

Women's Policy Research

Black Women's Unemployment Rate Remains High

Vicky Lovell

Despite some general improvement in the labor market in recent months, Black women's employment remains extremely precarious. The overall unemployment rate, which rose from its pre-recession low of 3.9 percent in December 2000 to a recent high of 6.4 percent last June, floated down to 5.6 percent in January of this year. A look behind the overall numbers however, finds that Black women continue to face significant difficulty maintaining employment. In February 2004, unemployment for these workers was very high: 8.8 percent. In each of the last six months of 2003, nearly one of every ten Black women wanting a job remained without one (see figure right).

Disappointing employment opportunities for Black women are reflected not only in unemployment but also in declining labor force participation. Between 1999 and

December 2003, the share of the adult Black female population that is actively in the labor force—either employed or seeking employment—fell by three percentage

points. Black men and white men and women experienced only minor declines in labor force participation over this period (1.2, 1.0, and 0.1 percentage points, respectively).

Black workers always face a less welcoming labor market than white workers, and unemployment rates are (cont'd on p. 9)

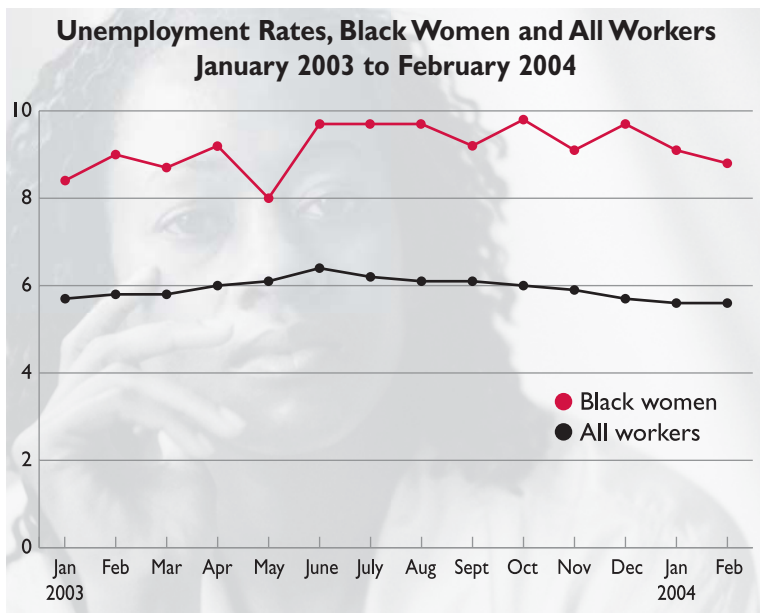


TABLE OF CONTENTS

- President's Message 2
- Gender, Religion, and Civic Activism . . . 3
- Tobacco Smoke and Breast Cancer . . . 3
- Making Pre-K a National Issue 4
- Book Celebrating Labor Feminists . . . 5
- Media Highlights 5
- States Project Moving Forward 6
- Data Advisory Group 6
- New Releases 7
- FDA Decision Delayed 8
- IWPR General and Project Support . . . 8
- IWPR's Inaugural House Party 9
- Member Carolyn Hopley 10
- Board Member Esmeralda O. Lyn . . . 10
- Spotlight on the Fellows 11

New IWPR Report Addresses Women's Employment and Earnings: How Many More Years Until Equality?

Misha Werschkul and Jody Herman

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) is releasing a new report entitled *Women's Economic Status in the States: Wide Disparities by Race, Ethnicity, and Region* to coincide with this year's Equal Pay Day. The report is part of a ten-year *Status of Women in the States* project, and provides state-by-state data on women's earnings, the wage gap, and poverty, disaggregated by race and ethnicity. IWPR's new report shows that full-time year-round employed women still earn only 76.2 percent of what full-time year-round employed men earn. While women have made important

economic gains since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, women still earn less, are less likely to own a business, and are more likely to live in poverty than men. In fact, at the rate of progress achieved between 1989 and 2002, women would not achieve wage parity for more than 50 years! Generally speaking, women in Western and Northeastern states experience higher economic status than women in the Midwest and Southeast. In addition, despite some progress, racial and ethnic disparities are wide everywhere in the country. African American, Native American and Hispanic women all experience high- (cont'd on p. 7)

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President's Message

Women and men often differ in the issues they consider important. For example, in a Washington Post/ABC News poll of 1,200 people conducted in early March, 72 percent of women but only 57 percent of men responded that education would be the single most important or a very important issue for them in making their choice in November's presidential election. Health insurance will be extremely important for 72 percent of women, but only 56 percent of men; the situation in Iraq for 74 percent of women but only 64 percent of men. Women and men gave taxes about equal importance (62 and 61 percent). Terrorism was a slightly more important concern for men than women (80 percent vs. 77 percent).

According to the same poll, had the vote been held in early March, between only President Bush and Senator Kerry, Kerry would have had a 21 percentage point advantage with women (58 percent of women were for Kerry vs. 37 percent for Bush) and a 2 percentage point advantage with men (49 percent of men for Kerry vs. 47 percent for Bush). With Ralph Nader in the race, Kerry's advantage among women falls but is still substantial (13 percentage points), whereas his advantage among men disappears (-2 percentage points).

IWPR is issuing as much information as we can throughout the election season. At a New Hampshire debate I attended the Sunday before that primary was held, I heard two of three candidates debating women's issues cite data generated by IWPR. In 2000, both major candidates cited facts and figures from IWPR's *Status of Women in the States* reports, as did several candidates for governor. This year IWPR is releasing *States* reports focusing on specific issues this spring and summer (women's economic status now and working mothers and child care in June) and the remaining nine states reports will be released in October 2004.

Although the election season is long, it is not too early to get involved. Work for the candidates of your choice, express your views, mobilize your friends and neighbors.

