.org/MARYKNOLL/SISTERS/ms_chantheatre.htm.



China and the UNFPA

When the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) released a report as Congress was debating whether to grant millions to the organization, U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) called it a "sham and a must-read for anyone who opposes forced abortion." In an op-ed published in *The Washington Times* Dec. 19, 2001, Smith highlighted factors and actions that he felt were suspicious and eroded the credibility of the organization.

He wrote about how the Population Research Institute sent an undercover fact-finding team to China to investigate claims of forced abortions. More than four hours of testimony was recorded in Sihui County, which Smith describes as "a UNFPA county." Those interviewed said that family planning was not voluntary and problems included:

- Age requirements for pregnancy
- Birth permits
- Mandatory IUD's
- Mandatory sterilization
- Fines or imprisonment for non-compliance
- Forced abortion and sterilization

These findings were presented at a House International Relations Committee hearing on Oct. 17, 2001.

The UNFPA then sent its own team to investigate. Smith scoffs at the team in his op-ed, noting that the team, which consisted of former UNFPA board members and three UNFPA employees, was hosted by those it was supposed to be investigating—Chinese population control officials. Smith said the team also announced when and where it would interview people. "Consider this," Smith writes in the op-ed, "if investigators truly want to catch a thug or drug-pusher, they do not announce the time and place of their 'visit,' and they certainly do not hobnob and munch down on barbecued treats with those under scrutiny."

The UNFPA report stated that they found no evidence of complaints or forced abortions. "How convenient," Smith writes, "and how utterly unbelievable."



The Sex Indi

REMINDERS of the exploitation of women all over the world turn up in many different forms. For some, it may be an “Oprah Winfrey” show or a research paper. For me, it turns up in my inbox in the middle of my workday about every other month as a bulk e-mail forwarded by a friend. These disturbing “chain e-mails” have prompted me to look more closely at prostitution and sexual trafficking, the subjects of many of the emails I receive. Here’s what I found.

Probably the most widely recognized abuse and exploitation of women is associated with the “world’s

instability. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, for example, economic problems in Russia are forcing women to sell themselves. With few options, more and more women are also crossing the border into Norway to take advantage of its more lenient prostitution laws. Perhaps even more disturbing, the situation is creating a generation of women that accepts and even admires prostitution: One out of every eight schoolgirls in Russia hopes to grow up and be a hard-currency call girl.

Some countries have actually legalized prostitution. The

teaches seminars to prostitutes, clients, spouses, tourists and schoolchildren.

Some believe that lenient prostitution laws provide obstacles to the effort against sexual trafficking. Each year, thousands of women and girls are lured, abducted or sold into forced labor, prostitution and marriage. Typically, girls are held in “debt bondage,” forced to work to pay off exorbitant sums. After desperate women are lured to a “better life” in other countries, or else

Industry Exposed

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

oldest profession”—prostitution. In the early 1900’s, there was growing concern about innocent women being lured deceitfully to other countries for work in the sex industry. This was addressed in 1949 by the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, but only 73 countries have ratified the resulting treaty.

One factor that fuels prostitution to this day is social and economic

Netherlands is one of the countries that has not signed the UN treaty. It is one of a handful of places, including three states in Australia, that is prostitution. In fact, in 1988 the Dutch government officially redefined the act of prostituting oneself as a sexual profession and since 1996 has required prostitutes to pay income taxes. It does not, however, require regular health checks. Brothels advertise openly. An organization of prostitution customers distributes brochures, answers questions and

physically abducted and forcibly taken elsewhere, traffickers seize their passports, threaten them and their families and work in collusion with local police and border patrol officials



At left, two prostitutes in Tijuana pass time knitting.

The United Nations...opposes tolerance of prostitution, deeming it a harmful cultural practice which arises from the subordination of women for the benefit of men, is



supported by traditional/cultural attitudes, reinforces stereotype roles for the sexes and damages the health of women and girls.

Above: A suspected Thai prostitute is taken into custody by Malaysian police during a pre-dawn raid in Kuala Lumpur.

so that trafficking victims have nowhere to go for help. In many countries, trafficking victims are treated like criminals when arrested for prostitution, while traffickers go unpunished.

Catherine Snow is an FFL member and a former board member of Rose Haven ministries, an organization that helps women leave prostitution.

"It is my opinion, and the opinion of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), that prostitution should not be legalized, decriminalized or tolerated," Snow

international laws.

■ More and more women will be trafficked into countries that favor prostitution. This creates a comfortable climate in which prostitution thrives and then expands into conditions of sex slavery and debt bondage.

"Furthermore, governments that profit from the abuse of prostitution through taxation can be viewed to be living off the earnings of prostitution and this should not be acceptable in a western democracy or in any country," Snow said.

Snow says that legalizing prostitution, as in Victoria, and deregulating it, as in New South Wales, has solved none of the problems it was supposed to alleviate. Violence against street prostitute women, the trafficking of Asian women into debt slavery and child prostitution have escalated. "What such 'reforms' have done is to create a comfortable climate for massive profits to be made from the sex industry and a comfortable climate for men who buy women," Snow said.

The United Nations also opposes tolerance of prostitution, deeming it a harmful cultural practice which arises from the subordination of women for the benefit of men, is supported by traditional/cultural attitudes, reinforces stereotype roles for the sexes and damages the health of women and girls.

Several other governments are actively fighting prostitution. Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, faced a recent upheaval with prostitution laws. In 1997, prostitutes in Taipei had their licenses revoked literally overnight by the work of a new mayor. Mayor Chen Shui-pien took a strong stance on the sex industry and attempted to rid the city of these operations. He was defeated in 1998 by Mayor Ma Ying-joi, who enacted a two-year grace period for women to find another source of income. That grace period is now over.

told *The American Feminist* in February 2002. "It should be eradicated!"

