IN MEMORY OF JESSIE BERNARD

We dedicate this report to our founding Board member and inspiration, Jessie Bernard, who served on the Center’s Board of Directors for more than 20 years. It was Jessie who encouraged Jane and Margaret to create the Center and it was Jessie who never faltered in her commitment to our cutting edge work and our feminist ideals.

Jessie was the most famous feminist sociologist in the world; her groundbreaking works — *The Sex Game, The Female World, The Future of Marriage, The Future of Motherhood,* and *Women and the Public Interest,* for example — shaped the thinking of a generation. And Jessie also understood what sisterhood is all about — and practiced it throughout her life.

The adulation she received never changed her. On her 85th birthday, she declined to allow the Center to honor her for her enormous contributions to feminist scholarship. But she loved our idea to honor and recognize other women leaders, activists and scholars whose lives and work demonstrate a commitment to what she called “feminist enlightenment.”

And so, in 1989, the Jessie Bernard Wise Women Awards program was born. We will continue this tradition in her memory — to honor Jessie by honoring her spiritual descendants in feminist thought and action.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This 25th anniversary report owes its existence to the vision and commitment of the Center's Board and staff, our founders Margaret Gates and Jane Roberts Chapman, and our Communications Director, Karen Schneider. We are especially grateful to Kathleen Carlson, President of The Equitable Foundation, for her longstanding commitment to the Center's work and for the Foundation's generous grant, which made this report possible.
PREFACE

The Center for Women Policy Studies, the nation’s first feminist public policy research center, was born a quarter century ago during the early years of the current struggle for women’s rights and equality. Over the last 25 years, the Center has remained true to its original mission — to shape public policy to improve women’s lives — while it also has evolved with the times. The Center has compiled a record of remarkable achievement during its journey down the road to lasting equality for all women.

With its pioneering research, solid analyses and astute advocacy, the Center has played a central role in the public policy arena on a range of issues that have advanced women’s rights, justice and equality. Equal credit opportunity. Violence against women. Women and AIDS. Educational equity. Work/family and workplace diversity. Women’s health. And much more.

The Center has been on the front lines of many critical policy debates about women’s rights, roles, and responsibilities. It has tenaciously pushed the envelope to create a climate for positive change. And it has never failed to take on the tough fights.

The Center is unique in several ways. It consistently brings the diverse voices and needs of women to the attention of policy makers. It makes central to its work an examination of how both gender and race bias affect women’s status. And it is on the cutting edge of many issues — such as examining work and family issues from the perspectives of women of color, bringing the voices of women with HIV/AIDS to the attention of policy makers, and exploring the link between girls’ experiences as victims and, increasingly, as perpetrators of violence.

The Center has had many triumphs over the years — new laws, new policies, new ways of doing things. Its quarter century of accomplishments parallel those of other national women’s organizations and of the women’s movement as a whole. The Center considers its partnership with sister organizations to be critical to its ability to advance women’s equality.

The Center’s long history and record of achievements are too numerous to chronicle in detail on these pages. Instead, we have chosen to present an oral history of the Center as told by co-founder Margaret Gates and by Leslie R. Wolfe, the Center’s President for the last decade.
Along with observations from more than 50 colleagues, Board members, elected officials, funders and staff members, these pages contain a selective account of the Center’s past and present, as told by the two people who — along with co-founder Jane Roberts Chapman — have had the greatest impact on the Center and its work.

Their history is a window to the extraordinary developments in the last quarter century for women and girls in the United States. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our friends and colleagues for supporting us over the years. We look forward to our next quarter century of feminist policy making and advocacy.

Felicia B. Lynch
Chair
Board of Directors
The year was 1971, a time of tremendous growth and excitement within the burgeoning women's movement. Margaret Gates, who one year later would become the co-founder and co-director, with Jane Roberts Chapman, of the Center for Women Policy Studies, had just graduated from law school — but practicing law in a courtroom was not on her agenda.

This is Margaret's story of the birth and extraordinary early years of the nation's first feminist policy research center.

"When the Center started, one of their real contributions was being a pioneer, setting out a new field, developing an agenda, and promoting ideas. The Center has a sterling record in this way."
— Susan Berresford, President, The Ford Foundation

I went to law school in 1968 to learn about justice — social justice. I admired the role that lawyers had played in the civil rights movement and I envisioned the possibility that, as a lawyer, I could help improve the status of women. People would say, “that’s great, that’s interesting, but what are you going to do for a living?” Amazingly, against everyone’s predictions, I soon found several very satisfying assignments as a consultant on women’s rights.

My luck continued when I attended a meeting at the National Organization for Women (NOW). I volunteered to work on a project with several other women, including Jane Roberts Chapman. Jane was a young mother of two who had worked at the Labor Department and whose educational background was in economics. Within a few months, we decided to join forces on some issues of mutual concern, and we formed a little organization called the Center for Women Policy Studies.

Jane and I had a lot in common, including the fact that we both were raising young children. A notable thing about the Center from the beginning was the way

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**1972**

- Incorporated the Center for Women Policy Studies on March 1 in Washington, D.C.
- Organized coalition of organizations to press AFL-CIO to address women's issues

**1973**

- Participated as expert in EEOC sex discrimination suit against AT&T
- Filed suit against U.S. Department of Defense to open DACOWITS Committee meetings to the public
- Launched project on sex discrimination by banks in the granting of credit
- Testified before Joint Economic Committee of Congress on economic discrimination against women
- Launched project to design model programs to improve treatment of women who had been raped
“Marge Gates was one of the first people that I spoke to when I started the women’s rights project of the Center for Law and Social Policy. I looked to her and Jane for a sense of what the important issues were and to see ways of attacking those issues. It’s been a very useful partnership over the years.”
— Marcia Greenberger, Co-president, National Women’s Law Center

in which we helped and supported one another as we struggled to combine work and family.

Jane and I had been working on projects involving women in nontraditional occupations — blue collar jobs, policing and the military. We were anxious to tackle some issues that would really change the daily lives of large numbers of women. But we had no money, no fundraising skills and pitifully little understanding of how to bring about social change.

While I was in law school, I had met Ralph Nader who, to the surprise of many, had a long list of what he considered to be injustices to women that could be remedied by changes in law or through institutional change. One involved the exclusion of women at U.S. military academies; another had to do with women in the labor movement. Ralph made the first grant to the Center, gave us office space in the National Press Building, and helped us strategize.

We decided to work on legal and economic issues and to do that in the public policy making arena. We did not want to argue cases in court or organize lots of people or become a membership organization. NOW and other women’s organizations that were forming were working quite capably in those arenas. We were trying to do something that would precisely aim at particularly troubling public policy issues.

One issue that was getting a lot of attention in the women’s movement and in the press was the charge that banks did not consider women to be good credit risks. Women had brought lawsuits against New York banks that denied women mortgages and other loans. Some members of Congress were drafting legislation to prohibit these practices, and we joined forces with them.

1974

- Joined sit-in to end sex segregation of the all-male Brown Palace Club in Denver
- Testified before U.S. House Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs advocating legislation to ban credit discrimination against women

1975

- Published manual of programs for hospitals, criminal justice agencies, and community groups to respond to rape
- Testified before Senate Banking Committee on amendments to the 1974 Equal Credit Opportunity Act
- Advised Federal Reserve Board on development of regulations for Equal Credit Opportunity Act in consultation with women’s and consumer groups
- Prepared papers on the legal and economic status of homemakers in each state, sponsored by National Commission on the Observance of International Women’s Year
- Worked with Women’s Equity Action League (WEAL) to examine sex discrimination in the Social Security system
We asked the Ford Foundation for $40,000 to do some research on the lending practices of banks. Our proposal landed on the desk of a young woman named Susan Berresford, who became our first program officer — and we, one of her first women's rights grantees.

The work that we did on sex discrimination in obtaining credit turned out to be easier than we anticipated. Our strategy was to work with the banking community to uncover the discriminatory lending practices and to determine whether there was any research or experience to support them.

When it turned out that there was no basis in fact for treating women differently than men in granting credit — and in light of the litigation women were bringing — the American Bankers Association gave in and decided to work with us to correct the situation. That proved to be an amazing victory.