Heidi Hartmann

Something seems missing in this year's election commentary—discussion of the gender gap. The Democratic Party is a majority female party. Yet in all the on air and print reporting throughout the primary season, I hardly recall anyone mentioning the fact that women were in the majority as voters in all the states holding competitive primaries. Women's majority ranged from 59 percent in Arizona to 51 percent in Vermont, according to exit polling data reported on CNN's website.

Women were 58 percent of the Democratic primary voters in Maryland and Mississippi; 57 percent in Delaware, New York, and South Carolina; 56 percent in Georgia and Virginia; and 55 percent in Florida and Rhode Island.

In most states, more nonwhite women voted than nonwhite men, but generally the gender gap in voting was not as large for nonwhites as for whites. It is white men who are underrepresented in the Democratic Party. When gender in the Democratic Party is discussed, it is generally as the absence of men, especially white men, rather than as the appeal the Democrats obviously have for women of all races and men of color. Get out the vote strategy often seems targeted on the missing men—this year the fashion is NASCAR dads—rather than mobilizing the party's base of women and people of color.

Given the large number of candidates, consistent gender patterns in primary voting did not emerge. In the early primaries, John Edwards generally did better with women, while John Kerry had the edge with women especially in the states holding primaries later on. Of 23 states with results available by gender, Kerry received a larger proportion of women's than men's votes in 14, Edwards in 13, and the next best candidate with women, Howard Dean, in 6. Kerry did far better among men and women of color than either Edwards or Dean.

Gender, Religion, and Civic Activism: IWPR's New Project on Women's Political Activism Within Interfaith Groups

Amy Caiazza and Carrie Hanlon

IWPR is beginning a new study that will explore women's participation in interfaith social justice organizations. We hope that the study will analyze the successes and challenges that interfaith groups see in efforts to promote women's leadership, as well as identify ways to inspire women's political activism by analyzing how some interfaith groups successfully motivate women to participate and become leaders.

Some interfaith groups are predominantly run and staffed by women; and in a few groups, women are responsible for significant decision-making, planning, and other leadership roles. Women's work in faith-based groups may be a particularly effective way to get them involved in public life as activists, as voters, as political leaders. This study will help determine how faith-based organizing successfully inspires women and enables them to develop their political skills. Further, the study will provide information that can keep women central to ongoing political debates about the relevance and contributions of religious values and faith-based organizations to government and public life.

The new study, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, will be conducted over the next year. The project will conduct interviews with leaders and activists in interfaith groups, as well as a public education effort to build bridges between interfaith and secular social justice leaders. In addition to researching women's faith-based activism, IWPR will engage a diverse group of scholars, religious and women's rights activists, and political leaders in discussions about how to motivate women's political activism.

IWPR officially launched the new study on January 28 at a meeting of political leaders, activists, and scholars interested in women and religious organizing held at the Brookings Institution. Participants such as Kim Bobo of the National Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice, Dr. Martha Burk of the National Council of Women's Organizations, the Hon. Mary Rose Oakar of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, and Dr. Theda Skocpol of Harvard University's Department of Government contributed to spirited discussions of

women's involvement in faith-based organizations. With their first-hand experiences of work within interfaith groups, leaders such as Ms. Mary Gonzalez of the Gamaliel Foundation and Ms. Karen Olson of Family

Promise offered an invaluable perspective. A researcher and author of books on faith-based organizing, Dr. Richard Wood of the University of New Mexico also presented his research at the meeting.



(L to R) Dr. Theda Skocpol, Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology, Harvard University; Laila Mehta, Program Director, National Women's Alliance; and Krishanti Dharmaraj, Executive Director, Wild for Human Rights.

A Connection Unveiled: Tobacco Smoke and Breast Cancer

A. Judson Wells

One aspect of women's health that is beginning to receive some attention is the probable connection between breast cancer and exposure to tobacco smoke, either from active smoking or from exposure to second hand smoke. Late last year the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) released for comment a draft of a report that updates their very well received 1997 report, *Health Effects of Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke*. In the new draft, based on 16 breast cancer studies, they state that there is conclusive evidence that passive smoking can cause breast cancer, and by implication, so can active smoking. In the 1997 report CalEPA said, based on the four studies they then had, that the association was suggestive but inconclusive. CalEPA's conclusion regarding breast cancer flies in the face of what some of the "authorities" in the field have stated, specifically the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute. In spite of the fact that the medical literature on breast cancer and passive smoking has been building since 1985, the Cancer Society, on their current web page, says that women who start smoking in early adolescence might be at some increase in risk, but possible risk

from passive smoking is not mentioned. The National Cancer Institute in 2003 did not include passive smoking as a risk factor for breast cancer. Now they say there is some suggestion of an association, but the evidence is weak.

Breast cancer is different from lung cancer in that the smoke does not contact the affected organ directly, but must be metabolized and circulated to the breast through the blood and lymph systems. There is considerable evidence that breast cancer, even late in life, results from exposure to cancer causing agents either during childhood or when the breast is developing between puberty and first pregnancy. By combining the results from the four best studies in the CalEPA draft, one can calculate an average increase in breast cancer risk of about 70 percent for passive smoking. When the active smokers were compared, as they should be, with the non-passively exposed never smokers, the increase in risk for active smoking was about 80 percent. Taken together, these increases in risk indicate that about 40 percent of all breast cancer is associated with exposure to tobacco smoke.

Studies that measure exposure at all stages of the life cycle are critical in analyzing women's breast cancer (*cont'd on p. 11*)

Making Early Care and Education a National Issue

Hiedi Hatcher and Barbara Gault



Many advocates argue that a national, publicly-funded universal pre-kindergarten system should be a major U.S. policy priority, given the pressing shortage of quality, affordable childcare, and because of the great potential long-term benefits of such a system. A number of states currently run state-wide programs that could be replicated at the national level. As has been shown in the states, publicly funded pre-kindergarten can be integrated with existing public school infrastructure but can also incorporate home-based and center care.