She says that decriminalization of prostitution is an obstacle to ending the trafficking of women in these ways:

■ Non-western governments at international meetings such as Beijing Plus 5 in 2000 have been seeking to outlaw the sex industry because they believe it is the only way to end the international trafficking that supplies that industry. Governments that decriminalize or legalize prostitution would have to stand in opposition to these

Another email I received recently prompted me to look further at Nepal. Police and activists helping to free women from prostitution achieved a major victory with the arrest in 1991 of Shimla Tamang, a notorious brothel owner. Tamang ran operations using 300 girls throughout India. After a five-year battle, she was sentenced to 12 years in prison. Substantial political power enabled her to be released after just two months, but this prompted the organization of Maiti Nepal, a group dedicated to fighting “all the social evils inflicted upon our female populace,” to lobby parliamentarians and political leaders for more severe punishment for traffickers. Maiti (maiti means “mother’s home”) Nepal also works with police/border officials to prevent trafficking into India and repatriates girls it finds in India. The organization gives sex workers other options through education, counseling, housing and income-generating skills and educates villagers about the ploys traffickers use to ensnare girls.

The apparent link between lenient prostitution laws and sexual trafficking was recently highlighted when the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) distinguished trafficking from prostitution, and the momentum against trafficking is building. One group formed in response to the growing problem of trafficking is the Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking, of which FFL is a member. A diverse partnership of human rights organizations, it recruits volunteers to donate time, services and financial resources to the effort against international trafficking. The opening for signature of the United Nation’s Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, was also a small step forward. By late November 2001, although only 3 countries had

ratified it, 100 countries had signed the protocol.

The U.S. Congress has recently acted against sexual trafficking as well. U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) has worked relentlessly on behalf of the anti-trafficking movement. “Each year up to a million victims—of whom the overwhelming majority are women and children—are brought by force and/or fraud into the international commercial sex industry,” Smith told *The American Feminist* in February 2002. “Every day we read accounts of women and children who are abducted in places as diverse as Burma, Kosovo and Vietnam and sold into sexual slavery in countries from Thailand to Israel, from China to the United States.” In response, Smith wrote and successfully negotiated through Congress the landmark Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Law, which dedicates resources to eradicate the trade of human trafficking and to help the victims.

It is difficult to read e-mails that document instances of sexual trafficking and abuse, but fortunately the emails are often accompanied by solutions that we can support. For example, the CATW has outlined what it believes to be a truly progressive prostitution policy, which would include the following ideas:

- Criminalize the buying of sexual services, brothel-keeping and pimping.

- Decriminalize the women in prostitution.

- Provide well-financed exit programs for women in prostitution, which will require shelters, targeted drug rehabilitation programs, vocational education and other support services. Research suggests the vast majority of women in prostitution wish to leave. ○

Susan Rankin is an FFL member and a paralegal for Dykema, Gossett law firm in Grand Rapids, MI.

Exploitation Worldwide

From Human Rights Watch

Of the hundreds of thousands of women and girls employed in Indian brothels, a large percentage is trafficked from Nepal. In Bombay, 20,000 Nepalis are prostitutes.

Thousands of Thai women are trafficked every year into Japan, where they are required to pay off debts that usually range from \$25,000 – \$40,000. Video cameras and motion-sensitive lights track their movements.

Two to ten women are trafficked from Colombia each day, mostly to Europe.

The U.S. State Department gave Greece the lowest possible trafficking rating (along with Burma, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Turkey), for failing to combat trafficking or even acknowledge that trafficking is a problem.

Six trafficking cases in Israel involved policemen. The U.S. State Department also ranked Israel in the lowest tier of countries for failing to combat trafficking.

Widespread corruption among law enforcement is a major hurdle in the fight against sexual trafficking in Nigeria. Many who look for a better life in Lagos are forced into domestic servitude, prostitution or farm labor in other West African countries.

Women trafficked from Ukraine, Moldova and Romania to Bosnia & Herzegovina are sometimes forced to provide free sexual services to local police officers.



Victims of acid attacks from Pakistan (above) and Bangladesh (center). Right: Pakistani woman's husband cut off her nose.

In the Name of Honor

Kristy L.

SUFİYATU HUSEINI AWAITS DEATH by stoning in Nigeria for an alleged adulterous affair. Saima Sarwar was gunned down because she sought a divorce from her husband whom she said was often violent. Ten-year-old Nurjahan bears the scars of having acid thrown in her face—a revenge attack meant for her 13-year-old cousin who had rejected a marriage proposal. Honor killings, bride burning, facial acid attacks and genital mutilation have been gaining notoriety over the past several years and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks have brought about a new sense of urgency regarding such crimes against women.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), at least one in five females worldwide has been physically or sexually abused. Moreover, the WHO reports that, “Worldwide, it has been estimated that violence against women is as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill-health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.” Many of these crimes are rationalized based on “honor.”

VIOL AGAINST



Time of Honor

Kirkland

ENCE WOMEN

Honor killings

According to the *Feminist Daily News Wire* of January 10, 2002, 35-year-old divorcee Sufiyatu Huseini was sentenced to death by stoning under the Nigerian state of Sokoto's Islamic sharia law for allegedly having an adulterous relationship that resulted in the birth of her daughter. At least 10 Nigerian states have adopted Islamic sharia law codes that have put strict restrictions on women. Huseini claims she was raped by a neighbor, but the Nigerian court claims there is no evidence to try her attacker.

