Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill, founding director of the Center for Research on Women (CROW), will return to Memphis to deliver the keynote address for CROW’s 20th anniversary celebration on Oct. 24. The theme of the event is “Appreciate our Past, Anticipate our Future.”

The celebration will start at 7:00 p.m. in the ballroom of the new Holiday Inn at The University of Memphis at 3700 Central Ave. Dill, director of the Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity and professor of Women’s Studies at the University of Maryland, will speak about “Race and Gender in Higher Education: Reflections on the Past 20 Years.”

In addition to Dill’s lecture, the celebration will highlight CROW’s community-based research and outreach by including brief comments from key local partners such as Ruby Bright, director of the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis, and Gayle Rose, a local philanthropist who oversees the Rose Family Foundation and chairs the board of the Women’s Foundation.

The Women’s Foundation was CROW’s chief collaborator in the release of the 1997 “Profiles” report on the status of women and girls. Referring to the report, Gayle Rose commented, “It raised the level of awareness that there is a feminine face on poverty. It’s a rallying cry for activism.”

Marilou Awaiakta, local author, poet, and long-term friend of CROW, has written a poem in honor of the 20th anniversary. It will be read at the celebration by Holly Lau, associate professor of Theatre and Dance at The University of Memphis.

The event will conclude with a gala reception in the lobby outside the ballroom.

“We’re really excited to welcome Bonnie Dill back to Memphis for this 20th anniversary celebration,” said Dr. Barbara Ellen Smith, director of CROW. “As we honor her and others’ roles in the past, we’re also building a future that continues to be founded on scholarship for social justice.”

CROW Celebrates 20th Anniversary

EVENT: Appreciate Our Past Anticipate Our Future Celebrate Our 20th Anniversary
DATE: October 24, 2002
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Ballroom, Holiday Inn at The University of Memphis

Appreciating our Past. . . .

~by Deborah White

The idea for a Center for Research on Women at The University of Memphis first surfaced during a conference at Barnard College in New York City 22 years ago.

Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill, an assistant professor of sociology at The University of Memphis (then Memphis State University), gave a lecture that attracted the attention of Mariam Chamberlain, a Ford Foundation program officer. Chamberlain offered a small grant to a research group of Dill and four other sociologists who were studying the intersection of race and gender. But she also told Dill to think about developing a women’s research center in Memphis.

“The Ford Foundation wanted to support a center in the South,” Dill recalled. “They had always assumed it would be in the Atlanta area. She said if we were interested in doing something, I should get back to her.”

See PAST on page 6
In 1982, the year the Center for Research on Women was founded, Ronald Reagan was in his first term as president of the United States. The Cold War still simmered, and the chief enemy of the U.S.—the “Evil Empire” in Reagan’s words—was presumably the Soviet Union.

On the domestic front, an assault on organized labor—signaled by Reagan’s determination to defeat a strike by the Professional Air Traffic Controllers (or PATCO) and break their union—had begun. Deregulation of everything from interstate banking to water quality was underway. After failing to gain ratification in a sufficient number of states, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) went down to defeat.

These were hardly auspicious times to launch a Center for Research on Women in the U.S. South. But that did not deter the founders of CROW. They were part of a generation that transformed institutional structures, political patterns and cultural practices across the United States. In higher education, CROW was in the vanguard of a movement to transform the curriculum across many disciplines, and to nourish innovative scholarship that sought integrative approaches to social inequality.

Today, one generation later, we draw inspiration from that legacy as we confront ominous trends in our own times. There is an eerie resemblance between then and now. As I write this column, President Bush has invoked the Taft Hartley Act—the first president in a quarter-century to do so—to force dockworkers on the West Coast back to their jobs under terms that they consider objectionable. On the foreign policy front, we are told that the greatest enemy of freedom today is an “Axis of Evil” that requires preemptive military action to eradicate.

Higher education, where CROW and others spearheaded conceptual and curricular transformations in the face of great opposition, remains contested ground. Academic freedom risks becoming the next casualty in the “war against terrorism.” Attacks are not limited to those with controversial views about Islam, U.S. policy in the Mideast, or Osama bin Laden. Dr. Lynn Weber, one of CROW’s founders and former directors, was recently singled out by the conservative Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) because of the guidelines that she developed some 18 years ago and utilizes to this day to ensure respectful discussion in her courses on social inequality. (See The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 27, 2002.)

