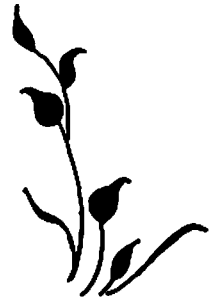




IGU

International Geographic Union STUDY GROUP ON GENDER



No. 4

May 1990

New Themes Emerging in British and North American Feminist Geography

At the 1990 meetings of the Institute for British Geographers, held in Glasgow in January, and of the Association of American Geographers, held in Toronto in April, increasing attention turned to cultural issues, including the ways that ideologies shape masculinity as well as femininity. Some of this interest reflects a turn by social theorists in geography to post-modernism and the study of difference.

The major presentation on this theme at the AAG meeting was a guest lecture by art historian, Rosalind Deutsche, co-sponsored by the Political, Urban, Socialist, and Geographic Perspectives on Women Specialty Groups. Under the title "Postmodernism, Feminism, and Difference," she presented challenges to David Harvey's latest work in which he continues to interpret the city from a purely Marxist perspective. Discussion arising from her paper, and a subsequent presentation by Linda McDowell, pointed out not only the limitations of Marxist theory from a feminist perspective, but also the limitations of postmodernist thinking which approaches difference from a relativistic stance. Here postmodernism contrasts with feminist concerns for redressing inequalities and fostering liberation.

Geraldine Pratt's presentation at the AAG highlighted the intersections of class and gender in the formation of subjectivity, focusing on masculine identity in urban settings. This concern with the cultural construction of gender and identity was also present in sessions at the IBG, especially in a paper by Peter Jackson on the cultural politics of masculinity, and in a workshop organized by Eleonore Koffman. British interest in the politics of subjectivity and culture is also evident in the agenda proposed for the Women and Geography Study Group (WGSG) reading weekend in March, 1990.

Another emerging theme is the study of women and the environment. This formed the basis for several presentations at the AAG meetings, including those by Suzanne Mackenzie and Susan Place, and a session on "Nature, Culture, and the Feminist Critique of Science," organized by Mona Domosh. In the latter, attention was directed to the ways science is done, definitions of "the experts," gender roles in environmental movements, and the links among militarism, business, and environmental crises. Concerns with ecofeminism and women's relations to environmental politics also surfaced at a one-day Symposium on Feminist Geography held at the University of Southern California in March, 1990.

Interest in cross-cultural and international studies is also growing, extending from the base of studies on women and Third World development and on women and global industrialization. Though both these topics were incorporated into multiple sessions at the AAG meetings, new attention turned to eastern Europe in a session on women and *perestroika*, and well-known human rights scholar and activist, Charlotte Bunch, gave a presentation on feminist conceptions of human rights in a session on the conference theme "Sharing the Global Village."

Finally, new interest in gender and historical geography has been evident at British and American meetings. A one-day conference on feminism and historical geography was held at University College, London in November, 1989 and a session at the AAG brought together historical geographers of the American and Canadian Wests to critique and extend work on the region from the perspectives of gender and ethnicity.

These new directions do not indicate abandonment of well-established topics and perspectives in feminist geography, however. For example, numerous papers at

the AAG meetings examined women's employment relations in diverse geographic contexts; a session at the IBG also emphasized aspects of women's paid employment. But this research is also expanding its framework, bringing class and ethnic diversity to the fore. Thus Nicky Gregson and Michelle Lowe in an IBG session on gender and class polarization in contemporary Britain examined the links between place relations and relations between women as domestic employers and employees; and a presentation at the AAG by Valerie Preston and Glenda Laws focused on the intersections between gender and ethnicity in the employment patterns of immigrants in New York and Toronto.