Violence against women is not perpetrated only by men. In Jordan two aunts took their niece for a walk and then stepped aside as she was shot four times by her brother because she refused an arranged marriage. According to a joint statement presented on April 9, 1999 to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights by the Center for Women's Global Leadership, the International Human Rights Law Group and the International Women's Tribune Centre, Saima Sarwar was gunned

down in Pakistan by a hit man her mother hired because she sought a divorce from her husband. The accusation underlying all three cases is that the women brought dishonor to themselves and their families, and the best way to remedy this dishonor was to kill them. According to the WHO, there have also been cases where women are forced to marry their rapist to preserve the family name.

Little is done to punish those who kill women because of "honor." In fact, "honor" is considered a mitigating circumstance in homicides in many countries. The joint statement presented to the UN Commission on Human Rights in April 1999 stated that honor killings are known to have occurred in a wide range of countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Iraq, Jordan, Nepal, Peru, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Bride burning and acid attacks

Murder is not the only crime based on "honor." Bride burning is also a prevalent form of violence against women, especially in countries where a woman must give a dowry in order to be married. According to the WHO, "In cultures where the giving of a dowry is practiced, the custom can be fatal for the woman whose parents are unable to meet demands for gifts or money. Violence that begins with threats may end in forced 'suicide,' death from injuries or homicide." Indeed, according to a 1996 CNN news report, police in India receive more than 2,500 reports of bride burning every year. Men who feel their wife's dowry is inadequate simply burn their wives to death because it is thought that burning will not leave any evidence behind.

According to the "Oprah Winfrey Show" website (www.oprah.com) acid attacks are becoming more common in countries like Bangladesh and India. A man who feels insulted in any way by a woman seeks his revenge by throwing acid on her, thus leaving her permanently disfigured. The intention of the attack is to harm the woman's looks so that no other man would want to marry her. In 10-year-old Nurjahan's case, the acid that was thrown on her was really meant for her 13-year-old cousin who had rejected a marriage proposal from a middle-aged man.

Female genital mutilation

Another form of violence against women that is accepted in many cultures is female genital mutilation (FGM), which involves different degrees of amputation of the clitoris and labia minora, too often in unsanitary conditions with crude instruments and no anesthesia. According to the WHO, reasons given to justify FGM include: custom and tradition, religious demand, purification, family honor, hygiene, aesthetic reasons, protection of virginity and prevention of promiscuity, increasing sexual pleasure for the husband and increasing matrimonial opportunities. The WHO reports that an estimated 132 million women have experienced FGM and 2 million are at risk of undergoing FGM. There are three types of FGM, but according to the WHO all forms could lead to serious health consequences while having no health benefits.

FGM has been practiced for several thousand years in more than 30 African and Middle Eastern countries and other parts of Asia. The WHO reports that most communities practice FGM on girls between the ages of four and 14, often as a rite of passage from childhood to womanhood. While FGM is considered female circumcision in many cultures, it is different from male circumcision in that it is not mandated in any religion and seems to have sprung from community cultural practices. It is also different in degree. Many forms of FGM are more equivalent to removing the head of the penis rather than just the foreskin.

FGM has received increased attention in the United States over the past decade. The U.S. Congress passed a law in 1996 that forbade the practice in this country. Furthermore, the Immigration and Naturalization Service has granted asylum in the United States to women who are fleeing FGM in their own countries. In September 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which included a call to end FGM.

It also supported ending all forms of violence against women, which was, as Sept. 11 reminded us, the only honorable thing to do. ○

Kristy Kirkland is a junior journalism and political science major at the University of Alabama. She has worked as a staff reporter and the news editor of "Dateline Alabama," the university's news web site.



Somalian child screams in pain while undergoing circumcision as her sister holds her so she cannot move.

Beating Violence

The WHO website (www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/vaw/infopack.htm) lists hundreds of initiatives that address violence against women.

They include:

- Support groups in Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Japan, Liberia.
- Local community involvement in reporting violent husbands in Belize, India and among Aboriginal people of Canada.
- Women's police stations set up throughout Latin America and in a number of Asian countries to provide a more committed response to crimes against women.
- Legal literacy programs and free legal advice in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Uganda.
- Sensitivity training for health professionals and the police, and the adoption of new protocols for dealing with the victims of domestic violence, in Zimbabwe, the United States, Brazil and elsewhere.
- Safe-houses and shelters in Egypt, Paraguay, El Salvador, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, Canada and other countries.

Marie Claire magazine (<http://marieclaire.women.com/mc/articles/22vday11.htm>) reported many victories against violence in 2001.

- February: A historic verdict is brought against three Bosnian Serbs for the rape, torture and enslavement of women during the war in the Balkans—the first time an international tribunal labels sexual violence against women a crime.
- July: A New York judge rules that domestic-violence survivors fired for reasons related to their abuse—missing work for doctor appointments, hospitalizations, or child-custody hearings—are eligible for unemployment benefits.
- September: After pressure from dozens of women's groups in Mexico, the Chihuahua state legislature reverses a law allowing shortened sentences for rapists said to have been "provoked" by their victims.
- December: Under new law, genital mutilation of girls under the age of 17 in Kenya is deemed a crime punishable by at least one year in prison.



