

**PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION
ON THE CELEBRATION OF WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY**

January 15, 1999

The fifth meeting of the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History was held on January 15, 1999 at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

In accordance with Public Law 92-463 as amended, this meeting was open to the public and members of the public were present.

Commission Members Present

Ann Lewis, Co-Chair
Beth Newburger, Co-Chair and Federal Representative
Gloria T. Johnson
Dr. Johnnetta Cole
Dr. Barbara Goldsmith
LaDonna Harris
Dr. Elaine Kim
Dr. Ellen Ochoa
Anna Eleanor Roosevelt
Irene Wurtzel

In addition to members of the public, Martha Davis from the General Services Administration and Ruby Shamir from the White House staffed the meeting.

Dr. Johnnetta Cole opened the meeting with the following remarks:

We are, as you so well know, in the National Park Services historic site for the celebration of Dr. King. This is a time when more than any other time in our country and indeed around our world where you stop, where you think about, where you feel that our Brother Martin passed this way and that in his ever-so-brief life-only 39 years on this earth-that he lead a life of full struggle and not only brought down the walls of legal Jim Crow, but that articulated for us a vision of a time when we [would only be judged by the content of our character]. We will be intensely honored today when Mrs. Coretta Scott comes to speak to us. For me this is extraordinarily important because it will be a powerful reminder to each of us that in the Civil Rights Movement as in every serious struggle, we women-folk were there.

I want to take just a moment to lift up a particular Atlantan who also reminds us that in understanding and celebrating American history, we must never forget Her-story. Now, there are many "sheroes" of the Civil Rights Movement including women of Atlanta-black and white women, gentile and Jewish women, lesbian and straight women, poor working-class, even some affluent women, young, old, and especially students. But none stands out more for me (pardon

the chauvinism) than a Spelman student. Her name: Ruby Doris Smith, born in Atlanta, GA on April 25, 1942, to Reverend and Mrs. James Smith.

By the spring of 1960, Ruby Doris was caught in a struggle which would change the world forever-the Civil Rights Movement. As a freshman at Spelman College, Ruby-along with Julian Bond and others-organized the Atlanta Committee on Appeal for Human Rights. She was one of the original freedom-riders in Jackson, Mississippi. That ride resulted in Ruby's jail sentence at Parchman Penitentiary for 42 days. The charge: breaching the peace. As you all who were part of the 60's and those of you who read of it know, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, S.N.C.C., had a strategy of jail-no-bail so our Spelman sister spent a lot of time behind the bars. In 1963 Ruby Doris withdrew from Spelman and devoted full-time service to S.N.C.C., and in 1966 she was elected Executive Secretary of S.N.C.C. Like many other sisters of all kinds, Ruby Doris managed to maintain a very active role in the Civil Rights Movement while continuing her education and maintaining her family life. Returning to Spelman in 1964, she completed a Bachelor of Science degree.

In January of '67, Ruby Doris became terminally ill. She died of cancer on October 7, 1967 at the age of 25. A news release from S.N.C.C. said this: "During her 7 years in the movement, she was the heart of S.N.C.C. as well as one of the school's dedicated administrators." Well, there's much about women in Atlanta that captures the myth and the realities of those of us who, in the words of a Native-American saying, "hold up half of the sky." No one expresses the myths and misconceptions about Southern women like Scarlett in Gone with the Wind, Martha Mitchell's novel. There's no greater challenge to the notion that if you have seen one woman, you have seen us all-no greater challenge to this than the presence in this city of women from countless racial and ethnic groups, especially the growing communities of women of various Hispanic communities and various Asian-American communities.

In this city women are in a range of religious and faith communities, ages, sexual orientation, physical abilities, and disabilities. Atlanta's also a place that can illuminate with particular clarity the importance of education in the transformation of women's lives. Here in this city are two distinguished women's colleges: Agnes Scott and Spelman, and these two institutions, with 17 other higher education institutions, continue in this city and nearby to teach women to better understand the world and the second role of education-to play a role in making this a better world whether it is in the arts, in various forms of government service, athletics and the health field, the various professions, the world of business, or the social services. Like our sisters everywhere, women in Atlanta continue to carry out meaningful work, work that unfortunately is far too often not paid equally for work done-comparable work done-by men.

Like every city in our nation and around the world, the women of Atlanta are victims of that which we must be the most ashamed: poverty, discrimination, and physical/sexual abuse. But here in Atlanta, our sisters also serve as shining examples of the promise of the new day-a new way when we finally experience the beloved community as defined by Dr. King and now struggled for by Coretta Scott King and all women and men-folk in the on-going Civil Rights Movement. The welcome my sisters is, and our one righteous brother, is a very deep welcome. It is a warm, southern, embracing welcome to a city that so deeply symbolizes a struggle to make real the promise of American democracy. Thank-you sister Chair.

Beth Newburger thanked Ann Lewis for organizing the meeting, and briefly went over some logistics, and asked participants to please limit their remarks to ten minutes.

Ann Lewis began her remarks by stating that the goals of the Commission are to find ways to best celebrate the role of women in American history through the millenium while keeping to the President's and First Lady's millenial charge of "honoring the past and imagining the future." Going one step further, Ms. Lewis noted that "we can't imagine the future if we don't know the past," and that the Commission is trying to expand our notion of history to reflect the truth that "men and women worked and prayed and marched together to build families and a better nation." Ms. Lewis then remarked that "our children are growing up with too few heroes. [If] we want them to act in heroic ways," we need to give them heroes and sheroes.

Ms. Lewis then introduced **Ms. Linda Chavez-Thompson**, Executive Vice President of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Linda Chavez-Thompson

Ann, when you said "Honor the past, Imagine the future," I saw so many possibilities, wow-you know when you just think about it, and people in this room are about to make it happen, especially the women on this Commission. I'm very delighted to be here and I want to thank you for inviting me and I want to thank Ann for that very kind introduction. There is one small thing that she did leave out. I'm a candidate for the White House in the elections of the year 2008. It all started as some of...you know, in *Parade* magazine and the White House project, I was reading it on a Sunday morning and surprisingly I didn't know that it was going to be there but I found my name among twenty women to be voted on for potential president in the year 2008.

I was in St. Louis, Missouri with Congressman Dick Gephardt who at the time whispered in my ear, "I'm glad you waited until the year 2008." [In] light of that and what we want to do and what we want to accomplish as women, take Barbara Goldsmith's terrific book about Victoria Woodholme who was the first woman candidate for president, and I understand that your book is doing terrific in the stores. You may think of it as the wonderful biography and these days I think of it as a "how-to" guide.

I'm here today to make a request: As you think about how we celebrate women in our history and as you talk about which women to honor and why and how, I urge you to give every consideration to working women. There is no one who deserves to be celebrated and honored more than they do, and I know something about their stories. It's not a well-known story, but it is a story of enormous struggle, and drama, and courage. It's a story of Mary Kenny O'Sullivan, the first woman organizer in the AFL, a book binder who left that job and worked with collar-makers, shirt-makers, shoe-makers, and silk-workers on the East Coast. One time she predicted if our mothers would teach us self-reliance and dependence, that it is our duty to depend wholly on ourselves, we should then feel the necessity of the organization and how wise she was.

The story of working women is also the "true" story-of sugar-cane workers in Hawaii, many of them Japanese-Americans. Their working conditions were awful. They would keep working in the fields even in the last stages of pregnancy. They couldn't afford not to work because their pay was so low but they joined together and finally in 1945 they got a multi-racial union along with their brothers in the workplace and before long they had a contract to protect their rights. They stood up, and fought back, and finally won. So did those sixteen young women laundry-workers in Somerville, MA, trudging through snow on a bitter cold day in the 1930's, picketing against the firing of an older woman worker who had just joined the Laundry Workers Union, and we should remember those three remarkable school teachers Florence Rood of St. Paul, Margaret Haley of Chicago, and Mary Barker of Atlanta. They were angry at the low pay and sex discrimination in public schools so they helped to create the American Federation of Teachers. They were called a lot of names.

I know personally about getting called a lot of names. Some people describe Margaret Haley as a lady "labor-sluggler," so she must have been doing something right. These women who taught our children, who worked in our fields, who bound our books, and cleaned our clothes-were they really, truly, historical figures? That's an important question. The British historian E.H. Carr wrote that "the great person is at once the representative and the creator of social forces which change the shape of the world," and he was right. Countless working women were brave in exactly that way. What they represented, what they did, has changed the shape of our world. In the name of the Hawaiian sugar-cane workers, the Somerville laundry workers, and millions of other woman who we will never know, I urge you from the bottom of my heart to give working women in American history all the recognition that they richly deserve. Thank you so much.

Gloria Johnson thanked her for her testimony and remarked on Ms. Chavez-Thompson's struggles over the years, and how her election as Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO has opened the door to millions of working women.

Ann Lewis then introduced **Ms. Elizabeth Englehardt**, a doctoral candidate in Women's Studies at Emory University.

Elizabeth Englehardt

Thank you for inviting me to speak today. I want to use my time to argue for the individual and institutional importance of Women's Studies for the Celebration of Women in American History. I'm going to do it by giving you three anecdotes: first, a story from my own undergraduate Women's Studies education; second, a story of my undergraduate students' learning; and third, some evidence of what my colleagues and I-as Women's Studies scholars-can do for celebrating women in history. As you know from my short biography, I left Western North Carolina to attend Duke University. Of all the excellent experiences I had there, one research assignment stands out in my mind as being life-changing. It was from Anne Scott's Social History of American Women class and it was entitled *Three Generations of Women*.

We were to use the history of women in our family, beginning with our great-grandmothers, as a window into the social history of American women. We had to find out as much as we could

about their family of origin, birth, childhood, and child-rearing experience, education, volunteer and paid work, political interests, health, etc. Then we had to put these women's lives into context, place, social class, race, ethnic group. Finally we had to put our comments into the larger context of events in the country during their lives. It was a difficult and at times a frustrating and certainly all-consuming project. We learned about and we often learned to criticize archives in which women were again and again obscured by catalog systems that privileged men. We practiced writing history and learned to approach secondary authors as practitioners with contexts and perspectives as well. We all wrote at least 30-40 pages. This is what the assignment did for me: It established in me a political awareness of the power inherent in our history—who tells it, who holds it, who finds it? I gained an awareness of archives and history in small places, which not incidentally has translated into encouraging other women to donate their papers and tell their stories.

I learned the dear value of oral history skills, how conversations hold the key to our past, how knowledge passed down has the benefit of being filtered through others' experiences—a kind of wisdom-gathering. I also left with a sense that all of our lives are connected. Although the assignment did not make me a History major, it did awaken me to more of the women in my life and my own ability to contribute in a small way to celebrate that history. Women's Studies thus produces students who think critically about who our country is, are willing to work harder to find researched answers such as by thinking outside the card catalog, the textbook, or the archives, and who value the stories of all people—especially those who might otherwise be disenfranchised.

To continue that theme of moving beyond the library catalog, one of the things I've worked hard on with my own teaching is what we at Emory call "Theory Practice Learning." Its emphasis is on connecting classroom theories to practices and in so doing forming bridges between universities and communities. One of Women's Studies greatest strengths is its theorizing about the interconnections of race, class, and gender in both society and individuals. At times this can lead to rather empty generalizations about multiculturalism which students need to move beyond. Theory Practice Learning assignments can help them do just that; for instance, in my introduction to Women's Studies class, I wanted students to think carefully about the process of building coalitions between people.

We read about the topic and then we did a short service project in the multi-race, multi-class community garden in downtown Decatur. Students had to learn about the garden, negotiate a useful project for the garden's numbers, do the project, and then write a reflection paper connecting their experiences with the theories of the class. I want to read you some of their reflections. One young man said, in a letter to fourth graders:

"Women's Studies tries hard to eliminate hatred among races, the rich and the poor, men and women, and gays and straights by learning about our differences and similarities. You probably wonder why we need to do a project to help us learn about these if none of us in the work project feel hatred toward other races, the opposite gender, or people who have more or less money than we do. Instead of guessing about those differences and similarities, we had to work face-to-face to get the job done. Much more understanding

and respect comes from working together than from simply reading about other groups of people we think of as different from ourselves."

A young woman wrote, in a letter to other Intro students:

"To make a difference in the next century, we must face the discomfort of coming together with people different from ourselves to fight for change. My class came together in the garden not because we thought it would be fun-we worked mostly alone on a muddy, cold day sharing with those we already see two times a week. Work in the coalition means that the work is not always enjoyable, that sacrifices and discomforts need to be had as well. Oftentimes the most uncomfortable situations are those most important for resolving oppressions, particularly those of women."

And another argued in a letter to a dean:

"We as students must realize that if we want our world around us to be the best it can possibly be, then we shouldn't focus so much on money, but instead focus on the people around us. We must look at the world around us-really look."

Women's Studies, then, can provide encouragement and support for, and teach practical skills in real-world coalition-building. Any celebration of women, I suggest, must incorporate such careful thinking and practiced skills.

Finally, as you contemplate how to celebrate women's legacy across the country, I ask you to bear in mind that there are more than 600 undergraduate Women's Studies programs. The number of graduate programs of both the masters and the doctoral level is growing steadily, and Women's Studies is even beginning to appear in high schools. This is a huge pool of dedicated people and physical resources to which you can turn as you plan your action as a committee, but beyond that, Women's Studies programs, with their traditions of feminism and womanism and thus a training and commitment to social justice on many levels, are uniquely situated to advocate for the recognition of women's important contributions. At the same time, because the existence and continuation of Women's Studies programs is itself a celebration and valuation of women in history, our relationship can be mutually sustained. Because of the concentration of interdisciplinary and critical thinking and the passion and dedication to be found in our departments, we could be an important resource for you.

In summary, I urge you to consider supporting educational efforts on all levels, efforts that value womens' particular histories, think beyond traditional textbooks' kind of history, and encourage students, especially young women, to take responsibility for telling, writing, and valuing women's stories. Consider locating your celebration between educational structures and communities, theory, and practice, and consider supporting and using the existing resources of Women's Studies programs, scholars, and students. Thank you.

Dr. Johnetta Cole noted that Ms. Englehardt's presentation aptly reflected the African proverb: "she who learns, must teach."

Ann Lewis then introduced **Ali Crown**, Director of the Emory University Women's Center.

Ali Crown opened her remarks by talking about how she came to head the Women's Center at Emory which opened in 1992. She said that in its first year, about ten women gathered to produce 19 programs for Women's History Month, and that each year the number and interest grew so that now there are approximately 40 programs for Women's History Month that come from all corners of the Emory campus. On these occasions, she noted, sheroes are celebrated and people are reminded that ordinary women have done extraordinary things-a concept which is learned when women tell their stories.

Ms. Crown then said that despite growing interest in women's issues and stories, women's studies programs and centers do not get the funding they need. In response to this, her recommendation to the Commission is to have President Clinton send a message of support of these programs to university officials, in effect issuing a challenge to universities to value women's studies. She reminded the audience that it is essential to tell the stories of all the women who have contributed to building this nation "until we reach our full human dignity." Ms. Crown then applauded President Clinton's efforts in appointing this commission.

When Ms. Crown finished, Ann Lewis asked that she send the Commission her calendar of Women's History Month events. At this point **Ann Lewis** introduced **Dr. Vera Rubin**, an observational astronomer and member of the Association of Women in Science.

Vera Rubin

Thank you Ann. I must thank Johnetta because at the top of my paper I had written "Women hold up half the sky," and I must thank LaDonna Harris for being here-I don't think I've ever been in the same room with you, but I did vote for you for Vice President. I'm an astronomer at the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and I thank you for offering me this opportunity to give you a capsule history of women in science.

Throughout history there have always been women doing science, but never many at one time or at one place. Generally, almost always, they gained entry into science via a man-a father, a husband, or a brother. Public education in America did not include women until after 1800 when academies for girls opened, often with the excuse that education would make them better mothers, and surely it would, but it would also do something for themselves. By about 1860, there were half a dozen girls' academies that taught astronomy and owned their own telescopes.

Mariah Mitchell was born of educated parents in Nantucket in 1818, one of nine children. Her father was a sometime teacher, banker, and amateur astronomer. At 14 she finished her schooling, already a talented astronomer, and she opened a school for girls-for white girls, and for black girls. They came, they paid a penny a day to attend. In time, she discovered a comet and was awarded a gold medal by the King of Denmark. She became famous in America, and a public figure, evidence of the entry of women into science. Joseph Henry, in his first report to the Smithsonian Institution in 1848, announced the discovery of the comet as "one of the finest additions ever made to science in this country," however, the American lady who made the discovery was not mentioned by name.