We then worked with Members of Congress to help draft the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which made it illegal to deny credit on the basis of sex. The success of this project was due partially to our being in the right place at the right time with some resources, but also to the fact that we were able to go beyond the anecdotal to the analytical. This ability became the hallmark of the Center.

We had testified at the congressional hearings on credit discrimination and, after the legislation passed, we were asked to become consultants to the Federal Reserve Board on writing the regulations to enforce the new legislation. It was just amazing how the barricades fell once we started. It was great, and the Ford Foundation was pleased.

“The Center's impact on me was profound. It was overwhelming, all consuming. I brought up my children right there. It was wonderful. How many people have the chance to create something and feel that it did make a difference? It doesn’t happen all that often.”

—Jane Roberts Chapman, Center Co-founder

1976

- Published first issues of RESPONSE to Intra-Family Violence and Sexual Assault
- Testified before Senate Select Committee on Small Business on women and the Small Business Administration
- Economic Independence for Women published by Sage Publications
- Launched six-year project to improve treatment of battered women by the criminal justice system
- Established National Resource Center on Family Violence
- Testified at U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearings on "Last Hired, First Fired: Layoffs and Civil Rights"

1977

- Joined national coalition to extend deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment
- Women Into Wives published by Sage Publications
- Launched project on sexual harassment
- Participated in U.N. International Women's Year activities
From the beginning of our collaboration, Jane and I had been involved in the growing movement to change the way that women who were raped were treated in the criminal justice system. Along with other feminists, we perceived the double traumatization that women faced after a rape, when all kinds of debasing and dehumanizing things were done to women by those who should have been helping them. We believed that the callous treatment resulted in large part from the law governing these cases, which in turn was based on deeply cynical views about women and their sexual behavior.

Our initial attempts to raise money to address this problem from the usual group of liberal foundations failed miserably. We were just too far out on the cutting edge. But help came from an unexpected source, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the U.S. Department of Justice, which gave us $250,000 — an enormous sum of money at the time.

In 1974, we began a large, multiyear effort to produce a “prescriptive package” that would provide information and protocols for hospitals, police departments, and prosecutors’ offices on how to improve their treatment of women who had been sexually assaulted. In the process, we identified the best practices of these institutions and also of a growing number of rape crisis centers.

This enabled us to become a clearinghouse for information, a convener of experts and researchers, and publishers of a newsletter called *Response to Intrarfamily Violence and Sexual Assault*, which went to

1978

- Began program to study women offenders’ access to rehabilitative programs and services
- *The Victimization of Women* published by Sage Publications

1979

- Launched program to improve services for battered women
- Conducted program to study sex discrimination against women working in corrections
- Testified before National Institute of Corrections regarding program priorities for women
- Testified before House Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and Administration of Justice on problems facing women offenders
"One of the Center's hallmarks is that it has consistently held to the vision of Marge Gates and Jane Chapman that solid research should be at the basis of public policy change that would result in social change. The fact that for 25 years the Center has always been a research based public policy advocacy organization is remarkable." — Steve Moskey, founding Chair of the Center's Corporate Advisory Committee and former Center Board member

One of the Center's thousands of agencies and individuals in the health and criminal justice fields.

The project was about developing a capacity to assist people in setting up better systems for their agencies. The underlying principle was social justice and, in particular, institutional change; we believed that institutions would see the light, give up their old sexist ways and operate in a better manner.

I learned years later that the document that we delivered to the Justice Department became the most frequently ordered "prescriptive package" produced in the history of the LEAA. It was a monumental effort to which many practitioners contributed, and it established the Center as an organization that could bring together people of different backgrounds, even from adversarial positions, and help them work for positive change.

While working on the sexual assault project, we became part of a network of feminist lawyers working to change the criminal law. We also became aware of problems of child sexual assault and abuse and of domestic violence. Working again with the Justice Department and later with the (former) Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), we used our existing networks and newsletters to organize to change laws and protect women and children. I feel sure that our efforts in those years accelerated what was basically a grassroots effort by stepping up information and technology transfer.

**1980**

- Participated in International Symposium on Women and the World of Work in Lisbon, Portugal
- *Economic Realities and the Female Offender* published by Lexington Books

**1981**

- Published *Prosecution of Spouse Abuse; Court Mandated Counseling for Men Who Batter; Legal Help for Battered Women; Cracking the Corporations: Finding Corporate Funding for Family Violence Programs; and Wife Abuse in the Armed Forces*
- Conducted national symposium on sexual harassment and published *Harassment and Discrimination of Women in Employment*
- Sponsored National Conference on Family Violence in the Military
- Published *Women and Corrections*
- Published *Poverty Viewed As A Woman's Problem: The U.S. Case*
These national projects absorbed a large part of our energy but we still continued to work with other women's organizations on a range of issues, mainly economic ones that required legislative action. Those were the years in which a powerful new women’s movement was demanding rights for women, and although the Equal Rights Amendment for which we worked long and hard never came to be, most of the blatantly discriminatory laws were changed. It was an exhilarating time. Jane and I feel privileged to have played a part in it, and thankful that others have continued the Center’s work.

"The Center is one of the few organizations that has got its ear out to what is happening and what are the emergent issues for the future. It gets issues on the agenda."
— Beryl Radin, Professor of Public Administration and Policy, SUNY Albany

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1982

- Published *Programs for Midlife and Older Women: State of the Art*
- Sponsored Symposium on Women Policy Issues in honor of the Center’s 10th anniversary

1983 - 1984

- Completed "Sexual Assault Legislation: An Assessment from the Field" project
- Expanded *RESPONSE* to a quarterly journal
- Published *Model State Act: Remedies for Domestic Abuse*
Margaret Gates left the Center in 1978 to join the Carter Administration, and Jane Roberts Chapman became the Center's sole Executive Director. The Center worked on a broad range of issues during this period. It published major reports on family violence, conducted a national symposium on sexual harassment, published a report on programs for older women, coordinated a coalition of organizations working on Social Security reform, testified before Congress on the problems facing women offenders, and much more.

Then, as the policies and programs of the Reagan Administration took hold in the early 1980s, the Center's fortunes fell victim to the sustained right wing attack, the backlash against feminism, and the virtual shutting off of federal funds from the Justice Department for work on violence against women. During this difficult period, Carol Tucker Foreman served as Executive Director from the spring of 1983 to the fall of 1984.

After Carol’s tenure, Jane completed projects and continued to publish RESPONSE to the Victimization of Women and Children, which she had developed from a newsletter to a highly-regarded quarterly journal on violence against women; at the same time, she was gradually scaling back operations. Then, in the spring of 1987, Jane began to explore the possibility of hiring an old friend of the Center’s, Leslie R. Wolfe, as Executive Director.

“When you are doing pioneering work, it is very hard. There are critics and the ideas seem marginal. What always impressed me about Marge and Jane was that they retained a sense of humor. Their ability to keep their eye on the horizon and have a good sense of humor was a wonderful part of the partnership.”
— Susan Berresford, President, The Ford Foundation

1985

- Coordinated Technical Committee on Earnings Sharing, a coalition working on Social Security reform
- Participated in U.N. Conference on Crime, Crime Victims and Rehabilitation of Offenders in Milan, Italy

1986

- Produced a series of Resource Collections on violence against women
THE SECOND GENERATION

In the fall of 1987, Dr. Leslie R. Wolfe became the Center’s new executive director and launched its second generation of feminist policy research and advocacy. Leslie brought a new vitality to the nation’s oldest feminist policy research center and an expanded focus on examining the combined impact of race and sex bias on women and girls. The following is Leslie’s account of highlights of the Center’s second generation of feminist policy research and advocacy, from 1987 to 1997, and of several Center programs; although it is not a comprehensive history of the Center’s accomplishments during the second generation, it conveys some of the Center’s mission and vision for today and tomorrow.

“The Center is a groundbreaker. Leslie and the Center pioneered the idea and proved the workability of simultaneously forwarding the interests of women and people of color — to our mutual and double benefit.”

— Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi, Professor, Graduate School, City University of New York

In January 1973, I was “between engagements,” having left my job as research director at the National Welfare Rights Organization. I had heard about the Center when Jane and Margaret started it the year before, so I went to visit them to see if I could volunteer.

I met with Jane and she said that as feminists they wanted to avoid exploiting women through free labor, but I begged and we agreed that volunteering for social change and feminism was a different matter. So we made an agreement that I would do library research for her — she was doing a paper on women’s work in several countries, including the United States — and the Center would establish a salary for me that would be my salary if I were working full time. And that was an enormous benefit because I did that and other volunteer and paid advocacy work — with the Women’s Lobby, the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women, and others — until my new contacts led me to my dream job.

1987

• Launched National Resource Center on Women and AIDS
• Launched project on occupational segregation and its roots in education
"When the Center was in its very embryonic stages, all of us in the women’s community had the illusion that we could create a Brookings for women’s issues, and that the Center could become a major think tank with millions and millions of dollars. And that wasn’t to be. The Center’s research mission was limited by our failure — not its failure — our failure to garner the kind of resources necessary for research on women led by women."

— Judith Lichtman, President, Women’s Legal Defense Fund

I went to work in the spring of 1973 at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as Deputy Director of the newly formed Women’s Rights Program. I got the job in part because I had experience in women’s issues, which did not come from having a Ph.D. in English, you can be sure, but from the opportunity Jane and the Center had given me.

Jane and Margaret and I remained friends and colleagues and had lunch together from time to time. When my sister Ellen, who was a social worker, was fired from her job at a local hospital after having experienced sexual harassment — though nobody called it that in those days — I suggested that she call Margaret. She did, and went to work as a consultant for the Center on issues of rape and domestic violence. She and Margaret became close friends and Ellen became a big sister/favorite aunt to Margaret’s daughter, Elizabeth. So it became a family relationship as well.

In its early years, the Center was the only feminist institution of its kind. It was the only place where meetings could happen. For example, the editors of Quest, the feminist quarterly, held editorial meetings in the Center’s conference room. When the National Women’s Law Center was starting a sex discrimination case against the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and needed to meet with sources, I arranged for them to hold their first meeting at the Center. So I was always connected to the Center in different ways.

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1988

- Published Earnings Sharing in Social Security: A Model for Reform
- Convened policy seminar on occupational segregation and its roots in education
- Launched Educational Equity Policy Studies program and conducted two Educational Equity Roundtables
- Convened women and AIDS planning meetings in New York and Washington, D.C. in cooperation with Center for Constitutional Rights
- Conducted educational equity workshops at annual meetings of National Association of Commissions for Women, National Education Association, and National Council of Equal Opportunity Associations
- Sponsored conference on educational equity in cooperation with Center for Policy Alternatives and New York State Division for Women, in Albany, New York
- Convened long-range planning meeting on future of the Center
- Established National Advisory Council to the Center

“The Center is a very special and unique institution. Its programs promote a set of activities that encourage collaboration, sharing information, building consensus, and forging coalitions among women of diverse socioeconomic and racial backgrounds.”

— Lynn Walker Huntley, Center Board member and Director, Comparative Human Relations Initiative, Southern Education Foundation
“A feminist Brookings”

I left the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1977 to join the Carter Administration as special assistant to Dr. Mary Frances Berry, a colleague and friend who had been appointed Assistant Secretary for Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In 1979, I became Director of the Department’s Women’s Educational Equity Act (WEEA) program, which made grants for model programs to end sex discrimination in education, from pre-school through graduate school.

When the Reagan-Bush Administration came to power in 1980, I came under attack from the Right as a “radical feminist” and WEEA was targeted for elimination by the Administration. After several years of relentless attacks, they fired me in 1983 and downgraded the WEEA program. I moved on to become Director of the Project on Equal Education Rights (PEER) of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. Then, in the spring of 1987, Jane and I began talking about her plans for the Center, and she suggested that I come “home” as the Center’s Executive Director. Margaret and Jessie Bernard — the Center’s Board members along with Jane — were equally enthusiastic and persuasive about my joining the Center.

In 1987, I had the same vision that many of us had the first time I met Jane and Margaret 15 years before — that the Center could grow into a feminist version of the Brookings Institution — a well-funded, visible, influential public policy center that would stay out front on issues.

I started writing proposals and talking with foundation colleagues about ideas for the Center’s “second generation” of cutting edge programs. June Zeitlin and Alison Bernstein at the Ford Foundation, Gloria DeNecochea at the Carnegie Corporation, and Irene Crowe at the Pettus-Crowe Foundation shared my vision and had faith in the Center, for which I will always be grateful. Their early grants made the “second generation” possible.

1989

- Published revised edition of Legal Help for Battered Women
- Convened “Feminist Futures,” the first national conference by, for, and about young women in their 20s
- Established Jessie Bernard Wise Women Awards program
- Published The SAT Gender Gap: Identifying the Causes
- Founded Bias in Testing Task Force of National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education
- Co-convened national Women in AIDS Network and co-sponsored three meetings
- In collaboration with Women in AIDS Network, sponsored concert at HHS Conference on AIDS and Racial/Ethnic Populations
- Launched Low and Pregnancy Program as second stage of Reproductive Laws for the 1990s project
- Conducted “Woman to Woman” AIDS education program in collaboration with YWCA of the USA
Thanks to the Ford Foundation, we were able to conduct a long-range planning process in 1988 to reflect on the Center’s work during its first 15 years and to think about new directions and the Center’s niche for the next decade. We really have followed the blueprint that we made in 1988.

We decided that we would take on issues that were way out on the edges, such as women and AIDS, which none of our sister organizations were addressing. We decided that we would continue to work to shape how the world defines an issue — as Jane and Margaret did on violence against women, as we did on women and AIDS and gender bias-motivated hate crimes, and as we are now doing on girls and violence.

We said that we also would take on mainstream feminist issues — such as work and family — and we would find the niche that is not being filled. For us, that was to look at how women of color define and experience work and family. We are not a leader on the work and family issue in general, but we have blazed a trail by looking at the issue through our race and gender lens.

We said we would support the work of other organizations even if we do not see a niche for the Center to fill. For example, we believe that all women’s groups should be visible on child care, family leave and related issues, and so we endorse the work of others; we followed the lead of the Women’s Legal Defense Fund on the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Children’s Defense Fund on child care legislation, and we will continue to do so.

We said that we would do original qualitative and quantitative research that is policy relevant and that we would do secondary data analysis where it would make a contribution to the debate. We said we would distribute our analyses to policy makers and policy influencers by publishing reports that are written in user-friendly style.

“Thanks to the Ford Foundation, we were able to conduct a long-range planning process in 1988 to reflect on the Center’s work during its first 15 years and to think about new directions and the Center’s niche for the next decade. We really have followed the blueprint that we made in 1988.”

— Juanita Tamayo Lott, President, Tamayo Lott Associates

“They are not afraid to take on controversial issues.”

— Juanita Tamayo Lott, President, Tamayo Lott Associates

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— Juanita Tamayo Lott, President, Tamayo Lott Associates

“They are on the cutting edge. There are two things about the Center that are unique — identifying cutting edge issues before anybody else and the multiracial perspective that they bring to every issue.”

— June Zeitlin, Director, Governance and Civil Society, The Ford Foundation

1990

- Published *How Does The SAT Score for Women? for Bias in Testing Task Force of National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education*
- Produced award-winning video, "Fighting For Our Lives": Women Confronting AIDS, and held screenings in San Francisco hosted by Pacific Telesis Foundation and in Washington, D.C. on World AIDS Day
- With Representative Constance Morello (R-MD), prepared “Women and AIDS Research Initiative” and “Women and AIDS Outreach and Prevention Act,” included in Women’s Health Equity Act
- Published first *Guide to Resources on Women and AIDS*
- With National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Women’s Legislative Network, convened seminar on law and pregnancy at NCSL annual meeting
- Produced Resource Collection on *The Law and Pregnancy: Protection or Punishment?*
We also said that a major function of the Center would be convening — bringing people who are creative thinkers and leaders in their fields together with others with whom they might not otherwise interact. This convening function has been important to us and will continue to be.