It is important, in my view, not to approach these developments with despair or interpret them as signs of defeat. Rather, we are living in a period of escalating polarization that carries hopeful possibilities as well as dangers. Contradictions abound. Even as the strident forces of nationalism move to tighten our borders in the name of foreign threats, there is also new awareness that Americans can not afford to be ignorant about or closed off to the rest of the world. Even as hate crimes, particularly against people of apparent Middle Eastern descent, grow in frequency, condemnations of racial-ethnic prejudice become more resounding and inter-religious alliances more widespread. Even as the drumbeat of war grows louder and louder, a new movement for peace begins to emerge.

At the center of this activism is a younger, up and coming generation that rejects the false alternatives of militarism or terrorism, color blindness or racism, nationalism or treason. As we of the current generation at CROW recommit ourselves to scholarship in the service of social justice, we draw inspiration both from the innovations of our founders and the boldness of younger generations. Although we live in a period of widespread anxiety, we refuse to be tempted by despair or inaction. We anticipate a future of justice and equity even as we act to create it.
Dr. Allison Graham hopes to spread awareness on campus that Women’s Studies “transcends academic work to encompass life experiences.”

Graham became director of the Women’s Studies program at The University of Memphis in August after serving as interim director for a year. A professor of media and communication studies, Graham has been a faculty member of the university since 1981. She earned her doctorate in English and Film Studies at the University of Florida.

“There is so much student interest,” Graham said of Women’s Studies. “They’re the most exciting courses I’ve taught in a decade.”

Last fall Graham taught one of the first courses with a Women’s Studies (WMST) designation, the sophomore-level Introduction to Women’s Studies. “When we offered it again in the spring, enrollment doubled,” she said. The course focuses on the intersection of gender with race, social class, ethnicity and sexuality.

“It’s extremely interdisciplinary. The readings we do are from literature, sociology, history, film and art criticism, and performance studies,” Graham said. “I’m trying to bring to the study of gender a balance of the sociological and historical with the artistic and philosophical.”

A variety of faculty members teach courses in the Women’s Studies program, which is part of the Interdisciplinary Studies office in the College of Arts and Sciences. This fall a senior-level course, Women and the Arts taught by dance professor Holly Lau, is the university’s first upper division WMST class. In the spring, Reece Auguste is scheduled to teach Women and Film, an upper-level Communication course Graham designed in the 1980s. Auguste will be the first male teacher of the course.

The program offers an undergraduate minor in Women’s Studies, which requires students to take three courses from a set of core offerings and three electives from a wider range of courses in cultural studies and the social sciences. In addition, a Master of Arts in Women’s Studies is pending. Staff members of the Tennessee Board of Regents and the Higher Education Commission have reviewed the program, but budget uncertainties at the state level have delayed formal approval of the proposal. However, the MA could be offered as early as fall 2003, Graham said.

“Response to the program has been very positive,” Graham commented. “I hope it will continue to grow and to stimulate community-wide appreciation of our talented faculty and students and the rich opportunities we provide for meaningful discussion and research.”

The Women’s Studies program also sponsors events on The University of Memphis campus. The program kicked off the 2002-2003 year with a keynote speaker, Dr. Sara Evans of the University of Minnesota Department of History. Her talk focused on her new book, Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century’s End.

Graham’s involvement in Women’s Studies dates back to 1984. There were no courses designated Women’s Studies at that time, but a core group of faculty members who were affiliated with the Center for Research on Women explored issues of gender and race and integrated them into the curriculum. Graham’s Women and Film course, for example, grew out of their discussions.

“That’s how I got started teaching issues of gender. It was partially an outgrowth of the core faculty group. Also, feminist film criticism was dynamic and exploding at that time,” she said.

Graham has been closely associated with the Center for Research on Women through the years. In the mid-1990s, she served as interim associate director. She also was a facilitator for several of the nationally attended Curriculum Integration Workshops sponsored by the Center as well as a facilitator for CROW-sponsored faculty diversity seminars on campus.

Women’s Studies “...transcends academic work to encompass life experiences.”

Women’s Studies Director Named
It takes $31,284 a year or $15.64 an hour in a fulltime job for a family with one adult and two children in Memphis to be self-sufficient, according to the Living Wage 2002 study from the Center for Research on Women.

The Living Wage study measures the level of income required for a family to live independent of monthly public assistance, food stamps, child care subsidies and rent subsidies.

“The Living Wage is only the amount that is required to provide basic self-sufficiency,” said study author Dr. David H. Ciscel, professor of economics at The University of Memphis and faculty affiliate of the Center for Research on Women. “It does not reflect the costs of the many pleasures of life: eating out, entertainment, a new car or the regular purchase of new clothes or electronic gadgets.”

Ciscel used government data to calculate the income a family needs to live modestly and to cover the costs of housing, child care, food, transportation, medical care, clothing and personal care and taxes.