Mariah Mitchell was employed at home by the Nautical Almanac Office. She was the first woman elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences over the objection of many members, and to the American Philosophical Society founded by Benjamin Franklin. The story of her comet should be known to every school child just like the story of Benjamin Franklin's kite. I was a student at Vassar

I wasn't as active then as I am now, but I must say by 1989, one hundred years after her death, we celebrated of course not her death but her life by having a party in the Dome, a Dome party which reconstructed the party she had had with her students, where songs were sung, poems were written, and much of this record exists today.

When Vassar opened in 1865, the first building was an observatory and Mariah Mitchell was the first professor of astronomy. She and other women of her generation who were equally distinguished but had never had a college education then became faculty who taught the first generation of college-educated women, and those women, almost all white, mostly Protestant, all unmarried, became the next generation of teachers in the colleges in related studies. In 1880, women were being hired for routine jobs in science. They were paid one quarter of a salary of a man. Pickering, the Director of the Harwing Observatory, wrote that he could hire four times as many women as one man and therefore got four times as much work done, probably five. If women happen to make a discovery, and some of them made phenomenal discoveries such as the discovery of distances to galaxies made by Henrietta Levitt at the Harvard College Observatory, men would receive the credit.

Mary Putnam Jacoby, at the 1983 World's Congress of Representative Women, said, "Physical science has opened up a sphere of activity resembling that of industry in an enormous development of details, which activity can afford useful employment to multitudes of persons of moderate ability. Modern science demands the cooperation of a great number of systems, much labor and time, requiring intelligence and great accuracy, but not necessitating original mental power." She concluded, "This is a most useful and important field of work for women."

Simon Flexner, Director of Laboratories of the Rockefeller Institute in an address to the 1921 graduating class of Bryn Mawr on "The Scientific Career for Women," distinguished two types of scientific discovery. The first needed "genius" or "imaginative insight" and his examples were all men, the other dealing with things predictable and required "knowledge-often deep and precise-and method, but not the highest talent" and here his example was Marie Curie. Black women entered science later. Among many notable women medical doctors is Dr. Margaret Morgan Lawrence, a distinguished psychiatrist. As a youngster, her parents gave her strong support and she left Mississippi for New York city in 1928 age 14 and later entered Cornell University. In 1988, her daughter Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, then one of only two women on the Harvard University faculty, wrote a remarkable biography of her mother, Balm in Gilead.

Her mother recalled each detail of her rejection by the Cornell University: "in Margaret's senior year at Cornell, she moved closer to medical school. The momentum and energy of her academic pursuits increased, her grades soared, and she knew with increasing certainty that her dream of becoming a doctor would be realized. When the Dean called Margaret into his office, her pleasant reverie were interrupted by the dean's voice, which seemed to be cautious and

apologetic. Then the message, with all its horror, began to penetrate: 'You know,' he said, without a hint of emotion in his voice, 'twenty-five years ago there was a Negro man admitted to Cornell Medical School and it didn't work out. He got tuberculosis.' Each of the dean's words cut like a knife."

Fifty years later, Dr. Lawrence weeps as she recounts this incident to her daughter. Columbia Medical School did accept her, but did not permit her to live in the dormitory. Instead, she roomed with the nursing students. Read the book. In 1942 or 1997, Marguerite Thomas Williams obtained the first Ph.D. degree in geology awarded to a black student, male or female, from Catholic University of America. She was 45 years old. She had been a college teacher and she continued to teach until she was almost 60.

When the Air and Space Museum opened in Washington, D.C., the first planetarium show detailed the history of American astronomy since the founding of the country. Little boys who streamed into the show in large numbers learned that they could be astronomers whether they be white or black, but little girls learned that only men were astronomers. Even discoveries by women were incorrectly attributed to men. I tried for over six months to get the show corrected but ultimately was told that it was recorded and could not be changed. Today I would not give up so easily.

During the second half of the 20th century, women have succeeded in science and their numbers are increasing, white women in larger numbers than minority women. Many have made great discoveries, but all too often they are paid less than men and have less prestigious positions, especially in academia. As a small fraction of the predominantly male science establishment, women suffer all of the social ills of a minority. As recently as 1995, women made up only 6% of the Ph. D. scientists in physics and astronomy in the US, and of the over 2,200 members of the US National Academy of Sciences, only about 100 are female.

Who will do science of the next century? American white males are entering the science and diminishing numbers. Demographics tell us that women, blacks, minorities, those young people today, will do the science of tomorrow. We must develop procedures to encourage all members of society to enter science or the U.S. will not flourish in this technological age. To encourage youngsters across the country to use science in their daily lives, the National Science Foundation, the Bayer Corporation, has developed an annual competition for community intervention. Teams of four middle-school student propose workable innovative solutions to common community problems or challenges by using everyday science. Last year, the Atlanta team of Tiffany Blunt, Brittany Darby, Elam Hill, and Rick Zachery, along with their coach Ann Woodward from the Walden Middle School, Atlanta, placed third, but they won a \$25,000 prize given to one of the teams to actually carry out their plan.

Their project was to develop a computer register for homeless and transient school children, children whose records are often unavailable as they are forced to move from school to school. One of these four winners was sitting in Mrs. Clinton's box on Tuesday nights during President Clinton's State of the Union address. Congratulations Atlanta. The National Science Board of the National Science Foundation is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the year 2000. As part of our anniversary celebration, we, along with a major national magazine, are extending the

program, students up to age 18. We hope that all students will learn that science is not something that is done by a few distinguished men somewhere else. All youngsters must grow up knowing that they too can have fun at solving problems and making discoveries. Solving problems can be difficult, demanding, and annoying, but it's also inspiring, exciting, satisfying, and fun.

I think [that] most of all, doing science requires curiosity and imagination. I am embarrassed to tell you how little mathematics I use at what I do. Tell your students and your children and your grandchildren that they can do it too. They can. With diversity we've learned more about the universe-we may even have learned more about ourselves. Thank you very much.

Elaine Kim asked why there were fewer men entering the field of science.

Dr. Rubin suggested that it was the movement of the labor market towards the financial sector where the opportunities to make money are greater. There are many Asians and more women entering the field. However, she noted that many men can go all the way through graduate school never studying under a woman.

Gloria Johnson told anecdotes that she often heard that women should not be put in positions of power because they are subject to their "raging hormones" and that if women are inclined to study it means that there must be something wrong with their sex apparatus.

Irene Wurtzel asked how the stories of women in science can reach schoolchildren.

Dr. Rubin said that many of these stories are reaching the middle school level and that she got the stories that she just told from some school texts. She said that there are performers and poets of note who are involved in telling these stories.

Ellen Ochoa said that since schools teach to testing standards, the challenge was getting the schools to actually use these resources and texts.

Dr. Rubin agreed and said that women in science stories are starting to filter into high school texts.

Ann Lewis introduced the members of the Commission and then introduced the next speaker, **Ms. Leslie Sharp**, National Register Program Coordinator and Women's History Initiative Coordinator at the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Leslie Sharp

Thank you very much. I am representing the Georgia Historic Preservation Division which is Georgia's State Historic Preservation Office. There is one office in each state which administers federal and state public historic preservation programs, such as the National Register of Historic Places.

When invited to testify, I was asked, "How do we insure that past women's achievements will be honored and remembered today and in the future?" That is what historic preservation is about and the buildings and sites which are preserved today will be a lasting monument to tell America's history in the future. An example of this is the Terrell-Saddler Plantation which was submitted into our office as the William D. Terrell Plantation. The text of the National Register nomination read, "In 1855 William D. Terrell who owned two slaves but no land married the wealthy Mary Saddler. By the end of 1855, the tax digest listed Terrell's assets as 20 slaves and 700 acres." The name now reflects Saddler, as it was her money and her land which increased Mr. Terrell's holdings. The naming of historic properties is a first step and although seemingly superficial, it is important because it recognizes that yes, women were there and they were important.

Although women have always comprised half of the population, not much is known about historic places related to women or about women's associations with commonly studied historic places such as residential, commercial, industrial, and community landmark buildings and even historic house museums. Of the more than 1,600 National Register of Historic Places listings comprising over 46,000 historic properties in Georgia, less than two percent of the listings are listed because of their association with women. Similarly, of 1,965 Georgia historical markers, less than 70 markers relate to women. Many of these are based on legend or myth or mention a female only because of her husband's historical significance.

This is not to say that the other 1,400 plus listings or 1,900 historical markers are unrelated to women, but that the role of women in these places has not been identified, evaluated, or even understood. Historians, architectural historians, preservationists, and planners have been shortchanging history and our historic environment by not recognizing historical associations with women in evaluating and interpreting historic places. In 1995, we at the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office recognized that there was a void in our understanding of the how women's history should be incorporated into our day-to-day preservation activities. We began a Women's History Initiative to address the topic of women's history as it relates to the identification, documentation, evaluation, and preservation of historic places. This was the first such initiative in the country.

The mission of the Georgia's Women's History Initiative is to integrate women's history and the preservation of historic places associated with women into the state's existing programs that record, document, interpret, and preserve historic places representing Georgia history. We are fulfilling this mission by:

- 1) actively seeking to identify and document historic places associated with diverse women in Georgia-including specific places that are associated with a particular woman or event, as well as resources that collectively reflect broad themes associated with the roles of women in the state's history;
- 2) reinterpreting historic places already identified in Georgia based upon a better understanding of women's history in Georgia; and

3) promoting the awareness, appreciation, and preservation of historic places associated with women in Georgia through publications, heritage education programs, and tour guides that will increase public awareness.

The first major project of the Georgia Women's History Initiative was a regional conference on women's history and historic preservation. Held in March of 1996, *Telling Her Story: Expanding the Past of Georgia's Women Through Historic Places* brought together twelve scholars and over 100 people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Feedback from the closing discussion session and the conference evaluation forms revealed a desire among the participants for projects focusing on women and the associated historic places. A majority of the responses centered on the need for greater activity in and awareness of preserving women-related places. One conference participant pointed out that the standard identification tools for historic resources discourage the documentation of places significant for their associations with women's history. For example, up until recently, women's history was not a historical theme in the Georgia Historic Resources Survey (the state's ongoing survey program of historic buildings and structures). This again underscores the fact that gender is not routinely considered in the evaluation of historic places either in Georgia or the nation. Another participant wrote in her conference evaluation that "Generally, but particularly for women in preservation, we need a unifying interpretive model that will help us ask fruitful questions of the landscape and built environment that lead to enlightening answers about women's experiences."

To help meet the needs identified by conference participants and to further Georgia's understanding of places associated with woman, we have been working since the spring of 1996 to develop a historic context or historical study on historic places associated with women in Georgia. After a two-year effort to obtain funding, the Georgia State Legislature, under the sponsorship of State Representative Doug Teper, appropriated funds for the development of a document establishing the historic context for women-related historic resources in Georgia. In June 1998, a request for proposals was sent out and a consulting team made up of Darlene Roth, Gail Dubrow, Beth Gibson, and Bamby Ray was hired to develop a women's history context, to do a field survey sampling historic resources in key areas of the state, to prepare a multiple property nomination form, and to complete at least five National Register nominations for women-related historic places. This is the first statewide study on women's history and the built environment to be undertaken.

The *Georgia Women's History Context Study* will be an important resource to professionals in historic preservation, women's studies, architecture, landscape architecture, and history for researching and celebrating women's history. It also will be an invaluable guide for the Historic Preservation Division staff as they evaluate and document historic places. The context study report will be a permanent contribution to the Division's capacity for preserving Georgia's heritage. More importantly, this publication will raise public awareness of, and appreciation for, women's history and its relationship to historic preservation.

The Women's History Initiative in Georgia has gone beyond its infancy and is now in its toddler stage; however, its first steps may serve as a model for other states as the awareness of women's history and its relationship to historic preservation are more appreciated. This awareness and appreciation (and ultimately the preservation) of historic places associated with women may not occur quickly. However, the opportunity and the challenge to fulfill the mission of the Georgia

Women's History Initiative have arrived with the beginning of the Georgia Women's History Context project. Already Georgia is integrating what we do know about women's history into National Register documentation, asking more comprehensive questions about historic places, and flagging women-related historic places in the Georgia Historic Resources Survey database. Georgia has also developed a guide to National Register-listed women's history sites in Georgia, planned a women's history tour with brochure for Athens, Georgia, and created a women's history archive. The completed women's history context, the sampling of survey work, the Multiple Property Nomination Form, and the National Register nominations will all be used to further integrate women's history into the programs of the Historic Preservation Division as well as provide a basis for a statewide women's history tour guide, heritage education programs, and other future preservation projects.

The expected benefits of the Georgia Women's History Initiative are nothing short of revolutionary. Integrating women's history into historic preservation will incorporate the largely overlooked history of one-half of the state's population into the long-term planning and day-to-day activities of Georgia's historic preservationists. The Georgia Historic Preservation Division envisions the following results:

- 1) preservation professionals and local communities will have the tools necessary to understand historic places significant for their associations with women;
- 2) the number of women-related historic places surveyed and listed in the National Register for their significance in women's history will increase;
- 3) funding for women-related historic places will become a priority; and
- 4) women-related historic places will be preserved and interpreted.

And finally and most importantly, "The Whole Story" of Georgia's history will be revealed.

This project has been done with little funding and lots of enthusiasm and hard work. With adequate support, the possibilities are endless. I cannot think of a better way to honor the past and to imagine the future than to identify and preserve our women-related historic places using Georgia's Women's History Initiative as a model.

To help and meet the needs identified by conference participants and to further Georgia's understanding of historic places associated with women, the Historic Preservation Division has been working since 1996 to develop a historic context or historical study on historic places associated with women in Georgia. Finding funding for such a project was next to impossible. We applied for a grant, we appealed to friends, corporate sponsor-everything. However, State Representative Doug Teper, who is in the back, was able, after two years of trying, to get our state legislature to appropriate funding for the project. Well we sent out a request for proposals last summer and a consulting team lead by Darlene Roth, who is a women's historian and a preservationist, will be conducting this study and we are in the process of it now and it should be hopefully finished December of this year.

Ann Lewis thanked Leslie Sharp and after a five minute break Ms. Lewis introduced **Anita Patterson**, who is the retired Area Director for the American Federation of State County Municipal Employees and a founding member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and Chair of the Coalition to the National Women's Committee, GA.

Anita Patterson

Good morning. I'd like to start by thanking you for inviting me to make this presentation today, and I especially want to thank my good friend Gloria Johnson. Preserving women's history is something that Gloria and I have tried to do over the years as we have worked in both the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and the Coalition of Labor Union Women and we venture outside of our own circle many times and we have a chance to tell the story of trade union women to other groups and we've done a lot of networking because it's something that's dear to our hearts. There's a great void in the recorded history of women and that void is in the stories told by Trade Union Women.

Trade Union Women have been in the unique position to further their educations, to hone their leadership skills, to be elected and appointed to leadership posts, to serve as political activists; our folks not only send out the mail and answer the phones and do the literature drops, but once it's time for the National Convention they get a chance to go as delegates and we get a chance to attend Presidential Inaugurations-a great life. We had a chance to travel all over the world and meet with other women in the Labor Movement and a large delegation of trade union women were a part of the official delegation that went to South Africa for the first free elections-a great experience. When C.L.U.W. was founded, there were very few women in the decision-making process of any union. I can only recall two at that time: Olga Madawa serving as Vice President of the United Automobile Workers, and Moselle McNerill was on our international board. On the regional and local level, things were a little better but not much. If the membership was predominantly female-nurses, secretaries, clerical-then they may have had a women president, but most of the women were members in 1974 with one vote and little voice in what was going on in the Labor Movement.

I'd like to tell you today the story that sparked my interest in the history of Trade Union women and African-Women trade union women in particular. On June 17, 1943 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina approximately 200 Black women in the stemming department of an R.J. Reynolds plant sat down at their machines and refused to continue their work. They were expressing their anger of the death of an elderly Black man who had been over-worked and denied medical treatment by company form. The underlying causes of the strike were low wages, hard work, and intolerable working conditions. Their average wage was 46 cents an hour, but the Black women who worked in the stemmery with him struck again who were paid by the pound rather than by the hour and in many cases their wages and job classifications were determined at the convenience and whim of management.