We said we would try to maximize our expertise by creating study groups, expert panels and advisory committees to assist us with our projects, to broaden our expertise and to bring our work into related fields and policy arenas. We also said that we would be actively involved in coalition work as an important strategy for the Center.

But most important of all, we said that we would expand our focus so that the Center looked at every issue from the diverse and self-defined perspectives of women of color. This focus is central to our inquiry as we examine the combined impact of race and sex bias and how it plays out for all women.

This emphasis has been central to my work since I began thinking about the connection between racism and sexism in the late 1960s, when I started reading feminist literature. My own life experiences and those of friends and colleagues convinced me that this connection was powerful and should be central to all feminist work. And it became the focus of my work, beginning at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, where our mission in the Women’s Rights Program was to consider how the combined impact of racism and sexism affected women of color, white women, and men of color and to help transform the Commission’s programs to incorporate women’s rights.

With my sisters in the women’s movement, I have struggled to build a feminism that confronts both sexism and racism. For white women, this means understanding our own skin privilege in the context of gender.

“Leslie was early in her recognition that the Center should look at how policies were affecting women of color. Leslie has always had as one of her very strong commitments a diversity agenda in the women’s movement.”
— Alison Bernstein, Vice President, The Ford Foundation

1991

- Developed federal legislation to ensure that women with HIV/AIDS have access to Social Security disability benefits
- Published second Guide to Resources on Women and AIDS
- Launched Work and Family Policy program
- Conducted congressional briefing on women and AIDS in cooperation with Congressional Caucus on Women’s Issues
- Presented testimony on women and AIDS at National Institutes of Health hearings on women’s health needs and at Campaign for Women’s Health Capitol Hill briefing
- Produced “Fighting for Our Lives”: Women Confronting AIDS Action Kit
- Submitted testimony on violence against women as bias motivated hate crime to Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Violence Against Women Act
oppression — and then rejecting it, speaking out against racism, rooting out the vestiges of racism in ourselves, in our organizations, and in our feminist theory and practice.

It means always recognizing the gender dimension to race relations. Applying a gender lens helps us see race relations more clearly and understand the inextricable links between racism and sexism, white supremacy and male supremacy.

I believe that we cannot do feminist work if we do not do anti-racism work simultaneously. And anti-racism work cannot succeed if it does not include anti-sexism work. And so, with the enthusiastic support of Jane, Margaret, and Jessie, I was committed from the beginning to building a multiracial and multiethnic feminist organization at the Center that would be a model of multiethnic feminist management — creating a “safe place” to explore our differences, to work as equal partners, to share our commitment to feminism through our work, to learn from each other and to learn what it is to work in a multiethnic and egalitarian world. It is a life-changing experience and a difficult one — but it is worth it. Our Board and staff reflect the diversity that many other organizations only talk about. It was our major commitment from the beginning of the “second generation.”

Cutting edge work on violence against women

There is something about the way we pick issues and how we define our niche that I believe is very special. We do not select issues that already are popular or well-funded. And we do not try to compete with sister organizations that are doing

1991 (continues)

- Published Violence Against Women as Bias Motivated Hate Crime: Defining the Issues
- Created Corporate Advisory Committee to the Center
- Organized and conducted workshops on reproductive rights and health issues for Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) Forum for Women State Legislators in San Diego
- Developed appropriations report language on women and AIDS research for National Institutes of Health FY 1992 appropriations bill
- Convened policy seminar on higher education and low income women, in cooperation with American Council on Education Office of Women in Higher Education
- Convened first meeting of the Women and AIDS Working Group, affiliated with the National Organizations Responding to AIDS (NORA) Coalition
I always worked three or four days a week on a somewhat flexible schedule. The Center believed in flexible workplaces. That was a wonderful thing about the Center: we lived what we believed.—Lois Copeland, former Center Publications Director

important work on an issue. Instead, we try to find a niche that is not being filled. It is one of our major criteria for selecting issues and strategies.

We will give an issue up when we feel that we no longer are on the cutting edge or when other organizations have taken it on, which is where I feel we have been with domestic violence since the 1980s. Jane and Margaret and their colleagues at the Center made an enormous difference in this field in the 1970s. They helped shape federal and state policy on domestic violence, they produced important materials, they created the first Resource Center on Family Violence, and they published RESPONSE. Today, there are many splendid organizations doing research and advocacy on domestic violence that we do not need to duplicate. We need to support their work, and that is what we do.

So, for our "second generation" work on violence against women, we started looking at what was on the cutting edge. We produced a landmark piece of work — Violence Against Women as Bias Motivated Hate Crime: Defining the Issues. Advocates and Members of Congress used it to define a civil rights remedy in the Violence Against Women Act. It is still being quoted and used by people who want to include violent crimes based on gender in federal hate crime legislation.

Now we are focusing on the issue of girls and violence — examining the connections between violence against girls and their increasing perpetration of violence.

Most research programs and youth violence prevention efforts seem to focus on boys, with girls being an add-on — if they are included at all. But programs that stress mediation, anger management, learning how to solve problems and conflicts without fighting, and learning how to walk away from a fight are unlikely to meet the

1991 (continues)

- Published More Harm Than Help: The Ramifications for Rape Survivors of Mandatory HIV Testing Of Rapists
- Produced Resource Collection on The Politics of Reproduction in the 1990s: Contraceptive and Reproductive Technologies
- Published Women of Color in Mathematics, Science and Engineering: A Review of the Literature
- Published Women, Pregnancy and Substance Abuse
- Published More Than Survival: Higher Education for Low Income Women
- Published Women, Welfare and Higher Education: A Selected Annotated Bibliography
- Created PS Emergency Fund for Women with HIV/AIDS

“Leslie and Jennifer had been talking about the news. They said, ‘We’re hearing about all of these girls who are shooting or stabbing boys. What is going on with young women that would create this pattern?’ That started the project. They start with real life — what is it like to be a woman or girl in America today?” —Steve Moskey, former Center Board member

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Created PS Emergency Fund for Women with HIV/AIDS

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needs of girls. Where is the mediation, where is the conflict reduction strategy, when a boy has raped a girl?

I believe that our girl-focused feminist analysis of the connection between the victimization of girls and their growing tendency to commit violent crimes is very cutting edge. In ten years, I hope we will be able to look back and say, “We really made a contribution.”

The next piece of our work on violence is our new StAR (Stop Acquaintance Rape) program. We are going to shine a light on acquaintance rape and make strides toward increasing public understanding and building public intolerance of this pervasive crime. I would like to focus on stopping acquaintance rape by targeting those who can — men — rather than continuing to tell women that it is entirely their responsibility to protect themselves. I believe that the Center will always do work on violence against women and that our focus will change over the years as law, policy and attitudes change and as we learn from our own research and the work of our sisters in the field.

But I really would like to come to the point in my lifetime where there is no need to do any more work on violence against women or on women and AIDS. I would like to live long enough to see the end of both. But I don’t anticipate that in my lifetime.

“A women’s epidemic”

I began to have conversations about women and AIDS in the summer of 1987. It was clear to me then that this was going to become a women’s epidemic and that women once again would suffer from the impact of sex, race and class bias at the same time that they were suffering from a major disease.