The Living Wage 2002 study is an update of CROW’s first Living Wage study in 1999. In the 2002 study, the Living Wage for a family of one adult and two children is 14.9 percent higher than the 1999 Living Wage of $27,225 a year for the same family type.

“We continued to get comments from people in the Memphis community asking about a Living Wage in Memphis. We kept referring to the ‘99 study. We decided it was high time that it’s up to date,” Ciscel said. “There seems to be increased interest in a Living Wage campaign and a Living Wage study helps back up that campaign.”

The Living Wage varies depending on the size of the family. For a family of one adult and one child, the Living Wage in 2002 is $26,128 a year, up 17.1 percent from the $22,306 Living Wage in 1999. For a family with two adults and two children, the 2002 Living Wage is $35,130 a year, an increase of 12.5 percent from the 1999 Living Wage of $31,220.

“The rising costs of the Living Wage can be traced partially to rising prices,” the study said. “Child care costs have risen. Food costs are up slightly. The costs of clothing and personal care are slightly more generous in the 2002 report than in 1999. But the biggest change is in the cost of housing.”

In addition to a general increase in housing costs, the Living Wage 2002 study based rental costs on a higher standard for decent rental housing from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. “Rents below this standard, known as the subsidy level, are considered to be substandard,” Ciscel said in the study. In 1999, HUD’s subsidy level was at the 40th percentile of all rents in an area, but in 2002 the HUD subsidy level is at the 50th percentile. That means half the rents are higher and half the rents are lower.

A Living Wage is approximately double the poverty level. For example, the current poverty threshold for a family of

| Table 1 |
| A Living Wage for Memphis |
| A Comparison of 1999 and 2002 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Adult with</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-- one child</td>
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<td>-- two children</td>
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<th>Two Adults with</th>
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<td>-- one child</td>
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</table>
one adult and two children is $14,269, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “The poverty thresholds do not represent enough income for a family to be independent or self-sufficient,” Ciscel explained.

The percentage of Memphis families who do not earn a Living Wage is large, although data were not available to pinpoint the number, Ciscel said. However, according to the U.S. Census, the median household income in the Memphis area is $34,583, which means that half the households earn more and half earn less. In the Memphis area 15.3 percent of residents live below the poverty threshold, and in the Memphis city limits 20.6 percent of residents live below the poverty threshold, according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

The Memphis economy is dominated by service producing jobs that pay $7-10 an hour, Ciscel said. In the study, he calculated how many hours it would take to earn a Living Wage at salaries ranging from the minimum wage of $5.15 an hour to $16 an hour. A single mother with one child could earn a Living Wage at $7 an hour – a typical wage for women leaving welfare – if she worked 75 hours per week. Or a couple with two children could earn a Living Wage if they both earned $8 an hour and together they worked 88 hours a week. At $5.15 an hour, a single parent with two children would have to work 121 hours a week to earn a Living Wage.

“In other words, a family can attain self-sufficiency in one of two ways: a higher hourly wage or many hours on the job,” Ciscel said.

In terms of labor income only, the Memphis area generates $32,000 per year (or $16 per hour) of wages and salaries per job, the study said. “It is clear that the problem is not generation of income. Memphis, though it may have a reputation for poverty, is rich enough to pay every working family a Living Wage,” Ciscel said.

Ciscel said it is difficult to determine whether there has been any improvement in the Living Wage in Memphis between 1999 and 2002. “The Living Wage study shows that the Living Wage is different for every family size. We don’t have good data on income by family size in Memphis.”

“My best guess is that a quarter to a third of households are either at the Living Wage level or below,” said Ciscel, who has studied the Memphis economy for 30 years.

“A large portion of the families in Memphis do not earn a Living Wage. It’s not a majority, but a significant minority of households are living with some level of deprivation.”

The Living Wage studies have had an informal but important impact, Ciscel said. “People in not-for-profit organizations and government say we use your study to see whether the people we hire are going to be making a Living Wage.”

“...the biggest change is in the cost of housing.”

See page 15 for information about how to order copies of this study.

### Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hourly Wages</th>
<th>Total Weekly Working Hours Required</th>
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<tr>
<td>$5.15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6.00</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>$7.00</td>
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<td>$15.00</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Overtime pay at time and a half is not calculated in this table. Since many workers expand their work hours to earn additional income through second and third jobs, this report uses straight time for all hours worked.
Dill acted on the invitation, developing a proposal for the Center with the help of her colleague, Dr. Lynn Weber, and Dr. Elizabeth Higginbotham, a member of Dill’s research group and a faculty member at Columbia University. In 1982, the Ford Foundation awarded a three-year grant of $211,547 and the Center for Research on Women (CROW) was born. Dill became the director, Weber was associate director, and Higginbotham soon joined them in Memphis.

