Message from the President

Greetings! It is time to flip the script on gender dynamics and ensure practical approaches to the realization of gender equality and women empowerment.

The recently concluded 59th Commission on the Status of Women in New York, which commemorated Beijing +20, marked the acme for reflection on the role of media in the post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. IAWRT, working under the umbrella of the UNESCO led Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG) International steering committee, attended the high level side event on Gender and media.

The event addressed Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action, putting a spotlight on the importance of media regulation and self regulation measures and the need for global partnerships. The 500 organizations drawn from media, civil society, academia, nongovernmental and governmental organizations are concerned about the absence of a stand-alone goal on gender and Media. “To forge a development agenda so blind to both the possibilities and dangers of the information revolution including for gender equality is ill advised” noted Colleen Lowe Morna, Chair of GAMAG.

But all is not lost! UNESCO and UN Women are collaborating on “rescuing gender from the periphery of the Sustainable Development Goals to bring it to the central” affirmed UNESCO Assistant Director for Gender in the Director General’s office, Ms Saniya Gulser Corat.

Despite continuing efforts to mainstream gender over the past two decades, disparities in gender representation in and through the media are still conspicuous. The new media environment which includes digital platforms and globalized media systems provides new opportunities for women’s freedom of expression and access to information but it also poses new and complex challenges for gender equality and social justice. Of notable concern is the glaring lack of regulatory / legal frameworks to address the challenges experienced on the online platforms especially those that touch on the rights of women.

The theme for the World Press Freedom Day “Let Journalism Thrive! Towards better reporting, Gender Equality and Media Safety in the Digital Age” calls for better quality of journalism that respects the basic tenets of journalistic practice (Balance, objectivity, fairness, honesty, factual, etc) ensures gender equality, equality and the digital safety of journalists to protect both themselves and their sources. The media will provide the required fluidity between the “public” and “private” and allow for greater ownership of the means and strategies of negotiating for safe spaces online.
To promote the empowerment of women in and through the media, we must deal with gender balance content, staffing, management and eliminate gender stereotyping which often has a polarizing effect on audiences/viewers. IAWRT’s study on gender stereotyping in public broadcasting stations in eight countries (Cambodia, Kenya, India, Poland, Moldova, South Africa, Tanzania and USA) was well received at the 59th CSW parallel event.

It analyzed gender in line with social justice thus revealing the correlation between content provision and social issues of sexual orientation, age, ethnicity and ability. There is need for deliberate influence on policies that accelerate the achievement of gender equality through media.

IAWRT’s 35th biennial conference theme Censorship: Its Contents and Discontents provides another opportunity for us to reflect on practical contribution to the realization of women empowerment and gender equality in and through the media.

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CSW59 Consultation Day March 8th

by Gerd Inger Polden, Vice President

“The ability of women to control their own fertility forms an important basis for the enjoyment of other rights... All couples and individuals have the basic human right to decide, ‘freely and informed,’ the number and spacing of their children.” (From the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies on the Advancement of Women, adopted at the Third World Conference on Women, Nairobi, 1990).

An estimated 12 hundred women, and some men, from every corner of the globe converged at the world famous Apollo Theatre in New York City for the opening of the NGO-CSW Forum on March 8th 2015 in an event entitled ‘Consultation Day’. Sheila Katzman, IAWRT Board Member and Chair, New York City for CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), was honored to be asked to read from the Nairobi Declaration (excerpt in the opening quotes above). The historic stage of the Apollo Theatre in Harlem has hosted music giants such as Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Patti Labelle, and many others in the past. Alongside Ms. Katzman, were the former Minister of Women’s Affairs of Iran and President/CEO of Women’s Learning Partnership, Mahnaz Afkhami; the Ambassador of the Mission of Denmark to the UN, Ib Pederson; and the phenomenal producer/artist and author of ‘The Big Lie’ Tanya Selvarnam. Ms. Katzman, also chapter head of the US chapter of IAWRT, was being honored for her work as Chair of Cities for CEDAW/New York, working for the passage of a Women’s Bill of Rights in New York City as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, has never been ratified by the United States Congress. They all put this year’s CSW, and Beijing + 20, into perspective by citing from declarations adopted by the Women Conferences in Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1990 and Beijing 1995.

“Aware that the problems of women, who constitute half of the world’s population, are the problems of society as a whole, and that changes in the present economic, political and social situation of women must become an integral part of efforts to transform the structures and attitudes” .... “equality, development and peace are closely interlinked with one another” ... “promote people-centered development, including sustained economic growth, through the provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training.”