Plans for Beijing Meeting Being Finalized

As noted in Newsletter No. 3, the Gender Study Group decided to hold a half-day program at the IGU Regional Conference in Beijing in August, 1990 in accordance with the agreement of the IGU Executive Committee to continue the meeting despite concerns arising from the political events in China in 1989. The Executive Committee's decision reflected a desire to sustain ties with Chinese geographers rather than isolate them. Since that time, the Chinese organizers have written to the Janet Momsen, Gender Study Group Chair, indicating their eagerness to have the Study Group meet and interact with Chinese geographers.

Ten people have submitted abstracts, though we are aware that two of these people have not been able to obtain travel support and will not be attending. If you have submitted an abstract, please confirm the status of your attendance with the Chair, Janet Momsen, Department of Geography, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, as soon as possible, but no later than July 1. If you have not yet submitted an abstract but plan to go to Beijing, please also notify her.

Teaching about Gender

Vidyamall Samarasinghe (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka) is teaching a course on "Third World Feminism" while serving as a Visiting Professor in the Department of Anthropology, Swarthmore College, PA, USA.

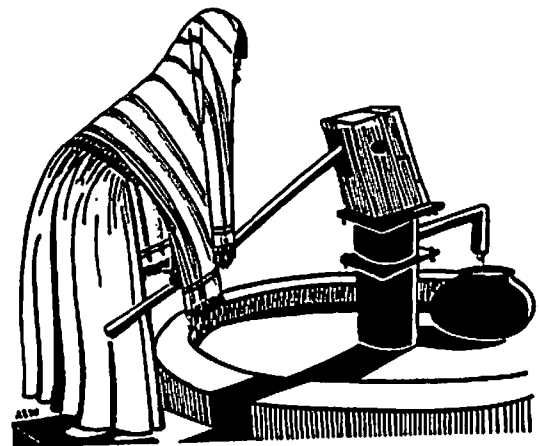
Saraswati Raju has received approval to introduce an M. Phil. course on "Regional Dimensions of Female Labor Force with Reference to India" at Jawaharlal Nehru University. This will be the first course focusing on gender to be taught in geography or economics in India.

Linda McDowell (Open University, Milton Keynes, UK) taught a graduate seminar in feminist geography as a visiting professor in geography at the University of California, Los Angeles in the winter quarter, 1990.

An M.A. course in gender analysis in development will be offered at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, beginning in 1990. The course will treat both urban and rural issues in an integrated way from household to national policy and international economy scales. Further information is available from Dr. Ruth Pearson, School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, England.

Research News

A household survey of the provision of basic needs to the urban poor was recently completed in Delhi by Saraswati Raju (Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi). She reports that women were cooperating across households to meet needs in water and fuel supply and personal sanitation. Dr. Raju has also been studying the work of women and children in the informal sector and presented a report on this theme to an Experts Committee Meeting.



Anoja Wickramasinghe (Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka) has undertaken two projects in Sri Lanka. The first, "Assessing the Situation of Women in System B: A Prerequisite to Planning Training Programme" is being conducted for the Mahaweli Regional Training Centre, funded by CIDA. To be completed in May, 1990, it provides baseline information for designing training programmes. She includes such topics as women's daily work loads, decision-making, resource management practices, and income earning activities of women.

The second project, "Evaluation of the Women's Income Generating Activities Under the Integrated Rural Development Project in the Kegalle District" is undertaken for this development project and funded by IFAD. The primary objective is to assess project related changes in income levels and living conditions. It will also examine constraints on implementing individual women's enterprises.

Peter Meusberger (Geographisches Institut, University of Heidelberg, FRG) has a long-established research program on women's work qualifications in regional perspective. Currently he is working on spatial differences in the female labor force in Hungary. Earlier studies address spatial disparities in the educational level of the female labor force, the spatial distribution of jobs for the highly qualified female work force, and spatial disparities in the feminization process of the teaching profession (see p. 4 publication by Jurgen Schmude).

Eva Humbeck, doctoral candidate in geography at Arizona State University, USA is currently in Thailand conducting research on the theme of the recruitment of Thai women for the "marriage trade" with West Germany. She will do follow-up work in West Germany with Thai women who have migrated there on marriage.