In developing the proposal, Dill built on the groundwork laid by the research group and invited input from people throughout the country who were also researching the intersection of race and gender. “At that time there wasn’t anything institutional or systematic as to the study of the intersection of these areas. Other centers for research on women were at big institutions with a sizeable number of people who worked on women’s issues,” Dill said.

“There were three of us. People who worked on this scholarship were dispersed around the country. We wanted to be a place where, when people thought about the intersection of race and gender, they would think about Memphis. We decided to build within that niche, which grew out of our individual research. We knew there was a lot going on. We knew it was dispersed. We wanted to get it into some format and some medium that would make it more broadly available.”

In the beginning, CROW’s mission was focused regionally and nationally. The first newsletter declared: “This Center’s first commitment is to advance, promote, and conduct research on working-class women in the South and women of color in the nation.”

The mission “was a direct outgrowth of our scholarly pursuits as well as of our biographies. All of us are sociologists and have realized the vision for the Center through collaborating on both sociological research and teaching that are centered on an agenda for social change,” Dill, Weber and Higginbotham wrote in “Sisterhood as Collaboration: Building the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis,” a chapter in Feminist Sociology: Life Histories of a Movement edited by Barbara Laslett and Barrie Thorne and published in 1997.

Dill grew up in Chicago in the 1950s and was one of a few African-American students in a predominantly white private school, according to “Sisterhood as Collaboration.” Higginbotham grew up in a working-class family in New York City and was one of a few students of color at City College of New York in the early 1970s. Weber grew up as an Irish Catholic in predominantly Protestant Nashville and enrolled at The University of Memphis in the late 1960s.

“We each entered graduate school in sociology in the 1970s to pursue our dual commitments to promoting social justice and to securing decent middle-class employment,” they wrote. “We knew, however, from our personal experiences and from the social movements of the times that the formal educational system could not be counted on to embrace our perspectives and meet our needs. We would have to make these things happen on our own.”

Although Dill and Higginbotham were at different universities, they met and kept in
touch because they needed support for their research on women of color. Three other women felt the same need, and during a phone interview from her current residence in Delaware. “It helped build that field.”

One of CROW’s first creations was a research clearinghouse for scholars interested in women of color and Southern women. “A lot of the scholarship that was being developed on women of color, Latinos and Asian American women was not getting published in mainstream journals. They were not in major indexes. The clearinghouse was helping faculty who were interested in this developing scholarship find it,” Higginbotham said in an interview from her office at the University of Maryland.

CROW virtually exploded with energy during its first 11 months. Among the activities, the Center:
- Hosted a one-day workshop on women and work in the South.
- Established a national advisory board.
- Co-sponsored a local conference about women and religion.
- Produced a newsletter with a national and local mailing list.
- Started a series of working papers.
- Began to develop more research grant applications.
- Provided a voice in the development of the National Council for Research on Women, a coalition of 28 centers for research on women.

In 1983, the Center’s first big event was a summer institute on teaching, researching and writing about women of color, recalled Higginbotham, who organized and directed the workshop.

“We brought mostly graduate students to Memphis for a week to talk about how to research and teach about the intersection of race and gender,” she said. “We became a place where people didn’t have to fight to do this scholarship. We helped them think about it.”

At the same time, Weber and Higginbotham sought more funding. Their successes included large grants from the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education and the National Institute of Mental Health. These outside grants were crucial. The University of Memphis provided space for the Center, but didn’t provide a base budget until 1987, Weber said. “They contributed very little and really didn’t do so until it was time to get grant renewals and we had built up this huge staff with outside funding.”

CROW’s office has always been in Clement Hall, but it expanded at times to other sites because of grants. For example, at one time the Center had additional space in a house on Central Avenue and in offices near Getwell and Highland.

See PAST on page 10
1982
- The Ford Foundation funds the Center for Research on Women (CROW) with Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill as director and Dr. Lynn Weber as associate director.
- CROW co-sponsors the conference, "Seeking and Sharing: Women and Religion."
- CROW establishes a clearinghouse of scholars conducting research on U.S. women of color and southern women.
- Dr. Elizabeth Higginbotham is a visiting scholar in the summer.
- CROW publishes its first newsletter.

1983
- More than 60 faculty and graduate students attend the first Summer Research Institute on "Women of Color."