Robert Black, one of the principals there, described the treatment of his wife at this plant. He said you went in, and there was a nail for you to hang your dress on. You put your work dress on and you went out and you worked all day. When you finished and came back to get your clothes, there was no place for you to wash up--you were covered with dust and perspiration and

you had to change from your work clothes into your street clothes while you were still wet and glotted to the elements. The work itself was horrendous: heat, dust, and the roar of machines all added to their discomfort. R. J. Reynolds could not stop the spread to other plants of the news of the strike. The largest tobacco production facilities in the world were shut down by these 200 women. By the end of that weekend, 8,000 of them, black and white, had signed on to join the Union--The United Cannery Agriculture and Allied Workers CIO Local 22. This union was officially recognized later on by R. J. Reynolds.

Black women had played a leading role in the victory. A contract was signed on April 24, 1944. The contract included an eight-hour day, a 40-hour work week with time and a half for overtime, and a minimal raise of ten cents an hour and the lowest pay got paid up to twenty cents an hour. However the real story is what they did after they were recognized. That summer of 1944 they set up an education committee. The education committee taught reading, writing, public speaking, contract-negotiations. They had a radio program every Saturday where they got on and had union members talk about the issues that were affecting their community and how they could have an impact. They formed the Political Action Committee and signed up some 7,000 people to vote, and then they taught them about federal and state constitutions so they could pay us the literacy that existed in those days.

Miranda Smith was one of the leaders of that movement. She went on to become the first African-American Regional Director and a member of the National Executive Board of her union. She died suddenly at 38 years old and Paul Roverson paid tribute to her at her funeral. There's a lot more to this story--it just goes on and on, but the union was destroyed from within and from without and one character that we all remember, Richard Nixon, was sitting on the House on American Activity and they took particular interest in what was going on the issue. So I can't tell you the whole story but it's one that serves us a lot for what we do in the Trade Union Movement today. I mean, we have not changed things that much, we're still political activists, we still do education, and we're still registered voters. So that model serves us even today. This local must never be forgotten, the black women who existed reared courage by going on strike, fighting a large corporation, and when they had gotten contracted not rest but went on to become a social and political movement and they deserve to have their story told.

The Trade Union Movement has changed dramatically in the last 25 years beginning with the AFL-CIO. We have our Gloria Johnson who sits on the Executive Council which is the highest level at the AFL-CIO, and my sister from AFSCME Linda Chavez Thompson who serves as a principal officer of that union. Linda and I had the pleasure of also serving on the very first international women's committee that was put together by Miranda Smith. Most international boards have a number of women serving on them, appointed staffs are integrated and more reflective of the Union's membership. A woman in labor now can set our goal and through some hard work, some commitment, some networking, she can usually get to in-posts that she'd like to get to, and we have to thank folks like Olga Madire, Eddie Wyatt, Harley Malone, Gloria Johnson, and some of the other trailblazers who helped us in the Labor Movement be able to aspire to anything that we'd like to have.

As Chair of the National Women's Commission Conference for the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, on the occasion of our 25th anniversary in 1995 I circulated a short survey and it just

asked, "What were you doing in 1972 in the Union and on your job and what are you doing now in 1995 in the Union and on your job?" Well of course in 1972 most folks were just members and we were in the clerical jobs, sometimes a dead-end job. By 1975, we were on staff at all levels, on international boards, departments heads, supervisors and managers on the job, and even some university professors. I was the first African-American woman to be appointed a Regional Director in AFSCME.

I have a friend in New York, Josephine Maboe, who started as a clerical who is now Executive Director of her council in New York City with 23,000 members with 50 staffers, and she was just elected to the International Executive Board and is just doing wonderful work. Mary Fingran was a United Food and Commercial worker and was promoted from local staff to international. She serves as Director of a civil rights department and on her international board--ordinary women living extraordinary lives. It's important for us to maintain the history of these women who never made headlines but through their work and union are able to make the difference in their lives and communities. Most of the history of trade union women is just waiting to be recorded and published. Our story needs to be told to the general public since we all need the inspiration and history it gives us.

In terms of recommendations, I agree with the recommendations presented to this Commission by Bridget Farrell and Gloria Johnson, teaching our children with stories of working women, cataloguing what unions are presently doing to preserve their history, using the Internet, movies, television, publicized stories, like that of Local 22, Josephine Maboe, and Mary Fingran. Additionally, women ought to be encouraged by adequate funding to produce these stories in books, videos, comic books, plays, and other outlets to reach the broadest possible audience.

In closing, let me refer back to Local 22. In the preamble of their constitution written in 1943, they banned all forms of discrimination and achieved the kind of solidarity that we must have as women to accomplish our goals, to continue our progress, to inspire, and that is worthy of celebration. Thank you.

Ann Lewis thanked Anita Patterson for her testimony and introduced **Dr. Barbara Woods**, who is the President of the Association of Black Women Historians and a former Chair of the History Department at Hampton University. She is now a professor at South Carolina State University.

Dr. Barbara Woods

Thank you so much and good morning. The Association of Black Women Historians are a support network of scholars and lay-persons interested in the preservation of black women's history and their promotion of scholarship by and about black women; we are pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this historic meeting and we thank the Commission very heartily. We're in the process of planning our 20th anniversary celebration during the fall of this year and our celebration will continue into the year 2000. We are very acutely aware of the significance of celebrating the roles and contributions of women in American culture and I don't know whether I understood correctly but I have a number of suggestions, I'm not saying too much about ourselves.

OK, our suggestions to the Commission include the following and I'm piggy-backing on some of what Ms. Sharp and Ms. Patterson just said. I have a list. One: Traveling exhibits which include posters, postal cards, and other memorabilia, pencils, etc., which visitors may take away with them. The exhibits should feature electronic media such as videos and interactive computer programs. I have two examples of traveling exhibits featuring women: the Smithsonian exhibition "The Achievement Against Odds: The History of Black Women," and the Georgia Women of Achievement has a Hall of Fame which includes a traveling exhibit circling throughout the state. Dr. Jacquelyn Rouse, who is a professor at Georgia State University and one of our former presidents in the audience, is familiar with this second exhibit.

Suggestion number two: A major rally on the mall in Washington, D.C.-- a "women on parade" day. This rally could be a kick-off event which would bring together a diversity of women from various occupations, social strata, and age groups. The focus could be historical as well as service-oriented. By promoting community service and outreach, we would have common thread which would unite the diverse groups.

Suggestion number three: Creating a massive documentary on the lives of women--the ordinary and everyday in addition to the great--to highlight the variety of roles that women have played in their communities. It would be important to move beyond stereotypical portraits of mother, nurse, care-giver, teacher, etc., [and] include the many ways in which women mold and shape community life. Special emphasis should be given to women's progress, for example, as entrepreneurs. We could do a close look at stable, small businesses, and I was thinking in terms of a major document that has been very popular: "Eyes on the Prize," the Civil Rights story of America.

Suggestion number four: Create related curriculum materials for the K-12 age group. Teachers need instructional packages which are complete, ready-made. I've worked quite extensively in preparing a Languis-Phillus package; I would suggest including a time line of women in struggle, not just traditional roles again. Also, it's important to include an accurate portrait of our country's diversity--women of every race, class, and background should be represented in areas such as women in diplomacy, women in aviation, women in World War II and Civil War, women carrying out espionage...whatever kinds of non-traditional backgrounds that are not usually covered.

Suggestion number five: Minting a special coin or printing a special dollar bill commemorating the contributions of women, and last suggestion number six, creation of a National Women's Historic Register to promote careful preservation of sites that are important to women and I was listening especially to Sharp's presentation and I [want to] use our ideas to create a parallel which I don't know whether that's possible, but that would focus stuff I think on women and would focus to encourage women to feel that they should indeed apply. What could be included obviously: homes of significant women, women's clinics, hospitals, buildings owned by women organization, and in places where buildings are no longer there, markers could be placed there to commemorate the sites, and finally in making these suggestions, we ask you to include the lives of white women and to call on our organization for information on the subject.

We are a national organization of scholars, many of whom specialize on the subject of black women's lives. Most have published books and articles and carried out important research projects. We are a pretty tightly-knit network who support each other and we would be happy to consult with you and celebrate the diverse roles of women in American history.

Ann Lewis thanked Dr. Woods for her concrete suggestions and introduced the next speaker, **Ms. Nellie Duke**, who is the Chair of the Georgia Commission on Women.
Nellie Duke

I'm honored to be here in the presence of this distinguished panel. My perspective on history has changed through the years--since I've gotten older, I feel historic myself. I was born during the Great Depression, and when I was a child, my role model and idol was the grandmother of one of your panelists, Eleanor Roosevelt. I have my own version of being born in a log cabin. It was a house, but it was almost a log cabin out in the country. Snow was on the ground and my uncle had to go get a doctor because my mother who was only 18 was having a difficult delivery. So then after that I was raised in a little village in north Georgia. Our little self-contained community was a great place for a little girl in those years. We had our own school, our own medical clinic, and a company doctor, and when nobody had any money we could shop on credit at the company store.

One reason that we were able to do this is that my parents were involved in the movement to unionize those textile plants after they realized it was important to do so and while I was quite small. In fact my mom was so good at it that the company made her a supervisor to get her out of the union. Needless to say, I gained some of the fervor that she exhibited--whenever she saw anything wrong, she didn't hesitate to get involved and I'd like to think that I'm also like that. I married at the tender age of 18 and will have been married 50 years this April to the same man, too. That is an accomplishment isn't it? Maybe I couldn't find anybody else.

At age 19 I had my first child, a boy. By the age of 29 I had five children--four boys and a girl. My evolution in the activism began with membership in the Women's Christian Temperance Union. That was one of the few politically effective outlets for women in those days and I was secretary for the local chapter, but I want you to know I never destroyed any bars. I suppose if those dear ladies with whom I was associated were alive today, I might not be serving wine for dinner as I do. I joined P.T.A. the year before my first child started school, immediately getting involved in creating change to improve the county schools, supporting school bonds and then later Governor Carl Sander's "Lights On for Education" which really got me going. That was around 1960, then closely after that I was working and distributing the polio vaccine, making sure that all the children in our area were in fact vaccinated and it seems to have worked.

Serving as a local P.T.A. president and a state officer, I continued with schools while my children were little. I was advocating for and working for improvements in education and promoting community recreation and athletics for boys and girls. When I was in school, girls were limited to playing basketball and maybe being a cheerleader and I did both of those, but I was acutely aware of the inequities between that which was available to girls as opposed to the many opportunities for boys. I contrast that situation with schools and colleges under Title IX, which, while not perfect allow more options for girls and women today.

After all my children were in school, another phase of life began for me and that was the same time that women were awakening to the notion that something was wrong about being treated less than equal. I started my working career as my vision broadened out and became aware of laws which blatantly discriminated against women and as is usual for me, I jumped right in. The footnote which really convinced me that I needed to do something was for one based on British Common Law which read, "The above does not apply to women, idiots, or children." Now I don't object to being lumped with idiots or children, but I do object to being excluded from protection under the law; therefore, I became an advocate for E.R.A. in the 70's, working with E.R.A. Georgia as West Area Georgia Coordinator.

I debated, I lobbied, I even had what would now be called the Christian Coalition praying that I'd lose a debate out in the lobby of the Holiday Inn and I involved my friends to get E.R.A. passed and as you know we didn't succeed in that effort in Georgia, but I found out who was against it and they are no longer against it and we did in fact change in the laws that affected us--those that offended us. I don't think you'll find very many of those anymore--maybe not anywhere but certainly not in Georgia. I retired in 1992 because of physical disabilities but I did not cease my political involvement, I just changed course a little bit. One of the things I've wondered is that to accomplish great things, women have to work together.

We must support each other and create the good old "girl network" to counter-act the effect of the corresponding and greatly effective good old "boy network." The Georgia Commission of Women which was created by the legislature in 1992 has its mission to announce the health, education, economic, social, and legal status of women in Georgia by conducting studies and research, disseminating information, analyzing the impact of Georgia laws on women, consulting and informing government officials, cooperating with United States and other states in programs relating to women, promoting women's organizations on state and local levels, accepting public and private grants (which I'll take if you have them with you), and holding public hearings, forums, and conferences to elevate the status of the women in Georgia.

To carry out the mandate the Commission had (and we were one of the few statutory commissions in the United States--you know there are a lot of commissions, but few of them are statutory, they have to go to great lengths to get rid of us now), but to carry out that mandate we held public hearings where we tried to establish what the priorities of the women of Georgia would be; we have published because of the lack of knowledge concerning the laws of Georgia and how they impact on women, a book (which I brought, I've got one in my car but it's hard to find a place to park and I had to walk a long way but anyway, if you come to the reception tonight I'll show you one). It's called Women and the Law: A Guide to Women's Legal Rights in Georgia.

We started [distributing the book] in June of '96; we've since published an update of the law, the legal changes since then, and this year are distributing a condensed version printed in [both] English and Spanish. [We] hold Georgia summits for women and girls which are educational in nature and motivational. We've maintained a website, we have a newsletter, and we try to recognize the accomplishments of women in several ways. One of them is that we hold the

Georgia Woman of the Year Event in the summer. Our first honorary was Rosalynn Carter, the second one was Dr. Betty Siegle, [etc.]

We also sponsor something called the Georgia Sports Woman of the Year award which we do in connection with the Women's Intersport Network and that's coming up in February. Also, we co-sponsor with Georgia Women's History Month Committee, the Women's History Month activities in the state of Georgia. We still do some other things too, but the big one, the first year we honored (and Ali Crown was Chair of that I believe) the women who were involved politically, or holding public office...oh that's right the first year it was women who were first in Georgia, who did something first and then the next year it was political. The year after that it was women in the arts...sports...OK the year of the Olympics...help me here I don't have this written down. Women in sports, OK. Anyway, we have that going on along with projects that we do ourselves and we developed a video on the First Ladies of Georgia which we have in distribution.

I've had the honor to stand with presidents and first ladies and governors in heads of universities with CEO's of major organizations or corporations, and political, religious, and educational leaders, but the greatest of honors have come as I follow the traditions set by my mother and other Georgia women who led the way for us all, even those who seek our help, to get training so they may work for their family's living, to find a refuge for violence in the home, for sexual harassment or discrimination in the workplace, to encourage those who think nobody cares, and to work to bring changes. I hope that if you decide to help celebrate women in America history, that you see fit to acknowledge those Georgia women, all of whom are very well known, but I hope you will also remember of the dozens of the women that you might not recognize, who have just begun to come into their own.

They are true heroes like Dr. Claire Hicks who gave up her practice to treat AIDS patients, Catherine Meeks who's fighting violence and Rebecca Denlinger who's a fire-fighter who's risen to be the head of the largest fire-fighting unit headed by a woman, and Marietta [Chief] and those many volunteers like Sue Castleberry who go out at night to provide solace and intervention to rape victims--those advocates who are still fighting the battle for us. Now I hope to see all of you this afternoon at the Capitol, we are expecting you and we will have some information for you later. Thank you.

Ann Lewis thanked Ms. Nellie Duke and added that partnering with state commissions is also an effective way to celebrate women. Ann Lewis then introduced **Ms. Gene Trolander**, who proposed and organized the design and development of a new park in Yellow Springs, OH honoring women.

Gene Trolander

I'm here to tell you about what a group of us did in a small town in Ohio, Yellow Springs, population 4,000 because practically every place public--the streets, the buildings, the parks, the schools--they're all named for men. So we asked the Village Council for a park to honor women. We wanted to honor all women--everyday women and outstanding women, past and present. Our Village Council said "OK--if you make the park, design it, help with the cost, get it

installed." And so we did. It took over a year and many people. The upshot is a grand, small place and it's right next to a well-used bike path. There's a path in our park and benches and plants, and three beds of tiles alongside the path with 500 tiles in them.

On each of these tiles there's the name of a woman or a women's group. Many tiles also have a phrase that captures the essence of the woman. The tiles were sold for fifty dollars each. Women were encouraged to design and pay for tiles for themselves. Many did, and they are today's history. The local paper was used to educate the community about the high-achieving women and there's a tile in our tile-bed for Coretta Scott King because she graduated from a college in our town, Antioch. People gave a lot of thought to what they put on the tiles. Families and friends got together to talk it all over. Many grew in self-esteem as they thought about the heritage built and left by the women.

Here are some of the quotes from the tiles: "Best Mom Ever," "Never at a Loss for Words," "We Shall Overcome," "We are all for Children," "Business Woman--Never Cooked," "Friend of Homeless Critters." Now out-of-town guests are brought to admire our park. Children leave the bike path to read the tiles again and again and of course they know some of the women there--their family, or neighbors, or teachers. Such variety, so many interests, and so much love [is] shown in our tiles. Soon after the tiles were laid the people saw how their tile looked with the rest of the tiles and they felt they needed a way to know more about each of the women--their curiosity is really great--and so a book is being prepared that will have a small biography of each woman honored on a tile. That way we're going to have over 500 biographies since some of those tiles have two women's names, or three.