The quotations sounded disturbingly prescient in a world ravaged by civil wars in many countries, and targeted attacks on girls going to school.
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka called upon men and boys to play their role and to take the responsibility to make a difference. She noted that countries have worked hard in the last few years, and there are areas where the landscape has changed. Gender based violence has been outlawed in many countries, but no country has achieved gender equality. The goal is to reach gender equality by 2030. To achieve this the progress has to be reviewed by 2020 to see if we are moving in the right direction. She pointed out the lack of legislation and change in the economic arena, which must be focused on in the coming years, as well as questions on women in poverty, which must be addressed.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka reminded us that gender stereotypes described in Mexico conference are still alive and well. Despite the many changes that society has gone through, we still have been unsuccessful in dismantling patriarchy. We have been changing patriarchy bit by bit and then we fall back, so we continue to live with the same problems we have been trying to solve. She ended by saying that if we continue at the rate as we are now, it will take eighty-one years to reach economic equality, and fifty years to reach political equality. So we have to change the pace.

Professor Ruchira Gupta of New York University heavily criticized UN Women on the controversial topic of prostitution and trafficking. She said UN Women continually categorized prostituted women as ‘sex workers.’ Her work fighting against trafficking in her native India drove her to call on the UN body to take a stand against trafficking. “The UN Women sent back a note to us saying that they would not do so, that sex work was …the choice of many women and they stood by it.”

Professor Gupta stated that she responded with a note that, yes, there could be multiple positions, but UN Women should stake neutrality as a stand and there were hundreds and thousands of women and girls for whom it was not a choice but absence of choice…the terminology ‘sex work’ actually sterilized the exploitation in their lives.

In her Keynote address Gupta talked about the struggle of the low caste women in India, who were undocumented people with no rights. They started by registering to get an ID, to become a citizen, so
that the next time they went to the police to file a case against a trafficker, the police would have to listen to them. The women started to have a voice, and discovered their collective strength. After the brutal gang rape and murder in Delhi in 2012 it was the Apne women who marched in the streets along with students who were all asking for a stricter law. In 2013 India passed a law criminalizing all form of sexual trafficking.

Professor Gupta was also the recipient of the coveted NGO CSW59 Women of Distinction Award for her unrelenting work against prostitution and for rehabilitation of women in prostitution in India. She was given the Award at the CSW-NGO reception held at the Armenian Center. Gupta showed excerpts of her EMMA – Award winning documentary – “The Selling of Innocents”. After shooting the film, she continued working with the 22 women who were featured in the film. In 2002 they founded the organization Apne Aap (on his/her own) together. The organization works against prostitution, and offers education and work for former prostitutes. http://apneaap.org/.

After a full day of inspiring presenters and panels including young activists, men and women, the audience went out to celebrate March 8th – International Women’s Day (IWD). New York City’s First Lady Chirlane McCray, delivered the opening remarks at UN Dag Hammarskjold. McCray told the massive crowd that “…this march started more than a century ago…we still have a long way to go before gender equality. But we gonna get there. I know it. Today we make history. Tomorrow, we start making a brighter future for our mothers, for our sisters…for our families…” Women, men and children of all ages and nationalities marched through the streets from the UN to Times Square calling for equality now.
IAWRT CSW Side Event

By Violet Gonda - IAWRT Board Secretary

The IAWRT side event at the CSW, about gender equality in the media, was successfully held on 18 March at the UN Church Center. The Boss Room was filled to capacity with almost 100 people including a New York congresswoman, UNESCO & CEDAW representatives present for the side event.

Our lead researchers, Diana Nastasia, Romania and Greta Gober, Poland, presented the IAWRT findings of the international gender monitoring initiative, which gives an interesting analysis not only of gender representation in the media in eight countries, but also other social justice aspects such as sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, and ability.

Carmine Amaro from South Africa and Cambodia’s Khemra Som, explained the work done by the chapters, and shared with the audience how the coding made them see the under-representation of women and other groups in society in a totally new way. It made them feel that they, as journalists, needed to do something about the facts exposed: the lack of diversity and men outnumbering women in all the roles.

Frieda Werden from Canada linked the findings to Section J in the Beijing Platform for Action. Gerd Inger Polden, Norway made the opening remarks at the meeting presenting IAWRT as a long-standing organization, and Sheila Dallas Katzman moderated the meeting in a very engaging way.

The gender monitoring research preliminary findings have been uploaded onto the IAWRT website: http://iawrt.org/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2015/03/Preliminary%20findings%20final.pdf

UNESCO official Alton Grizzle said his organization was impressed with the results of our findings and would be interested to partner with IAWRT on this research.
The UNESCO official led us all in a chant at the end of the IAWRT event – “yes we can, gender equality in the media by 2030!” IAWRT was at the CSW for 5 days (the CSW runs for almost a month). Individual participants attended various side events - some of them posted on our Facebook page.