High-quality universal programs would decrease financial burdens for families who currently pay a large portion of their incomes for early care and education; improve the cognitive development and school-readiness of young children; expand women's ability to work and pursue rewarding careers; provide better compensation to early care and education providers whose work is currently grossly underpaid; and save public funds in the long run.

As with the public K-12 system and with the Head Start program, major government support would be crucial to a successful universal pre-kindergarten system. Such

support would help ensure that teachers are adequately compensated, that the quality of care is high, and that lower and middle-income families have equal access to quality care. Currently, low pay in the early care and education field leads to high turnover and difficulty retaining well-qualified providers, which in turn reduces the quality of care. Through improved access to quality care, government investments in publicly-funded pre-kindergarten would improve children's cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral development.

According to the National Institute for Early Education Research, Georgia and Oklahoma are exemplary models of state-level universal pre-kindergarten programs. Georgia's full-day program has provided universal classes for four-year olds since 1995 and in 2003 served a majority of four-year-olds. Oklahoma's pre-kindergarten program allows all 4-year olds to participate and served 60 percent of all four-year-olds in 2003. The D.C. public school system is one of the few school districts that provide regular all-day classes for 3- and 4- year old children in each elementary school.

Other states have passed universal early care and education initiatives. In 2002, Florida passed a ballot initiative stating that every 4-year-old should be provided with high-quality pre-kindergarten learning by 2005. West Virginia has also passed legislation to implement universal prekindergarten programs by 2012. Louisiana's State Board of Education has retreated from implementation of legislation passed in 2001 by increasing the number of districts that are not required to offer prekindergarten programs.

Recent studies suggest that a national universal pre-kindergarten initiative would receive broad public support. A recent poll by Lake Snell Perry found that the vast majority of voters feel that there is not enough affordable child care available. A majority of women, both Democrats and Republicans, believed that preschool education is important, and most women felt that there are not enough preschool programs. A poll of the Democratic Presidential primary candidates by Take Care Net found that all of the candidates supported public funding for universal, voluntary pre-school programs. In light of the strong demand for expanded early care and education, and a growing awareness of the need for supports to improve work-life balance, several major advocacy organizations are attempting to make early care and education a major issue in the 2004 Presidential campaign.

This summer the Institute for Women's Policy Research will release state-specific briefing papers on the need for universal pre-kindergarten in New Mexico and Wisconsin. Current statistics on labor force participation by race and ethnicity and for women with children under age 6 and age 18 will be included in the report to illustrate the demand for early care and education expansions. The report will also present information on state pre-kindergarten policies and the availability of child care subsidies. These briefing papers, funded by the Rockefeller Family Foundation, will be released in late June. With support from the MacArthur and Packard Foundations, IWPR is also working with leaders in selected states, including California and Massachusetts, to estimate the cost of expanding prekindergarten.



Maria Stratigaki, Professor of Social Policy and Anthropology at the Panteion University located in Athens, Greece, and Heidi Hartmann, President of IWPR, socializing in Athens where Dr. Hartmann spent one week in December 2003, lecturing in three different cities throughout Greece.

Sue Cobble's Book Celebrating 'Labor Feminists' in DC

Kathy Vi and Regan Chemski

On February 9, IWPR, in cooperation with The Division of the United States Studies of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, was proud to co-sponsor the launch of long-term IWPR member Dorothy Sue Cobble's new book, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America*. Dr. Cobble asserts that "all feminisms are not alike, and all feminist history has not yet been uncovered."

In this, her third book, Dr. Cobble discusses the socially and ethnically diverse 'other women's movement.' "By the 1940s,"

according to Dr. Cobble, "a new generation of labor women emerged who were dedicated to making first-class economic citizenship a reality for wage-earning women." What Cobble calls 'labor feminists' set their goal as 'full industrial citizenship.' Unlike the 'new,' more middle-class feminists of the 1970s, they supported protective legislation and opposed the Equal Rights Amendment. Their feminism championed the labor movement and the needs of working-class women; they recognized that oppression based on class and race could be as harmful and as difficult to deal with as gender



(L to R) Heidi Hartmann, Dorothy Sue Cobble, and Karen Nussbaum, Assistant to the President of the AFL-CIO at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

MEDIA NOTES

Yi-Ling Tan

IWPR has continued to receive wide media coverage on multiple issues. Significant media attention over the past several months addressed gender economic disparities and workplace concerns. Dr. Barbara Gault was quoted in a front-page *Washington Post* article focusing on minority and gender discrimination in the workplace. Dr. Vicky Lovell's research on unionization in the retail food industry was cited in the *San Diego Union Tribune*. The *Status of Women in the States* publications were cited in the *Capital Times* (Madison, WI) and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentential* several times, in articles highlighting the initiative of Wisconsin Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton to improve Wisconsin's economy by increasing the economic status of the state's women. The *Albuquerque Tribune* cited the *States* report in an article on female business owners.

IWPR Director Dr. Heidi Hartmann and Dr. Avis Jones-DeWeever appeared on several live radio shows about women and the economy, the federal budget, and President Bush's Healthy marriage Proposal, including shows in Los Angeles, CA; Boulder, CO; Huntington, WV; Valdez, AK; Taos, NM; Sacramento, CA, and other local and nationally syndicated radio shows.

The *Georgetown Public Policy Review* published an interview with Dr. Hartmann, which focused on equal pay. Dr. Hartmann was also quoted in an article in *The Nation*

responding to Lisa Belkin's *New York Times* "Opt-Out Revolution" article.

The *Orlando Sentinel* quoted Dr. Gault on children living in poverty following welfare reform. Dr. Lovell was also quoted in *Women's eNews* on older women's employment. Dr. Jones-DeWeever was prominently quoted in a *Christian Science Monitor* story on government-promoted marriage initiatives. Dr. Jones-DeWeever was also quoted in a *NewStandard* article on the economic disparities between African Americans and whites. IWPR's research was also cited in the *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland) in a story regarding women and Social Security benefits.