School children are helping with this book. This is a terrific way to get people interested in women's history, and we are about to have more women's history per square inch than anyplace else in the world. This project has a life of its own. It's not just a city park--it has grown into a book, and we're adding more tile-beds, and other communities use us as a model, and here I am talking to you about it, so it's been a wonderful adventure. Wouldn't it be great if every county in the United States, in the world, had a park to honor the women? We'd like to see that. Many people learned a lot working on this park, and now our town is more interesting and it is more gender-fair. Thank you. Come and visit us.

Ann Lewis asked if a professional designer designed the park, to which Ms. Trolander responded that the design of the park was a community effort. Ms. Lewis then asked how much money was raised from the project and what the total cost was, and Ms. Trolander answered that sixty-thousand dollars was raised and the total cost ended up being fifty-thousand; surplus will be used to make a project-related book.

Johnetta Cole suggested that any photographs of the park could be made into calendars or magnets. Gene Trolander responded that T-shirts have already been made and that note cards are currently being made.

Ann Lewis thanked Gene Trolander for her testimony and introduced **Ms. Linda T. Muir, Esq.**, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Matters for Bellsouth, GA and Georgia State Chair of the Women's Leadership Forum.

Linda Muir

Glad to be here. It's a wonderful occasion. Commissioner Lewis, members of the Commission, honored speakers and guests, I am Linda Muir, a lawyer by profession and a Director of Legislative and Regulatory Matters with Bellsouth Corporation. As a citizen of Atlanta for 23 years, it is a distinct honor to welcome you to my city and to appear before you today in this historic and hallowed place at the end of a week of celebration of the life and contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He demonstrated that it is possible, though difficult and sometimes painful, for one group of people separated from another by differences to find common ground based upon mutual respect and understanding.

In no small measure, Dr. King paved the way for us to return to Atlanta to discuss the significance of the history of women. Women, too, have risen above the repercussions of discrimination to raise our voices and to proclaim with Dr. King that we also "have a dream." Yes, we should honor the past by imagining a future that includes a national museum of women's history in the Nation's Capitol in celebration of women and their role in building and sustaining this great nation of men and women. Bellsouth joins me in welcoming you and this hearing to our city. We are pleased to sponsor the reception that will be hosted by the Georgia Commission on Women at the State Capitol rotunda. My friend, Nellie Duke, Chair of the Commission and the entire G.C.W. are doing a wonderful job of helping and celebrating women and girls in Georgia. I know they look forward to working with you.

While I am privileged to represent Bellsouth, my remarks today are, almost of necessity, personal to me as a woman who cares deeply about the importance of ensuring that women's achievements and stories of women's lives are included in the national tapestry that is our history. I am here today not only as a lawyer and business woman--I am here as a daughter, a granddaughter, a sister, a niece, a wife, a mother, an aunt, a grandmother, a friend, and a colleague. I am just an ordinary American woman. A national museum of women's history is needed so that men, women, and children of my lifetime and lifetimes to come will know--so they will know--what many of them would never know without such a special museum. I grew up in Nashville, Tennessee and attended Newcomb College of Tulane University, a women's college in New Orleans, and hold three degrees.

Nevertheless, only in the last four years have I learned that Tennessee was the last state to ratify the 19th Amendment, that my grandmother was the first woman in her county--Humphries County, Tennessee--to vote in 1920 (when my mother was three years old, and my grandmother was then about the age I am now), and the true significance of the Seneca Falls Convention. Young people today, I fear, are not being taught about these feminine aspects of history either. If women are to live up to their full potential, they cannot remain ignorant, not knowing that they don't know. They must know their own history, and men need to know it, too. Our future depends upon it.

Beyond presenting the accomplishments of extraordinary women, which is essential to demonstrate what can be done, our museum should memorialize and elucidate what it means to be a woman and has meant to be a woman through the centuries. What are the experiences of

women's lives? What has remained the same over time and what has changed with the times? Now, as we enter a new century and a new millennium and are open to considering a broader expanse of the human experience is the perfect time for women to assume their rightful place for the ages. We need to know and to understand how women have shaped American history and how it, devoid of much mention of women, has shaped them.

The National Museum of Women's History will be different from any other museum although it may take from, interconnect with, and inform other museums across the country and around the world. Because it will be about women, it will have to devote significant attention to the extent to which any woman's identity is tied up in her unique capability to bear and mother children. It is almost impossible to say "women" without saying or thinking "children." Any discussion of women's history will of necessity have to look at women in the light of the history of their reproductive freedom, the impact of "the pill" and other contraceptives, and the significance of the constitutional right of each woman to choose her individual reproductive history. Is the issue only "choice"? Could it also be about "control"?

The National Museum of Women's History will need to consider what it means to be considered "chattel." The progress of women's legal rights will be a central theme. What difference did it make for women to get the vote in 1920? Why didn't they have it in 1776? Why did it take so long? Why was it not enough? In addition to legal rights, the women's museum will no doubt highlight the parallel improvement in women's economic status and the continuing need for it to improve even more for more women. To do this, it may be necessary to help us see women not only as we see ourselves but as we are perceived and depicted. It is just as important for people to know how the truth is distorted as it is for them to know the truth about women and our experiences.

As the various aspects of women's history are revealed through all the facets of our lives, it is likely to come clear that women are complicated, integrated beings living in a society in which they manage multiple roles and multiple relationships which are themselves complicated and diverse. The most significant relationships are those with men, children, and other women of course, and those are worthy of exploration in order to begin to understand the experiences of women.

The National Museum of Women's History should not be a static place. It should be alive and dynamic, a place for research and learning, a place for women and men to come together, [and] a place for children to learn that they are connected to their past and future as much as to their present. Individual women in their local communities should focus on what is uniquely theirs and look to the National Museum to help them archive it, preserve it, understand it, and share it. Ms. Trolander has presented us a grand way to do this, to literally establish a community foundation of women's history by laying inscribed tiles, each telling a different woman's story, in a community "women's park."

In the information age, the technology of today and tomorrow will be a very useful tool for finding, storing, and accessing worlds of information about who we as women are, have been, and can be. Perhaps we could establish a "virtual women's park" in cyberspace by putting all of the tiles from every American community women's park on-line.

In closing, I enthusiastically request [the following]: Let there be a special place of learning, involvement, and interaction, ideas, and action celebrating the history of American women that is not a cloister but a burst of enlightenment for all to see.

Ann Lewis asked if there were any questions, then introduced **Ms. Suzanne McDermott** who is a singer, writer, guitarist, and painter with professional experience in classical music publishing, international chamber music festivals, world and experimental music. Ms. McDermott worked as secretary to Sarah Vaughn and was United States delegate for Carter Administration to People's Republic of Congo.

Suzanne McDermitt

Thank you very much. I'm bringing my guitar up with me to make a point--I'm not going to play it. Now, I have an awful lot to say, as we all do, and a very little bit of time to say it, but I'm very glad that I was able to follow Linda because I'm going to make some similar points. Wonderful things have been said this morning. I'm wearing a little pin here. It says "his story--history; my story--mystery." The word "history" first came to us through Herodotus in 6th century Greece and we've talked about what history means and why we need to study it and learn from it.

Herodotus based his model of history on Homer's work, Homer the blind poet who sung his poems and accompanied himself on the Kithara, a stringed instrument, and he actually worked much earlier than Herodotus and had a lot of little "Homerids," they called them, that ran around reciting Homer's work, the same stories, and I bring this up because this is actually what I do. Not all of my songs are based on historic subject matter but many of them are, and interestingly enough, not wearing the signs pin, the first song I ever wrote like this was about J. Robert Oppenheimer, the three dreams of J. Robert Oppenheimer.

This past year I've been teaching at a private girls' school in Charleston, S.C., Ashley Hall, and it's part-time. I've been teaching Architectural Drawing and various forms of music and they asked me to teach 6th-grade Music this year. What an experience. I decided to teach them a survey of the history and development of Western and then American music. As I stood before 50 11-year-old girls and looked at the curriculum I'd prepared, suddenly the significance of not having female models in the history of music took on a profoundly new experience and then I started looking at everything a little bit differently.

I went to a private girls' school, I've been in the music business in some form of it all my life. Suddenly I found myself standing in the grocery store line this month and looking at the magazines. There was a *Vanity Fair* with some young babe with a beau of some sort and on the cover it said, "Bruce Weber's Photo Essay on Young Guitarists." Knowing what I was going to see I opened it up and of course all of the guitarists were boys. I offered guitar at the school and I had no students at all. Next to that was a beau with Jewel on the cover, the largest-selling female musician right now, or one of them, and there she was in her little tight gold outfit, and next to that was *People Magazine* with the top divas, all of whom had ample cleavage--not that there's anything wrong with that at all--and inside when they had the interviews--I'm furious

about this--when they had the interviews with these women and they asked what their passions were, these passions consisted of shoes and I-don't-know-what, consuming...basically consuming objects. This is not acceptable for me.

So anyway, I'm very glad that the Commission invited me to speak here today and that Ashley Hall supported my trip here. Music is so important and it has been marginalized as an important subject in our culture and our education. The history of women in music is very very interesting and the history of women in American music also. I am so glad that Elizabeth Engelhardt spoke on the women's programs. This is where a lot of the information of women in musical history has been done. I'm going to give you a couple of very brief models, make a couple of remarks, and then give a few recommendations.

Barbara Thornton, who unfortunately we lost two months ago, was a performer and musicologist who co-founded an early music group called *Sequentia* and she pretty much single-handedly--through her academic research work and then through a recording project that she did with *Sequentia*--made available all the work of Hildegard von Bingen, who was amongst other things a composer in the 12th century and we now, thanks to the work of Barbara Thornton and the recording project that she undertook, have the work of Hildegard von Bingen and the history of music has been changed forever. In 1942, Charlotte Salomon handed two packages of paintings and text to a doctor in the south of France and said, "Will you take good care of these? It is my whole life."

Not long after that Charlotte died at the age of 26 at Auschwitz, but what she left was a documentation of her entire life from the moment her parents met, and it was a package of over 700 paintings with text and music and it was called *Leben Oder Teatre, A Singpiel Life or Theatre, a play with music*. This is a document of the artist as a young girl at a remarkable moment in history. This is not an isolated case. A Dutch film director made a movie of her life, Viking Press made a very substantial book of the painting and work. There's so much more. Laura Boulton, an ethno-musicologist, recorded in the 30's and 40's the Navajo music and collected examples of the instruments, so we now have an example of the Navajo music. Jeannette Thurber founded the National Conservatory of Music in New York in 1885 and she believed in the importance of the music of African-Americans for the future of American music and offered scholarships to talented blacks.

I would not be able to do the work I am doing today if it were not for the black blues singers that traveled the United States and especially Gertrude Ma Raney, who was an early blues singer when it was not possible or appropriate for a respectable woman to perform. I will e-mail and prepare in printed form what I think is a crucial suggestion to the Committee, and that is that it would take too long and it's too complicated, not that it can't be done eventually, to put materials into the schools, you know, about bureaucracy if you're in Washington. This information that is being collected and developed really needs to go mainstream. It needs to go right to the youngest children. There are many women who are extremely talented and capable marketers and entrepreneurs who can help to fund a structure that can develop this sort of thing.

The American Folklife Center at the Smithsonian has a *Folklife and Fieldwork* booklet which describes how to collect oral history. This is a beautiful model combined with the women's

program studies that was earlier described. A publication that could be put into circulation that can be used as a model for families, communities, schools, Girl Scout troops, everything right up to the academic level, but we really have to get to the mass culture and it's a perfect way to employ artists and musicians and playwrights to commission them to do this because there is no place in the structure of our current economic society to employ the women to do this sort of work and it's crucial because it shows our soul. The music and the artwork and the plays are a way of our soul coming through and that's what I have to say.

Ann Lewis introduced the next speaker, **June Griffin**, Bill of Rights Bicentennial Commission and Medal of Honor winner. She could only speak for a few minutes, and did not address women's history issues at all in her short remarks.

After a lunch break, **Ann Lewis** introduced **Ms. Jeannie Jew**, the National President of the Organization of Chinese-American Women in Maryland.

Jeannie Jew

Thank you very much, Ann. My special thanks to the Co-Chairs and the Commissioners, to those who called me up very quickly, "Come here, come here." Atlanta is a nice place to be on an occasion like this. It is a real pleasure to be here today. The Organization of Chinese-American Women is America's premier organization devoted to the needs and concerns of Chinese and Asian-Pacific American women. Even though we were established in 1977, our organization is challenged each day as we teach basic skills to the under-served immigrant woman as well as voicing support to our new members who have broken the glass ceiling.

From those among our membership include Chief Operating Officer of the Civil Rights Commission Ruby Moy, Deputy Assistant Secretary Gau Lianh Hong, and Deputy Assistant Secretary Nancy Linpatten of Commerce. On the other end we also have the first Chinese-American woman ambassador Julia Chang-Blaugh, and even Elaine Chau, Deputy Secretary of Transportation in a previous administration. So you can understand that we have an extensive group of outstanding women. We have indeed served every administration, from President Kennedy to President Clinton by our members, and it's through that membership through educational excellence, leadership, and community service that we are here today.

I was asked, "What single recommendation could I make to this particular Commission?" And there is one, not a litany of one, not a large address, but one especially and that one is inclusion. What does inclusion really mean? It means that whatever the word minority, diversity, or race initiative be defined, it must include people who look like me. If at the table you look around and you don't see someone who looks like you, that is not an inclusionary process. But how do we really go back to when this exclusionary process began? For us, that is, the Chinese-American, it began so many years ago. I want to tell you a very brief story about how Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month all began.

It really began when a young man by the name of M. Wy Lee left Canton, China to come to America for a better life. He helped to bring the railroad and upon completion of the railroad he went to San Francisco to become a prominent business man. Hearing of the deep peril and the

violence in Oregon, Mr. Lee traveled to Oregon and helped his own people, the Chinese-Americans. He was killed, he was hanged. Mr. Lee was the beginning of a new group of people who were going to take the idea of being an American in their own hands, to help others to show that exclusionary laws which were very prevalent at that time should not be in at all.

So what was the legacy of Mr. Lee's? One woman picked up the story and believed that not only his story, but the story of other Asian-Pacific Americans in the Asian-American experience should be told our concerns, our needs, our contributions, and our achievements. This young woman walked the halls of Congress and believed that this legislation should create a commemorative period that would designate the month of May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Week and Month, and why was May chosen? Two significant events occurred during that time. One was the building of the railroad. At Provo, UT, the Chinese-Americans who built almost primarily part of the Central Pacific were denied even being there when they cut the ribbon.

In addition, the first Japanese-Americans arrived in May so many years ago. Those two pieces of history for Asian-Pacific-American Heritage Week and Month became significant to go forward, but how do we get 218 signatures from members of Congress? That's almost totally impossible. This young woman, once before, was denied the opportunity to become a Capitol page in the U.S. Congress because she was female, because she was Asian. When she returned to Capitol Hill some years later, she was the first staff member of Asian descent to be on Capitol Hill so already benchmarks were being made. The time when legislation occurred was in 1977.

It was the very first time which the legislation developed and conceived by her was to designate the month of May of which May 5th and May 10th would be designated as A.P.A. Heritage Week and A.P.A. Heritage Month sometime later. It took her 20 years, two decades, for that legislation to be written in perpetuity. That legislation would be impossible to pass now, because no such legislation can be enacted. I will say something: We women didn't do a good enough job because Women's History Month was not enacted into perpetuity. It is done by the President every single year.

We should go back to the books and make certain that it is public law and that it is written in perpetuity. In fact, Asian-Pacific-American Heritage Month is the only law with regards to Women's History Month and Black History Month. I would challenge each and every one of you to go back and make certain that the Congress pass it into public law so that it would be done in perpetuity and not at the whim of any possible member who is sitting in the White House. So I assure you that without that perpetuity I would not be standing here today.

So what happened to this kind of tragedy that occurs? What was a personal tragedy in the life of this particular family did indeed become a public testimony because the month of May is now the umbrella-mark in which all Asian-Americans can say, "I want you to look at our concerns, or our needs and our contributions and our stories." But who is Jeannie Jew? She was that young woman so many years ago who really stalked the halls of Congress, knocking on 218 doors and did it for 20 years. You can imagine how difficult it is to be almost a single lobbyist on the Hill

as well as to approach the President of the United States, so from President Carter to President Clinton, every President has designated the month of May as A.P.A Heritage Month.