IAWRT as a member of the Global Alliance on Gender and Media (GAMAG) international steering committee also participated in separate high-level discussions with UNESCO bosses and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka a United Nations Under-Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN Women. The meetings highlighted shortcomings of Section J in the Beijing Platform for Action. Surprisingly there is no reference to Gender and the media in those – Sustainable Development Goals. Ms. Ngcuka said the UN Women is sympathetic and has vested interest in a breakthrough. “You cannot be fully democratic when you are gender blind. Goal 5 should dismantle patriarchy.”

GAMAG Chair Colleen Lowe Moran added: “The next 7 years must be spent dismantling patriarchy, and the media must be an active participant in the process.” A short video and photographs of our event is posted on the website.

After attending the CSW events for a week, the 15 IAWRT participants were invited to a cocktail party, to celebrate the end of our event, at the home of Eleanor Alper – an amazing painter/artist who has a penthouse in DUMBO, Brooklyn with a picturesque view of Manhattan.

The highlight? 14 of us were stuck, for several minutes, in the elevator on our way to the top 32nd floor apartment! We realized later that the elevator was supposed to take about 5 or so people at a time!
Twenty years after the Beijing special session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, in which an action platform for women’s empowerment was adopted, it is imperative to assess progress in regards to equality of gender as reflected in various radio and television programming. However a comprehensive understanding of such issues is not possible without an array of investigations and analyses on different regions of the world and globally.

The 2014-2015 media monitoring research project of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) has attempted to make a contribution toward gaining a comprehensive understanding of where media currently stands with regards to equality by looking specifically at public media venues; moving beyond the already well scrutinized news programs and examining prime time entertainment, public interest, and educational programs; as well as considering gender in conjunction with other social justice aspects, such as sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, and ability.

This project has employed a content analysis, with closed as well as open questions, in the examination of public media materials from eight countries on four continents in which IAWRT has chapters, including: South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, India, Cambodia, Poland, Moldova, and the United States. Data was collected during the week of January 12 to January 18, 2015, in five hours of prime time for each medium, which based on standard media monitoring practices was considered to be the hours 6:00 to 9:00 and 15:00 to 17:00 for radio and 18:00 to 23:00 for television.

Overall, 223 public radio programs and 266 public television programs were coded. This amount of programming constituted the non-news programs broadcast on the main public radio and public television channels in the eight countries included in the research. In total, 2214 people speaking in radio programming and 2844 people speaking in television programming were analyzed. The examination of a week of prime time public radio and public television programming across eight countries. Identified what issues concerned the types of programs and who speaks in programs revealed issues and patterns related to diversity and equality or inequality in public media internationally.

Some key findings are showcased below:

Broadcaster’s own productions constituted together 218 programs or 97% of the public radio programming examined, and 135 programs or 47% of the television programming...
examined, while foreign productions represented the second largest television production category with 49 programs or 18%. While featuring the broadcaster’s own productions can be cost effective for public media venues and does create brand recognition among public media audiences, featuring overwhelmingly the broadcaster’s own productions on public radio and predominantly the broadcaster’s own productions on public television, along with foreign productions, reveals what critical scholars of the media have called an unequal distribution of narrative resources. The smaller numbers of public media products by a third party and made through domestic or through international co-production show that there is insufficient collaboration between the public broadcasters and other creators of media content, be it persons, nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, and other media venues.

Moreover, the relatively large number of purchased foreign productions on public television shows that the globalization of media products often means consumption of purchased foreign products rather than collaboration between national public media and international media to create and disseminate global content customized for local publics. Based on the results of this study, it can be stated that public media venues across the globe have work to do in regards of diversification of programming.

The results of the study also show that, 20 years after the Beijing declaration, men still have more media presence and more of a voice in media venues than women. Among characters examined in public media, 1880 or 37% were women whereas 3172 or 63% were men. The numbers and percentages hold up for both public radio and public television: 749 or 34% of radio characters were women, whereas 1464 or 66% of radio characters were men; and 1131 or 40% of television characters were women, whereas 1708 or 60% of television characters were men. Additionally, there were more men than women across public media in the countries included in the research and across roles in programs of characters examined.

Additionally, the study also found that there is little to no diversity among all characters examined and in particular among those in the categories of journalist and experts in regards to sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, and ability. The lack of diversity in regards to who speaks in the media across countries and systems can be assimilated with a lack of focus on the lives and concerns of those of more diverse backgrounds globally, and it can be concluded that public media reinforce the relative invisibility of those who already have less power in the public sphere.

Additionally, since who get to speak in the media get to influence public opinion, it can be argued that influencers primarily remain male, of middle age, and of the majority population of a country.
Findings on gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, and ability show what critical scholars of the media called a deep denial of voice, which correlated with the unequal distribution of narrative resources shows that there is still work to do for public media internationally in regards not only to diversification of programming but also to diversity of voices, including gender equality and social justice.
Reflections on Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action

by Frieda Werden former IAWRT President

Thanks for this opportunity to speak on my favorite document. It's one I'm very interested in. It is Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action, on Women and the Media. There are 12 Critical Areas of concern that got captured in that document. As far as I know, this was actually the first time that we got media into one of these documents coming out of a world conference on women. And it was a hard sell because two of the major world powers actually were opposed to it. China was opposed to it – and they even left it out of the document they distributed about the Platform for Action – because they believed that the state should control the media, and it wasn't anybody else's business to be saying what the content should be.