1984
- CROW begins the paper series "Southern Women: The Intersection of Race, Class and Gender."

1985
- Weber and Dill secure a grant from the Ford Foundation to investigate race-based wage discrimination.
- Higginbotham and Weber begin research on black and white professional women in Memphis.
- CROW sponsors its first curriculum workshop. Dr. Sandra Morgen is the keynote speaker.

1989
- The University of Memphis becomes a participant in the American Commitment to Diversity Project sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Higginbotham is named acting director.
- CROW faculty affiliate Dr. Lynet Uttal launches comparative study of relationships between parents of young children and paid childcare providers.

1992
- Higginbotham is named associate director of CROW and book review editor for Gender and Society.

1993
- CROW and the Department of Philosophy co-sponsor conference, "New Trends in Feminist Thought."
- Dill, Higginbotham and Weber receive the Jesse Bernard Award and the Distinguished Teaching Award from the American Sociological Association.
- CROW launches a speaker series that brings junior scholars in race and gender studies to the campus.

1995
- Higginbotham and Dr. Robert Frankie coordinate faculty seminars on integrating race and gender into the curriculum.
- Weber and Drs. Milan Buncick, Phyllis Belts, Corinna Ethington and Dianne Horgan receive National Science Foundation grant to explore pedagogical transformation in introductory physics courses to better retain women and minorities.

1996
- Dr. Barbara Ellen Smith named interim director of CROW.
- CROW begins "Baseline Project on the Status of Women and Girls in Memphis/Shelby County" with funds from the Assisi Foundation and in collaboration with the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis. CROW faculty member Dr. Martha Schmidt is team director.

1999
- The University of Memphis becomes a participant in the American Commitment to Diversity Project sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Higginbotham is named acting director.
- CROW faculty affiliate Dr. Lynet Uttal launches comparative study of relationships between parents of young children and paid childcare providers.

2000
- CROW collaborates with the Highlander Research and Education Center of New Market, Tenn. and the Southern Regional Council of Atlanta to begin research and education project on the implications of recent Latino immigration to the South. The three-year project receives $525,000 in funding from the Ford, Rockefeller and Charles Stewart Mott foundations. Smith is principal investigator and Dr. Marcela Mendoza is local project director.
- CROW sponsors first Race and Gender Symposium with Dr. David Roediger as keynote speaker.
- Betts and a team of CROW research assistants begin series of community profiles of six low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in the Memphis area, with support from the Memphis Community Development Partnership.

2001
- CROW publishes first in a series of reports on local Latino immigrants, "Latino Immigrants in Memphis, Tennessee: Their Local Economic Impact." Additional reports are released in collaboration with other organizations, including The Work Place, Inc. and the Regional Economic Development Center.
- CROW, in collaboration with Highlander Research and Education Center and Southern Regional Council, releases first in a series of reports on "The New Latino South." CROW, Women of Achievement and the Women’s Foundation sponsor forum on “Change-Makers: Women’s Activism in Memphis” to celebrate Women’s History Month.
- Betts serves as acting director for the 2001-2002 academic year.
- CROW and Radio Ambiente 1030 AM host first meeting of Latino immigrant women, "De Mujer a Mujer," at the University Center. Event is entirely in Spanish.
1986
- CROW is approved as an independent unit of the University by the Tennessee State Board of Regents and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.
- Ford Foundation gives funds to continue CROW programming.

1987
- CROW collaborates with University of Memphis and area groups to bring “Women of Courage” photography exhibit to the campus.
- Dill, Weber and Dr. Reeve Vanneman develop analysis of “Race and Gender in Occupational Segregation” that is part of National Committee on Pay Equity report.

1988
- The Electronic Bulletin Board goes online.
  Postings include job opportunities, calls for papers, conferences and discussion of topics.
- Weber becomes director of CROW.
- Dill begins a pilot project on low-income female-headed families in the rural South with Ford Foundation grant.
- Weber and Dr. Rebecca Guy secure National Science Foundation grant for classroom microcomputer laboratory to enhance learning of sociology research methods for minorities and women.

1989
- The Ford Foundation gives CROW a $50,000 grant to incorporate race and gender as part of general education at the University.
- CROW begins a speaker series highlighting new race and class scholarship.
- Dill, Dr. Michael Timberlake and Dr. Bruce Williams begin to study rural poverty among women in the region.

1990
- Dr. Norma Burgess begins a three-year National Science Foundation Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at CROW where she examines African American women and families.

1991
- Timberlake and Guy complete the microcomputer version of the Research Clearinghouse and offer it for sale.