Family issues also gained media attention. Dr. Amy Caizza was quoted in *The Blade* (Toledo) and *AlterNet.org* on the role of presidential wives. Dr. Caizza was also quoted in several stories on the growing number of childless women, including the *Boston Globe*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, the *Charlotte (NC) Post*; the *Star-Telegram* (Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX), the *Oakland Tribune*, *Women's eNews*, and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

The Communications Consortium Media Center (CCMC) recently published a review of a media covering low-wage work issues. This analysis showed that IWPR ranked in the top five research organizations most quoted in the media on low-wage work issues. (The media included 8 major newspapers and ABC, CBS, and NBC News).

inequities. From the 1940s through the 1960s they called for legislation that would mandate equality — guaranteeing equal pay for equal work — while recognizing difference — mandating maternity leave.

Serving as commentators for the launch event were Karen Nussbaum, Assistant to the President of the AFL-CIO, and IWPR's own Dr. Heidi Hartmann. Each of the commentators focused on the importance of studying the history of the women involved in the labor movement who kept feminism alive between the first and second prominent waves of feminism. They also stressed using the lessons learned by the labor women of this era to aid in the current struggles of the modern women's movement; both commended Cobble's book as a valuable tool in such study.

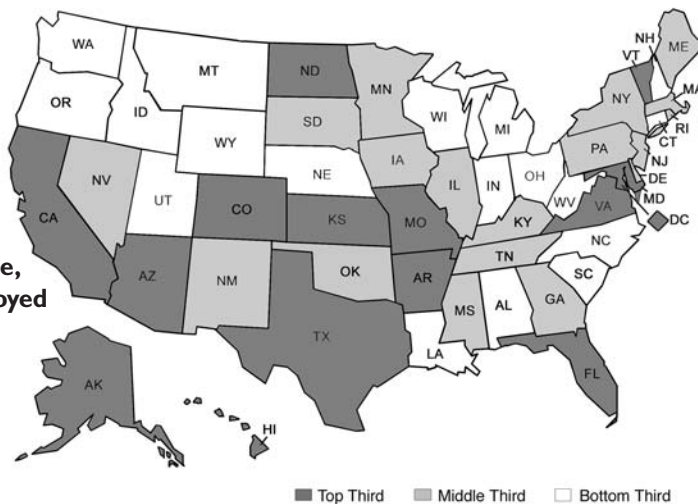
Dorothy Sue Cobble is Professor of Labor Studies, History, and Women's and Gender Studies as well as Director of the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers University. She is the editor of *Women and Unions: Forging a Partnership* and the author of *Dishing it Out: Waitresses and their Unions in the Twentieth Century*, the winner of the 1992 Herbert A. Gutman Book Prize.

To read the introduction to Cobble's new book, please visit www.pup.princeton.edu.

See www.iwpr.org/pdf.html
for all IWPR New Releases

Reporting Back & Moving Forward: The Status of Women in the States Project

**Earnings Ratio
Between Full-Time,
Year-Round Employed
Women and Men,
2001-02
from Women's
Economic Status
in the States**



Jean Sinzdak

The work of our state-based Advisory Committees to the Status of Women in the States project continues to make changes for women. New and innovative programs and research from our state partners provide exceptional models for state-based activities to improve women's status.

For example, the Women's Foundation of Minnesota (WFM) recently released the *Status of Women in Minnesota Counties* report, utilizing IWPR's *Status of Women in the States* reports as a model for developing the report's methodology. The report ranks all 87 Minnesota counties on four key issue areas: political participation, employment and economic status, reproductive rights, and health and well being. The report also includes a web-based tool in which a policymaker, community leader, or member of the general public can visit the WFM website and click on a particular county on the state map to get an instant reading on its ranking among the counties. To highlight the release, the WFM held a press conference at the State Capitol that received wide press, television and radio coverage. Nearly every daily paper in various counties picked up the press release. For more information on the project, contact Erin Ceynar at WFM at (612)337-5010.

The Alliance for the Status of Missouri Women was formed as an outcome of the release of the *Status of Women in Missouri* report in 2002. In November 2003, the Alliance held one-year anniversary press conferences across the state to showcase Mis-

souri's low grades on women's status. To build on that momentum, the Alliance held a series of Women's Agenda Assemblies this spring to establish priority issues for a women's legislative agenda, through which the Alliance hopes to effect public policy change to raise Missouri's grades on the status of women.

The West Virginia Women's Commission is working on a campaign to increase the number of women registered to vote, in response to the state's low grade in that area in the *Status of Women in West Virginia* report. Also, West Virginia committee co-chair Barbara Howe will travel to a women and leadership program in China to talk about mobilizing for change in a rural state, highlighting the report as a resource.

On a final note, IWPR would like to acknowledge the hard work of Betsy Nowland-Curry and her colleagues at the Kentucky Commission on Women. With a change in the governorship, the Commission's offices have unfortunately been closed. While it is not unusual for a new governor to appoint new Commissioners, it is unusual to eliminate a Commission on Women entirely. Ms. Nowland-Curry and her staff, Lori Kidwell and Ann Ferrell, did an excellent job in working to build the economic status of the state's women, and it is critical that the momentum continue. They coordinated the Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women, which included over 300 men and women from over 55 counties, and the Task Force's report details recommendations for improving the lives of Kentucky women and conse-

quently all Kentuckians. They also coordinated the first-ever Summit on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women, which was a tremendous step forward in developing action plans to address the issues affecting women in the state. Certainly their work will continue to inspire all those committed to improving women's economic status at the local, state, and national level.

IWPR will keep you posted on important happenings in the states! Please share your news with us by contacting Jean Sinzdak at (202) 785-5100 or sinzdak@iwpr.org.