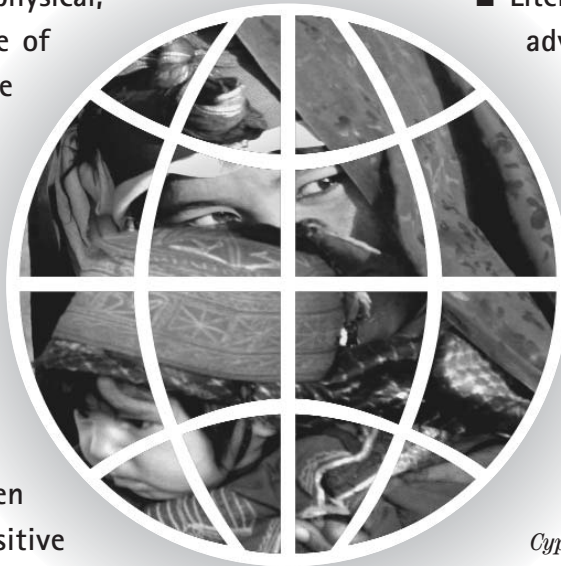
IN HER OWN WORDS

Oduogo Cyprine Onyango

"VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, in its various forms, is endemic in communities and countries around the world, cutting across class, race, age, religious and national boundaries," according to a paper by FFL-member and PhD candidate in anthropology and international relations, Oduogo Cyprine Onyango. "The most common type of violence against women worldwide is 'domestic violence' or the physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse of women by their intimate partners. Research consistently demonstrates that a woman is more likely to be injured, raped or killed by a current or former partner than by any other person."

As aware as she is of the atrocities against women worldwide, she also is positive about international trends to address violence against women. "A growing awareness of the issue of violence against women in families, spearheaded by the efforts of hundreds of women's organizations from around the world, has resulted in a range of initiatives dealing with the problem at almost every level of society." In her paper she points to:

- Women's support groups (Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Japan, Liberia, Kenya)
- Rebuking of violent husbands (Belize, India, some Aboriginal people of Canada)
- Women's police stations (parts of Latin America, Asia)
- Courses in non-violent parenting and conflict resolution (Jamaica, Canada)
- Literacy programs and free legal advice to women (Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Kenya, Uganda)
- Sensitivity training for health professionals and police (Zimbabwe, the United States, Brazil)
- Safe-houses and shelters (Egypt, Paraguay, El Salvador, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, Canada)



Cyprine Odango has begun the PhD program in Anthropology and International Relations at Syracuse University, with Assistantship. She interned at United Nations Development and Population (UNDP) in New York City, summer 2001. She was one of two hosts and emceed the 2002 Syracuse University African Cultural Celebration, where she opened with a talk, "The Beauty of Africa." Her husband Fred, a mathematics professor, and four children are at home in Africa while she studies in the U.S.

Access Denied

ON THE AFTERNOON of December 6, 1989, 25-year-old Marc Lepine entered the Ecole Polytechnique, the University of Montreal's Engineering School in Canada, armed with a Sturm Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic rifle and several knives. Having been denied admission to the school, Lepine blamed "feminists" for taking the place that should have been his. In a ruthless act of vengeance, he entered a classroom and systematically shot the nine female students present, ages 21 to 31, while allowing the 48 male students to leave the room. Lepine killed another three women in the school's cafeteria before shooting four more female students and himself in a second classroom. By the end of the so-called Montreal Massacre, Lepine had murdered 14 women and injured 10 others.

Violent Opposition

In his suicide letter, Lepine wrote that he had decided to send "Ad Patres [to the Fathers] the feminists who have ruined my life... [and] are so opportunistic that they neglect to profit from the knowledge accumulated by men throughout the ages." The letter was followed by a hit list of 19 women who had achieved success in traditionally male professions, including the names of a feminist journalist, the first woman firefighter and police captain in Quebec and a labor organizer.

With his murderous acts, Lepine was trying to prevent women from obtaining education and employment. His perspective is all too common throughout the world.

In South Africa, girls are raped, sexually harassed and assaulted at school by male classmates and teachers, forcing girls to choose between education and safety. A Human Rights Watch report on the subject quoted one 13-year-old girl as saying, "I left [school] because I was raped by two guys in my class who were supposedly my friends."

The Human Rights Watch asserts: "Although girls in South Africa have better access to school than many of their counterparts in other sub-

EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT



regarding this latter practice in Turkey, however, which recently adopted a revision to the country's civil code that recognizes women's equality and abolishes the need of her husband's permission to work outside the home.

A struggling economy also hurts women's access to labor. In Russia, women workers are fired from public sector employment in disproportionate numbers—over two-thirds of the unemployed in Russia are women. This discrimination is condoned by top Russian labor officials. In February 1993, Russia's Labor Minister Gennady Melikyan said, "Why should we employ women when men are out of work? It's better that men work and women take care of children and do housework. I don't think women should work when men are doing nothing." Also destructive to women's ability to work is

"Why should we employ women when men are out of work? It's better that men work and women take care of children and do housework. I don't think women should work when men are doing nothing."

— Russia's 1993 Labor Minister Gennady Melikyan

Saharan African states, they are confronted with levels of sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools that impede their access to education on equal terms with male students."

Perhaps the most widely known crimes against women these days were made so by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. From 1996 until the defeat of the Taliban army this year, women in Afghanistan were banished from the work force, expelled from the country's universities and prohibited from being examined by male physicians (effectively denying women all medical care as female doctors were not allowed to practice). Schools closed their doors to girls and the few home schools that existed were operated in secret and under high risk. The Fund for a Feminist Majority—one of the few organizations to speak out against these abuses—reported that a woman who

ran a school for girls was killed in front of her family and friends for her defiance.

Other Obstacles

Violence is not the only way that women are barred from education and work. Virginity exams are required in Turkey for girls studying in medical high schools, a requirement that was re-instated in July 2001, by the Minister of Health. In Iran, women are unable to study abroad without the permission of a male guardian, and only men can receive financial assistance for studying overseas.

Obstacles for women who want to work for a living are also present throughout the world. In some Guatemalan factories, women must take pregnancy tests before they are hired. In Syria, women are not allowed to work outside of the house without their husbands' permission. There has been some heartening progress

the lack of support for their children: 5,000 government day care centers closed in 1993, 6,000 pre-schools were closed the same year and the charge for pre-school increased 20-30 times from 1992.