1992
- The conference, “Global Cities: Promise and Peril,” takes place at Fogelman Executive Center co-sponsored by The University of Memphis Department of Sociology, CROW, the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Office of International Programs, and Rhodes College. CROW affiliate Dr. Wanda Rushing is a key organizer.
- Rushing begins “Global Cities” project to examine the three characteristics of place with particular attention to the intersections of race, class, wealth and power.
- CROW releases second Living Wage report by Ciscel.
- Dr. Allison Graham, CROW faculty affiliate, becomes director of Women’s Studies.
- CROW releases study of “Latino American Women in Memphis.”
- CROW celebrates 20th anniversary with lecture by founding director Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill.

Anticipate...
“And even though administrators appreciated the money and the visibility of the grants that we brought to the university, they did not believe that our Center, or women’s studies as a whole, would survive for five years,” Dill, Higginbotham and Weber wrote in “Sisterhood as Collaboration.” By the early 1990s, the university’s administration was more appreciative of the Center’s work, they wrote.

Curriculum workshops were another significant part of CROW’s early years. The format of the workshops was innovative and engaging, Dill said. “It was an important part of the curriculum transformation movement.”

Their efforts, Higginbotham said, “really helped faculty take groups that had been on the margins of the curriculum and figure out how to teach them as part of the core.”

Dill, Weber and Higginbotham pointed out several other highlights of the 1980s in “Sisterhood as Collaboration.”

Dr. Maxine Baca Zinn, a pioneering sociologist in the field of Chicana studies and families, collaborated with them on a critique of exclusionary practices in women’s studies. “We hoped that making white feminists aware of their biases would prompt them to take issues of race and class more seriously,” they wrote.

Dill conducted research on black domestic workers, exploring their working conditions and economic survival strategies. She also explored female-headed families in Mid-South rural counties. Dill, along with Michael Timberlake, a Memphis faculty member, and Bruce Williams, a faculty member of the University of Mississippi, received a grant from the Aspen Institute to examine the relationship among family structure, state supports, and community resources in the coping and survival strategies of low-income single mothers.

Higginbotham was one of the first people to study social class differences among educated black women. Weber completed a project on American perceptions of class. They designed a joint project to explore variations in the educational and occupational mobility of black and white women. With a team of graduate assistants, they interviewed 200 baby boomer women who worked fulltime as professionals, managers or administrators in the Memphis area from 1985 to 1987.

In 1987, Dill stepped down as director and Weber took her place. Dill left the Center in 1991 to become a professor of Women’s Studies at the University of Maryland.

In 1993, Dill, Weber and Higginbotham received two major awards from the American Sociological Association recognizing the impact of their teaching and research about groups that are “traditionally devalued and marginalized.” “Those awards are among the highest honors that the association bestows on any scholars,” commented CROW director Dr. Barbara Ellen Smith. “They represent a great validation of the significance of CROW and the work of its founders.”

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**Mark Your Calendar**

**October 24, 7:00 p.m.**
Holiday Inn Ballroom
*CROW 20th Anniversary Celebration*
Keynote by Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill
- Founding Director

**November 14, 4:00 p.m.**
200 Mitchell
*The Underground Railroad in Canada*
Ms. Rosemary Sadlier,
Ontario Black History Society, Toronto, Ontario

**November 16, 4:00 p.m.**
Maniatial de Vida, 4720 Raleigh-LaGrange, Memphis
*Second Annual “De Mujer a Mujer”*
- Latino Immigrant Women’s Gathering
Co-Sponsored by Radio Ambiente

**December 5, 3:00 p.m.**
Fogelman Executive Center
*Latinas in Memphis*
CROW 6th Annual Community Issues Forum

**March 7, 2003, 7:00 p.m.**
100 Ellington Hall
*Family Trees Across the Landscape: Family Values, Kinwork, and African American Return Migration to the South*
Dr. Carol B. Stack
- Department of Women’s Studies
University of California
Sponsored by the Department of Anthropology
Charles H. McNutt Speaker Series
**CROW Founders – What are they doing now?**

**Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill**

Dill became a professor of Women’s Studies at the University of Maryland in 1991. In 1998, she became the founding director of the Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity at the University of Maryland. The consortium is a “university-wide initiative promoting research, scholarship and faculty development that examines the intersections of race, gender and ethnicity and other dimensions of difference,” according to its Internet web site (www.umd.edu/crge).

Dill also is an affiliate professor in the Sociology Department, the Afro-American Studies program and the American Studies Department.

Her research includes a follow-up to a study she did in the late 1980s and early 1990s about low-income single mothers in the rural South. “I will be working with another scholar to understand how things have changed as a result of welfare reform and economic development in the last 10 years,” Dill said.