“\textit{The Center is doing very impressive work with regard to women who are at risk of being infected with AIDS. They were very pioneering.}”
—— Kathleen Carlson, President, The Equitable Foundation

“The interests of the Center and our company coincided in many ways. We wished to focus the attention of policy makers and lawmakers on the act of sexual assault itself rather than on any one particular weapon used by rapists. The thoroughly responsible and objective way in which the Center pursues its work on this issue came to be admired by me and others in our company.”
—— Donald Kaiser, Head, Global Biometrics, F. Hoffmann-LaRoche, Ltd

1992

* Published \textit{Understanding the Second Epidemic: The Status of Research on Women and AIDS in the United States}*
* Published \textit{Women and the Definitions of AIDS}*
* Launched WomanCARE program on access to care for women with HIV/AIDS*
* Launched study of women’s health decision making*
* Conducted focus groups with women of color to define work and family issues*
* Developed appropriations report language on women and HIV prevention, research and care for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services FY 1993 appropriations bills*
* Convened Think Tank on efficacy of civil rights remedies for violence against women*
* Co-sponsored “An Evening with Susan Faludi” with Lammas women’s bookstore*
* Published \textit{The SAT Gender Gap: ETS Responds—A Research Update}
“Leslie epitomizes somebody who is truly committed, who is fair-minded, who is intelligent, who has a sense of humor, a sense of history, and a vision for the future.”
—Connie Morella, Member of Congress

I can remember the exact moment when I decided that we absolutely had to take on the issue of women and AIDS. I read an editorial about HIV transmission, which said that heterosexual transmission of HIV was highly unlikely and therefore the epidemic was unlikely to reach the “general population,” which was a code word for heterosexual middle class folks. I had to read it several times before I realized that they were not talking about male-to-female transmission at all; what they were saying was that the risk to heterosexual men from sex with women was low. Women were not seen as persons at risk, as persons at all, but only as potential vectors of infection.

This enraged me and made me realize that feminist analysis and intervention were needed, tremendous job of

To this day, in far too many circles, that is how women are still seen in this epidemic. Today, HIV prevention policy for women only focuses on preventing pregnant women from transmitting the virus to their fetuses; there is very little attention paid to protecting women from HIV infection by the men they love and trust — and often fear.

The first person I talked to about women and AIDS was Irene Crowe of the Pettus-Crowe Foundation. She was the only funder and feminist whom I knew at the time who had a commitment to focusing on women with HIV. She gave us the tiniest bit of money, but she gave me the most enormous support and encouragement and affirmation that it was the right thing to do. And that sisterly support was worth more than money.

Thanks to Irene, I learned that the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York was also thinking of creating a clearinghouse on women and AIDS. We held planning meetings together to ensure that we did not overlap or compete in any way. The Center created the National Resource Center on Women and AIDS and the Center for Constitutional Rights began to litigate on behalf of women with HIV and

1992 (continues)

Published Unjust Punishments: Mandatory HIV Testing of Women Sex Workers and Pregnant Women
Published Pregnancy Exclusions in State Living Wills and Medical Proxy Statutes
Co-sponsored forum for business and community leaders on “family friendly” workplace policies with Representative Connie Morella (R-MD) and Montgomery County, MD Commission for Women
Revived national “WEEA Network” of experts in educational equity for women and girls and other supporters of Women’s Educational Equity Act (WEEA)
AIDS and to focus on legal issues. They were the only other group on a
national level that was focused on women, particularly women of color, with
HIV/AIDS.

To this day, there are no other national feminist organizations that
have made HIV/AIDS a top agenda item, although women’s health
organizations and several national AIDS organizations recently have
decided that the issues facing women with HIV are important to their work.

The National Resource Center’s first project was to
produce a guide to resources on women and AIDS, which
was the first and, at the time, the only directory of AIDS
programs that paid some attention to women.

Our video, “Fighting for Our Lives”: Women Confronting
AIDS, was a real highlight. I always tell people that we are a
policy center, not a movie studio — we don’t do videos. But
there was an urgent need for something that focused on
women not as victims or vectors of infection but as leaders
in their communities. We selected several local women of
color leaders who were doing HIV education and advocacy
for women with virtually no money but with enormous
courage and grace in communities around the country. The video has been
seen by women throughout the nation and has, I hope, inspired them as it
did me.

We made another important contribution with our report that exposed the flaws in
both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) AIDS case definition and
the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) use of that definition of AIDS to determine
eligibility for disability benefits; the CDC case definition excluded specific infections
common to women with HIV and SSA’s reliance on it made it impossible for many
women to qualify for benefits. Building on that, we did advocacy work with government

1993

- Launched ethnographic study of Ryan White CARE Act Title I Planning Councils in Miami,
  Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles to assess services for women
- Launched “Fighting for Our Lives” video distribution project with Valley AIDS Network in
  Virginia and Women’s AIDS Resource Movement in Florida
- Launched Microbicide Research Advocacy Project with Reproductive Health Technologies
  Project
- Convened conference on midlife and older women and HIV/AIDS with AARP Women’s
  Initiative
- Conducted Think Tank on future of the Center and feminist policy studies
agencies and had some impact — along with many other advocates — in changing the definition. That was a real contribution.

Thanks to Congresswoman Connie Morella, we have advanced the needs of women with HIV and AIDS through federal legislation. Connie has been the most stalwart member of Congress on women and AIDS, introducing two pieces of legislation, one on research and the other on HIV prevention and outreach. She and her staff were relentless in signing up co-sponsors on the bills and in getting these issues before the public. It is always a delight to work with a member of Congress like Connie Morella who never gives up, no matter what.

Our federally funded five-year national demonstration project, the Metro DC Collaborative for Women with HIV/AIDS, is designed to reduce barriers to care for women living in the metropolitan Washington area. We are building a model for developing HIV/AIDS policy that is responsive to the needs of women, and we are building a cadre of women with HIV who will be empowered to influence policy.

When the project is completed, we will be able to present a road map of strategies, structures and evaluation data to show women in other communities how they can create the same kind of project; we will report on our successes and on our failures so that others do not have to start from scratch.

During the next several years, we will increase our work on woman-focused HIV prevention — with a strong focus on girls and young women especially, who are at great risk.

We have lost some very good friends to AIDS, among them our sisters Janice Jirau, Michelle Wilson and Pat Griffin; in every case, they have been part of our work. I promised each of them that we would keep working on women and AIDS until the women's epidemic is over. I am committed to doing just that and so is the Center's Board and staff.

1993 (continues)

- Presented findings of Center/Mirabella magazine survey on women's health at Capitol Hill symposium
- Testified before Administration Working Group on Welfare Reform on higher education for low income women as priority for welfare reform
- Launched Work/Family and Workplace Diversity study
- Launched project to prepare "country paper" on US women's movement for Ford Foundation funded book on women's movements worldwide and conducted Think Tank on Future of the Women's Movement
- Published The Guide to Resources on Women and AIDS: Third Edition
Advancing educational equity

When I came to the Center, I wanted to build on my own strengths in the area of educational equity. I had already spent 10 years in the field, and felt that we had begun to have an impact in shaping the field’s focus on women of color and women with disabilities, especially through the WEEA grantmaking process.

Gloria DeNecochea at the Carnegie Corporation agreed that this was essential work, so our first grant from Carnegie enabled us to look at how women and girls of color were being treated in math and science education. We produced a review of the research literature on math, science and computer education which found very little literature on girls and women of color.

We also examined school-based and after-school programs and convened a steering committee of experts and advocates. This convening function is one that the Center continues to emphasize — bringing together people who otherwise might not work with one another to coalesce around the needs of women and girls of color. Our first two-day meeting in 1988 focused on math and science issues and on sex bias in the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test, then called the Scholastic Aptitude Test).

The SAT gender gap became a major focus of our work thanks to Phyllis Rosser’s persistence and the excellence of her research. I think that we have made an enormous contribution to the field through Phyllis’ solid and important research on sex bias in the SAT. Even now, as we do public education work on the SAT gender gap, we are up against very powerful and recalcitrant institutions — ETS, the publisher of the SAT, and the

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"Leslie Wolfe has been a stalwart on the issue of gender equity and in the development of policy positions that have been supported by feminists and advocacy groups. Her leadership has been key to where we are today." — Patsy Mink, Member of Congress

“The Center was in the forefront of women and AIDS and the SAT gender gap. Their biggest contribution is having a research arm that is ahead of the wave.”
— Lourdes Miranda, former Center Board member, President of the Miranda Foundation

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1994

- Conducted focus groups with women of color on work/family and workplace diversity
- Published Defining Work and Family Issues: Listening to the Voices of Women of Color
- Created National Advocacy Committee for Woman-focused AIDS Policy composed of service providers, researchers, advocates, policy makers, and women with HIV
- Published Women’s Health Decision Making: A Review of the Literature
- Conducted focus groups on women’s health decision making
- Conducted focus groups with teen women about girls and violence
- "Girl Stabs Boy at School": Girls and the Cycle of Violence published in Women’s Health Issues, Summer 1994
"When I was invited to apply to be on the Board, I called around to women I know in Washington. They said, 'This organization is solid as a rock. You can always count on them.' I went from hoping I could duck this bullet to hoping I would be able to join the Board."