Know your rights

In denying women the right to employment and education, governments and individuals not only exclude women and girls from knowledge and income, they also can create barriers to their understanding and appreciation of their own civil and human rights. As the chairman of Pro-Life Tanzania, Emil Hagamu, writes in an email to FFL, "I want to assure [you] that women in the third world are the most discriminated, the most intimidated, the most defenseless."

Hagamu goes on to state that working with feminist organizations in other

countries will enable his organization to help Tanzanian women through “continued education and hence enable them to defend for their own rights which are infringed through the legal, institutional and cultural systems.”

But if access to education provides a means for women to understand and defend their own rights, the position of women in higher education is troubling. Even developed countries like the United States are behind. Since 1833, when Oberlin College first opened its door to female students, women have been a presence in higher education in America. Yet, despite the fact that women are more likely than men to hold high educational aspirations, and despite higher enrollment rates for female students, men still outnumber women in attaining professional degrees and PhDs.

Also, women comprise only 25 percent of faculty at public research and private doctoral universities, and only 19 percent of college presidents are women. One explanation offered for these discrepancies is that the years women seek graduate degrees often coincide with childbearing/raising years, and women normally take on the lioness’ share of the work. Thus, the lack of practical resources for mothers in the United States such as child care and flex time is another way that women are kept from education and jobs.

Furthermore, on the employment side, higher education still does not guarantee

equal pay for women. According to Diversity Digest, women college graduates in the United States have a median income of \$36,559, compared to \$22,780 for women with high school diplomas. Men with high school diplomas, on the other hand, have a median income of \$31,477.

While conditions in the United States are in many ways different than those faced by women and girls in countries such as Afghanistan, the economic and educational inequality they all face serves to inform us of the work that still must be done. ○

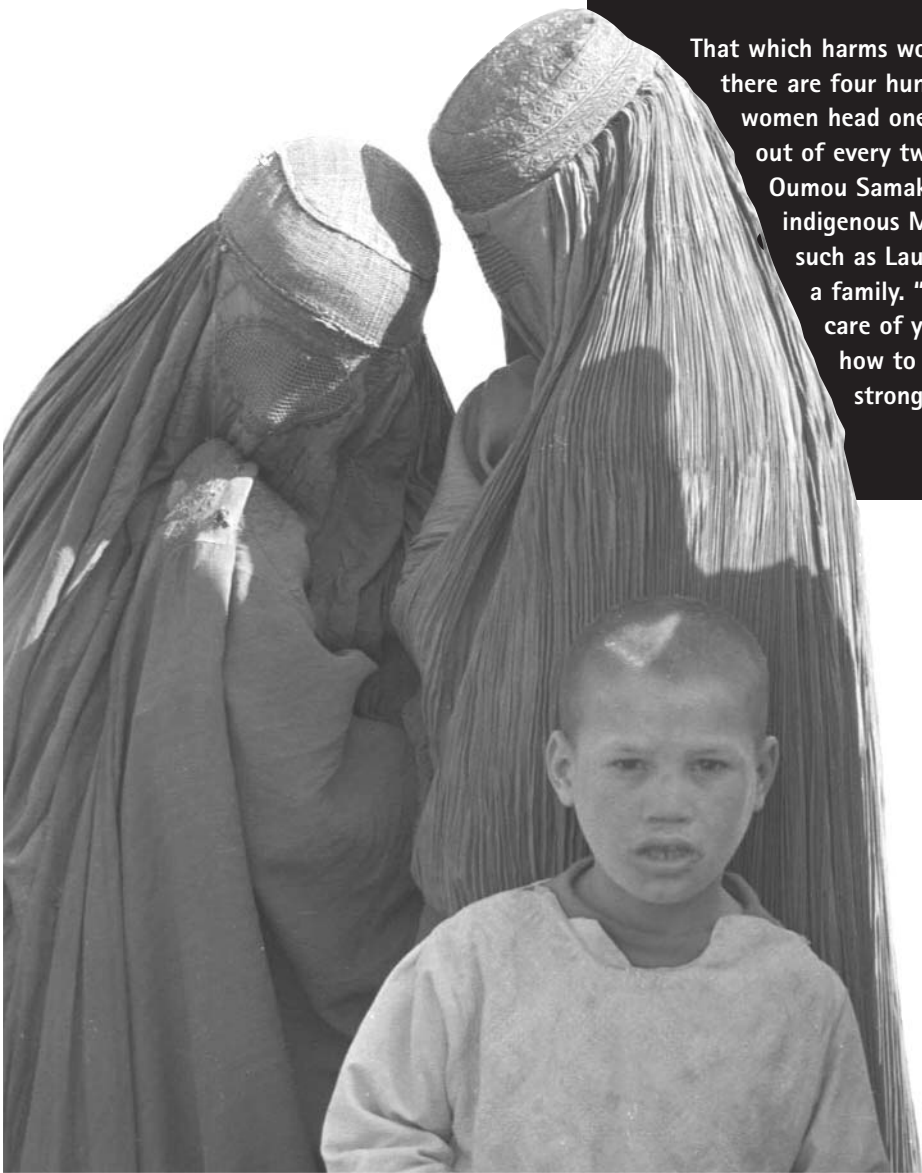
Jennifer Haselberger is obtaining her Ph.D in English at the University of London.

Limited literacy

One factor that severely limits women’s access to education and employment is illiteracy. According to Laubach Literacy, one out of every three women in the world cannot read or write and more than 65 percent of the 1 billion adults who have limited literacy skills are women.