Annegret Presting, also of Heidelberg, is undertaking her doctoral thesis on regional differences in the labor market participation of women in Austria. Using 1971 and 1981 census data, she seeks to establish the significance of regional, social, and economic factors for the labor market participation of women in different sectors of the economy, different professions, and positions. She is especially interested in comparing urban places of varying sizes.

Rochelle Ball (University of Sydney, Australia and Cornell University, USA) is completing research for her doctoral dissertation on Filipino women and international contract labor migration.

Publications

Verena Meier (Geographisches Institut, University of Basel, Switzerland) has a new book, *Frauenleben in Calancatal: Eine Sozialgeographische Studie, Cauc/GR: Notizie della Calanca*. It is an attempt to write a new local geography from women's perspectives. It incorporates theoretical reflections and empirical material based on extensive field work that included participant observation and action.

Women at the Crossroads: A Sri Lankan Perspective is a collection of essays co-edited by historian, Sirima Kiribamune and geographer, Vidyamali Samarasinghe. Published by the International Centre for Ethnic Studies in association with Vikas Publishing, New Delhi, it deals with an array of topics from law, politics, and education to family and work relationships. Of particular interest to geographers is the essay by Lakshmie Cumararatunga on Sri Lankan women migrant domestic workers in West Asia.

"Making Space for Women: Feminist Critiques and Reformulations of the Spatial Disciplines," by Louise Johnson appeared in *Australian Feminist Studies*, 9, Autumn, 1989, 31-50.

Women's Role in Natural Resource Management in Africa, edited by Eva M. Rathgeber with Bonnie Kettel, has been published by the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada K1G 3H9. It includes theoretical and methodological essays and case studies on fuel, food, water, and land.

David R. Lee's article, "The Status of Women in Geography: Things Change, Things Remain the Same," *The Professional Geographer*, 42 (2) 1990, 202 - 11 examines the distribution and ranks of women faculty in US geography departments in the late 1980s, and also the production of women graduates. He identifies problems and suggests solutions to them.

"Reconceptualizing the Links Between Home and Work in Urban Geography," by Susan Hanson and Geraldine Pratt, Economic Geography, 64 (4) 1989, addresses theoretical concerns in the context of their research in Worcester, Massachusetts.



Joan Nogue i Font reviewed The Desert is No Lady: Southwestern Landscapes in Women's Writing and Art (edited by Vera Norwood and Janice Monk) in Documents d'Analisi Geografica, (Autonomous University of Barcelona) No 16, 1990.

"The Wage Effects of Residential Location and Commuting Restraints on Employed Married Women," by Janice Madden and Lee-in Chen Chiu has been issued as a Working Paper by the Alice Paul Center for the Study of Women, University of Pennsylvania, 106 Logal Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6304 USA.

Gender Restructuring: Five Labour Markets Compared," by S. Walby and P. Bagguley, appeared in Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 7 (3) 1989, 277-292.

In the "Open Forum" section of The Professional Geographer, 42 (2) 1990, 228 - 231, Rickle Sanders writes on "Integrating Race and Ethnicity into Gender Geography." She reports on and critiques the ideas presented in a panel at the AAG meeting in 1988, emphasizing why it is important to develop an inclusive scholarship. As one of the few Black women in American geography, she raises questions about the links between the make-up of the profession and the ways its research develops. Commentaries on her arguments are offered by Saul Cohen, "Geographic Gender Studies: Fresh Approaches but with Integration," (pp. 231-32) and Olivia Mitchell and Neil Smith, "Bringing in Race," (pp. 232-34).

"Regional Disparities in the Feminization Process of the Teaching Profession--Historical Aspects and Future Problems" by Jurgen Schmude (Department of Geography, University of Heidelberg, FRG) has been published by the Congress on Regions and Training, Marseilles, France, 1989.