Data Advisors Group Explores Race and Ethnicity in the States

April Shaw

On December 9, 2002, IWPR convened a meeting of its Data Advisors Group in the IWPR conference room for the Status of Women in the States project. Several leading experts were in attendance: Dr. Marlene Kim, University of Massachusetts-Boston; Dr. Roderick Harrison, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies; Sonia Perez, National Council of La Raza; Dr. Matt Snipp, Stanford University; Dr. Jared Bernstein, Economic Policy Institute; Peter Tatian, Urban Institute; Dr. Greg Squires, George Washington University; Dr. Elena Silva, AAUW Educational Foundation, IWPR staff who attended included: Dr. Heidi Hartmann, Dr. Barbara Gault, Dr. Amy Caiazza, Dr. Avis Jones-DeWeever, Jean Sinzdak, April Shaw, and Misha Werschkul.

At the meeting, the group discussed the indicators in the Status of Women in the States project and advised IWPR how to address questions of race and ethnicity in the 2000 Census report, since the categories vary from those in past censuses. For the first time, individuals could report that they belong to two or more racial groups. The advisors made recommendations on how to disaggregate racial and ethnic data, immigrant data, and multi-race data. In addition, the group will review the upcoming reports before they are published. The 2004 round of *Status of Women in the States* reports feature more state-level data by race and ethnicity than ever before. Stay tuned for the upcoming reports to be released this summer and fall!

Women's Employment and Earnings: How Many More Years Until Equality?

(cont'd from p. 1)

er rates of poverty and lower earnings than white and Asian American women.

Each year since 1996, the National Committee on Pay Equity has organized the national observance of Equal Pay Day, the day when women and men around the country recognize the wage gap between working women and men and offer remedies to address pay inequity. This year, Equal Pay Day is Tuesday, April 20th. The date chosen for Equal Pay Day is symbolic: April is chosen to indicate how far into a new year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year, and Tuesday symbolizes the day when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous week.

The concept of Equal Pay Day – the symbolic point in the year to which women must work in order to earn the wages of a man in the previous year – is especially interesting when using the data found in the IWPR's new report. By IWPR's calculations, the actual day when the average woman's earnings catch up to the average man's earnings in the previous year (2003) is April 23rd, 2004, meaning that the average woman has to work all of 2003 and almost four months of 2004 to earn what a man earned in 2003.

Hispanic women must work almost an entire extra year, until November 22nd, to catch up with the earnings of the average white male in the previous year. Asian American women observe Equal Pay Day slightly earlier than all women, on March 30th. Native American women would have to work until September 12th and African American women until July 19th to catch up to the average white man's earnings from the previous year. Within these racial groups, there are also striking disparities in earnings: for example, Cuban American women earn, on average, \$28,700 a year, requiring them to work until May 17th to catch up to the average white man's earnings. Mexican American women, on the other hand, earn only \$22,100 a year, requiring them to work until October 14th to catch up with white men's earnings.



On the state level, there are also significant differences. Women in the District of Columbia, the state with the smallest gender wage gap, catch up to men's earnings on January 30th. Women in the state with the widest wage gap, Wyoming, have to work until July 4th for their earnings to catch up to the earnings of men in Wyoming. Comparing the racial breakdowns with the state breakdowns reveal even greater disparities. For example, African American women in Louisiana will have to wait to observe Equal Pay Day until January 13, 2005; this means that they have to work 378 extra days to make up the earnings that they lose over one year, compared to the average white man.

The report also looks at women's poverty by state and by race and ethnicity. Women are least likely to live in poverty in New Hampshire, Minnesota, and Maryland. Women are most likely to be poor in many Southeastern and Western states, including Mississippi (19.4 percent of women were living in poverty in 2002), Arkansas (18.9 percent), the District of Columbia (17.5 percent) and New Mexico (17.4 percent). Women's poverty rates also differ by race and ethnicity. Nationally, 25 percent of Native American women, 24.1 percent of African American women, and 22.5 percent of Hispanic women aged 16 and over were living below the federal poverty line in 1999. White women (9 percent) and Asian American women (12.4 percent) are less likely to be poor.

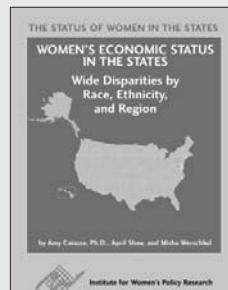
The report recommends policy changes to improve women's economic status, including strengthening support for equal opportunity laws, improving education and job training opportunities, and supporting the economic development of Native American reservations.

For more information on women's economic status, check out IWPR's new report at <http://www.iwpr.org/>. For more information on Equal Pay Day, see <http://www.pay-equity.org/day.html>.

NEW RELEASES

Report

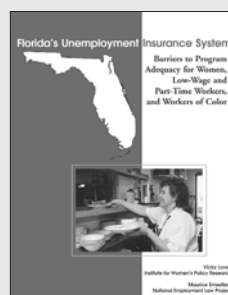
Women's Economic Status in the States: Wide Disparities by Race, Ethnicity and Region by Amy Caiazza, April Shaw, and Misha Werschkul. The first part of the Status



of Women in the States 2004 series, this report provides state-by-state data on women's economic status including their earnings, their occupations, the wage gap, business ownership, and poverty levels. The results illustrate how economic opportunities for women differ tremendously in different regions and states, and, even more profoundly, across different races and ethnicities. April 2004. R260. ISBN 1-878428-86-1, 48 pages, \$15.00 Order form on back cover.

Report

Florida's Unemployment Insurance System: Barriers to Program Adequacy for



Women, Low-Wage, and Part-Time Workers, and Workers of Color by Vicky Lovell and Maurice Emsellem. Exploring the effectiveness of Florida's unemployment insurance

(UI) system, this report concludes that the Florida system is not currently providing enough support for temporarily unemployed workers and that women, low-wage, and part-time workers collect UI at a rates that are much lower than those of other workers. The authors include a set of recommendations for Florida that would allow more people to qualify for UI and improve the unemployment trust fund. March 2004. C354. ISBN 1-878428-84-5, 32 pages, \$10.00. Order form on back cover.