That was a difficult task, but who else is Jeannie Jew? Jeannie Jew is the daughter, the granddaughter, of that early pioneer who gave his life in the plains of Oregon and today, my grandfather's spirit crosses the century and stands next to me as I speak to you. The term "Asian-Pacific-American," and "Asian-American" never existed 25 years ago. I was fortunately able to create that term and help to popularize that term to make it so that every time you utter that word, a little bit of me stands next to you, and that a little spirit from way-back-when, also is standing by you.

Each time that we are given the opportunity to speak before forums such as this, opportunity to have programs such as this, and to be invited to programs such as this, we know that in some way we are being included in the process for without that word "inclusion," none of us would really be here. I am so often invited to events in which people who look like me are never there, and if I'm not here, that means the process and the program is exclusionary so the key word and the key accomplishment that I want to set forth from this particular Commission is that we be included-every program, every book, every history, every text; in fact, the Organization of Chinese-American Women was just given some seed money to start a Chinese-American Women's History project for the 20th century.

I hereby request and hope that this Commission supports and endorses and recognizes our small project because we intend to recognize every woman of Chinese descent who has made an impact on the history of America. I will say that I was at a recent program on American Women's History in Washington. It talked about the women's history but it did not include us. The answer was, "Well we didn't have enough facts in the last quarter of this century," so that meant for a quarter of a century I didn't exist as a person. So this woman who stands across these times asks you to think about us, to include us in every project, every program, and every forum that you have-that the Organization of Chinese-American Women stands with you and we support you, and we look forward to working with you. Thank you very much.

Ann Lewis asked if there were any questions and thanked Ms. Jew. She then introduced **Ms. Edith Mayo**, curatorial consultant for the National Museum of History and the creator of the first CyberMuseum exhibit, *Motherhood, Social Service and Political Reform: Political Culture and Imagery of American Woman Suffrage*.

Edith Mayo

Good afternoon, and I'm honored to have the opportunity to address the Commission again. When I spoke to you before, I talked to you about what I thought was a crucial need for Title IX for women's history. This time I'd like to talk on the subject of a particular exhibition that I had the good fortune to curate this fall entitled *Rights for Women*. I would want to talk about this not because I was involved, but because I feel so passionately about the topic. The exhibit was produced under the joint sponsorship of the World Financial Center in New York City and the National Museum of Women's History in Washington, D.C. and addressed the subject of women suffrage, gaining the right to vote for women.

We have in the past few years celebrated the 75th anniversary of Women's Suffrage and commemorated the 150th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention but I think celebrating and commemorating are not sufficient. The public at large stills knows little about the real Suffrage Movement, the women who lead it- a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-class movement and the significance to American political life, so I was happy to have the opportunity to address the subject of suffrage once again in this exhibition. I view history as a tool for women's empowerment and think it's crucial for women to understand their political past, so in this exhibition I tried to present Suffrage Movement as one of the two most important political movements of the 20th century: the extension of political and legal rights to women-that is over half of our population-and the second movement that was of great importance, civil rights for African-Americans.

When you examine the structure of the Suffrage Movement, it reveals to be quite different from the popular perception: that of a small group of elderly but doggedly determined women whose persistence finally paid off until men gave them the right to vote. The examination reveals instead a full-fledged mass-political movement of theoreticians, recruiters, organizers, writers, and publicists, of leaders and lawyers - in short, demonstrating that these women were brilliant political strategists who struggled and manipulated an intricate and complex political system until they achieved victory.

The exhibit presents 52 Suffrage leaders-their photos and biographies, photo-collage panels at the parades, pageantry, and activism of the Suffrage drive, reproductions of the colorful banners from the Smithsonian's collection, the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe, the National Women's Party, and the Connecticut State Library Museum in Hartford. The display also includes some of the political imagery the women invented and developed to sell the Suffrage Movement to the larger American public and presents the women in their professional leadership roles.

The women were presented this way with great deliberation because as popularly presented as the little old ladies, these women are robbed of their historical agency and power. The women invented many of the strategies of popular politics which today are taken for granted as the hallmark of 20th century politics. This brings me to the advocacy of a national museum for women's history and the importance of creating a space where women's real story can be told. If the rights for women exhibition were dedicated as a millennium project, we could attract the necessary funding to place the exhibit on the museum's website or travel it across the country.

It could be enlivened through the addition of Suffrage songs and music through actresses speaking the biographical details. The research is completed, the exhibition is developed, but is now languishing in storage. We need visibility and funding. We must move, I think, beyond celebrating and commemorating the past to understanding women's experiences and restoring the power of women's past. We must create spaces, whether physical or in cyberspace, where the central experiences of women are no longer marginalized but where women's experiences are finally viewed as central to the American experience and stereotypes are laid to rest.

We must create spaces that break down the deep-seated ambivalence, even hostility, towards power in the hands of women that continues to plague our progress today and I hope the Commission will take up that challenge. Thank you.

Ann Lewis highly recommended the cyber exhibit and thanked Ms. Mayo for her suggestions. She then introduced **Dr. Allida M. Black**, a member of the Board of Directors of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill and the National Museum of Women's History. She has published [Casting her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism](#), and [What I Want to Leave Behind: The Selected Articles of Eleanor Roosevelt](#).

Allida Black

As we leave today to prepare the work before us, I ask the Commission to keep one charge before it and to use it in framing every project you undertake-to recognize that commemoration alone is self-defeating. Celebrating events, especially events relating to women, without understanding those events-who the women were, why they acted, what forces shaped their actions, what impact their actions had-is counter-productive and dangerous because it perpetuates stereotypes which undermine the Commission's goals.

Take Eleanor Roosevelt, for example. Anybody in here who knows me knows that I've spent fifteen years of my life working on Eleanor Roosevelt. I sold a car, I sold everything I own, I have thirty-seven files of file boxes in my basement, but let's look at her. We celebrate her in ways we do few other American women. She is included in the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C. and she has her own statue in New York's Riverside Park and Washington National Cathedral. Pundits compare her to Hillary Rodham Clinton with a drop of the hat, but how is she described to the public unfamiliar with her legacy? As "her husband's eyes and ears," "the conscience of the nation," or my least favorite of all, "the First Lady of the world" - all convenient labels which strip the most important woman of the 20th century of her power.

The woman who brought Harry Hopkins, the architect of modern social service policy into the White House, the woman who drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document which has served as a model of more state declarations than our own constitution, and the woman who, more than any other white American of her era, understood in a profound way the intersection between race, class, gender, religion, and democracy, is relegated to standing in her husband's shadow rather than exerting leadership in her own right.

When Eleanor Roosevelt entered the White House in 1933, she published a second book [It's up to the Women](#) in which she told Americans that if we were to survive the Depression, save and humanize capitalism, and make democracy more vibrant and exclusive, women must act. They must study the issues, get involved, and not be afraid to speak, to act, and to take risks. She said this as a politician, an activist, and as a historian. She taught us history and was widely read in it. The Commission's statutory authority is limited. Millennium-generated projects may only last for two years. I ask you today to be creative in your interpretation of these guidelines. Follow Eleanor Roosevelt's lead and "think, speak, and act boldly."

I urge the Commission to designate a category for projects designed to last long after the Commission completes its final report. If the Commission would designate certain notable projects/programs as Millennium Projects and allow that distinction to be used to raise funds for these activities, the Commission would be making a huge commitment to commemoration with understanding. While there are numerous projects worthy of this endorsement, I appeal to you to recognize two. First, the National Museum of Women's History-a building with and without walls for women. Edie Mayo talked of the role its cybermuseum could play in further understanding the intricacies of the Women's Suffrage Movement.

I ask you to consider the impact it could have on the exhibit before you on Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It would be the only time in her own words where Eleanor Rossevelt could speak for herself and we owe her that. There are people like me and my great friend Blanche Cook and my friend Dorris Cards-Goodwin-we will tell you in a drop-beat what she said but rarely do we have the opportunity to hear what she said about herself. With the Commission's endorsement, funds could be raised to add audio, film, and other interactive technology to the photographic exhibit, launch it on the National Museum of Women's History's cybermuseum site, and allow it to travel to schools, libraries, and other interesting repositories.

It hung in the Washington National Cathedral for seven weeks. I now have 17 different states who have contacted me individually to bring the exhibit. Endorsing and recognizing such exhibits would not only bring attention to the museum and aid in its development campaign, but it would also bring American women's history to the world via the Internet. It would also dramatically illustrate how intertwined are women's rights with human rights.

Second, the Eleanor Roosevelt Project soon to be presented to the National Historical Publication and Records Commission. When we met in D.C. last winter, Ann Lewis spoke eloquently of the need to preserve, collect, and annotate women's records. If we could produce an Eleanor project-digitize it-the impact on world understanding would be profound and I urge the Commission to consider this proposal should the N.H.P.R.C. adopt it at its February meeting.

These endorsements would not cost the Commission any of its limited funds but would instead enable two very worthy projects to raise the funds they need to do the work the Commission was charged with encouraging. The day before she entered the hospital for the last time, Eleanor Roosevelt battled fatigue, high fever, and nausea to write the last sentence of her life-it is my screen-saver, it is shellacked on the door of every campus I have ever been on, and I urge for us to carry it with us in our soul when we leave. It is, "Staying aloof is not a solution, it is a cowardly evasion." Her charge should not go unnoticed-it's what forms the basis of all this activism and I thank you very much for your attention.

Ann Lewis thanked Dr. Black and introduced **Ms. Mashadi Matabane**, a senior at Spelman College where she majors in Women's Studies.

Mashadi Matabane

I've been involved in Women's Studies for about four years now, I think. I became interested in it-I went to Madeira School, a boarding school on the East Coast-and the head mistress is a very outspoken feminist and of course it rubbed off on the rest of us, and I got to Spelman and they had a Women's Studies major there. I think my sophomore year they initiated it and I switched over from History to Women's Studies which is exactly where I want to be-I'm going to graduate with my B.A. in Women's Studies and get a good job 'cause no one thinks you can with a Women's Studies degree.

But anyway, I feel that in terms of celebrating women's achievements in American History I think it needs to start.I'm going to focus on the classroom in terms of children because one of the things I'm angry about is that why did it take me so long to learn about so much when I'm in college? I am furious...like I don't understand, there's like so many women out there, so many things I just didn't know about, why am I twenty years old learning about it in my Feminist Theory class when there was all the opportunity in the world when I was in elementary school or when I was in middle school?

And so I kind of feel cheated, and I think that's where it needs to start. So I have a couple of ideas I'm going to put forth. Maybe someone could create an on-going list/computer-database detailing memorials, grave sites, museum exhibits, historical homes, and other sites by state and city, you know, so that teachers and schools could have this list or could tap into the database-they could choose where to go, you know-Georgia you can go here, there, you know, they want to travel to Washington, D.C.

There could be a website and this database could actually be on this website and it could lead to other like-minded sites and this particular website could also highlight a specific memorial, like I said, you know, a historical site of the month, or you could have...you could also call up a specific woman, this website could also have.you could keep on-line specific historical speeches that certain women are known for or particular related rights, several pieces you could have on this website.

You could have bibliographies, books about these women and also the things that they actually wrote, and maybe a little index and tell a little bit about what each book is about, you could have a biographical database...I mean this could really be an introductory thing in terms of having at least a starting point, you know, for kids to tap into something.just put a name in, you know, you get a little biographical sketch to tell you where you can go for more, or.I also have pictures of them...I mean this all just sounds so simple to me but if it wasn't I guess we wouldn't all be here, but I think that places that commemorate women should have schools on their mailing list, or schools should get themselves on the mailing list and that way they can have information packets sent to the schools-actually maybe someone could come from the place to speak to the children before they actually go there, and this could tie into whatever era students are studying.

Have students do reports on women. I mean, perhaps they could investigate the women behind the famous men, like we don't know what some presidents' wives did or we don't know about the sisters of scientists, you know, what they may have done. I think it's about taking a

non-traditional route. Students need to realize that women today also are making American history, and that they can acknowledge and celebrate women who are well-known but also women who are a little bit closer to their own reality-make history intimate.

I mean I think that you can get caught up, you know, "history's the past with nothing to do with me," but if you kind of bring it, you know, a little bit closer I mean, I know for me growing up, we never quite got into the 60's or the 70's. We always got stuck a little bit after slavery or you know, so it was like, can we move forward please? And also you interview women in their lives like sisters, mothers, grandmothers. I mean, somebody's grandmother could have, you know, been a labor union organizer and no one knows it, and this could also work on a community level in terms of actual, you know, March month of celebrating women's achievements.

Basically I guess what I'm figuring out is that I'm right now, in terms of my family and who I've come across, you're surrounded every day by living American history-you just don't even know it-and I think students need to tap into that so it's also just to bridge that gap between the past and now in terms of getting students to understand women from the past and when the now, so we always have to be, you know, digging up the past or we need to just bridge the gap-make someone understand that history is right now as well.

Include a variety of women of all backgrounds in textbooks. I hate textbooks 'cause the teachers I always had, I mean, they literally went *straight from the book* and I can tell you in college that's what happens in Spelman, but it doesn't encourage you always to show up at your class because you figure they're going to go through the book, well you can just do that, you know, while you're watching the soaps in your room. I mean, but until class, we read from her book Dr. Beverly's book Words of Fire and I learned about so many black women. I mean, if I hadn't taken this class, I really would have thought that black women weren't doing anything in 1800's except you know slavery was going on.

That's basically about the only place black women have been situated is in slavery, and I learned about [the other things that black women have achieved] and I was like, "Wow, we've been doing things," and that felt so good to me because no one told me before, I didn't know. You know, my parents were very politically active and you know you're getting black history but still it's like, I was just you know you have Harriet Tubman...you get the same black women and they're wonderful but we need more. It's not going to hurt to have ten. It amazed me that black women were doing things that I did not know-they were writing, talking about their attitudes towards race and sex. That brought history closer to me, that I knew that women were doing things even at that time period because otherwise I would never have known.

I remember when I was in elementary school in the mid to late 1980's during Black History Month, the teacher would put up these individual posters on the wall featuring different historical black figures, and there was text, and there was you know a picture, and I remember my teacher said, she asked us, "What is Congress?" and I yelled out, "It's a bunch of men." I remember this as if it were yesterday because I think she hurt my feelings-she told, she point, she said "Mashadi go up to the wall" and there was a picture I believe with Barbara Jordan, I'm not sure, and she made me read it out loud to the class and ever since then I always read things on walls because she, she was no joke.

I think we had the same thing for Women's Month. You could various....women of different race, of different backgrounds, a series put up on schoolroom walls, make documentaries or films about women in American history. I just saw *Paradise Road*; I didn't know anything about women who were interned in the 40's. Kids love to watch videos, I mean, you know, let's be honest. I would show up for class if there was a movie that was going to be shown. There could be a national women's history time line like a mural or some other physical, artistic object and I think you could really involve children in that, and I'm not sure, I just.....some kind of time line, and it could be on-going. It could be completed by centuries for the past and for the more recent times through the decades. Let's see let's see.

I guess OK what it all comes down to for me is that there needs to be a clear, strong, diverse educational resource for teachers to use for Women's Month 'cause I don't think we take that seriously-we still don't take Women's Month seriously. I don't hear enough about it. I mean, I have little cousins who just have no clue that this month exists and so...in it you could have lesson plans, posters, suggested places to visit, how to introduce the topic, why it's even important to study the topic because I found that just because a teacher was a woman does not mean that she's going to go out of her way to whip out and tell you about women in history, so I think that it would be a great way for teachers who are not particularly trained or who don't see the interest, I mean this is a way for them to introduce the topic to their students and....those are my suggestions.

Ann Lewis thanked Ms. Matabane and introduced **Ms. Judy Heumann**, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

Judy Heumann

I'd like if I could please just to also read a summary. Judy Winston who's the Assistant Secretary for the General Council Office in the department and who's working with the Commission couldn't come today, but I have a very quick summary of the Department of Education's issues in education if I can read that and then I'll get into my statement:

One of the long-standing goals of the U.S. Department of Education has been to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence. The Department works to achieve this goal for women and girls in a variety of ways, including its work through the enforcement, as you know of Title IX, which prohibits discrimination, sex discrimination, in federally-funded education programs and its work through the Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center. In spite of these and other governmental and private efforts, stereotypes about women and girls still exist and it is important to dispel those perceptions.

Without the presence of accurate and complete women's history in individual curriculums, as well as throughout the entire educational experience, young girls and boys are allowed to develop stereotypical views that may have a negative impact on equal opportunities in all areas of society. Children, even very young children, must have the opportunity to learn about women's accomplishments and our roles in our history.