"Women's Space" is the theme of the Bulletin of the Association of Greek Architects, No. 20, May, 1989. It is prepared by a group of women architects and planners and includes eight articles on housing, urban development, and women's experiences of and participation in making the urban environment, as well as an extensive bibliography (address for purchase: Vrysakiou 15 & Kladou, 105 65 Athens). Also from Greece comes "Women's Work: Between Two Worlds" a special issue of Synchrone Themata No. 40, December, 1989, guest edited by Dina Valou (Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens) and M. Stratigaki. Ten articles on Greece deal with such topics as women's new poverty in the post-modern society; the relationship of life cycle, family arrangements, and paid work; the ways women fight to redefine gender relations; and theoretical and methodological aspects of women's paid work, especially in informal and part-time jobs (address for purchase: Valaoritou 12, 106 71, Athens).

Linda McDowell has a chapter entitled "Women, Gender, and the Organization of Space," in Derek Gregory and Rex Walford (eds.) Horizons in Human Geography, London: Macmillan, 1989.

Networking

A New Zealand Women and Geography Network was established at the New Zealand Geographical Society Conference in August, 1989. Topics discussed at the meeting included the need for more information about opportunities for women geographers in New Zealand, the availability of resources and bibliographic information, and the establishment of a New Zealand newsletter. Contact for the network is Wendy Larner, New Zealand Women and Geography Group, Department of Geography, University of Waikato, Private Bag, Hamilton, New Zealand.

The International Social Science Council (UNESCO-1, Rue Miollis, 75015, Paris, France) has issued an experimental newsletter that reports the projects, conferences, and publications on women emanating from international scholarly organizations in various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, population studies, and political science. It includes a description of the work of the IGU Study Group on Geography and Gender. Also reported are projects within the units of the United Nations Organization.

The European Women's Studies Network issues a newsletter published by the Council of Europe Network for Scientific and Technological Cooperation. It is available from the Netherlands Ministry of Education and Science, Postbus 25000, 2700 LZ Zoetermeer, The Netherlands. Among reports in the February 1990 issue are "Interface of Work and Family," the theme of the Network's 1989 Brussels conference, and "Women, Work, and the Family in Italy in the '80s," as well as other reports and bibliography.



Congratulations

To our Australian/New Zealand colleagues: Anna Howe has been appointed as Director of the Office of the Aged in the Australian Commonwealth Government Department of Community Services and Health. Wendy Larner, who recently completed her M.A. on Samoan women's migration and work, will be replacing Louise Johnson teaching gender in geography at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. Louise is returning to Australian Studies at Deakin University. Ruth Fincher has received a three-year grant to study class, gender, and the local state. Hilary Winchester has gained a grant for a study of one-parent families and Kathie Gibson has been funded for research on women and restructuring in the Queensland coal mining communities.

Suzanne Mackenzie (Canada) and Joanna Regulska (USA) have both been promoted to associate professors. Cathy Enderton and Susan Hardwick (USA) received small research grants from the Association of American Geographers. Kim England and Linda Peake have been appointed to positions at the University of Toronto and York University respectively which incorporate their gender interests.

Shahnaz Huq-Hussain has been awarded an IGU Travel Grant for Young Scholars from the Third World to attend the Beijing meeting. Shahnaz is currently undertaking field research for her doctoral dissertation in Bangladesh.

Conferences

The 27th Pacific Science Congress will be held in Honolulu Hawaii, May 27 - June 2, 1991. Secretary for the Congress is geographer, Nancy Davis Lewis. Among topics scheduled are women, economics, and human rights. For further information contact the 27th Pacific Science Congress Secretariat, 2424 Maile Way, Fourth Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 96822.

The 1989 -1990 program of the Catalanian Geographical Society will include two sessions on gender in May 1990. Sarah Whatmore (Geography, Bristol University, UK) will speak on "Gender and the Study of Localities" and Lourdes Beneria (Regional Planning, Cornell University, USA) on "Internationalizing the Economy and Women's Work."