The United States was opposed to it – remember, this was under the Clinton era, when there was a lot of liberalization of selling off the frequencies and things like that – they were opposed to it because they basically had the attitude that the power to control the media belonged to the people who owned the media. So, later when they did their follow-up, they chose some areas of concern to focus on; at Beijing+5, I spoke to members of the delegation, and I said, “Why isn't Section J one of your priorities?” And they said, “Well, we can't look at everything!”

I noticed that Clinton didn't even ask any women from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC, a US communications regulatory agency) to be on his President's Commission, which was all federal employees, on the Status of Women. And I mean other governments had the same concern. Face it, you know governments always would like to control the media, because they don't like to be criticized. So this is a problem, then, that in the Section J, where they actually put some responsibilities on government, they are somewhat weakly framed. But I think this is very apt for this discussion, because we're talking about public media.

There are different ways that public media is funded. In some countries it is directly funded by and controlled by the government, the content – the content is responsible directly to the government. In the United States, it is funded indirectly through a funny little shadow institution called the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), that supposedly is a firewall between the government and the public media, but it isn't. Well, it is to a degree, let's be fair. And the public radio is funded by an even more arcane system – the money from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is now, since about 1985, is distributed to the public radio stations, so it goes into all the Congress members' districts, and then it comes back to the public radio network through the stations. And in a way, I think that's better, but still public radio is very skittish – they're very skittish about women in the United States, and I think they still are to this day. Originally, WINGS: Women's International News Gathering Service, was funded by a grant from the Public Radio Satellite Program Development Fund, and then the CPB took the money away from that fund and decided they would make the decisions.
Women and the Media, Section J:

They were recognizing that there's now global communication, and more women in the communication sector, but still we have this problem of negative and degrading images of women in the media. And this came out in the IAWRT report that either women are the villains, or they're the bimbos, or something of the kind – and they're certainly not the experts in any significant number. And that's really disturbing.

Then, women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge, and access. ....it's one thing to enhance the skills – and I think more women are studying media; certainly there are different organizations that are training women in media; but except for community radio, which is very open and I happen to be a very big fan of community radio, the public media and even more so the commercial media are still resistant to putting those trained women to substantial work, especially once they're not beautiful in the sense that these fellas like. [laughter] All right.

Governments and other actors are supposed to promote an "active and visible policy" of mainstreaming gender perspectives in policies and programs. So, are they doing it? I'm curious, actually, about who funded this IAWRT report? Was it FOKUS? [audience response: "yes"]. Well, very interesting, FOKUS is actually government money from Norway that goes to the women's organization and is distributed by the women's organization to projects. Now it's my understanding that with the new Norwegian government they're under a little bit of scrutiny and pressure, too – but certainly this is a good example of their use. And I'm really fascinated that the training to do the study was probably as important as the results. And that you're talking about very specific outcomes that are coming from that training, where the people who are trained – mostly women who are trained – started looking at the programs and saying, "hey, this representation of women on the air isn't the way I thought it was, or the way I imagined it was." And when we do the surveys in community radio you start to think, oh, there's lots of women on the air, and then when you do the studies about who the personalities are, you see almost none of the stations come up over about 30% women on the air; and if you count the length of the shows, the time that they're on the air, it's even much smaller. So, even in the best of circumstances, we don't see gender balance on the airwaves. And this is an obligation that is not met.

There are two strategic objectives in Section J. One is to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through media and new technologies. So, governments are supposed to support women's education and training, support research – Norway did it, support women's full and equal participation in the media, including management, programming, education, training, and research – Wow! we don't have much of that supported by the government. They say "support," they don't really say "fund." [laughter] … Encourage, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression, these bodies to increase the number of programs for and by women, to see to it that women's concerns are properly addressed. This is a huge, gaping need that is not dealt with.
Well, we did finally start to get some coverage of violence against women, but it's still so stereotyped. It took about 20 years of activism before we got to the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in 1994. And some women, mostly in the US, raised over a million dollars to have a women's press room, and luckily the conference was really boring up until the end [laughter] and so the women's press room got a lot of press, and there was a huge forum about violence against women all over the world with testimonies from women who had been brutalized all over the world. It was so disgusting to watch! Everybody who watched it had secondary trauma – I know I did – we couldn't sleep, we were crying. It's horrible to realize what women go through around the world. And we did get some press for it, but still the women in terms of actors against the violence, women's ideas on how to combat the violence, is not getting the coverage. And this is why I say we still have to have our own media; we still have to have women's independent media, and we have to support that ourselves, because the governments are not going to do it.