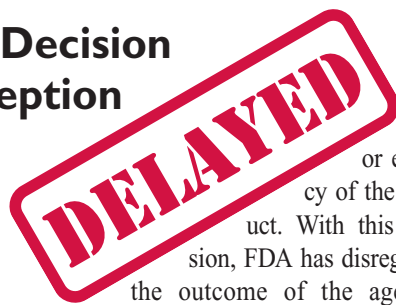
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FDA Over-the-Counter Decision for Emergency Contraception

Sarah Benatar

The Food and Drug Administration has opted to delay its decision on whether or not to approve a change in the prescription status of the emergency contraceptive pill *Plan B* until May. When faced with the February 20th deadline, the agency chose to take an additional 90 days to consider the application submitted by the Women's Capital Corporation in April of 2003 for over-the-counter (OTC) conversion of *Plan B*. Women's Capital Corporation received approval to market *Plan B* with a prescription in 1999, but access issues have limited the use of the emergency contraceptive product. The pharmaceutical firm Barr Labs has agreed to market the product if FDA grants OTC conversion of *Plan B*.

By law, FDA is required to respond to an application within 10 months, making the decision deadline, also known as the user fee date, February 20, 2004. Though the agency typically responds with an approval or denial by the user fee date, they do have the option to request more data and postpone the decision 90 days. The decision to delay in this case, however, is somewhat extraordinary. Typically FDA will request additional time only if the data are inadequate, or there is not widespread agreement regarding the safety



or efficacy of the product. With this decision, FDA has disregarded the outcome of the agency's Advisory Committee on Reproductive Health Drugs meeting in December 2003, when the committee overwhelmingly recommended approval of OTC conversion. The committee, made up of appointed medical experts, voted 24-3 that *Plan B* is safe enough to be sold without a prescription based on safety and efficacy data. The agency's decisions rarely contradict an advisory committee recommendation.

Requiring a prescription for emergency contraception has severely limited the use of the product, which has proven to be very effective in preventing unintended pregnancy. The prescription status requires that individuals seeking emergency contraception must locate a doctor willing to prescribe it and a pharmacy that stocks the product within the timeframe that it is effective. Emergency contraception is extremely effective if taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex, and is more effective the sooner a woman is able to take it. This can pose a significant barrier for many women who find themselves in a bind over a weekend, or

during a holiday, or in a region of the country where few physicians are willing to prescribe the product because of their political or religious beliefs. In addition, many pharmacies have stated that they do not stock emergency contraception because of low demand, while others refuse to stock it based on "moral" reasons.

The choice to delay the decision on OTC conversion of emergency contraception has not been the only blow. The agency has also moved the decision from the Office of Drug Evaluation, where scientific reviewers assess applications, to the office of FDA Commissioner Mark McClellan, who was appointed by the Bush Administration. The delay and this move have been criticized by some who believe that political concerns are being allowed to trump scientific evidence, and have caused great concern for supporters of the OTC switch.

IWPR General and Project Support

Rebecca Sager

Support for IWPR's research, education, and outreach activities is funded primarily by foundations, organizations, and individuals. We are able to fulfill our mission of providing information about economic indicators, social trends, and the effects of significant public policies on women and their families with the generous support of: the Anne E. Casey Foundation for our work on access to unemployment insurance, paid sick leave, and job quality; the Otto Bremer and the Rockefeller Family Foundations for *The Status of Women in the States* project; the American Association of University Women for studying the educational status of women; the Ford Foundation for research on interfaith activism *The Status of Women in the States*, job quality, and access to education and training; the AARP for our work on older women's poverty; the Joyce Foundation for work on work supporters and job retention; Mailman, Packard, and the MacArthur Foundation for our work on early care and education; and the Nokomis Foundation for funding *The Status of Women in Michigan* report, and the New Prospect Foundation for general support.

And special thanks to all of IWPR's generous and loyal members and donors. Your commitment to IWPR makes our work possible.

MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

April 25, 2004 • Washington, DC

choice | justice | access | health | abortion | global | family planning

WHO?

- + American Civil Liberties Union + Black Women's Health Imperative
- + Feminist Majority + NARAL + Pro-Choice America
- + National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- + National Organization for Women
- + Planned Parenthood Federation of America

WHAT?

Women and men from around the country are marching in support of reproductive freedom. It is time to uphold the rights of women and march in unison on April 25th. More than 612 cities are participating in this Nationwide event so don't miss out!

WHERE?

- + Assembly of supporters will begin at 10 AM on the National Mall between 3rd and 14th street.
- + Step off will take place at noon.
- + The afternoon rally will take place from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- + Visit www.marchforwomen.meetup.com for your local meet-up location!

www.MarchForWomen.org

Ellen Delany, IWPR Board Chair, Hosts IWPR's Inaugural House Party!

Alison Stein

On January 29th, old friends, new friends, IWPR members, and staff gathered at the home of Ellen Delany, Chair of the Institute's Board of Directors, for IWPR's first-ever house party. Occurring less than 24 hours after the New Hampshire primary, conversation focused on the important role of women in the upcoming election cycle, and how people can use IWPR's research to evaluate and educate candidates on issues of importance to women.

IWPR Study Director, Dr. Amy Caiazza, discussed why it is critical for people to support IWPR's research on women's participation in the political process. "In our research, we have found that in places where women's status is highest, social capital is highest, too. These findings suggest that if you invest more in women, you will build stronger communities and a better political system. But guess what? We've also found that at the rate of change in the 1990s—the fastest ever, by the way—women will not achieve equality in elected office for over a century—which means a century of losing out on women's talent



Ellen Delany, IWPR Board Chair, and D. Marianne M. Jones, Executive Director, The Women's Fund of New Hampshire

expertise, and representation of women's interests in the political process."

Nancy Ryan, Director of the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women, spoke of how she uses IWPR's *The Status of Women in Massachusetts* report in her ongoing efforts to bring women's issues to the forefront of the policy debate in Massachusetts. "*The Status of Women in Massachusetts* provides me with the tools I need to make a case for women and their families living in Massachusetts. I would not be able to do my job without IWPR's critical research."