Newsletter No. 6 from the German-speaking group of feminist geographers includes reports of recent conferences, upcoming retreats, and a reflection by Vreni Meier on her period as visiting professor in Bogota in Winter, 1989. At the Berlin retreat in November 1989 attention was focused on the "miserable situation" of women geography students and teachers in many German universities. The retreat also took up the themes of women and development, women and ecology, reproductive technology and population policies; and women in urban & regional planning. Among other conference themes are "Women's Work in Urban and Rural Space" (April, 1990 in Kirchbach, Austria) and economy, ecology, society, geography, planning, and feminism (August-September, 1990 in Aarau).

The Canadian Association of Geographers Meeting, May 31 - June 2, 1990 will feature a number of gender sessions. Main themes will be "feminism and methodology" and "native studies and gender relations," the latter in a session sponsored jointly by the Native Studies Group.

The Institute of Australian Geographers Gender Study Group is planning a joint session with the Industrial Restructuring Group at the IAG Meeting in September, 1990. There is also likely to be a session on social theory.

Plans for Gender Study Group Symposia are Progressing

Enclosed with this newsletter is the call for papers for the May, 1991 symposium on "Gender and Economic Restructuring" being organized for the Study Group by Trudi Buntling, Lindsay Dorney, and B. Hyma at the University of Waterloo. They hope to include presentations from all world regions and are seeking funds to subsidize participation.

Plans for the 1992 International Geographical Congress in the United States include a Symposium organized by the Gender Study Group which will be held at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey in the week preceding the main Congress. Local organizer is Joanna Regulska. Women geographers' groups in the US have already raised some funds to support travel grants for women geographers from the Third World and Eastern European countries to attend the Congress and plan to continue this effort. In addition to the gender symposium, gender themes are threaded throughout the prospectus which identifies themes for the Main Congress. If you have not received the Congress Prospectus, please request a copy from the IGC Congress Secretariat, National Geographic Society, Washington DC 20036, USA.

IGU Gender Study Group Working Paper Series

The study group has initiated a series of Working Papers to facilitate rapid dissemination of research. The first papers in the series are a selection of those originally presented at the Workshop on Gender and Development organized by the Study Group and held at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, April, 1990.

The following titles are available:

#1. "Development and Factory Women: Negative Perceptions from a Malaysian Source Area." Amriah Buang

#2. "Energy and Rural Women's Employment in Ghana." Elizabeth Ardayfflo-Schandorf

#3. "Access of Female Plantation Workers in Sri Lanka to Basic Needs Provision." L.K. Vidyamali Samarasinghe

#4. "The Impact of Labor Saving Devices on the Lives of Rural African Women: The Case of the Gambia, West Africa." Hazel Barrett and Angela Brown

#5. "The Household and Agriculture: Western Samoa" Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop

#6. "Invisible Female Agricultural Labour in India" Parvati Ragurham and Elizabeth Oughton

#7. The Reconstruction of Gender in Colonization and Land Settlement (with Columbian Case Studies) Janet Townsend

#8. "Rural Development Programmes in India from a Gender Perspective" Rameswari Varma

#9. "Women's Labour and Household Reproduction in Bolivia" Collin Sage

#10. "The Intersection of Emerging Class and Gender Relations: A Case Study from Papua New Guinea" Stephanie Fahey

Erasmus Program in Amsterdam Focuses on Gender and Geography

Between April 2 - 9, approximately 50 students and 9 geography faculty from universities in Denmark, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK, together with a group of Dutch planners met for an intensive course in geography and gender. The program built on readings that were distributed in advance. It incorporated theoretical issues, attention to labor markets, the urban environment, rural development, EEC policies and gender, and daily activities and household strategies. Additionally, time was devoted to geography and gender in secondary education and women and geography in the EEC universities. Field trips examined women's domains (women's houses, bookshops etc.) in Amsterdam and a bicycle excursion in a new town to experience the problems of development there as they are lived by local women.