OK, just to flip through this document, Section J, just a little bit more: “recognize women's media networks”. And where do we see that? This is all government responsibilities. “Encourage and provide incentives for creative use of programs in the national media” – that's the national media. “Guarantee the freedom of media.” So, what is the freedom of media? Is it the freedom of the people that own media? Is it the freedom of the executives who are appointed by the government to control the media, like in Canada? Anyway, these are issues.

National and international media systems are supposed to – they promised; well, they didn't promise, they were there, but the governments made the promises – “develop, consistent with freedom of expression, regulatory mechanisms, including voluntary ones, that promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women by the media and international communications systems, and that promote increased participation by women and men in production and decision-making.”

Now, I have to tell you a sad story about Canada: before 1995, Canada had a really excellent broadcasting industry code on gender portrayal. And after 1995, fairly recently, they set that code aside and they came up with a really vague and smarmy sort of equitable portrayal of minorities, which included women under minorities… so you have to watch out for this backsliding. But the old code is still online, and I think we're going to have to do a campaign to get it reinstated, alongside the equitable portrayal code.

Governments are supposed to facilitate the compilation of a directory of women media experts. Imagine, all those government spokespeople included in the charts of the IAWRT report – the plurality of the speakers were from government and were almost all men. And I notice in the United States that women in politics don't get the airtime that the men get; considering what their status is, they are not getting the same amount of airtime. This may be unconscious, but still deliberate sidelining of these women and their opinions.

Non-governmental organizations are supposed to encourage the establishment of media watch groups – we did it. They're supposed to train women to make greater use of information technology for communication in the media, including at the international level – we are doing it! We're supposed to create networks among and develop information programs for nongovernmental organizations, women's organizations, and professional media organizations to recognize the specific needs of women in the
media – so this is something else that we can do; and we’re supposed to encourage the media industry and everybody to develop appropriate language – well, we did make some inroads, I think, on language.

And also include things like storytelling – ethnic forms of media like storytelling, drama, poetry, and song, reflecting cultures, and use these forms of communication to disseminate information on development and social issues – a lot of that’s been done by the women’s movement, actually, we’ve got street theatre things, we’ve got radio theatre projects – Sheila Katzman Dallas has been very good in that.

So, anyway, you can read the rest of it – Section J, Beijing Platform for Action – it's online. And I just want to say that, you know, we're doing our part and we just have to push these guys more, and pushing from the bottom up seems to be our way in.

Cities for CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action

by Sheila Katzman Dallas
IAWRT-USA Chapter Head and IAWRT Board Member

What is the difference between the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and CEDAW?

The Platform for Action includes a number of objectives that are directly parallel to the rights specified in the CEDAW Convention and other human rights instruments. Like the 1979 CEDAW Convention, BPfA seeks to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex and provides for equity and equality between the sexes. While the activities in the BPfA may be the product of a particular political moment, the legal obligation under the CEDAW Convention, which is effectively an international bill of rights, continues indefinitely, regardless of changes in ruling party or even forms of government. Treaty ratification is a government undertaking for the long term, with obligations to continuously self-monitor, make changes in legislation and policy, and report periodically to a body that will examine compliance with the legally binding obligations under the Convention.

Cities for CEDAW is a declaration of the local need for an explicit Bill of Rights for Women based on International norms as outlined in CEDAW. For a country, which has not ratified the convention, a state or city municipality can adopt local ordinance based on the CEDAW framework. In the United States, where enactment is complicated by federalism, cities, beginning with San Francisco, have created movements to pass the laws locally.

In terms of scope, the Platform for Action moves beyond the CEDAW treaty in some areas. At the same time, not all issues are addressed from a rights perspective. But the Platform and the Convention are complementary. If invoked together, the two instruments along with other international agreements and treaties constitute a global basis for advocating gender equality.
Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls in the Digital and Technological age

By Carmine Amaro – South Africa Chapter

In a world where technology has become such an integrated part of society, it can become either a weapon or a saving grace to women who find themselves in a vulnerable position. This CSW59 conference in New York highlighted the plight of so many abused women who were victimized by their intimate partners via technology.

For these women, even an everyday social activity like login onto their FaceBook account can be a nightmare. It is reported that in Australia 97% of abused women reported being a victim of revenge pornography. Many women are dependent on males to help them set up FaceBook accounts and navigate their everyday interactions with their smartphones, giving their partners access to bank accounts, social contacts as well as personal details. Cindy Southworth, Executive Vice President for the National Network to End Domestic Violence, said that it is imperative that every woman becomes technology savvy and to be in control of all her interactions with technology and social media.

She has created a blog called techsafety.org, which educates women on being safe on the Internet. She said that a major problem of educating women is that, inadvertently, their abusers are also being educated. Women should begin at an early age to become aquatinted with as many forms of technology.