Teaching women's history increases the self-image and self-esteem of girls and the respect of women's capabilities and worth of women by boys.

Further we must expand our methods of teaching women's history to represent all women, including disabled women, women of color, and women who are members of many different ethnic groups that comprise our communities. By expanding our teaching of history to include an examination of the role and contributions of all women, boys, and girls-we gain a better, more accurate sense of women's place in history which in turn increase the aspirations of all children. To this end, one recommendation to consider is that the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women's History encouraged funding for the support and identification of promising practical things that effectively integrate women's history into the elementary and secondary education process. Through the efforts of integrating complete and accurate women's history throughout all levels of education, we ensure that the rich diversity that comprises women's achievements, contributions, and life stories are included in our past and our future.

I think this statement really substantiates the much more eloquently-presented previous speaker from Spelman College's views-done in a governmental style. However, the way you expressed it, the depth is much more impact. Also, Susan Hodges if you could raise your hand. Susan is here from the Department who works in Judy's office so if any of you have any other questions that you'd like to ask later on, please feel free to talk to Susan or myself about this.

I am, as Ann said, the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the Department of Education. I'm speaking today, really on behalf of disabled women, particularly the disabled women political appointees who had heard about the Commission meetings going on and felt that it was really important to allow some of the issues affecting disabled women to be able to influence the overall work that's going to be going on, so my statement will really be one which is looking historically at some of the issues affecting disabled women, and conclude with some broad recommendations of whatever you're going to do, how we think this village should be integrated.

I am thrilled to participate today in the work of this Presidential Commission. Celebrating the role of women in American history and ensuring that our children recognize the impact women have had in shaping our country is very exciting. Your commitment and dedication will no doubt inspire some powerful recommendations for President Clinton to consider and I am honored to be a part of the dialogue. I would particularly like to thank Ann Lewis for inviting the Department of Education and particularly myself to be with you today.

In presenting information today on effective ways to commemorate the achievements of American women, my desire is that you leave here understanding the disabled women's achievements are an important and overlooked part of the history of American women. Disability history and specifically the role of disabled women have been an invisible part of American history. Thus, this opportunity to make the invisible visible for an audience of historians seems to me to be a "historical" event in and of itself.

In the United States, of the 53.9 million people living with disabilities, almost 29 million are women. I had my disability in 1949-I had Polio. Disability is part of the life course of both men and women. The most frequent reported causes of disability among women include arthritis, back or spinal problems, heart disease, respiratory problems, and high blood pressure. As this list indicates, most women are not born with a disability but acquire their disability over time. Although the consequences of having a disability can be significant for both men and women, women bear disproportionate outcomes, both in the U.S. and all over the world.

On average, women with disabilities are less educated and less likely to be employed than women without disabilities or men with and without disabilities. Many women with disabilities live in poverty. Research conducted by the Centers for Disease Control has found that women with mobility disabilities (like people who use wheelchairs, crutches, braces) are significantly more likely to live below the federal poverty level than men across most levels of disability. Women with disabilities from racial minority groups are the most disadvantaged in our society.

Women with disabilities face other barriers to participation in society. For instance, they often are denied basic health care because of their disabilities. Too often, health care providers focus on the disability but fail to provide routine health care needed by all women regardless of disability. I recently spoke at a conference in California which is focusing on issues affecting disabled women and breast cancer because the movement in the area of breast cancer is still not integrating issues affecting disabled women who may acquire breast cancer such as assuring that facilities are accessible or the advertisements that are being done clearly show disabled women there, and so many women are in fact not participating in what we consider good health care because of bad attitudes and because the women's community has not yet recognized the particular issues facing this population.

Disability refers to the effects of certain physical or mental conditions. It is also a social construct. As a social construct, it equals gender, race, and socio-economic class as a potential determinant of life experiences. Just as gender provides a means of examining power relationships within a historical framework, disability similarly represents power relationships. The stigma associated with disability reflects value judgement of our culture. These value judgements influence decisions of the dominant society regarding allocation of resources. These assumptions have been decidedly challenged by members of the disability community. Today, civil rights laws are beginning to mitigate the barriers associated with disability. The ways in which this has been accomplished provides important information about the evolution of American society.

Social historians in recent decades have written histories of the Women's Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, The Gay Rights Movement, but are only just beginning to recognize the importance of the Disability Rights Movement. This movement, with significant participation of women, has been instrumental in effecting political and social changes for people with disabilities and the general society.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, enacted in 1990, provides a civil rights framework that establishes requirements for prohibiting against people with disabilities in areas of public accommodation, employment, transportation, and communications. Disabled women played key

roles in writing the legislation, championing it through Congress, and organizing grassroots support instrumental in its final passage. Academicians are beginning to recognize the linkage between the Disability Rights Movement and other civil rights movements in the 20th century. Characterized by one author as the "Last Civil Rights Movement" (Dredger), the Disability Rights Movement has impacted legislation, jurisprudence, academia, expressed culture, as well as the lives of millions of people with disabilities and their families, providers, and society in general.

This movement is not confined to the United States, and women with disabilities are influencing women's rights movements all over the world. One striking example of this influence occurred in Beijing at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women and the associated Non-Government Organization Forum held in August, 1995. Women with disabilities representing over 35 countries participated in a symposium on issues of women with disabilities. This symposium occurred under very difficult conditions. Accommodations and meeting spaces were largely inaccessible.

Disabled women protested about these conditions to Chinese officials with no avail. Finally on the third day of the forum, when disabled women and their supporters arrived at a workshop on "Disabled Women and Development" only to find that the meeting room was located up several flights of stairs, a spontaneous demonstration erupted. Disabled women continued to protest throughout the course of the forum and gained international attention to issues of freedom of expression, denial of education, high unemployment rates, substandard health care, and basic denials of civil and human rights.

At the international level, this linkage between the Women's Movement and the Disability Movement has created a synergy with great potential for improving the quality of life for all women. Many activities are ongoing. In 1997, the International Leadership Forum for Women with Disabilities was held in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the United Nations, 25 United States government agencies, and 22 non-governmental organizations. Attended by 652 women from 82 countries, it reached out to representatives of the International Women's Movement because disabled women know that their issues are issues affecting all women. Follow-up meetings will include four national and international training sessions that will focus, among other things, on liasoning with established women's organizations to achieve mutual goals.

In the past, those writing American history have ignored disability history. Only now is disability emerging as an object of historical, anthropological, sociological, economic, and linguistic study. In fact, a field of disability studies has emerged and is being taught at a number of universities around the country. Because disability has not been a subject of historical inquiry, we don't yet know the extent to which disability affected the lives of American women nor how disability interacted with other attributes. We have yet to write histories of American women that reflect their true diversity.

For instance, while most Americans know about Helen Keller's sensory disabilities, they don't know about her strong advocacy for social justice. Americans know about Harriet Tubman's work freeing slaves, but few know that she had a seizure disorder. Dorothea Lange's photography is well known, but not the fact that she had polio which left her with a significant

physical mobility impairment. Because disability had been associated in our culture with an inability to lead, American leaders such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, or more recently, Barbara Jordan, chose to hide their disabilities from the American public. These are the histories that are yet to be written.

As a woman with a disability who has participated in political, social, and cultural developments that have changed the world for people with disabilities, I think it is critical that we document the role that disability has played in the lives of men and women. We must record the history of changes that are occurring and analyze the forces that have created these changes, and we must reflect on what these changes mean for our overall society. It is imperative that disability be recognized as part of the current and past history of American women.

President Clinton has appointed more people with disabilities to positions of leadership than any other American president. Many of these appointees are women. His recognition that disability is part of the rich diversity of our country helps set the stage for the Commission's work. Your efforts will help to make disabled women's history a part of the history of women in this country.

Having laid out some of the reasons that women's disability history must be included in the Report to the President, let me suggest some ways that this might be accomplished. One, include disability in any frameworks developed to guide this work and in any public displays of women's history which is accessible for blind and deaf women. Two, develop a website that catalogs existing sites for finding information on women and include women with disability, which may mean looking at organizations like the National Council on Disability, the National Council on Independent Living, the World Institute on Disability in Berkeley, CA, and the Center for Research on Women with Disabilities at Baylor College in Houston, TX.

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, a part of my office, is currently funding development of the Disability Rights Leadership Archive at the University of San Francisco and a project at the Bancroft Library on "The Disabled Persons' Independence Movement: The Formative Years in Berkeley, CA." Finally, include women with disabilities in the implementation efforts that result from the Commission's recommendations.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today. If I or my office can be of any support in meeting the goals of this Commission, I would be more than happy to work with you in the future. Thank you.

Ann Lewis thanked Judy Heumann and introduced **Dr. Rosemarie Garland Thompson**, Associate Professor of English at Howard University, Washington, DC. Dr. Thompson is also a disabilities studies scholar and author of [Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature](#).

Rosemarie Garland Thompson

Good afternoon. I appreciate having this opportunity to speak to you today about including disability in our celebrations of women in American history. My remarks here elaborate on the main point that Assistant Secretary of Education Judy Heumann just made to you: that disability

should be a visible category in women's history. I'm going to expand on Judy's talk by acquainting you with the emerging field of disability studies. Disability Studies is a recent development in the academic world that is changing not only the way we imagine women's history but is transforming the conceptual framework of humanities studies similarly to the way that considering gender and race have changed the way we study the world.

Let me describe to you what I call the New Disability Studies in the Humanities. This emerging interdisciplinary field of inquiry is just one of the profound changes and challenges in the educational world wrought by the civil rights movements of this century. Part of this broad social transformation is the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, a civil rights act that mandates physical inclusion of people with disabilities by focusing on accommodating our presence and eliminating barriers that keep us from full and equal participation in the public and private sectors. The ADA is requiring academe to reconfigure itself physically and procedurally, but it is also prompting an intellectual reconfiguration as well.

Colleges and universities are now coming to understand disability as a diversity category, a pedagogical issue, a field of study, an identity, and a civil rights mandate. Moreover, disabled people are a clientele to be served. The aging of America is increasing our presence, making disability a majority concern and underlining the fact that disabled people are the largest minority group in the United States, comprising when broadly defined 30% of the U.S. population. There's also a growing awareness among those who imagine themselves as "able" body-that disability is perhaps not so distant, or threatening-that is indeed often an ordinary, ultimately universal human experience. Now, what makes the new disability studies new is that it envisions disability as a subject of study and a category of analysis that goes far beyond fields such as social work and medical rehabilitation.

The disciplines that tend to treat disability as a physiological problem or as a set of unfortunate individual circumstances in need of solutions-in other words, the new disabilities studies recognizes disability as a social identity and a way of imagining bodily variation that can be traced, analyzed, and challenged through the humanities curriculum and scholarship. Rather than viewing disability medical category or as a social problem, the New Disabilities Study instead considers disability in the broadest sense as a representational system that marks bodily differences and prescribes a hierarchy of bodies that is then used to justify the distribution of class, power, and resources.

This re-framing of disability emanates from and engages several inter-related developments in the study of history. First, recovering the history of disabled populations is part of the shift in the practice of social history from studying the powerful and elite to focusing on the perspectives and contributions of previously marginalized persons. Second, examining images of disability arises logically from literary theory's emphasis on discourse analysis, social constructionism, and the politics of representation. Third, theorizing disability as an identity-category responds to critical theory's inquiry into the body's relation to subjectivity, agency, and identity.

Fourth, framing disability in political terms reflects the post-Civil Rights impulse towards positive identity politics. Fifth, insisting on the integration of disability into the curriculum and disabled people in the classroom corresponds to the humanistic commitment to serving under-

represented populations. By recasting disability from a majority model into a minority model, the New Disabilities Studies takes its form from these paradigm shifts as it strives to inter-weave the political, the material, and the intellectual realms. Here, for an example, are a few of the compelling recent topics of research and publication in the new disability studies: The history of the new disability rights, of course, invalidism in women's writing, disability and the ideology of individualism, a critique of telethons, the ethics of genetic testing, the metaphors of deafness, disabled dancers, disabled heroines in Tony Morrison's novels, feminists' analyses of anorexia and bulimia, the concept of prosthetics, the politics of appearance, the crippled figure in sentimentalism, the disabled figure in religious traditions, disabled fashion models, that's my new project, and histories of deaf culture, and I would like to charge Mashadi with going to graduate school and writing a book on Harriet Jacobs or Barbara Jordon, both of who are important African-American women leaders who were also disabled.

In my view, the fundamental goal of this emerging field of study is to re-imagine disability. The most important contribution that a humanities-based perspective can bring to the subject of disability is a focus on the issue of representation. Now I mean here "representation" in its very broadest sense, not just as novels or paintings, but as a saturating of the material world with meaning. In this sense, disability is a story we tell about bodies. Disability studies uses mainstream critical theory to dismantle many of these stories-chiefly, it challenges the assumption that disability is a natural state of bodily inferiority, exposing it instead as a cultural product fabricated from bodily differences. It challenges as well the story that disability is an occasion for pity or for patronizing admiration, or a tragedy, or that disability is something to be "overcome" rather than something to be integrated into a meaningful life.

Disability, then, is a way of interpreting bodies that historians can chart over time, that philosophers can query, that religious scholars can trace, and that literary critics can reveal. The important point, of course, is that the stories we tell ourselves about disability shape the material world. They inform human relations and they mold our senses of who we are. The New Disabilities Studies rewrites our collective stories about disability-in other words, it re-imagines disability as an integral part of all human experience and history.

I'd like to close with three recommendations that echo Judy's suggestions and that emerged from Disability Theory and practice. One, include disability as a category of experience and identity in considering women in American history. In other words, allow a disabilities perspective to shape the way we think about women's lives and accomplishments. Number two: include women who have disabilities in planning and executing all aspects of this celebration of women in American history. Three, include all people with disabilities in these celebrations by assuring that all sites are fully accessible, both physically and intellectually (which is I think what I've been talking about).

Such inclusion will help establish what the scholar Eve Sedgwick has called, "a universalizing view of disability," one that will cast disability [as], and I'm quoting Sedgwick here, "an issue of continuing determinative importance in the lives of people across the spectrum." These celebrations should confirm what was asserted in a recent chronicle of higher education article that said, and I'm quoting again, "the cultural representation of people with disabilities affects us all." Thank you.

Ann Lewis thanked Ms. Thompson and introduced the final scheduled speakers **Dr. Nancy Nahra and Dr. Will Sterne Randall**. Dr. Nahra is a nationally recognized award-winning poet and a visiting professor at John Cabot University, VT. Dr. Randall is a former award-winning investigative journalist and also a visiting professor at John Cabot University. They are together writing a textbook history of the United States for university students.

Dr. Nancy Nahra

The reason I've been invited here today, I think, is because I write books. I write books about the 19th century and I want Ms. Matabane to know I also write textbooks and I try to write textbooks of a kind you would not like to read while watching soaps, and it's true that right now I'm working on a history of the United States-I can't talk about it without doing that because that's how big it has to be. There will be women on every page, not because it's a women's history book, but because women belong on every page. And because I have been here today and learned things very recently, particularly from the very moving remarks by Ms. Heumann and also Professor Thomson, we will include in our book a history of people with disabilities which has been an amazing blind-spot in history books in general. In writing the stories of women in 19th century America I have encountered more silence than voices, and then worked on finding out why.

Well-meaning people, both women and men, believed that silence suited ladies because it proved their refinement. The Bible, after all, had instructed women not to speak up in church and that pious behavior was encouraged. Without education most women lacked the confidence to express what they had to say. When attitudes started to change, women were gradually allowed to speak publicly to groups of women but not to "promiscuous groups," as assemblies of men and women were called.

The record shows that women who were bold enough to speak in public paid a public price. Rotten eggs, when they are thrown at the podium, do not need interpretation. Fire hoses were also used against women who tried to speak publicly. When women began to leave their "separate sphere," as it was called, some professions were easier to crack than others. Medicine, because it resembled what women did anyway, could tolerate women practitioners. For a time in the late 19th century there were women physicians before the medical profession closed ranks to exclude them. But law was a different matter. Because lawyers were required to collect money and to speak in court, women could not expect to be allowed such unseemly tasks. They did not handle money and could not-often would not-speak up.

The first woman lawyer in the United States, Myra Colby Bradwell, fought hard for nearly twenty-five years before the United States Supreme Court granted retroactively her request to be admitted to the Illinois bar. Why have you never heard her name? For a quarter century she wrote and published a weekly newspaper, the *Chicago Legal News*-I see nodding heads, you have no idea how thrilled I am to see nodding heads in the room-that paper set the agenda for Illinois political debate and legislation with respect to married women's property laws. You have never heard of her partly because her papers are in private hands and her newspaper, outside Chicago, is available only on microfilm that is difficult to find and just as difficult to read.