— Jean Hardisty, Center Board member and Executive Director, Political Research Associates

College Board. They persist in declaring that the SAT is, unlike other artifacts of our society, totally without bias.

Today, our educational equity work centers on access to postsecondary education in two ways. First, we continue to develop strategies and policy options to ensure that low income women of all races/ethnicities are able to attend college; and second, we continue to alert the public to the impact of SAT sex bias on access to college and scholarships for all women.

We know from research and data that low income women of all races/ethnicities can achieve economic self-sufficiency through postsecondary education. Our work in this arena began in 1988, when Marilyn Gittell and Erika Kates presented their research at our seminar on occupational segregation and its roots in education. Then, in 1991, we published Erika Kates’ studies of the experiences of low income women of all races/ethnicities on welfare who attended college in Massachusetts and the strategies that colleges can use to create supportive environments for women who are struggling to break out of poverty. Last year, we published a report that shows state legislators how they might be able to count postsecondary education towards fulfilling the work requirements for women on welfare under the new welfare reform law passed last year.

When the Clinton Administration said it intended to “end welfare as we know it,” we were one of the many groups that met with leaders in the Department of Health and Human Services to share ideas. Our focus was on the role of postsecondary education in lifting women out of poverty and we made the case for including postsecondary education as a centerpiece of any welfare reform proposal; we also brought our analysis to our colleagues in welfare policy advocacy groups and to Members of Congress through our testimony.

1994 (continues)

- Conducted Microbicide Research Advocacy Project press briefing with Reproductive Health Technologies Project and Communications Consortium
- Launched five year Metro DC Collaborative for Women with HIV/AIDS project with Prototypes and The Measurement Group
- Launched Center newsletter, AFFILIATES QUARTERLY REPORT
- Convened first Think Tank on mandatory HIV testing, names reporting, partner notification, and other controversial issues for women
- Midlife and Older Women and HIV/AIDS published by AARP
- Published Woman-Controlled HIV Prevention Methods: A Fact Sheet on Microbicides
We knew that we were not going to win. But this is another strategy that we use at the Center — to persist in speaking out about what is right and about what we know will work, even if it is unpopular. We are not naive. We understand that the politics of the day will not permit us to be successful, but we continue speaking out so that when the politics change, we will be there with the data and documentation — and the vision.

We are continuing this advocacy on the state level, and have shared our welfare reform analyses with every Governor. We are sharing what we learn from the Governors with women state legislators in our Contract with Women of the USA network so that they can pursue this strategy in their states.

Even though our work on welfare has been seriously underfunded, it is a major area of concern so we continue to make the case. It shows what you can do with limited resources if you remain devoted to your vision. But we could do so much more, of course, with adequate financial support.

“Feminist enlightenment”

Another program that I am especially proud of is our Work/Family and Workplace Diversity Program, which began with a conversation with June Zeitlin at the Ford Foundation and has made important contributions to knowledge, thanks to Jennifer Tucker’s vision and persistence. When we first met with June, she was concerned about the apparent invisibility of women of color in the struggle to enact the Family and Medical Leave Act. We decided that an important niche for the Center would be to conduct some research to learn how women of color experience and define work and family issues, especially since our initial literature review found little that focused on women of color.

Our pilot study showed that, for women of color, balancing work and family responsibilities is intertwined with their experiences of racism and sexism in the

1995

- Created Advocacy Network for Educational Options in Welfare Reform composed of academic researchers, national and local welfare reform advocates, and policy analysts
- Published *Getting Smart About Welfare*
- Testified before House Human Resources Subcommittee/Committee on Ways and Means on higher education and welfare reform
- Convened second Think Tank on mandatory HIV testing, names reporting and partner notification
- Published *HIV Surveillance, Reporting, and Testing Policies: Controversial Issues for Women*
- Conducted focus groups with parents on sex and race bias in the SAT
- Conducted reader survey on girls and violence in *New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams* and *Teen Voices: A Magazine by, for, and about Teenage and Young Adult Women*
"Our work at the Center is not only about policy research and advocacy on current issues. It also is about continuing to build and strengthen an institution dedicated to social change and equality for women, regardless of race, ethnicity and class."
—Jennifer Tucker, Center Vice President

workplace. These subtle — and sometimes overt — incidents follow women home and affect their ability to function comfortably in both spheres. Our second set of focus groups explored this link and also asked about workplace cultures. We presented our findings to business leaders at a Center-sponsored symposium, and now we are conducting a survey of professional women of color in Fortune 1000 companies. Our research agenda has really moved this issue forward. It's an area where we can really make an impact on women’s lives.

To me, that is what this work is all about. A large part of my vision for the Center has to do with the transformation of women's lives. Our work is not just about doing great, cutting edge projects. It is not just about collaborating with wonderful funders. It is not just about having a stellar multiethnic, multiage feminist staff. Though it is all of these things.

It is about our active involvement in feminist revolution and what the late Jessie Bernard, our founding Board member and inspiration, called "feminist enlightenment" — taking part in the transformation of consciousness about men and women, building an egalitarian future for all women. And in this mission, we stand together in sisterhood with millions of feminists worldwide.

1995 (continues)

- Convened two local working groups on critical policy issues for women with AIDS in metro DC area — Medicaid and Guardianship/Life Planning
- Conducted information sharing meeting on women and HIV/AIDS for service providers in metro DC area
- Published WomanCARE — In Their Own Words: Women’s Programs and the Ryan White CARE Act
- Conducted information sharing meeting on life planning for women with HIV/AIDS in metro D.C. area
- Conducted focus groups with African American women with HIV in metro DC area
- Conducted information sharing meeting on medical manifestations of HIV/AIDS in women for women with HIV and service providers in metro DC area
In 1987, the Center became the first national feminist organization to focus on the needs of women with HIV and AIDS, and today remains a leader in research, policy analysis and advocacy in this field.

The Center was instrumental in the development of legislation to increase federal support for research and prevention programs for women living with HIV/AIDS, including research on microbicides—a woman-controlled method of protection against HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The Center’s woman-focused HIV/AIDS prevention agenda serves as a model for AIDS policy across the nation. And the Center contributed to efforts to change the official definition of AIDS to include women-specific symptoms.

Since 1994, the Resource Center has conducted the Metro DC Collaborative for Women with HIV/AIDS, a federally funded model project that, through leadership development and other activities, is creating a cadre of women living with HIV/AIDS who will work as policy advocates. The Collaborative, conducted in cooperation with our subcontractors (Prototypes and The Measurement Group), is also building partnerships with policy makers and service providers to bring attention to the self-defined needs and concerns of women living with HIV/AIDS.

The Center also has developed a comprehensive set of recommendations for Medicaid managed care plans to meet the needs of women with HIV and has examined state Medicaid managed care contracts to determine whether they address women’s needs.

1995 (continues)

- Presented “Results of a National Study on Women’s Health Decision Making: Implications for Your Program” to annual conference of National Association of Women’s Health Professionals
- Presented three mini-plenaries at Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) Forum for Women State Legislators in San Diego—on violence against women, women and AIDS, and work/family issues; convened ad hoc meeting with core group of state legislators on bringing Beijing home to US women and to state policy arena
- Convened corporate symposium on work/family and workplace diversity in New York
- Published Workplace Cultures: A Reality Check—Listening to the Voices of Women of Color
The Center is developing strategies to encourage pharmaceutical companies to become engaged in microbicide development and marketing and is conducting research on women's access to HIV/AIDS medications, such as protease inhibitors.

Law and Pregnancy Program

Since 1989, the Law and Pregnancy Program has conducted research and made policy recommendations on the “second generation” of complex reproductive rights and health issues to ensure that anti-choice attempts to define a legal status for the fetus do not restrict women’s reproductive rights.