IWPR's Director of Development, Rebecca Sager, was delighted with the event, and hopes to replicate its success at future house parties across the country. "It was great to see so many progressive women in one room for a common purpose – promoting positive change for women through research, education, and dissemination."

With representatives from the New Hampshire Women's Fund, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, an elected official from the Boston City Council, and a special performance by The Boston City Singers, the evening was a tremendous success.

"This is the first time in some years that IWPR has had a locally sponsored event in Massachusetts," said Ellen Delany. "We have many friends here, and this was a wonderful opportunity to bring them up to date on IWPR's work and reinforce the impact of IWPR's work on women's lives. And it was also a great opportunity for a number of dynamic women to interact. Most of the women at the event did not know each other and it was heartening to see the connections that were forming as the evening progressed."

Black Women's Unemployment Rates Remain High

(cont'd from p. 1) typically significantly higher for Black women than for white women—usually more than twice as high, in both good economic times and bad. Thus, the *highest* unemployment rate adult white women faced recently (4.6 percent, in April 2002) was substantially lower than the *lowest* rate for adult Black women in the last thirty years (5.5 percent, in December 2000 and again in April 2001.)

High levels of occupational segregation by race and sex contribute to the divergence in Black and white women's experience of our economy. For instance, more Black women work as nursing aides than in any other occupation. While this occupation grew by 23 percent from 2000 to 2003, most of the new jobs went to white women. Black women are also disproportionately employed in sales and office occupations (34 percent of all Black women workers were employed in these occupations in

2000), sectors where the employment of Black women fell by 5 percent. Several occupations with high concentrations of women employees, including cashiers, medical assistants, and janitors and building cleaners, experienced decreases in Black women's employment and increases in white women's employment from 2000 to 2003.

Many of the jobs that have been shedding Black women workers—maids and housekeeping occupations, janitors and building cleaners, child care workers, retail salespersons, and cooks—pay low wages. These workers often begin their unemployment in a vulnerable economic position and are less likely to have enough savings to ward off financial disaster. Some will qualify for unemployment insurance benefits (UI), although payments to low-wage workers are small. UI is a federal-state program and individual states control the eligibility and benefit standards. Workers who quit their jobs because of incompatibility between family care and employment are

usually denied UI, as are part-time workers in many states and workers with short job tenure. Working with the National Employment Law Project, IWPR has produced three reports on the impact of UI systems on women and on the low-wage workers—in Texas, Georgia, and Florida (see www.iwpr.org for PDF versions and for ordering information).

Better support for workers who become unemployed is essential, but heading off job loss is even more critical. Even in good economic times, help in maintaining stable child-care, housing, and transportation is needed to help low-income workers stay on the job; paid-time-off policies are also crucial. So is stepped-up enforcement of equal employment laws. In periods of weak job growth, like the current recovery, federal fiscal policy should play a role in stimulating the economy to create more jobs. Unfortunately, the recent tax cuts are not working to spur job growth, and the cuts in government spending they require only exacerbate the situation.



Profile on IWPR Member Carolyn Hopley

Alison Stein

While there are many ways to contribute to the feminist movement, IWPR member Carolyn Hopley has used film to promote the visibility of women's issues around the world. Carolyn Hopley founded Third Wave Television, Inc., a feminist media production

company, after attending the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing.

"At the UN conference, I learned about the ability of the media and television to empower women around the globe. I saw how the media could give the experiences and voices of women greater magnification."

Almost a decade later, Hopley's films have won numerous awards, have been aired on public television stations, and are used by schools, libraries, and individuals around the world. These films, narrated by renowned journalists like Paula Zahn and Maria Baritomo, address a variety of contemporary feminist issues including suffrage, women and gun control, and child care. IWPR's Heidi Hartmann is featured in "Women Count: Smart About Money," a highly regarded Third Wave Television Production that highlights women's financial management issues during different stages of life—from a woman's first job through her retirement. Working with Heidi on the film may have been Hopley's first direct experience with IWPR, but her knowledge and interest in the Institute was several years in the making.

"I heard Heidi speak some time ago and was deeply impressed with her work. I have

always been eager to support her organization because of the useful and solid information they produce. To the best of my knowledge, IWPR is the only group of its kind."

Hopley has devoted more than twenty years of her life to the feminist movement. After graduating from the Union Theological Seminary in New York, she became active in Connecticut's chapter of NOW, serving as president from 1988 through 1990. During her term as president, Hopley worked to pass state laws in Connecticut that helped counter the effects of *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, a 1989 Supreme Court decision which curtailed access to abortion by enabling states to pass legislation to regulate or restrict reproductive rights.

Currently, Hopley and Third Wave Television staff are working feverishly to complete a film that focuses on women's issues and the upcoming presidential election. They hope that this topical film will motivate more women to vote and to become active in the political process.

To learn more about Carolyn Hopley and Third Wave Television, please visit their web site at www.thirdwavetelevision.org.



Profile on New IWPR Board Member Esmeralda O. Lyn

Regan Chemski

"As a Filipino-American academic with an expertise in finance, I hope to bring a different perspective to many issues that IWPR is involved in," says Esmeralda O. Lyn, Ph.D., IWPR's new treasurer and a member of the Board of Directors.

Dr. Lyn is Professor of Finance at the Frank G. Zarb School of Business at Hofstra University, where she has been teaching since 1982. She loves what she does: "I am still imbued with wide-eyed idealism about this profession – that we learn and teach for the sheer love of knowledge and the desire to share that knowledge with others, especially our students." Dr. Lyn's areas of specialization include mergers and acquisitions, international finance, and agency theory. She has published articles in such journals as the *Journal of International Business Studies*, the *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, *Advances in Taxation*, and *Advances in Working Capital Management*.