Myra Colby Bradwell is estimable but not unique. Her story belongs with those of other American heroes. As a researcher I want to see her story not just told but moved. Her papers and those of other admirable women need to be available beyond local historical societies. When a bright undergraduate in a Georgetown seminar asked me where to go for the papers of the first ladies, I had to ask, "Which one?" There is no archive for outstanding American women-not even for First Ladies.

Now, let me remind you about an important American poet, Elizabeth Bishop. She always refused to have her work included in collections of women's poetry. In her view, that would have diminished her achievement somehow. In that same spirit, I think that for now there needs to be a museum to celebrate American women, but only for a while. Now because I do history I take the long view of things; I mean, I hope that in a hundred years no one will understand why such a place exists because it will be so obvious these outstanding people have always belonged in a museum of America's human riches. Thank you very much.

Dr. Will Randall

To co-author with one's wife, one always lets one's wife go first-that way, she remains one's wife. When I saw that I was the only man on the agenda I gulped, but as a young reporter covering the Civil Rights Movement in the 60's, I was often the only white man and I got used to the idea of being the only one and I'm very grateful to be invited because this is not something that men should be kept from celebrating. As a biographer of the Founders of the United States and as a historian writing textbooks for college students, I have been constantly frustrated by the difficulty of learning about the lives of the women in American history.

Nearly 1,000 books have been written about Thomas Jefferson but almost nothing is known of his mother, his wife, his sisters, his daughters, or the scores of slave women who carried out the labor on his farms or in the President's House he was the first to occupy. There is no modern biography of Martha Dandridge Custis Washington, the first First Lady. Only two of her letters are known to survive and these are in private collections.

To learn of the daily lives of the women who did so much to shape the customs and rituals of early America, it is necessary to decode the writings of their husbands. George Washington was so touching on the subject of his wife's poor education that he personally rewrote all her correspondence-even her shopping lists. Even our most famous spy and traitor, Benedict Arnold, is better documented in American history than his brilliant wife, Margaret Arnold, who masterminded the plot to overthrow Washington and the rebel Congress. The most highly-paid woman spy in American history, her records survive only in Canada and England where she lived in exile for 20 years. One of the least-heeded admonitions of the revolutionary period was Abigail Adam's injunction to her husband while he was writing the frame of the first American government, "Remember the ladies." (He didn't.)

The problem does not abate as we grow closer to our own time. Almost every President has his papers gathered and published at some university or other, but how will future researchers and students find out what happened to Mary Todd Lincoln, Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, Ida McKinley, or Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis after their husbands were assassinated? Our Civil

War soldiers are honored at battlefield museums and in the Nation's capitol and in every state capitol and almost every town square, but how do we learn who ran the threshing machines and made the bandages while their husbands, fathers, and brothers huddled in their tents or trenches?

Our newspapers were almost mute as hundreds of thousands of immigrant women assembled the munitions of World War I-except when the plants blew up. Ever since the women of Lichfield, CT melted down America's only equestrian statue of King George III and made 42,000 bullets out of it, millions of real-life Rosie-the-Riveters have supported the efforts of America's fighting men yet we know almost nothing of them.

As we all work to remedy our once all but all-male history, the words and images of America's women must be made more accessible. It is not enough that professional archivists know where to find private papers or that private papers preserve them. Electronic databases and computer technology now make it possible to gather, record, and disseminate the words, sounds, and visual images of neglected American women. A major research project that can lead to a revolution in rewriting and re-interpreting the composite history of all Americans can find its natural home in a national museum-based archive of the history of American women in Washington, D.C.

There is a precedent for the American Revolution Bicentennial of 1976. Every state appointed a committee and used graduate students to find every single name and every surviving document of anything to do with the Revolutionary War, and then a finder's guide was printed and distributed around the country and made available on microfilm. I make this as the first recommendation for the museum. The exciting results of a nationwide, state-by-state treasure hunt can be gathered and collated and beamed by print, film, and electronic impulse to every home, school, and library in the United States.

Americans have passed into a new age of public awareness of the importance of past deeds and misdeeds. We all have a right to know the truth about our complex heritage. It's time to learn about these forgotten Americans who bore us and educated us and helped to bring us together, who made us a new and unique people. We must do all we can to recall and to honor the role of women in our rich history.

Ms. Lewis thanked both Nancy Nahra and Will Randall and asked if there were any questions. She then announced that the Commission would listen to public suggestions after a statement from **Coretta Scott King** was read by Johnetta Cole.

Johnetta Cole

I'm quite honored to read a statement from Coretta Scott King:

Although a previous commitment prevents me from being with you in person for this meeting of the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, I want to join you in spirit by expressing my wholehearted support of your efforts.

I want to commend the White House for having the vision to establish this Commission which is charged with making recommendations on focusing attention on the celebration of the history of

women as we move into the 21st century. Your work is vitally important, particularly to the younger generation of women who will become the policy-makers of tomorrow.

Like black history which is celebrated in the in the month of February, women's history has been largely neglected for most of this century and, in a similar way, this has lead to the undervaluing of women's contributions to our society. This has had an adverse effect on the self-esteem of girls and women, as well as given boys and men a distorted view of American history. That's why they call it "his-story," and it is the job of this Commission to make sure that "her-story" is told as well.

One of the most important accomplishments of the Women's Rights Movement during the last three decades is the encouragement it has provided for phenomenal growth of women's studies. As a result, there has been a significant increase in women scholars and scholarship about the role of women in society and in building America, so it is gratifying that all of you are united in your determination that the "her-story" of the 20th century will be properly told.

Women of all races have been far more influential in America's story, particularly in terms of the Nation's moral development, than is revealed in most of the history books. Women have long provided cutting-edge moral leadership in America, from Lucretia Mott-who played a central role in founding the abolitionists, women's rights, and peace movement-to Harriet Tubman, the Grimke sisters, Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, and the Suffragettes, Jeanette Rankin, Mary McLeod Bethune, Mother Jones, Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa parks, and so many others.

Even though we had been locked out of the political process for so long, we have always done more than our share to advance human rights and social progress, even when men got all the credit. When we are talking about the development of moral leadership in America, women have quite an inspiring story to tell. Serious students of history know that the contemporary women's rights movement drew strength and inspiration from the non-violent Civil Rights Movement lead by Martin Luther King, Jr.

It is less well-known, however, that my husband was inspired by an earlier women's movement. So I will conclude my remarks this morning with a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.: "When women had decided that the time had come for them to vote, they were far from submissive and silent. They cried out in the halls of government. They agitated in their homes. They protested in the streets. And they were jailed. But they pressed on, their voices were vigorous, even strident, but they were always effective. Through their courage, their steadfastness, their unity, and their willingness to sacrifice, they won the right to vote. From these women, we have learned how social changes take place through struggle."

Again I regret that I could not be with you on this occasion. But I wish you the best for a productive and successful conference. Thank you and God bless you.

Ann Lewis introduced the first speaker from the audience, **Ms. Lissa McKlain**.

Lissa McKlain

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to be here to speak and want to thank all of the people on the panel because you're giving your time to this-it's a very important endeavor. I'm going to start with a little story. In fourth grade I was in a special class and at that time, what they did is they took the ten smartest fourth-graders and the ten smartest fifth-graders in my elementary school and I happened to be one of the ones chosen as one of the fourth-graders and there were two things I remember from that year. One is, I looked around the room and out of those 20 kids, 15 were girls and don't think I wasn't doing the math on that.

The other is, when we would get our work done I had to do both fourth and fifth grade work that year and when we would get our work done we would go to the library and in the library I loved to read books. I did even then. There was a shelf about this wide of books on real people-that's what I liked to read, and I would go down there every week and check out the same book Clara Barton who was the only woman on the shelf. I had a dress I called my Clara Barton dress; my mother hated it, I wore it every week at least once, so what I...I guess I'm telling you this story because I think it's important for fourth-graders to be able to find books on women.

I read about Myra Bradwall, the speaker who spoke about her, I've read a book on her and I got it from the National Women's History Project. I discovered them in 1991, I don't know how they got me on their mailing list but I got a flyer and I actually had just moved into a new home and I thought, "This is for the person who lived here before" but it had my name on it so I started going through. I bought one book and I have a whole library today that I purchased for myself that's going to my high school in my will because I don't want my niece Sarah who's one-year-old today and my niece Emily to go to school in fourth grade and say, "Where are the women? There are no books on these shelves."

So as you're charged with making your final recommendation, the issues that I would suggest you consider are: what is it we're trying to fix here and what will have a lasting impact? And if...my dream would be that we have the materials in the classrooms, that we represent it in the textbooks as several people have said here today, and that we make women's history real. People have to feel it. Pictures...websites are a nice idea but I'll tell you, walking through the Holocaust Museum makes you feel. And I think we need a museum on women that when you walk through it you feel what their lives were like. It just...it speaks to you in a different way than a book, than a picture, than browsing on a website.

Websites can be erased, so...I'm all for the websites and access for the materials, but for me, it's something someone has got to experience, walk through, touch and feel and we've got to start with little kids and they've got to little boys and girls-need to know that women did things too, right alongside the men and I...several people today have commented [about] how the anger fuels them because they didn't learn about it until they were 20 or 30 years old. I use that anger to do volunteer teaching with Scout troops and those kinds of things because I don't want children to grow up and not know that the other half of this population did all kinds of things. They didn't sit around and knit. So...thank you.

Ann Lewis then introduced **Ms. Samantha Clark**, Director of Girls Speak Out.

Samantha Clark

Today I'm wearing two hats-the first is for Girls Speak Out, which is a program that's done here in Atlanta based on a book that is for girls from 9-15 and what it does is it brings them together and they get to see...the older girls get to see where they've been and the changes they've made, and younger girls get to look at where these older girls have gone and hopefully make a conscious choice about is that the direction that they want to take?

We're really excited about it and we had a meeting last Saturday because we knew you all were coming and we asked them, "what would you like to see in the millennium?" And what they said is "We want posters, we want videos, we want public announcements, we want you in our schools and we want you to do the work so that we are not trying to explain to boys that we are valid." So they want this very, very badly and they're very excited that this is happening and they came up with a lot of different slogans and stuff and the one that they voted to send to you was: "Ignorance isn't bliss-Think of all the women you've missed."

The second hat that I wear is "I come to you as a lesbian, a dyke," and I haven't heard anyone else actually mention this today. I was the first-out lesbian who was president of Georgia Now and notice that I did not say the "first lesbian," just the first-out one and I am the first-out lesbian that ran for the state legislature in the state of Georgia and after that I got out of politics. I didn't win, obviously, and it took me a long time to feel political again. It was pretty ugly.

So my political contribution now is geared around the Girls Speak Out and I share the anger that you talked about, Lissa. When I was 12 I asked my dad, "Haven't women ever done anything great?" And his answer was, "I don't think so. I think they were too busy having babies and raising families." So I want my granddaughters and stuff to come from more than that too and so I would like to personally and for all the lesbians in Atlanta, even the ones that don't particularly like my style, charge you like Abigail did and say don't forget the lesbians...mention us, acknowledge that we have existed all the way through and that we're still there in the forefront of a lot of things.

Ann Lewis thanked Samantha Clark and introduced **Ms. Janet Faulk**, who is involved with the Women's Project Movement at Georgia State University.

Janet Faulk

I am retired from Emory University and I was in the library there and very active in the women's movement there but I am working as my colleague is with the Women's Movement Record Project at Georgia State, which is compiling records and oral history [about] women who were involved in the Women's Movement, and I would just like to say that this is being funded with hundreds of thousands of dollars that have come from women in Georgia to enable us to start this program and we are collecting the women's papers and we are doing oral history and I would like to see this done around the world or around the country because...and the funds, some of the funds are public, some of the funds are private.

There's a small permanent exhibit but there is an endowment fund now to enable us to have an archivist and we do need to not just collect women's papers but we've got to process them and make them available, and there are programs going on and there are volunteers who are going out to interview. Equipment is provided by Georgia State, and there are retired women like myself and we're doing not just their involvement in the Women's Movement but their history-their mothers' aspirations, their fathers' aspirations, how they got in the movement, what they did, what has happened to them, what has happened to their children, and to me it's very exciting to be able to be part of this and we have a script but we can deviate from it.

I wanted to mention this as a possible project that can involve retired women from all over the country and I would just also like to say that the National Museum of Women in Washington was put together originally with just a couple who began being curious about the history of women artists whom they knew nothing about, and now of course they have their own facility which is very exciting and I'm proud to be a charter member of that.

I think that there are many many women around the country who would be thrilled to have the opportunity to be a charter member of a group like this and we need this because until our young women are validated by knowing that they were part of history, they are kept in many paces from being the people that they are. So I hope that we can do baseball cards, except cards with women. We can do these. We can do the Web, we can do the many many things that will enable our young women to know about their history and the value of who they are.

Ann Lewis thanked Janet Faulk and introduced **Ms. Shawna Lowry**, who is a graduate History major at Clark Atlanta University.

Shawna Lowry

Good afternoon everyone. It is my pleasure always to stand here in front of ten distinguished members or Commission for the coordinating council. This morning Madam Chair you said, "Don't honor the past if you can't understand it" and I jotted it down right in front of my notes. [For] the young lady from Spelman College that was frustrated about not having her history-our history-black women's history documented in a format, we actually do have an organization (and I only have one recommendation to the Council). It's the National Black Her-Story Task Force that is birthed out of Emory University Women's Center. It is a non-profit educational and cultural organization funded to develop vehicles to collect archives and celebrate the legacy and lives of all women of African descent and their alliance. We seek to correct voids and misinformation in the telling of our story. Our alliances are those who risk their position in society-and often their lives to assist us-our male family members.

We will provide factual documentation of our trials and tribulations. Additional goals are to ensure the inclusion of our stories in the telling of global history. We will develop and maintain a catalog-database of previously-published or unpublished work about women of African descents. We will hold workshops and annual conferences celebrating the lives of black women through the establishment of independent chapters and joint projects with similar organization. We will achieve these goals especially seeking out women organizations striving to make the academic curriculum more inclusive of the stories of all women.

We want the month, or we recommend the month of March to be proclaimed National Black Her-Story Month just as it has already been proclaimed International Women's and Women's History Month. Together, with the support of educators, professional grassroots members of the community, and hopefully President Clinton, we shall teach the world community that there cannot be an accurate recording of world history that does not include her-story. And just to proclaim as a historian from Clark Atlanta University, today also marks I'm not sure how many years, but the landmark decision of Roe versus Wade. Twenty-six years.

Ann Lewis next introduced **Ms. Alma Giddens** who is a project coordinator for the International Training in Development Project. She is also an African Women's Studies graduate major at Clark University.

Alma Giddens

First I would like to thank you all for inviting us from African Women's Studies to be here. The International Training in Development Project is the internship program that takes students and now professionals to Africa, Asia, and South America to unite education and exposure to development with N.G.O. organizations and community-based organizations around development. In the past, it was focused for the first two years around women but we are expanding that to include more areas as well. I'm also working on my thesis. My master's thesis is in African Women's Studies and counseling and it's on identity-women and identity.

And I would also like to say a little bit more about myself. I come from the descendant of my grandmother, my great-great-grandmother who was a midwife, a grandmother who had a cleaner and she named him Master Cleaners because she believed that she was the master of her destiny and my grandmother who recently made her transition this year, she was a lot of things. She was a homemaker, she was a domestic worker, she also...as well as was a realtor and she raised more than, I would say, she birthed two children but she raised a whole lot more in the community.

The comments I want to make are basically suggestions that I gathered just from sitting here, and one of them is we are here also to talk about seeking to change the views of how women are viewed in society. So with that we also have to look at our target--who we target. We are here, we want to go beyond preaching so one of my suggestions is how do we target men to change their views to see, to look at things differently--for all of us to view the world differently? So I think that some of the programs that we're targeting, that we seek, that we are seeking to do, that they are integrated into our systems be it history, be it health care, whatever the discipline is.

But in that I do believe and support the necessity for us having to call it a think-tank to build and develop different programs. You have to have a source, you have to have a base. As you do that you branch out, and my other suggestion is that continuing with the history and integrating into our lives...for example there needs to be a training manual for health care workers.

If you're counseling women or if you work at a hospital, women who come there, who have been raped or molested or whatever the particular issue is, I think that the health care workers need to know the history of that type of abuse or those experiences of women and the type of treatment

that they may receive so that we're taking our history and moving it to action in the community. And also I think with that someone did talk about doing oral histories, or histories of the elderly--people who aren't on the common beaten path--everyday lives of women because I think that's very important and that will again shed another light on the history and lives of women and the contributions that we've made to society, and that's it, those are my suggestions.