In 1994, Dill published *Across the Boundaries of Race and Class: An Exploration of Work and Family Among Black Female Domestic Servants* (Garland Publishing) and *Women of Color in U.S. Society*, which she co-edited with Maxine Baca Zinn (Temple University Press).

**Dr. Elizabeth Higginbotham**

Higginbotham left CROW in 1998 to become a professor of sociology in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware.


In 2001 Higginbotham worked with a colleague in a study abroad program, “investigating multicultural Britain and rethinking race in the U.S.,” she said. In the program she took students to London, Liverpool and Manchester.

In 2003 Higginbotham plans to do another study abroad program in London, where she will teach a course on race and society that is comparative in focus.

In her new research project, Higginbotham is looking at black women in mid-career. “I am interested in the life decisions that they have made in response to work options, family and personal responsibilities,” she said.

**Dr. Lynn Weber**

Weber left CROW in 1994 for a sabbatical at the University of Delaware. She stayed there in 1995, and in 1996 was recruited to become director of the Women’s Studies program at the University of South Carolina. This year she is on sabbatical at the University of Maryland, working again with Dill and Ruth Zambrana to develop intersectional scholarship. Weber is teaching an undergraduate course in the fall and a graduate course in the spring. Both classes are on Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality.

In her research, she is working on elaborations of a conceptual framework that integrates race, class, gender and sexuality. Her book, *Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework*, was published in 2001 by McGraw-Hill. “I want to take that framework and apply it to women’s health,” Weber said.
This has been an exciting and challenging year for those of us involved in founding, developing, and implementing the program of the Center. From our beginnings in a classroom with green metal partitions reminiscent of government offices, and through the dust and debris of renovations, we now have comfortable and commodious offices centrally located on the Memphis State University campus. The space transition has in many ways paralleled our process of refining and clarifying the goals and focus of the Center, of identifying our staff needs, our roles and responsibilities, and of assessing our progress and plans for the remaining two years of the Ford Foundation grant. While at times things have seemed to move slowly, and we have wondered if we would overcome some of the obstacles we’ve faced, we have ultimately made tremendous strides in informing people of our existence, beginning to advance our research program, and initiating some of the projects that are so needed in research on working class women in the South and women of color in the nation.

This, our first issue of the newsletter, contains stories describing most of our activities during the past eleven months and some of which we project for the next year. All of these reflect the ways in which we see ourselves vis a vis the community of researchers, writers and teachers who make up our target population, the University community in which we hope to become an increasingly important unit, and the Memphis community, in which we live and work.

Since this Center’s first commitment is to advance, promote, and conduct research on working class women in the South and women of color in the nation, we spent a good deal of time this summer refining and clarifying our research focus and mission.

Our research strengths are in the social sciences and we plan to build upon them. We will do this through focusing upon the social structure and its impact on women’s lives. Specifically, we plan to study women within the context of the political economy, to look at the social organization of work, and the relationship of work and personal life. These three themes infuse our research activities and plans for both target populations. Other issues of importance to our study of working class women in the South include: the intersection of race, class, and gender; the movement of rural people to urban settings; and the impact of institutions, such as legal, educational, and religious institutions on the relationship of work and personal life. In the study of women of color, we are particularly interested in theory development, in the significance of class differences among racial-ethnic groups, in comparative research across racial-ethnic groups, and in the impact of a variety of social institutions on the relationship of work and personal life.

Our current activities and plans for the future flow from this definition of our mission. We have become the administrative home for the Inter-University Research Group on Gender and Race and are seeking to assist in disseminating those findings through a Summer Institute. Lynn Weber Cannon, our Associate Director, is beginning work on grant proposals on women and work in the South, and our initial collaborative conference with the Duke-UNC Center should help promote our research in this area. Our clearinghouse, under the direction of Lynn Weber Cannon and Earnstein Dukes, is moving toward completion. Two graduate assistants, William Chan and Anita Roy, have assisted in this project. We have a computer program prototype, have begun developing a thesaurus and expect to begin inputting data in January 1983. By spring, we will have in operation one of the first computer-accessible information databases focused on women in the country. It will be the only one with a specific focus on women of color and working class women in the South.

I began this piece by describing this past year as a year of transition. Many things have happened which we had not anticipated and yet we have moved forward to begin to meet some of our goals. It is my sincere belief that the next two years will contain at least as many surprises and challenges as this first one. With your help, encouragement, and support, we will continue to be a productive and flourishing Center, promoting research on two groups whose lives and experiences have too often been ignored and distorted. Join us!
Latino immigrant women in Memphis will gather Nov. 16 to discuss such issues as health, work, family and education as part of a series of meetings sponsored by the Center for Research on Women (CROW) and Radio Ambiente 1030 AM, the local Spanish-language radio station.