Last year, Dr. Lyn had the opportunity to learn more about IWPR through her colleague at Hofstra, Dr. Cheryl Lehman, who served as our previous board treasurer. After Dr. Lehman nominated her for the position, Dr. Lyn did her homework, "I visited IWPR's website to learn more about the Institute and started reading some of its research output. After much thought, consultation with people I respect, and discus-

sion with Heidi [Hartmann, IWPR President], I accepted the nomination and joined the board."

Contributing to Dr. Lyn's expertise in finance is her past experience as a finance officer at the United Nations in New York where she spent some time on a foreign assignment in Bangladesh. She has also worked for Integrated Resources, Inc., Smith Barney Shearson, and has done consulting work for various companies. She is currently on the board of the Nassau Educators Federal Credit Union and the Global ShareResource Foundation. Dr. Lyn has been editor-in-chief of *Corporate Finance Review* and has also served as the Co-director of the Merrill Lynch Center for the Study of International Financial Services and Markets at Hofstra.

As for IWPR's future, Dr. Lyn hopes her position on the board will provide her with the chance to help make IWPR "the first organization that comes to mind when women's issues and policies are discussed in public and private forums."

Visit us at www.iwpr.org

Spotlight on IWPR Fellows

Erica Williams

The Institute for Women's Policy Research would like to recognize Fellows Alison Stein (Development) and Misha Werschkul (Mariam K. Chamberlain) for a year of effective work on behalf of IWPR. Alison, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, became interested in women's issues through her work in Ghana and Tanzania on reproductive health, education, and rights. As part of the development team, Alison has taken the lead in researching potential new funding partners to support IWPR's work on issues of importance to women. She also coordinated IWPR's first house party (see pg. 9). Alison, in addition, supported the Research Department by organizing the inaugural Advisory Committee meeting for IWPR's new project on gender, religion, and civic activism (see pg. 3).

Misha Werschkul came to IWPR from Macalester College in Minnesota where she studied economics and political science. Her senior thesis examined the effects of recession and economic adjustment on the educational attainment of women and girls in Argentina, where she studied during her junior year. Misha's work at IWPR includes statistical analysis, cost-estimate modeling, writing literature reviews, and creating tables and graphs on pay equity, childcare, and women's economic status in the United States. Her research skills proved essential in the revision and co-authoring of a briefing paper entitled, *Child Care Subsidies Promote Mothers' Employment and Children's Development*. Misha also manages a variety of important information sources such as the welfare listserv and Research News Reporter.

Both Alison and Misha have made exceptional contributions to the work of the Institute for Women's Policy Research and we wish them both well as they continue to pursue their careers in gender and public policy.

Alison is on the left and Misha is on the right!



Institute for Women's Policy Research

IWPR is a public policy research organization dedicated to informing and stimulating the debate on issues of critical importance to women and their families.

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Latest IWPR Research

Engaging Women in Environmental Activism by Amy Caiazza and Alison Barrett
This report compiles research on women's attitudes toward environmentalism, finding that women are less likely to support environmental spending cuts than men and are more likely than men to volunteer for environmental causes. Read more...

Women's Job Loss and Material Hardship by Vicky Lovell and Gi-Taik Oh
This paper finds that women's job loss increases their chances of material hardship by two-thirds and elevated hardship persists even among those who are re-employed. Read more...

The Impact of Disabilities on Mothers' Work Participation: Examining Differences Between Single and Married Mothers by Sunhwa Lee, Gi-Taik Oh, Heidi Hartmann, and Barbara Gault (Working Paper published by the Joint Center for Poverty Research) Read more...

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The Status of Women in the States

"If women's representation in Congress changes at the rate it did during the 1990s, it will take more than a century to achieve equality in political representation."

The Status of Women in the States reports measure and track women's status in all 50 states and DC. The project ranks and grades the states on: political participation, employment and earnings, social and economic autonomy, reproductive rights, and health and well-being. Overall, the reports find that while women have made many strides in recent decades, they are far from gender equality. For more information, click here.

Hot Topics

TANF Reauthorization Resources

Child Care Subsidies Promote Mothers'

Check out IWPR's new website design at www.iwpr.org. Unveiled in January 2004, the new site has generated a lot of traffic. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can continue to improve it! Email suggestions to sinzdak@iwpr.org.

A Connection Unveiled: Tobacco Smoke and Breast Cancer

(cont'd from p. 3) risk from exposure, especially to assess the relative risks from passive and active smoking. Unfortunately, a large number of breast cancer studies were done in an earlier period that compared active smokers with all never smokers. When these studies found no consistent increase in risk, the authorities concluded there was no active smoking effect. Then, since there was no active smoking effect, they said that there could be no passive smoking effect. The trouble with this conclusion is, as noted above, that the passive effect is almost as large as the active effect, and since, in Western societies, 80 percent or more of women are passively exposed, the researchers were comparing exposed with exposed, and therefore got no effect.

In the face of the data from the best studies, why do some authorities continue to deny a connection between tobacco smoke and breast cancer? One reason, I believe, is that many of the experts were identified with the earlier, flawed studies that compared the smokers with all of the never smokers. Another reason is that a few of them have also done some passive smoking studies and have found little breast cancer effect. Unfortunately, their questionnaires

were generally weak in that they failed to measure adequately occupational exposure and, particularly, exposure during younger ages, before first pregnancy.

The emerging conclusion of the best studies is that exposure to tobacco smoke is a probable major breast cancer risk factor. Some "authorities" notwithstanding, women should be warned that both active smoking and exposure to other people's smoke should be avoided, particularly during the years before first pregnancy. Smokers with girls at home should smoke outside, and smoking in automobiles should be avoided if girls or young women are present. Women's organizations could agitate to make sure that the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute pay increased attention to what is in the CalEPA draft, and warn women about their increased risk. To get a hard copy of the CalEPA report, call Mr. Jose Saltana on 916-322-0289. The full report (about 700 pages) is also on the internet at www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/ets/dreport/dreport.htm. Those who would like more information may contact me at ajwel@earthlink.net.

A. Judson Wells, Ph.D, is a long-time IWPR member whose research focuses on the health risks of tobacco.

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