Examining Issues of Gender and Social Inequality
As you will read in the following pages, this has been a year of action and accomplishment at the Center for Research on Women (CROW). Our work on issues promoting the status of women and girls, including economic self sufficiency, child care, women’s health, infant mortality, and teen pregnancy, brings into focus the need for reliable data and information that can be translated into sound public policy.

At the local level, CROW has long been involved in research and initiatives related to adolescent sexuality and teen pregnancy. We are excited to report that we have partnered with the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth and other community organizations to conduct a needs assessment and evaluate the effectiveness of the $4.2 million federally funded Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Success grant.

Looking more broadly, our research team, in collaboration with the Institute for Women’s Studies at the University of Georgia and the National Council for Research on Women, are completing a two year project dedicated to understanding the impact of increased child care funding allocated to low income women and families under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Funds). A full report and recommendations for national, state, and local policy change are forthcoming in the spring. The project was funded by the Ms. Foundation with additional funding support from The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis, allowing CROW to expand the scope of local data collection.

CROW continues to partner with local agencies and organizations that serve women and girls in Memphis to provide research support for local programming. This year CROW worked with Girls Incorporated of Memphis, Girl Scouts Heart of the South, A Step Ahead Foundation, and the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis, to provide research support for the important work they contribute to our community.

In addition to direct research this year, CROW sponsored events that promoted women’s scholarship and celebrated women’s achievements. Partnering with a growing list of campus and community organizations, the Center facilitated a number of projects and programs that helped to both support women’s rights and ensure their well being.

On behalf of our staff and outstanding team of Faculty Affiliates, I want to thank each of you for your keen interest in our issues and, more importantly, for your continued support of our work. With your help we look forward to another year of investigation, discovery, and activism on behalf of women’s quest for social equality.

With best regards,

Lynda Sagrestano, PhD
Director
Center for Research on Women

Publication content and design:
Teresa A. Diener
The Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis has investigated issues of gender, race, class, and social inequality for more than a quarter century.

Our mission is to conduct, promote, and disseminate scholarship on women and social inequality.

An interdisciplinary unit within the University’s College of Arts and Sciences, this thriving academic center is home to collaborative researchers committed to scholarly excellence and deep community involvement. The Center is regarded as a national leader in promoting an integrative approach to understanding and addressing inequities in our society.

The Center’s approach to research, theory, and programming emphasizes the structural relationships among race, class, gender, and sexuality, particularly in the U.S. South and among women of color.

This kind of action-oriented, community-based research strengthens the public’s understanding of women’s experiences and informs local, regional, and national public policy.

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CHILDCARE AS AN INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE

The Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis and the Institute for Women’s Studies at the University of Georgia are collaborating with the National Council for Research on Women on a project examining the quality and affordability of childcare for low-income families in Tennessee and Georgia.

The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which the increased childcare funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)—also known as Stimulus Funds—adequately reached low-income women and families, particularly families of color.

Together, our agencies have been examining the impact of ARRA on childcare in Tennessee and Georgia, and studying the ways in which low-income women were affected. Three framing questions guided the study: (1) Did ARRA supplemental funding reach families that needed additional help? (2) Were providers able to access the education and training opportunities that ARRA funded? and (3) What changes in the child care subsidy infrastructure are required for families to access assistance with greater ease?

We will use the findings to work with policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels to suggest models for stronger childcare initiatives. A full report with recommendations will be released in the spring.

The project was funded by the Ms. Foundation with additional funding support from The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis, allowing CROW to expand the scope of the local data collection.

INFANT MORTALITY

In 2008, the Center for Research on Women began work on a comprehensive, four-year evaluation of Community Voice (CV), a grassroots educational program designed to reduce and prevent infant mortality.

From March of 2008 to June 2010, 447 Lay Health Advisors (LHAs) successfully completed the CV training through the local Tennessee March of Dimes, preparing them to share information with family, friends, and acquaintances about risk factors associated with infant mortality in an effort to prevent infant mortality in Memphis. To date, LHAs have reported contacting over 15,000 community members to talk about infant mortality.

In July of 2010, funding for this project was reduced, and LHA training was temporarily suspended while the CV program was restructured. Now under the leadership of the Hickory Hill Community Redevelopment Corporation, renewed efforts have begun to recruit and train new LHAs. CROW is evaluating the restructured program, and LHAs are still actively educating our community on infant mortality.

This project is funded by the Tennessee Governor’s Office.

Visit www.memphis.edu/crow/infantmortality.htm to read the 2008 and 2009 Community Voice Evaluation Annual Reports.
**TEEN PREGNANCY**

CROW has long been involved in research and initiatives related to adolescent sexuality and teen pregnancy in Memphis and Shelby County. Our newest project is in collaboration with the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth and several other community organizations on the $4.2 million federally funded Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Success grant.

The Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Success project is developing a system of care to facilitate a coordinated community response to teen pregnancy and parenting in Shelby County. CROW is conducting a community needs assessment and evaluating the effectiveness of the system of care.

This project is funded by the National Institutes of Health Office of Adolescent Health. Thanks to the Children’s Foundation of Memphis for providing seed money to begin this project.

**PROMOTING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN OUR COMMUNITY**

CROW remains dedicated to supporting the well being and advancement of women and girls in our community. One way we do this is by providing research support to local agencies that work directly with women and girls in the Memphis area.

- CROW is conducting a multi-year evaluation of the effectiveness of the Girls Incorporated of Memphis programs for girls ages 9 to 18.

- Researchers at CROW are evaluating the effectiveness of programming provided by the Girl Scouts Heart of the South, which serves approximately 12,000 girls in grades K-12 across 59 counties in West Tennessee, East Arkansas, and Northern Mississippi.

- CROW provides data tracking assistance for A Step Ahead Foundation, which is dedicated to providing free, long-acting reversible contraception for Shelby County women.

- CROW is working with The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis to create a Shelby County Women’s Health Report Card.

Women have inspired the University of Memphis throughout its 100-year history. To show our admiration for all that women have contributed to The U of M, CROW has partnered with African and African American Studies and The Department of History to honor 100 women who have made a difference to The U of M.

We put out a call for nominations for you to nominate women and you have delivered! Nominations have been pouring in and soon 100 women who made a difference to The U of M will be celebrated!

On Friday, April 27, 2012, CROW, African and African American Studies, and The Department of History will spend an evening honoring 100 women who made history at The U of M.

Join us for the celebration!

*Tickets on sale in February 2012. For more information call 678-2770 or visit www.memphis.edu/crow.*
**Women’s Research Forum**

CROW routinely invites scholars from The U of M and across the country to present their research in a public forum. This year, CROW was honored to have several women scholars present:

Janann Sherman, Ph.D., Chair, Department of History, U of M, Jean O’Barr, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Duke University, and Judy Touchton, Ph.D., CEO, Touchton Partners LLC, discussed the advances women have made in higher education and obstacles they still face in their panel discussion, *Women in Higher Education: What Have We Learned?*

Lisbeth Berbary, PhD, Assistant Professor of Educational Research at the U of M, discussed her feminist ethnographic study of a southern sorority, offering a look at the complexities of being a woman in a sorority in her presentation, *Subject to Sorority: Feminist Ethnography and Creative Analytic Screenplay.*

Cynthia Tucker, PhD, Professor of English at The U of M, discussed the themes and motives for writing her latest book *No Silent Witness*, which follows three generations of ministers’ daughters, mothers, and wives in one of America’s most influential Unitarian dynasties.

Magda Biejat, M.A., Visiting Scholar at the Center for Research on Women, detailed her research *Democratization for Women? How the Farmers’ Wives Associations Were Left Behind* concerning the transition from communism to democracy in Poland during the late 1980s, and the effects on the Farmers’ Wives Association.

Jennifer Wagner-Lawler, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of English and Women’s Studies, Penn State University, and Deborah Perron Tollefsen, PhD, Chair, Department of Philosophy, U of M, presented *Falling Off the Roof: Menstruation and the Epistemology of Ignorance*, addressing the phenomenon of menstruation trauma, and the lack of knowledge women have about the function of their bodies and menstrual cycles.

Janet K. Page, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Musicology, U of M, explored female musicianship in the late 17th and early 18th century in Viennese convents in her presentation, *Creative Women: Nuns and Their Music in 17th and 18th Century Vienna.*

Carrie Brown-Smith, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Journalism, U of M, detailed the ways in which new communication technologies have changed the ways traditional media outlets deliver news in *News 2.0: How Social Media & Digital Technologies Are Changing Media Institutions & How We Communicate.*
Women’s History Month

CROW teamed with the Department of Sociology and Women’s and Gender Studies to bring internationally known relationship expert Pepper Schwartz, PhD to the U of M. Dr. Schwartz shared her presentation *Sexuality Throughout the Life Cycle* giving the audience a fascinating look at the ways in which sexuality changes across the lifespan.

Harold F. Linder Professor of History at Princeton University, Joan Scott, PhD, shared her presentation, *The Politics of the Veil*, detailing the French government’s controversial decision to ban the wearing of headscarves. Co-sponsored by CROW and The Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities at the University of Memphis.

CROW director Dr. Lynda Sagrestano joined Lorinda B. Cahoon, Associate Professor in the Department of English at the U of M, for a presentation examining the illustrations in children’s literature by Louisa May Alcott. This event was sponsored by The Ned R. McWherter Library at the U of M with funding from the American Library Association Public Programs Office with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Visit www.memphis.edu/crow for information on 2012 Women’s History Month events.