That which harms women also hurts children. Laubach Literacy says that there are four hungry children for every impoverished woman. Also, women head one out of three families in the developing world, and one out of every two in parts of Latin America and Africa. According to Oumou Samake of Mali, who learned to read with the help of an indigenous Malian development organization and other nonprofits such as Laubach Literacy, education is key to the ability to support a family. “When you know how to read and write, you can take care of your babies. When you start something, you can read how to do it better...like preparing food to make our children strong.”

**That which harms
women also
hurts children.**



Women's Work

“NIMBLE FINGERS” IS A GENDER STEREOTYPE that helps drive the exploitation of female workers in the labor-intensive, low-wage textile and garment industries. Women who work in these industries are repeatedly threatened, abused and held hostage by their fear of losing their jobs.

Some companies go so far as to require pregnancy tests of prospective employees. Human Rights Watch has documented this practice in some Guatemalan maquilas (apparel manufacturing factories). Eighty percent of maquila employees are women. While the Guatemalan labor code protects women from discrimination, it is rarely enforced.



Another sector in which women continue to be exploited is domestic service. Using Guatemala as an example again, domestic workers are denied the right to the eight-hour workday and the minimum wage. While the workers from discrimination, it is rarely enforced.

Another sector in which women continue to be exploited is domestic service. Using Guatemala as an example again, domestic workers are denied the right to the eight-hour workday and the minimum wage. These realities are not found only in Guatemala. Human Rights Watch notes that live-in domestic workers in the United States remain explicitly excluded from protection under the National Labor Relations Act and other labor provisions.

Some exploitation around the world extends to physical violence. Human Rights Watch has documented rape, beating, kicking and other physical violence against women workers. Workers are also subjected to illegal confinement and long working hours. Due to sexual discrimination in some criminal justice systems, numerous women, especially heads of households who support their children, fear that by complaining they will lose their jobs.



Some governments, including Singapore, Indonesia and China, claim that worker's rights are incompatible with the right to economic development. Many, recognizing that cheap labor is their chief advantage in the drive for foreign investment, try to ensure that wages remain low by retaliating against union organizers, neglecting to enforce labor standards and ignoring abuses by employers.



There are organizations working with women to address discrimination. For example, the Authentic Labor Front, Mexico Solidarity Network and community organizations are working with workers at Congeladora del Rio (CRISA) in Irapuato, Mexico. The company employs mostly women, some as young as 12 years old. They average \$4 to \$9 for an eight-to-fourteen-hour shift. Relentless hours in unsafe working conditions led them to strike in July 1999. The strike continues today. Targeting CRISA owner Arthur Price of Global Trading in Greenville, SC, the Authentic Labor Front, Mexico Solidarity Network and community organizations are working together to win union recognition and promote a suitable work environment at CRISA. ○

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Write Arthur Price at arthur@globaltrading.net and respectfully request that he sign a contract with the striking workers and reinstate workers that were fired.
- Contact U.S.-based clothing manufacturers and retailers that have contracts with discriminatory maquilas in Guatemala, including Target, The Limited, Wal-Mart, GEAR for Sports, Liz Claiborne and Lee Jeans. All have codes of conduct that prohibit discrimination, so respectfully ask them to do more to enforce those codes.
- Read a Human Rights Watch report on labor conditions in Guatemala www.hrw.org/press/2002/02/guat0212.htm.
- See these websites for more information and ways to take action: www.sweatshops.org, www.humanrightswatch.org, www.nlcnet.org/ (National Labor Committee).

WE REMEMBER



Erley Suzana Che Yop

1975 – 2000

ERLEY SUZANA CHE YOP of Dungun, Malaysia, was 25 years old when she bled to death after an early-morning abortion in March 2000. She had been 16-20 weeks pregnant.

Dr. Mohamad Rafie was called to the witness stand in March 2002 at the trial of abortion provider Dr. C. Sethugavalar.

“An interior examination showed blood clots in her uterus believed to have been caused by blunt and hard objects consistent with medical instruments used in performing a Dilation and Curettage (D&C),” Dr. Rafie testified.

“...she had lost at least 500 ml of blood and further examination revealed perforations in her uterus,” the clinical pathologist added.

Sethugavalar, 57, is accused of fatally puncturing the womb of the victim while performing an abortion between 1:00 and 3:00 am. He is liable for up to 10 years in jail and/or a fine if found guilty.

“During my examination of the uterus, I did not find any fetus and further tests showed that she died in about four to six hours,” Dr. Rafie testified.

As of this publication’s printing, the hearing continues.

Source: *The Post (Malaysia)*; October 30, 2001



Some say FFL’s trademarked logo is reminiscent of a woman reaching out to a child, or a child to her mother. We all agree that it is a joyful interpretation of the classic women’s symbol. FFL’s stunning logo pin has been reintroduced in celebration of our 30th anniversary. Available in sterling silver or sterling silver plated in 24 karat gold, it measures 2-1/4 by 1-3/4 inches, and comes in a navy-blue gift box. It’s a perfect gift for the dedicated volunteer, public servant – or treat yourself! Each is available for \$100. (See order form on pg. 31.) Please specify gold or silver. If you can’t decide, get both!

Electronic Fund Transfer Form

Help FFL Help Women and Children! Your monthly electronic donations provide essential support as FFL works to bring about positive change for women and children. Electronic donors receive quarterly President reports, detailing FFL’s progress. To begin your monthly contributions, simply fill out the electronic transfer form and send it (along with a voided check) to FFL. It’s that easy! Donations will be debited on the first business day of each month and will be put to work immediately by FFL. Your participation helps FFL continue the tradition of the early feminists—pro-woman and pro-life!