Julie Oberin of Women's Services Network has worked to create a refuge for abused women by linking them to a company called Telstra Safe Connections. This company supplies abused women with cellphones that have not been compromised, so their partners cannot gain access to them. The problem of abusive relationships is huge in Australia, Obering said, and many different solutions are being developed to reach out to these women. Examples of apps that have been developed to this end are: Aurora-help is at hand, Imatter app and Daisy App. Every country can learn from the efforts made in Australia to prevent the scourge of online abuse. This conference was definitely a high point for me.
Why Counting Women in the Media is Still Important: 
Highlights from CSW59

by Ida Kvittingen – Norwegian Chapter

Global surveys show that three of out four people involved with media are men. Four meetings at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York discussed what to do about this. A common theme across the meetings was to make this imbalance visible. To do this, we need to continue counting women's presence in the media. As Maria Edström, researcher at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden said: "What we measure is what we treasure". She participated in the side event 'Women and Media Discourse', alongside female media professionals. Edström reminded us that three out of four people in media are men, according to the Global Media Monitoring Project. She stated that this is a problem for both freedom of expression and for the media, missing great stories from women. Furthermore, it is not profitable business to target only half of the population. MTV and radio host Nessa Diab shared her experiences as a young media professional. She stressed the importance of female mentors with senior positions. Diab did not have a lot of them when she entered the media, but she had one that made a difference.

Racheal Nakitare, IAWRT President on right

Even though the gender imbalance is a well-known problem, awareness is key. In another meeting, Geena Davis, actor and chair of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, revealed that screenwriters are shocked to learn about the lack of women in their films. Davis informs them that in crowd scenes in films less than every five characters are women. Maybe Hollywood writers think women don't gather? Davies speculates rhetorically. "When they hear that, they want to change. It is just something people have not noticed", she said.

Nevertheless, awareness is not enough. UN Women and UNESCO hosted the side event 'Women and the Media: Advancing Critical Area of Concern J of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action'. They called for government action in order to achieve the goals set in Beijing 20 years ago. Legislation has changed in many countries, but the implementation has been poor, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka of UN Women said. UNESCO presented an ongoing global survey showing that governments still have a long way to go. Only one out of four of the 27 countries in the survey state that media is regulated by governmental gender policies regarding decision-making level of organizations. Most governments do not have a budget to promote gender equality in media.
Media leaders may also play an important role. Former editor-in-chief Matthew Winkler was asked how Bloomberg News could change the picture when it comes to staffing. He said that his company has flexible work hours that may benefit women, and that they try to recruit more women in top positions. However, he admitted that reaching equality is an ongoing task that requires many strategies. Moreover, self-regulation in the media is not always efficient; Icelandic minister Eygló Harðardóttir underlined the need for more government regulation.

Legislation is a pressing problem when it comes to abating violence against women on the internet. This was made clear in the parallel event, ‘Ending violence against women online’, hosted by The Association for Progressive Communications (APC). Social media and sharing of photos and other private content have made women a target online. Different laws exist in different countries, and many countries still have no specific laws against online violence. The panel included IAWRT president Racheal Nakitare. Racheal talked about a project in Kenya, where IAWRT has trained women on how to be safer online and sensitized the police in order for them to take these cases seriously.

**IAWRT Biennial – New Delhi Beckons!**

_by Reena Mohan_

*Managing Trustee, IAWRT India*

IAWRT will hold its 2015 Biennial Conference in New Delhi, India from 15 to 18 September 2015. The theme of the conference is Censorship: Its Contents and Discontents. In an increasingly complex and multi-layered media world, the terms of how we understand and encounter censorship have completely changed. The media is censored by governments through international and national surveillance; it is censored by corporates through media ownership and control of content, as well as employment practices. It is also censored through society via moral policing, both sexist and fundamentalist, and misogynist internet trolling.

How does this play out with respect to gender? How do all of these intensely interwoven matrices constrain women’s political freedoms and expression? How do they keep women’s perspectives out of the media and set the agenda on women’s issues in a patriarchal mode? More importantly - what challenges do women journalists face while reporting on the frontline and in conflict regions?

How do women rise to these challenges? Through individual initiatives, through organizing, through inventive use of new media, through creating their own networks? What can women of different generations learn from each other’s strategies, both as feminists and as media practitioners of old and new media, citizens of the global North and South?