This program has produced reports and resource collections on legal and ethical issues surrounding new reproductive technologies, on attempts to restrict women’s autonomy during pregnancy through coerced medical treatment, on pregnancy exclusions in living will statutes, and on prosecution of pregnant women who use drugs and alcohol.

The program’s recent focus has been on the potential for mandatory HIV testing policies to erode the legal and public health framework of women’s reproductive rights. The program helps both reproductive rights advocates and supportive state legislators identify voluntary HIV counseling, testing and reporting policies that protect women’s reproductive health and rights.

While the program addresses the concerns of all women, its focus is on the women who are most directly burdened by these policies — women of color and low income women of all races/ethnicities.

1996

- Launched expert planning process on women with HIV and Medicaid managed care and convened three meetings of expert planning committee
- Launched Contract with Women of the USA project in partnership with Women’s Environment and Development Organization in celebration of International Women’s Day and announced first 8 state contracts
- Released findings of national survey on women’s health decision making
- Released findings from reader survey of New Moon and Teen Voices readers on girls and violence; op-ed distributed by AFSCME to newspapers nationwide; survey findings published in New Moon.
- Testified at Congressional Women’s Caucus forum on educational equity for women and girls in the 1990s and beyond
- Launched Reproductive Rights and Mandatory HIV Testing of Pregnant Women project

“I feel blessed to be at a place where I can make some real contributions — and where the personal and the political meet and generate action.” — Cathleen Maine, Center Program Associate
Women’s Health
Decision Making Program

Beginning in 1993, the Center conducted qualitative and quantitative research to understand women’s health decision making and the institutional and internalized barriers that women face when seeking health care. The program’s goal is to foster the development of health care systems and health promotion messages that respond to women’s self-defined needs.

The program has conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on women’s health decision making; a series of focus groups with women of all racial/ethnic backgrounds; a reader survey in *Mirabella* magazine; a national random sample telephone survey; and a symposium on women’s health decision making in the context of managed care. The Center’s research staff conducts specific studies of health care decision making on particular issues and the policy staff develops materials and provides technical assistance to state legislators as they consider regulation of managed care delivery systems.

Violence Against Women Program

The Center has focused on violence against women almost since its founding, taking the lead in defining rape as a federal policy issue and contributing to the development of the federal Rape Prevention and Control Act of 1975 and to early federal responses to domestic violence.

During the 1970s, the Center conducted research and produced training and advocacy materials on family violence that are still used today. It launched the widely acclaimed quarterly journal, *RESPONSE to the Victimization of Women and Children*.

1996 (continues)

- Published *Medicaid Managed Care: Defining the Issues for Women*
- Published *Building a National Policy Agenda: Ten Principles for Woman-Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention*
- Distributed *Medicaid Managed Care: Defining the Issues for Women and Building a National Policy Agenda: Ten Principles for Woman-Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention* to President, Speaker of House and Senate Majority Leader, all 50 Governors and editorial page writers/editors
- Launched *WomanCARE News*, quarterly newsletter of Metro DC Collaborative for Women with HIV/AIDS
- Launched *State Legislative Report*, Contract with Women of the USA quarterly newsletter for state legislators
- Conducted four information sharing meetings for women with HIV in metro DC area on: needs of women ex-offenders with HIV; protease inhibitors; AIDS drug assistance programs; Speak Out on domestic violence. Convened roundtable of service providers for Latinas with HIV

"The Center builds relationships with other organizations to find a common ground and to bring women’s voices to the table without any desire for acknowledgment or visibility beyond doing old fashioned coalition building. The Center’s board and staff really believe in building relationships across competing sectors of race, class, ethnic and gender lines." —Irene Lee, Center Board member and Senior Program Associate, Annie E. Casey Foundation
"I am a woman of color. I’ve been on welfare. I’ve worked construction jobs. I’ve worked on political campaigns. My background is really different and yet my experience is as valued as that of Leslie, who has a Ph.D in English literature. I don’t think there are too many places like that.”
— Belinda Rochelle, Center Senior Program Associate

In 1991, the Center published a landmark report, *Violence Against Women as Bias Motivated Hate Crime: Defining the Issues*, which showed that acts of violence based on sex are not random crimes against people who happen to be female. Rather, like hate crimes based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion or sexual orientation, acts of violence based on sex are crimes against individuals intended to intimidate and terrorize all women. The Center also convened a think tank to explore the potential of civil rights remedies for violence against women.

**Girls and Violence Program**

Research, public policy development and youth violence programs generally focus on the experiences of boys and young men and make little effort to understand how powerlessness, low self esteem, sexism and other factors place girls at risk for being victimized by, and committing, violent acts. To bridge this gap, the Center launched a research program on girls and violence in 1993, focusing on the link between girls’ experiences as victims and, increasingly, as perpetrators of violent crime.

The Center has reviewed the literature, surveyed young women enrolled in self-defense classes, conducted focus groups with girls, and conducted a survey of readers of two girl-focused magazines, *New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams* and *Teen Voices: A Magazine By, For, and About Teenage and Young Adult Women*. The findings of this exploratory research offer convincing evidence of the importance of examining the link between the victimization of girls and their growing tendency to commit violent acts.

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1996 (continues)

- Conducted focus groups with white and Latina women with HIV/AIDS and conducted 35 in depth interviews with women with HIV in metro DC area
- Launched SAT gender gap public education campaign
- Conducted symposium on women’s health decision making and implications of Center’s research for managed care
- Created National Honor Roll of over 300 State legislators from all 50 states who support Contract with Women of the USA
- Submitted “The role of women state legislators in post-Beijing implementation” to President’s Interagency Council on Women
- Published *New Frontiers for Worker-Friendly Companies: Report of the Corporate Symposium on Linking Work/Family and Workplace Diversity*
- Published *Case Management: Meeting the Needs of Women with HIV/AIDS*
In 1997, the Center published *Victims No More: Girls Fight Back Against Male Violence* and convened a *Summit on Girls and Violence* to develop strategies for reducing the crushing violence that many girls and young women experience. To lay the groundwork for further research, the Center also is conducting a comparative secondary data analysis of government statistics on both victimization of girls and arrests of girls for violent crimes.

**StAR (Stop Acquaintance Rape) Program**

To continue the momentum created by important legislation in the 1990s, including the Violence Against Women Act and the Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act, the Center launched its third generation of work on violence against women in 1997. The new program, StAR (Stop Acquaintance Rape), will conduct information sharing, policy analysis and development, and public education activities to heighten public awareness about acquaintance rape and, ultimately, to create public intolerance of these crimes.

**Work/Family and Workplace Diversity Program**

Since 1991, the Center has conducted policy-relevant research on work and family issues from the perspectives of women of color. This research has documented the extent to which women of color experience sexism and racism in their workplaces, identified their coping strategies, and considered how these experiences affect job productivity and the quality of family life.

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1996 (continues)

- Published *WomanCARE Action Kit*
- Published *Women and the CARE Act*
- Published *Reforming our Thinking on Welfare: Strategies for State Action*
- Published *Roundtable of Service Providers for Latinas with HIV/AIDS* in English and Spanish
- Published *What a Woman Should Know about Protease Inhibitors*
- Published *Breaking Walls: Women Ex-offenders Living with HIV/AIDS*
- Published *The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP): A Resource Guide for Women Living with HIV/AIDS*
- Published special issue of *WomanCARE News, Women with HIV/AIDS Speak Out on Domestic Violence*
The Center’s initial research found that women of color confront both race and sex bias while struggling to balance family responsibilities with job duties in workplaces that they often experience as hostile. The Center presented its research findings at a Corporate Symposium on Linking Work/Family and Workplace Diversity in 1995.

The Center, which remains unique in its long term commitment to examining these issues through the eyes of women of color, continued its pioneering role in 1997 with a national survey of women of color at Fortune 1000 companies, conducted in partnership with The Kwasha Lipton Group of Coopers and Lybrand, L.L.P.

Feminist Visions of Fatherhood Program

This new program will bring multiethnic feminist visions of fatherhood into the public discussion about men’s roles in the family, which has been dominated by the growing and well-funded “fatherhood” movement that is based on patriarchal premises.