I want my bank to transfer monthly donations to Feminists for Life of America. My authorization to charge my account at my bank shall be the same as if I had personally signed a check to FFLA. This authorization shall remain in effect until I notify FFLA, or notify my bank in writing that I wish to end this agreement, and my bank or FFLA has had a reasonable time to act on it. A record of each charge will be included in my regular bank statements and will serve as my receipt.

\$ _____ Amount of monthly pledge (\$5 minimum).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Day(____) _____ Eve.(____) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please enclose a voided check from your account to show the bank’s address and your account number.

Send to: Feminists for Life,
733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20005.
Electronic fund transfers will begin immediately upon receipt.

Thank you!

Celebrity Focus

Washington, D.C. Press Conference...



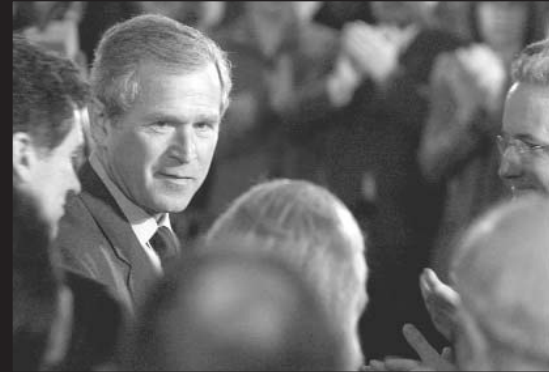
FFL President Serrin Foster introduces FFL Honorary Co-Chair and actor Margaret Colin (*Independence Day*) and FFL Honorary Chair and two-time Emmy winner Patricia Heaton (*Everybody Loves Raymond*) to U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) before they each address the press at a Capitol Hill briefing April 10. FFL supports a bill introduced by Senators Brownback and Mary Landrieu (D-La.) that opposes the creation and destruction of human clones for research.



...at the White House...



This AP photo of Margaret Colin before stacks of petitions against human cloning appeared in papers across the country. Colin told reporters, "Manipulating the laws of nature for the benefit of some at the expense of another is never justifiable, and never without risk." She then told them about the feminist pioneer Mary Wollstonecraft, who in 1792 wrote the landmark book, 'The Vindication of the Rights of Women,' and prophetically warned, 'Nature in everything deserves respect.... those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity.' "This woman, who championed the rights of women and condemned the destruction of embryos, died giving birth to her second daughter," Colin continued. "Named Mary after her mother, she too, became a great writer. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley fictionalized her mother's warning through her classic novel, *Frankenstein*."

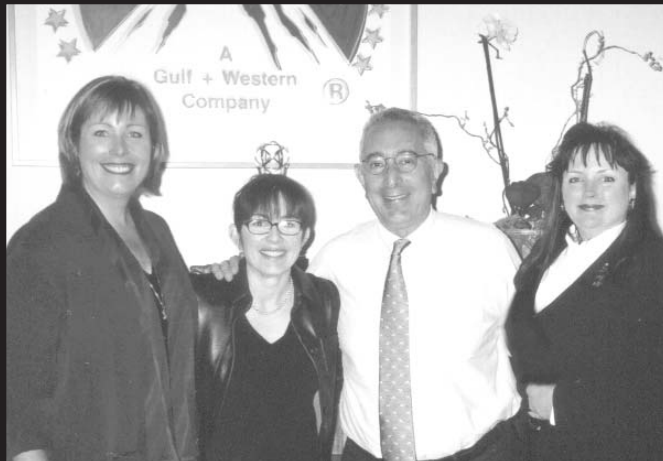


Margaret Colin, Patricia Heaton and Serrin Foster at the White House after the President's press briefing.



... Los Angeles, California

Patricia Heaton tells the media, "As honorary chair of Feminists for Life, I am here today to refuse to choose between creating a new class of humans solely for experimentation, and those who would benefit from research." NBC television affiliates carried Heaton's statement, "The proper role of medical research is to eradicate illness, not create and destroy human beings."



Board Public Policy Chair Therese Madden, Patricia Heaton and Serrin Foster meet actor Ben Stein at his home to discuss support for life on college campuses. That's not a crown on Heaton's head—that is Stein's Emmy displayed on the mantle. His show, *Win Ben Stein's Money*, has been awarded numerous Emmy's. Stein, who is perhaps most famous for his role in the film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, was recognized by FFL in 2001 as a "remarkable pro-life man."

President Bush greets Members of Congress after an East Room press briefing on human cloning. Bush predicted the creation and destruction of human clones for research "would create a massive national market for eggs, egg donors and exploitation of women's bodies that we cannot and must not allow."



FFL leaders meet actor Hunter Tylo at Spago's restaurant in Los Angeles to discuss ways to fight pregnancy discrimination on campus. Tylo was fired by producer Aaron Spelling from his TV show *Melrose Place* after learning she was pregnant and would not have an abortion. Proceeds from her successful lawsuit helped fund "Hunter's Chosen Child," an organization that fights pregnancy discrimination and provides support for women in need. In 1998, FFL recognized Tylo as a "remarkable pro-life woman." (From top left, Patricia Heaton, Hunter Tylo and Serrin Foster. From lower left, Executive Director of Hunter's Chosen Child, Sheryl Turner, Therese Madden and FFL Vice President Sally Winn.)





The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic: A Pro-life Feminist Concern

There are many parallels/tie-ins between the HIV/AIDS epidemic and abortion and other “life” issues. They just aren’t quite the ones that either extreme of the U.S. “culture war” has seen to date.

HIV/AIDS, like abortion, threatens human life on a massive worldwide scale. Millions of lives have already been cut short. Millions more will be lost if immediate action is not taken. It is a source of profound personal, familial and societal suffering and grief for all touched by it.