The Conference will reflect on these provocative questions over four days in pursuance of IAWRT’s ongoing work to strengthen women’s voices in the media and to make the media a more equitable space. The keynote address will be given by stalwarts from South Asia, Asma Jehangir and Vrinda Grover, drawing upon their long engagement with democracy and human rights, with particular emphasis on gender. While South Asia will be an area of focus, the Conference will look beyond and draw linkages between women’s experiences of well-known international media including those from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Maghreb, Thailand, Burma, Egypt, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Cambodia, the USA and the UK. Speakers will also include IAWRT members with their rich experience. Make sure you get that ticket to New Delhi in September!
IAWRT Reproductive Health Documentary

The 2014/2015 IAWRT Documentary series on Women’s Reproductive Health is now in postproduction. The four short video profiles, made by women directors from Kenya, South Africa, Poland and India to represent the reach and complexity of issues of women’s reproductive health will be unveiled at the IAWRT Biennial Conference in India. Our mandate for this project is to engage our members in innovative ways to report and to connect reproductive health issues to race, class and gender and other related issues. We also believe that this series of portraits of women making a difference will be of use to educators, analysts and media outlets. IAWRT will unveil the film at the 2015 Biennial. The previous series was on Climate change.

Profile of Producers:
Bina Paul: Executive Producer, India.

Anna Pawlowska: is an author, radio and television director with over 25 years of experience in film production. The Polish journalist will tell a story of a mother of three who sued the state after she was denied an abortion that could have saved her eyesight. She won the case. Pawlowska hosted Poland’s first television breakfast show ‘Coffee or Tea’, which was televised for 21 years. She holds a Masters degree in Psychology and is currently a teacher at the Department of Journalism, University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw. Her previous work includes hosting psychological programs and script writing.

Priya Goswami is an internationally acclaimed documentary director from India whose work has been screened in several countries. Priya’s documentary will focus on a journalist from Dawoodi Bohra ethnic group who speaks out against the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Her documentary, ‘A Pinch of Skin’, is the recipient of the prestigious 60th National Film Award of India; and has been screened at international festivals. She has worked with organizations like the National Institute of Design (NID), United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (UN-FAO) in Cambodia and Zee Network (Television News Network). She is currently pursuing independent projects on fiction and non-fiction work.

Sarah Chitombo is a writer and a filmmaker from South Africa. She will direct a documentary of a young woman who is determined to give youngsters access to knowledge about contraceptives. Her first short documentary film, ‘Bailing out the Ballot’, was released in 2009 and was screened to audiences in Cape Town and Brighton. She has worked as a reporter and a director for e-TV for three years and for several years as a Communications Coordinator for Social Development at Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa and Namibia. Currently, she is working on a film about the influences, demise and resurgence of hip-hop culture in Pretoria. Sara holds a Masters degree in Digital Documentary Film and a bachelor’s degree in Media and Performing Arts from Sussex University.

Otieno Careen Atieno is an award winning multi-media producer and correspondent for local and international media. She will direct a documentary on traditional birth attendants’ verses the government’s directive to phase them out; and the risks involved when births are complicated in Kenya. Atieno completed a Masters Degree in International journalism at Cardiff University, UK last year and has a Diploma in Mass Communication with a major in Television and Radio production.
OBITUARY

Ratnabali Mitra – Soul so simple
We often keep on postponing meetings for tomorrow. Little realizing that ‘tomorrow never comes’ or at times it is too late. That’s what happened between Ratnabali Mitra and me. So many times she invited me to her place but I always kept postponing it for some other day.
We had a very peculiar bond. Both being passionate about radio, our conversation would inevitably reminisce about ‘those were the days, my friend…’ and about various great personalities of radio. After initial talks about radio and our latest work projects, the conversation would drift to the trivialities and significant–insignificant issues of personal life. And though we did not meet regularly, the truth is that there are some people who always leave an impact; even simple words, like ‘You can count on me,’ or gentle touch on the shoulder means a lot. It makes us feel better, spirited. And that’s what Ratnabali was to me.
I will always remember our short but sweet meetings; her warm smile and her considerate nature. Souls like her are so difficult to find now. Will miss you, Ratnabali!

May your next journey be great and wonderful. RIP.

By- Geeta Sahai

When Death was Sweet and Kind to Take My dearest friend Diane Bailey, out of her pain. – Rest Sweet One, shh, shh, Rest in Perfect Peace Shhhhhhhh. Rest.

I am writing a tribute to IAWRT USA longtime member, Diane Bailey. Actually, I know she didn't want to make this transition yet. She was not ready - oh death you are so cruel. Here is my personal experience with ‘Lady Di’ or ‘Di,’ the names I call her. Every time for the past three weeks that I have tried to write her tribute, gibberish comes into play. It just wouldn’t happen. I was forced to stop, like I shouldn’t write about her in that way. The girl is not dead man. She has only just gone home. She does not want me to write a tribute to her as if she is dead because she is not. I know that our matriarch, Leila Doss is having similar challenge. That’s it.