Feminists have long called upon men to assume active roles in their families and to share parenting and household responsibilities — in the context of egalitarian partnerships with women. The Center will convene feminist thinkers and leaders to articulate and refine multiethnic feminist messages around fatherhood and the politics of family responsibility and to recommend a series of research, policy and media strategies to disseminate multiethnic feminist visions of fatherhood and to shape public opinion during the coming years.

1997

- Conducted national survey of parents on bias in SAT and its impact, with Lake Sosin Snell and Perry, announced survey results and data from earlier research on SAT gender gap at press conference and established toll free number for callers to request SAT Gender Gap Action Kit
- Conducted survey of women of color employees in Fortune 1000 companies in collaboration with The Kwasha Lipton Group/Coopers & Lybrand
- Launched program on multiethnic feminist perspectives on fatherhood
- Conducted evaluation of state Medicaid managed care contracts to assess services for women living with HIV/AIDS
- Published Medicaid Managed Care: Serving Women with HIV/AIDS
- Produced checklist for state legislators, Managed Care: Serving the Needs of Women? 110
- Recommended Consumer Protections and Safeguards for Managed Care Plans

“The Contract was an effective organizing tool for us. It was very empowering to know that other women legislators around the country were also coalescing around this agenda.”
— Senator Sandy Pappas, Minnesota Legislature
The SAT Gender Gap Program

Each year, more than one million high school seniors take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT); their scores are used for college admissions decisions, as a criterion for awarding scholarships, and for placement of secondary school students in “gifted and talented” academic enrichment programs.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS), which designs the test, and the College Board, which administers it, say that the SAT’s sole purpose is to predict first-year college grades. But landmark research by Phyllis Rosser, published by the Center, shows that the SAT fails at this mission. The Center’s report, The SAT Gender Gap: Identifying the Causes (1989), critiques the SAT for underpredicting women’s first-year college grades and identifies biases in the test that account for women’s lower scores.

The Center continues to share these research findings with advocates and policy makers and has conducted focus group research with parents of school-age daughters, a national random sample survey of parents, and a public education campaign on the SAT gender gap.

Postsecondary Education for Low Income Women Program

For more than a decade, the Center has been examining the role of postsecondary education in increasing low income women’s chances for economic self-sufficiency. Through reports and policy seminars, the Center has documented the role of higher education in moving women toward economic independence and made the case for developing welfare policy options that include postsecondary education.

1997 (continues)

- Conducted focus group with women with HIV on wasting and thalidomide; conducted focus group with labor union women on the HIV education needs of union members for the George Meany Center
- Participated on D.C. Mayor’s Action Task Force on needs of ex-offenders living with HIV/AIDS
- Conducted local support group for Latinas living with HIV/AIDS
- Conducted first annual advocacy training for women with HIV/AIDS in the metro DC area —“Fighting For Our Lives”
- Testified at congressional briefing sponsored by Policy Action Network for Women with AIDS (PANWA)
- Published “We Know We’re Not Alone” — The Voices of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in the Metro DC Area: A Content Analysis of Focus Groups with African American, Latina, and White Women
- Published Mandatory HIV Testing: A Threat to the Reproductive Rights of All Women

"Leslie gave me institutional backing at a time when I needed it the most.... She's always been there to keep the issue alive." — Phyllis Rosser, author of "The SAT Gender Gap: Identifying the Causes"
With the passage of welfare reform that establishes a lifetime maximum of five years of welfare benefits, the Center is working to help state legislators develop policies to ensure that women have access to postsecondary education as part of a strategy to move from welfare to work and economic independence.

**Contract with Women of the USA
State Legislators Initiative**

The *Contract with Women of the USA* is a set of 12 principles for women's equality based on the Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The Center and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) developed the *Contract* in 1996 to bring the promises of Beijing home to women in the United States.

Through the *Contract* initiative, the Center has developed a national network of more than 1,000 women state legislators who are committed to creating and implementing policies that promote equality for women and girls and to enhancing the leadership roles of women legislators.

The Center serves as a national support center for women state legislators, maintains a state legislative clearinghouse for innovative legislation, publishes a quarterly newsletter — the *State Legislative Report*, which includes up-to-date news, analyses of federal and state policy options, and cutting edge issues that affect women — and produces Policy Action Alerts, Issue Briefs, and Legislative Action Kits on key issues.

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1997 (continues)

- Published *Victims No More: Girls Fight Back Against Male Violence*
- Convened summit on girls and violence
- Launched Stop Acquaintance Rape [StAR] project
- Co-sponsored first Asian women elected officials summit, convened by the National Asian Women’s Health Organization
- Created State Policy Advisory Council of women state legislators
- Conducted roundtable on policy challenges facing women in 21st century, co-sponsored with NCSL Women’s Network at National Conference of State Legislatures annual conference
- Produced state legislative alerts on: welfare, education, and the definition of work; domestic violence and the new welfare reform law; maternal and child health abstinence-only funding
- Published *Symposium on Building Partnerships for Women’s Health: Implications for Managed Care*
- Published *The SAT Gender Gap — An Action Kit*

Workplace Cultures: A Reality Check — Listening to the Voices of Women of Color (1995)

Defining Work and Family Issues: Listening to the Voices of Women of Color (1994)

The SAT Gender Gap: Identifying the Causes (1989)

The SAT Gender Gap: ETS Responds — A Research Update (1992)

The SAT Gender Gap — An Action Kit (1997)


Getting Smart About Welfare — Postsecondary Education is the Most Effective Strategy for Self-sufficiency for Low Income Women (1995)


What a Woman Should Know About Protease Inhibitors (1996)

“We Know We’re Not Alone” — The Voices of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in the Metropolitan DC Area: A Content Analysis of Focus Groups with African American, Latina, and White Women (1997)


Roundtable of Service Providers for Latinas with HIV/AIDS (English and Spanish) (1996)


Women with HIV/AIDS Speak Out on Domestic Violence (English and Spanish) (1996)

Case Management: Meeting the Needs of Women with HIV/AIDS (1996)

Medicaid Managed Care: Defining the Issues for Women with HIV/AIDS (1996)
Medicaid Managed Care: Serving Women with HIV/AIDS (1997)


Women and the CARE Act (1996)

WomanCARE Action Kit (1996)

WomanCARE — In Their Own Words: Women’s Programs and the Ryan White CARE Act (1995)


"Fighting for Our Lives": Women Confronting AIDS, a 30-minute video with companion action kit (1990)

Women and the Definitions of AIDS (1992)


Women and AIDS Fact Sheet (1997)

Woman-Controlled HIV Prevention Methods: A Fact Sheet on Microbicides (1994)


Women, Pregnancy and Substance Abuse (1991)

Pregnancy Exclusions in State Living Will and Medical Proxy Statutes (1992)


Symposium on Building Partnerships for Women's Health: Implications for Managed Care (1997)

Violence Against Women as Bias Motivated Hate Crime: Defining the Issues (1991)

Legal Help for Battered Women (1989)

Violence Against Women Fact Sheet (1997)

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Deborah J. Doxtator
Esther Peterson
Maria Gomez
Bella Abzug
Girls Editorial Board, New Moon Magazine
Gloria T. Johnson
The Clothesline Project
T.H.E. Clinic

1994
Rita Arditti
Byllye Avery
Sue Julian and Diane Reese
Cha Sun Kim Lyu
National Women's History Project
Helen Rodriguez-Trias

1993
Herninia "Tecihzian" Enrique
Guerrilla Girls
Elizabeth Janeway
Joyce A. Ladner
Honorable Patsy Mink
New Endeavors By Women
Barbara Faye Waxman

1992
Irene Blea
Susan Faludi
bell hooks
Honorable Constance Morella
Margaret Peake Raymond
Michelle Wilson
Mitsuye Yamada

1991
Asian Women United
Juana Bordas
Marian Chamberlain
Shirley Chisholm
Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey
Rayna Green
Susan Hester
Barbara Smith

1990
Maria Antonietta Berriozabal
Cai Jinqing
Johnnetta B. Cole
Wilma Espinoza
Diane Carlson Evans
Florence Howe
Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Mary Ross
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Paquita Vivo
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Mary Frances Berry
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