100 Years, 100 Women

2012 marks both the *30th anniversary of the Center for Research on Women* and *100 years of the University of Memphis*. To honor these major milestones CROW, along with African and African American Studies (AAAS), and The Department of History at The U of M, are honoring 100 of the inspirational women who have made a difference to the U of M.

CROW, AAAS, and The Department of History will celebrate 100 of these women during the CROW 30th Anniversary and U of M Centennial celebration on Friday, April 27, 2012. Tickets for this celebratory evening at the U of M Holiday Inn will go on sale in February 2012. For more information contact 678-2770 or visit www.memphis.edu/crow.

Women’s Academic Network

Throughout the year CROW provides female faculty and administrators at The University of Memphis with the opportunity to meet new colleagues through the Women’s Academic Network. Twice a semester female faculty and administrators meet to socialize and discuss topics of interest and relevance to women in academia including tenure and promotion, family friendly leave policies, child care and schools, partner hiring, and mentoring.
Reproductive Rights

The Center Director continues to serve as sponsor for the Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region’s VOX chapter at the University of Memphis. VOX—or Voices for Planned Parenthood—serves to educate the campus community and bring awareness of the reproductive rights of women. The U of M VOX chapter has held several events including film screenings, panel discussions, and fundraisers.

Encouraging Girls in Science and Technology

For the third year in a row, the Center for Research on Women assisted in the planning and promotion of an incredibly special workshop for girls in grades 6-8. Organized by the University of Memphis Herff College of Engineering, the purpose of this one-day event entitled *Expanding Your Horizons* is to promote girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) through hands-on workshops. This year’s event, held September 24, 2011 at the U of M, included more than 150 middle school girls.

SafeZone

Students at The University of Memphis deserve to study in an environment that is safe, supportive, and friendly regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. That is why The Center for Research on Women is proud to support the arrival of the SafeZone Program at The U of M. Founded by a group of U of M students, faculty, and staff, the Safe Zone is a program designed to educate faculty and staff on issues concerning our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed, and questioning (LGBTIQ) students; to support our LGBTIQ students; and to improve the overall campus environment. U of M faculty and staff who wish to become certified SafeZone Allies participate in a three hour training session where they learn how to become safe and supportive allies. CROW research associate Nikki Edney serves as a SafeZone Ally.

For more information on the SafeZone or to become a SafeZone member visit www.memphis.edu/safezone or call 678-2068.
**Memphis Teen Vision**

CROW serves as one of the lead agencies of a local initiative, Memphis Teen Vision (MemTV), a collaborative of over 40 local agencies working to reduce teen pregnancies and support pregnant and parenting teens through a coordinated community response. This year MemTV held a community awareness forum on teen pregnancy prevention; commissioned a study of the economic impact of teen pregnancy in Memphis from David H. Ciscel, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Economics, U of M; and hosted a roundtable discussion with local healthcare providers to address teen reproductive health.

For more information on MemTV visit www.memphis.edu/crow/MemTV.php

**American Association of University Women**

AAUW commissioned CROW director for two presentations concerning women’s issues this year. Dr. Lynda Sagrestano presented *Nowhere to Hide*, a look at sexual harassment in Memphis area middle and high schools, at the AAUW State Convention in Memphis, TN. She also presented *Childcare as Investment for The Future* at an AAUW sponsored event for the Tennessee Economic Summit for Women in Nashville, TN. To read these full reports visit www.memphis.edu/crow.

**Early Success Coalition**

The Center Director serves as the chair for the Teen Pregnancy workgroup of the Shelby County Early Success Coalition (ESC). Launched in January of 2009, the ESC serves as a collaborative of many Shelby County agencies working together to improve the lives of families and children in the Shelby County area. Their mission is to “develop and expand an early childhood comprehensive system of high quality services for children from pre-conception to age eight that engages families, promotes resiliency, and supports positive early childhood development.”

**Community Boards and Committee Service**

- American Association of University Women, Memphis Chapter, Membership Chair
- Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, Advisory Board
- Governor’s Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative
- Memphis Teen Vision
- Shelby County Infant Mortality Initiative, Core Leadership Group
- Tennessee Economic Council on Women
- National Council for Research on Women
Please add the Center for Research on Women to your list of annual charitable gifts!

Our researchers are working on issues of vital importance to women and girls in Memphis, the region, and the nation, including:

- Sexual harassment in middle and high schools
- Infant mortality
- Poverty
- Teen pregnancy and sexual risk-taking
- Violence against women
- Childcare
- Transportation

Over 250 Memphis community members attended the Memphis Teen Vision Community Awareness Breakfast to promote the 10th Annual National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.
FACULTY AFFILIATES 2011

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Dr. Mariam Ayad  
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Dr. Vania Bararra –Toledo  
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Center for Research on Women
Supporting scholarship on race, class, gender and social inequality since 1982

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