What you need to know is that Diane was one of the major founders of the IAWRT USA Chapter. G-d knows she worked really hard to get the chapter its legal status and managed to get it incorporated. Three weeks before her transition from excruciating pain, together, with the help of my husband, we submitted the application for the tax exemption status to the Internal Revenue Service. She shared that she had not even paid credit card bills. And being with her in her home that day, I realized that even sitting at the computer was a major task. She said to me once when I advised that another board member could help with the tax exemption, “Patricka (the name she calls me), I want to finish what I started just give me some time.” Looking back now, I realized that she had no intent on dying. Because she was willing and being a hard worker – I didn’t push it. Diane was always willing to help where she could. And she would say no when she couldn’t. She was the tireless treasurer of the IAWRT USA Board.
She would help me with the final editing of IAWRT Newsletters or UN reports or CEDAW stuff. All I have to do is ask. She has always given compliments and encouragement and acknowledgement of what people do. She acts as if she was a fan of mine always showering me with compliments. This was something I told her ones because she always said such nice things to me. Always concerned about the welfare of others. Our conversations end with “take care of yourself Patricka.”

Character wise, Diane was a very honest person, knows when someone is dodgy and would say, “I don’t know why, I just feel uncomfortable with that person.” She was always right. She likes clarity and transparency. Diane loved tennis. Wouldn’t miss a game for the world. You couldn’t ask her to lunch or the theatre when a match was on. Serena Williams was her favorite. She meditated first thing in the morning and then went for a run afterwards. She also ran half Marathons. The girl was fit. Anybody else with terminal cancer would have to be in bed. No, not Lady Di.

In 2013, I submitted her name to the IAWRT board to be considered as one of the Jury members for the Radio segment of our Biennial Award for Excellence in Radio and TV. At first, she said, “Patricka, I really don't want to travel.” For a person who has traveled the world, this was a marker. She had shared that a fear of travel was discovered at Hippocrates Health Institute in Florida, a place where she spent a week or two each year for preventative health reasons. Despite that fear she did accept the offer from IAWRT to travel to Morocco. We had a wonderful time together. She met and made friends with quite a few IAWRT members and often spoke of them fondly after that conference. We shared a room on our stay over. We had such a good time that she secretly bought me a precious and costly gift. She handed it to me at the hotel and said “Patricka, thank you for encouraging me to come...” and gave me this colorful plate set made from the local clay from the Berber region. I was so moved. She was a major help in writing the Moroccan conference report.

So guess what, in 2014, I said to her, Di, please accompany me to Turkey for the IAWRT conference. Again, she said, “not sure Patricka, I have to think about it, but I like traveling with you.” When she said yes, I was elated. So again we travelled to Turkey together. Violet, Diane and I went to the Historical world class Harem and had a ball. It was late night in pouring rain, starving, because while we were getting naked together with a bunch of other naked ladies, getting our bodies scrubbed as our mothers did when we were little kids and getting different massages, we had no idea how late it was until our bellies began to sing in harmony like a Broadway chorus. In the pouring rain the three of us found a restaurant and had a small meal, after which we taxiied back to our hotel.

We went on a Bosporus Cruise to the Asian side of Turkey and shopped for jewels from the local artisans. We laughed a lot, had so much fun and photographs. Here’s a shot.
friend to the subway – a half-mile each way, and the first thing she said was, “Patricka, I can’t pee.” I asked what? And she said she could not pass her urine. I told her call the doctor immediately and that she should call her sister. It was Mother’s day. She said she would and gave me the telephone contact for one of her sisters. That was when her life’s journey sped up, like a racing car on track to the finish line. The competition was between her and her maker who she stood up to. You cannot take me yet. I am not ready. Pushing back. You did.

We love you girl…. IAWRT all over the world poured out tribute to you. And I am not going to let you get off lightly, you left me a lot of work to do with the bank. Which meant that I have to deal with your passing and accept it. "Patricka, isn't it strange that Catherine and I both have the same birthday and we both have cancer", you told me in Turkey …. Well…So have fun with your Daddy. Catherine (the late Catherine D. White of IAWRT) must be shocked to see you so soon.

After our loss, I had the unpleasant task of adjusting the IAWRT-USA bank information. She was not ready. Maybe completing these tasks would represent a completion she was not yet ready to face. That must be why, despite being asked, she did not add the names to the account. I then had to make these changes afterwards. I was not prepared to be told by the bank that I needed the death certificate. I was also not ready. I could not handle confronting this reality. I could not help it. I surprised myself when I broke down crying in the bank manager’s office. I could not face having to handle this statement of finality. Love you girl…. and I know you are reading what friends are saying on the IAWRT website and your own website dedicated to you.

By- Sheila Katzman
New Members Aug 2014 - Jun 2015

Congratulations to the following members who joined a warm family of women media professionals recently

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<th>NAME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Birgitte Jallov</td>
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<td>Prutha Soman</td>
<td>India</td>
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<td>Gauri Chakraborty</td>
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<td>Teena Gill</td>
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