Yet it, too, is utterly preventable. In cases where it is too late for prevention, many of its harms can be alleviated.

There is controversy over whether condoms, abstinence, or some combination of the two are the appropriate means of prevention. But it is very clear that simply advising people to abstain from sex and/or giving them condoms will not alone save lives.

Prevention and treatment are hindered and denied on a very wide scale because of institutionalized discrimination, abuse, and neglect on the basis of economic status, race, sexual orientation, disability, age and gender.

Women and children are especially endangered, yet least empowered to protect themselves. There are some biological reasons why they are more vulnerable, but the main problems are created by society.

HIV-positive women, and those most at risk for the virus, face tremendous pressures to abort. To add insult to injury, people with HIV/AIDS or at risk for it face denial, judgment and ostracism rather than the love, support, and acceptance they deserve. They may be told they are “getting what they deserve.”

Such discrimination can pressure them into suicide, and it makes assisted suicide and active euthanasia seem like more acceptable public policies. While people continue to suffer and die, the “culture war” has shut down many possibilities for joint action.

— *Mary Krane Derr*

Mary Krane Derr has been an FFLA member since 1986. She is a writer and social service professional who formerly worked as a pregnancy counselor and now assists HIV/AIDS projects in sub-Saharan Africa, the hardest-hit area of the world.

Thanks to FFL President Serrin Foster for Continuing an International Legacy

In celebration of her 8th anniversary as president of FFL, I’d like to take a quick moment from Cambodia to thank Serrin for her many, many, many heartfelt hours given during and well beyond the 40-hour work week in the past eight years. Serrin has been strategically and emotionally devoted to springing FFL into the hearts and minds of so many people. Yesterday, I visited the famous 1000-year-old temple Angkor Wat. While there I had explained to me a beautiful carving that survived these many years which depicted one of the 32 “wrongs” people committed in their time, including abortions performed by midwives and doctors. The pro-woman, pro-life message is one that appears throughout many cultures, time periods and religions. Serrin has helped translate the all-encompassing pro-life message in our world, in our time, in an intelligent and determined fashion. Indeed, she is a priceless asset to FFL. Now let’s see what we’ll be looking back upon at her 10th year anniversary!

— *Andrea Milanowski*

Andrea Milanowski is Chair of FFL’s Board of Directors and is in the midst of a 5-month sabbatical in Southeast Asia.

Pregnancy Resources Forum at Vanderbilt

I’ve just come from Ms. Foster’s speech given at Vanderbilt University. She articulated so beautifully a message of respect for life. Her well thought out, intelligent arguments were a breath of fresh air in a climate where it can feel that if you are not pro-choice you must be uneducated, unenlightened or ignorant.

Thank you for the much needed voice, crying out in what seems to be the wilderness, a voice of sanity saying all life is precious.

— *Cherry Stone, Nashville, Tenn.*

Editor’s note: At the end of the lecture Serrin challenged Vanderbilt students on both sides of the abortion debate to work together for women by identifying and developing resources in support of the “rest of the choices” next semester. They agreed to host a Pregnancy Resources Forum next year. Students at University of San Diego, Duke and Fordham have made similar plans.



Voices

OF WOMEN WHO MOURN

Ghost in the House

*Come, child. It's evening. Come to me
And sit with me once more.
Let's rock here while the others sleep.
Let's see – your sister's four;
The baby is three months today;
Your little brother's two,
And I have not decided if I'll tell them
about you.*

*And you, you would be eight this year.
I do not know your name.
The color of your eyes, or hair,
Or where, or how, to blame.
The fear was all, the fear of change,
For I saw change as loss.
Against my dreams, my plans, my life
You seemed so small a cost,
Not knowing how your presence
Altered how I felt and thought,
Not knowing how you changed me
In the mix the hormones brought.
And you were not a child to me
But sickness, pain, and fear –
But oh, I know, I know you now,
Now that these three are here!
Your scent, your weight within my arms,
Your head upon my breast-
I did not know these things when I decided
what was best.*

*And I am lost and so confused
And don't know how to feel,
For you, who were an illness,
Every year become more real;
Your sister and your brothers,
They proclaim you as they grow.
They make it harder still to face
The coldest truth I know:
That knowing – feeling – only
What I knew and felt back then,
I cannot say I would not make
This saddest choice again.
Oh! My little lost unknown,
My first and neverborn,
Forgive the ignorance that sent you
To the dark, unmourned!*

*And no, it isn't every day
I find your shadow here;
Most times I'm far too busy
For reflection or for tears,
But sometimes, when the children sleep
And I have time alone,
I sit down in the dark, and rock,
And bring my baby home.*

—Amanda Lewanski

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- A college of my choice: _____
- Name of kit recipient _____
- Title _____
- College _____
- Address _____
- Phone _____

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- 24K gold plate over sterling
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(anthology of pro-life feminist essays)
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(anthology of pro-life feminist essays)
- \$2 "Question Abortion" bumper sticker
- \$2 "Voices of Our Feminist Foremothers" poster
- \$5 *Man's Inhumanity to Woman*
(essays by 19th-century feminists)
- "You're Not Alone" brochures:
50 for \$5; 100 for \$10; 250 for \$20
- "What Women Really Want" brochure:
Free with a self-addressed stamped envelope
- "You Have Choices" brochure:
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- "College Outreach Program" brochure:
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Thank you!



Did I deserve the death penalty?

My "crime" was being conceived through rape.

So the next time you hear people talking about "exceptions" to abortion for rape and incest, think of me.

My name is Rebecca.

I am that exception.

Refuse to Choose. There *is* a better way.



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