The first meeting in the series took place in November 2001 in celebration of the first anniversary of Radio Ambiente’s program De Mujer a Mujer (From Woman to Woman). Approximately 180 women and 60 children attended the meeting that was conducted entirely in Spanish.

“There was such enthusiasm. We need to get together to enjoy fellowship and talk about relevant issues,” said Dr. Marcela Mendoza, a researcher at CROW and an immigrant from Argentina. Similar gatherings were held this year in January, May and July, with more than 100 women attending each meeting.

This year’s meeting in November will serve as the second annual celebration of De Mujer a Mujer as well as a forum in Spanish for women to discuss their needs, Mendoza said.

Recurring problems discussed in the meetings include formalizing immigration status and getting driver’s licenses and car insurance, Mendoza said. “Many women would like to get the GED. And there are issues arising from the fact that we are getting adjusted to a new society.”

However, the meetings have been solution-oriented, too. “It has become a fellowship where we help each other,” Mendoza said.

“Because of the meetings, some of the women started offering driving lessons to each other and one woman offered computer lessons,” Mendoza said. “One of the participants, a psychologist, created a relaxation group.”

Mendoza said that she and Mariel Loaiza, a journalist with Radio Ambiente, often are able to access information and pass it down at the meetings or to put the women in touch with professionals. “At the last meeting we had an accountant talk about tax issues,” Mendoza said.

To inform another segment of the community, CROW’s sixth annual Community Issues Forum on Dec. 5 will communicate research findings in English for service providers, philanthropists, CROW supporters and others interested in the concerns of Latino immigrant women. Mendoza will summarize issues discussed in the series of meetings of Latinas and present research about the Latino community. Panelists will discuss Latino immigrant women’s needs in the areas of immigration law, education and health.

For more information about De Mujer a Mujer or the Community Issues Forum, contact the CROW office at 678-2770.

Duke Holds Institute on Globalization, Women, and Development

Dr. Wanda Rushing, assistant professor of sociology and affiliate faculty member of the Center for Research on Women attended Duke University’s recent Summer Institute on Globalization, Women and Development.

The interdisciplinary conference held July 30-Aug. 2 brought together 25 scholars representing colleges and universities from across the United States for intensive study and discussion. The conference was sponsored by Duke’s International Studies and Women’s Studies programs and was funded by a Title VI grant.

Topics included women and information technology in developing nations, gender and participatory development, sustainable agriculture, Mexican farm workers in North Carolina and women in transition from planned economies to the free market. Participants, who represented many disciplines, will use the program content and professional networks developed at the conference in their curriculum planning and scholarship.

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“My thinking, enthusiasm and interest were sparked and nurtured by my association with the Center,” she said. “As a result of my working with people at the Center, I became co-producer of a documentary film on the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike, *At the River I Stand.*” It premiered in 1993 on PBS and was nominated for an Emmy award. Other producers were her Communication Department colleagues David Appleby and Steve Ross.

Graham has produced not only films but also film criticism. Her new book, *Framing the South*, analyzes the depictions of race and social class in the region in a wide range of Hollywood films and television shows including *A Streetcar Named Desire, The Three Faces of Eve, A Face in the Crowd, Cool Hand Luke, In the Heat of the Night, Mississippi Burning, The Beverly Hillbillies* and *The Andy Griffith Show*.

Graham’s book traces how these films confronted, or avoided, issues of racism over the years. “It explores the way Hollywood has exploited stereotypes of the South to advance cultural and political agendas,” she says.

Graham’s knowledge of the South led organizers for the upcoming meeting of the Organization of American Historians (OAH) to ask her to lead a tour through the Mississippi Delta that will highlight locations of significance to the Southern civil rights struggle. Also at the OAH meeting, which is scheduled for April 2003, the Women’s Studies program will join with CROW and other units to sponsor a reception for scholars.

For additional information about these and other program activities, contact the Interdisciplinary Studies office at 678-3550.

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“The content focused on environmental issues, economic issues and technology in the developing world as well as immigration from the developing world into the U.S.,” Rushing said.

Rushing praised the format of the conference, which offered both formal presentations and opportunities to interact informally. “This is a model that seems ideal for our future plans to have a conference focusing on globalization, inequality and the American South,” she said.

For web-based sources on this topic, visit the web site developed by Duke University Librarian Catherine Shreve:


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