After **Ann Lewis** thanked Ms. Giddens for her suggestions, **Gloria Johnson** reasserted the importance of focusing on the personal, first-hand stories of women in order to preserve the history of women. Ann Lewis then introduced **Ms. Serena Guy**, representing the Women's Resource Center at La Sierra University.

Serena Guy

Thank you. I stand before you today because of an influence of a very important American woman that I think most of you [have] never heard of. Her name is Ellen G. White. She was a religious leader. This woman started the seventh chapter at this church. They're from a very small community as they become a ten million membership. I'm not here to talk about the seventh chapter, but this is a historical woman, about her heritage. She is only one of, I think there are many religious leaders that were women that have been forgotten.

I am an immigrant. I didn't grow up in this country. Through the influence of this woman, I have been able to receive an education and have lived a lifestyle that she advocated that prolonged life: work in a hospital. Because of her vision about health care, the Seventh to Heaven Church has one of the most extensive health cares world-wide. I work in Florida Hospital in Orlando, which is the largest hospital, I think the largest residency program of faculty at a residency program over there.

I guess my point is that I understand the importance in American history and our Constitution the separation of state and religion. Let us not forget the religious leaders that were women that shape American history and make a difference in world history as well.

Ann Lewis thanked Serena Guy for her comments and introduced **Ms. Nicole Sheig**, a senior at Auburn University majoring in Women and Political Science.

Nicole Sheig

Thank you so much. First the formalities. I'm actually a student from outside the city of Georgia and I thought that would be wonderful to bring up and also, our President of our university William Muse, when he heard that I was coming over here because I like to...when I get excited about something I run around campus and talk about it a lot so everybody knows about it, he wanted to make sure I told the Commission what a wonderful job that they were doing [and] that he and Auburn University were one hundred percent behind your work and your achievements, and it's funny--when you are running around campus and you're talking about something that you're very excited about, people start asking you questions and one of the things that I was just shocked to know was that most students on Auburn's campus did not know why March was so important.

And I kept on saying, "Women's History Month, come on, you've got to know," and I guess just because this Commission has already formed, it has been having meetings and I was able to run around campus and talk about it and was excited about it, it's already started an awareness. So just in the most simplest of forms, the ball is already rolling on college campuses and it needs to be rolling a whole lot more. One of the things that greatly concerns me is the footnote that we find in poor history books concerning women's history and the Women's Movement. There needs to be more of an impact-so much of an impact just for my life and for so many other lives that if all students had the opportunity to learn more about women in our history, women who fought and as we said earlier "blaze a trail" for somebody to follow, I think it would greatly change people's lives and greatly change the way they look at their studies and their own life.

So one of my recommendations is pushing to have more of an influence and more of a presence on college campuses around the country. I think one of the best ways to achieve this is to promote some type of annual gathering of college students in D.C. in the month of March-it was already said about the march in Washington, D.C. for Women's History Month. I think it needs to have a huge push for the inclusion of college students because those students are already there on campuses because they want to further their education and we should give them every resource to further that education-that is to provide lessons of women and what women have done to impact American society.

One of the greatest things I have seen in a while that has sparked a national discussion was the President's dialogue on race and I think that if we encourage or make the recommendation for some type of program like that dialogue, communities all around the country will find new ways and unique ways that none of us have thought of before to commemorate women and to celebrate women, especially the park in Ohio, I just love that idea.

That is just a wonderful thing that everyone needs to know about and a big thing with me is always, when we talk about women's history, is to include a living legacy and that is to take a look around and just...the women in this room, I am just humbled by what I've learned today and just who I've met and just what people have experienced, and this even more so makes the claim that any initiative, whether it be a museum or whatever it may be, needs to have a living legacy that we take women that influence, impact, and shape American lives today and we celebrate them and we give them the opportunity to interact with us because now we have books, we have other types of documentation of women who have already passed.

Truly for us to take a woman who is extraordinary and to just continue their legacy, we need to allow them the interaction to ask questions, to bring them to a museum, to have speaker tours, and that would be my last recommendation would be the living legacy and to disclose, and just...because I'm so inspired by so many of the things I've heard of today and it just kind of changed what I want to do with my life, actually. I feel like a sponge, I just want to go out there and learn more, I want to close with just someone who's inspired me in my life and who would definitely be a part of any type of living legacy...that's why Angela, in her poem entitled "Phenomenal Woman," she writes: "Now you understand just why my head's not bowed, I don't shout or jump about or have to talk real loud. When you see me passing, I ought to make you proud," and then she goes on to say, "because I'm a woman, phenomenally-phenomenal woman, that's me."

After a ten-minute break, **Ann Lewis** announced that the remainder of the meeting would be a discussion among Commission members only.

Beth Newburger reported that Commission member Michael Cook has been very involved in getting financial support from businesses who are interested in women's issues.

Ms. Anna Eleanor Roosevelt

Speaking of working with working women, there are all these good ideas and there's always this undercurrent of funding that I think we all...we hate to think about that because it's the hardest piece to begin with but as you point out, that's what Michael was turning out to be-a very valuable member to help us get it, but one of the things that I think would be interesting would be to, in a public way, challenge women-owned businesses to step forward like Reverend Jackson has challenged Wall Street to step forward to support a progressive mandate and I think we have some very wonderful ambassadors who could do that and not just Michael Cook, but if anybody embodies the hope of the future, it is the First Lady and as well as the witnesses-the number of women who served in this administration at the turn of the millennium.

Elizabeth and I would be challenged and excited to respond to a request from women in leadership to step forward to fund some of these things in partnership.

Johnetta Cole

One of the ways that you might follow up on your idea is to go to a very specific organization called Catalyst. Michael might already be there. But here's an organization particularly interested in women who sit on corporate boards and I think you're absolutely right, Anna-part of being a leader is to be able to access funds and these women are in top American corporations and we can give to them. Plus women are organized in the nationalizing of business women. There's no shortage of that list and we need to say that yes we want men to contribute, but we're prepared to contribute, too.

Gloria Johnson

Just a couple of suggestions here. I agreed with Anna that we need to talk to these women-business women, also to women's organizations-but I think we need to go beyond that because otherwise it becomes a business thing and we are not recommending this. What we are recommending is involvement, someone focused on that. Now if we're going to involve people in terms of coverage for women I think we've got to extend that to the funding as well.

As minute as some of the funding might be by some other organizations, people have to be made to feel they are a part of it and so as we pursue this I would strongly recommend that at some point maybe do a conference call, each of us be challenged to bring in recommendations; for example, I'm thinking about Myth and Miss Foundation that does tremendous work. I'm thinking about the American Labor Movement, I'm thinking about organizations like the one that Anita represented-Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. To do that kind of outreach I think is

absolutely urgent. We've got such a variety of recommendations that small funding for some is all that is needed.

Ann Lewis

If we could agree on a menu and then we could all do pieces of it and see which of those we could find some sponsors for, I agree with you that ultimately we should ask, but in my experience we have better chances of asking and then getting more if we start by leading by example. If there are some things that are already going on, people will be even more interested in participating so that's I think what we were hoping to do in kicking some of this off.

Irene Wurtzel

I was just going to add as a tag-along to the notion of who should ask and I think that not just women business owners, but businesses that cater to women. There's Revlon and the cosmetics companies, and lingerie companies and they have been significant givers to breast cancer...

Ellen Ochoa

I just want to go back and say these aren't the only elements-these are the kinds of programs and to the fourth we should have added a fifth, which is a video and you not having talked about a video from the beginning, there are two versions. One is the one-headed attachment. You can tell this is a work in progress which suggests a video [and we] could include some of the places that we've talked about and some of the work of the Commission. That could be a wonderful teaching tool about how we began. But we just thought these were some of the concrete examples, but back to you.

Elaine Kim brought up the point that in order to truly celebrate the history of women in American history, it is essential to focus not only on the "sheroes"-the women who achieved great accomplishments-but also the women who struggled without necessarily achieving their goals.

Ann Lewis

Inclusion includes the struggles, not just the celebration-the "isn't-it-nifty."

Johnetta Cole

I add along to my sister's comment my own "closing of the eyes" and trying to imagine the brother President and the First Sister of our nation receiving this report, tells me that it's not flat. They've got to turn on something. They've got to hear something and I don't know how good Ruby's technology has been in recording but I think pretty good. We have got to capture some of what we've experienced today. I mean literally to hear those voices as they were presented. So keeping it from being "flat" has got to be a goal all the way through it in the format.

Ann Lewis

Some of the wonderful quotes we would like to put in boxes-you know, "ignorance isn't bliss," for example. They ought to be scattered throughout so you really hear real voices.

Beth Newburger

I think that Ruby's tape recorder probably isn't good enough to do what you're talking about but that doesn't prevent us from getting it done. I mean, we have a production studio, we can go back...We can digitize the voices and enhance them, or we can go back to the same women, some of who are still in the room, and ask you to say some of these things again into a microphone that has a camera attached to it-what a novel concept-so that the President and First Lady can see it because I think that's even more.

I have a question to ask though and this goes to the heart of how to write this thing, and this is not well-written, folks, but it was a start and it was an incredible tangle to try to figure out how to put this down on paper given the volumes of notes we've all been taking, and to try to focus it into some sort of logical or cohesive statement without having four books because I don't think anybody's going to read four books, that's just my sense of things, although this is a President who gave me four books to read for him, but the rest of us wouldn't so how do we deal with it?

The question I want to ask is I've heard what Elaine has said and I feel the same way about wanting to be sure that we convey the character of the suggestions that we're making, that we really capture in some way what we're trying to say, but on the other side of it my sense is that we're not going to make the recommendation for who these women should be.

If we suggest an exhibit, we're not going to say "these are the people who are going to be in the exhibit." We want to say...we want, in this case, what we're suggesting or hoping for is that the National Women's History Project would be the jury for that exhibit and they would be the ones because they're the professional historians who should know and who would bring it to us. In other places, perhaps a how-to guide; for example we would want, if we're going to talk about building local archives, we'd want to team with the professional archivists and librarians and historians who would do that so how do we get the favor and still not pick the people?

Elaine Kim suggested that they exhibit projects such as the park in Yellow Springs, OH.

Beth Newburger suggested utilizing existing materials such as letters of the women's sanitary commission during the Civil War located at the New York Public Library.

Ann Lewis

One thing for those of us who are going to be trying to put it down on paper: if every one of the Commission members would think, if you can, go back over your minutes, what are your favorite quotes and what are your favorite examples? Help us. On the one hand we've got to write it in a way that sort of summarizes and makes it accessible, then we've got to put the life and the interest back in. Think of the people, think of those human moments. If each of us could do that, I think that would be good.

Johnetta Cole asked if it would be possible to include in the report a suggested list of organizations, individuals, or corporations who had initially expressed an interest in partnering with the Commission, to which the Commission members responded favorably. She then presented an informal Commission report check-off list which included factors such as whether or not the report was truly inclusive, especially with regards to including ordinary as well as extraordinary women, as well as whether or not all of the suggestions were truly feasible.

Ann Lewis

Let me take you back two steps. One is you're absolutely right-is it possible? We don't do anybody a favor if we write down every wonderful idea we ever heard of, put it in a report, and then just walk away and say "Boy we did a great job." I mean, we ought to responsibly say "We can make these things happen." If we can get this report-and there's sort of the chicken and the egg-if we can write a report where we get enough pieces of people who said "Yeah I'm interested in doing that, I might do that," we then get to present it to the President and First Lady.

I've got to tell you the President and First Lady thank people for offering to do it. They're that much more likely to do it so we ought to think about this as a great opportunity also to seal the deal.

Beth Newburger

Well, we will seal the deal. I mean, I've been talking to these people and they have said...what I have said to them is I can't promise you that this is going to be a recommendation-I'm in the chicken and the egg now-I'm waiting for this meeting today. I can't promise you it's going to be a recommendation. If it's a recommendation, will you fund it? And the answer was, "If you're going to endorse it, we'll fund it. But you've got to tell us you're going to endorse it." So in great part there are-I'm not going to say there are 10 million organizations out there-but there are probably a half a dozen so far that have said, "Sure, if you're going to put it in a memo to the President [we'll] support it." It's a little bit like the First Lady's treasures-they get credit, they will do. So I think we need to make a decision here what those suggestions are.

Ann Lewis reaffirmed her support of the traveling exhibits, and **Beth Newburger** asked **Molly MacGregor** if she would be willing to act as the Commission jury and traveling consultant if given the appropriate funding, to which she responded favorably so long as she could first review the proposal.

Gloria Johnson

I want to go back to a point I made earlier about the funding. It is extremely important as a Commission that we look at the funding sources of-and I'll say this as pleasantly as I can. Everyone who has monies may not be acceptable as a funder because of previous behavior and/or action, etc. So I would hope that when we get into the raising of funds or getting funders that we sort of have some consensus on who will be doing the funding.

The second thing is, with this traveling exhibit, I think it's going to be extremely important-I know Molly will handle this but I'll just say it-that it is extremely important that we look at where this exhibit is going. There are some places that are usually not on the regular path and there has to be I think some guarantees that this will go into areas that perhaps we may not think of just off the top of our heads.

Barbara Goldsmith

Through the Internet and so forth, in other words, would our traveling exhibit also be accessible to people sitting in their living rooms?

Ann Lewis

Let me suggest this, which is one that's a logical thing. It seems to me if you're going to put it together and we talked about accessibility, we should then go back and figure out every way we can make the same material accessible. But what I'm going to suggest coming out of what I've heard is, if we could today as a start agree on say three, four, five recent projects that are the direction we want to go, before anybody takes any steps on funding, Gloria makes a very good point, we would have a conference call and go through the menu and say here are some potential funders and meanwhile that gives all of us a chance to think of who we might want to take responsibility for asking.

So what we could do today at least is figure out the priorities and also be thinking ourselves who we might like to ask and give this glorious opportunity to take part in this project and then we would exchange that information in a conference call to be sure that everybody is comfortable with how we would approach it. Can we just agree on those?

The Commission members agreed and then **Elaine Kim** asked if they could get a boiler plate to send out to potential funders, to which **Ann Lewis** said yes.

Ann Lewis

I think we can write up what the proposal would be but I tend to agree with the point that the more people who could think they had a part in sponsoring it, even if their piece of it was relatively small, the more interest we would get as it went out around the road so this might be where we would really like to try to get several organizations to put in, you know, a part of the sponsorship. And there's a chance to be very inclusive in that as well, which is a great message. I think I hear consensus on the traveling exhibit along the lines we just discussed and making it as accessible. That was part of our accessibility.

Beth Newburger

One of the things you could do with a traveling exhibit is to offer sponsorships to the panels so that, you know, there are a variety of ways that you can get some smaller investors in.

Ann Lewis

Let me ask about number two which was a community guide which was simply the approach we took to think about how is it we get this into the communities, how could we partner with the General Federation of Women's clubs-which I think has clubs in 6,000 communities. So that seems like the most widespread or a similar group, but to raise the level and to say any community no matter how small, there is something you can do to honor and celebrate the women and the work of women in your community.

Ellen Ochoa suggested that the Commission propose possible models in the community guide such as the park in Yellow Springs, OH in order to make community projects more tangible.

Johnetta Cole brought up the point that the "how-to" guide needs to share the values of the people who sponsor the community projects.

Ann Lewis

If organizations are going to sponsor it, we have to expect that it's going to live up to our values and at least in our initial conversations when people hear about this they at least say they're very interested.

Gloria Johnson

I just have one recommendation. The first, the fourth paragraph, when you speak about the distribution and to the President I think that's a great idea; I do think however that the distribution lists could be extended so we might want to

Consider-you have about 5 or 4 organizations listed-I think that there are probably some others that we would want to do some outreach in as well.

Elaine Kim

And also there are some groups that wouldn't be covered by [the General Federation of Women's Clubs].

Ladonna Harris illustrated that neither the Chinese-American Women's Organization nor Native-American women are included in the General Federation of Women's Clubs. **Beth Newburger** explained that she would be in favor of involving these groups provided they maintain the value of inclusion.

Irene Wurtzel

We have to give them guidance though. Think of all the groups you want to see, because it's too much of a burden for them to figure it out.

Beth Newburger

And I think before we make any specific suggestions, we should have a specific sheet of paper saying "this is our mission statement." Anything that you see that follows must be inclusive and we just get a mission statement that clarifies it so that people don't fit that model if they're exclusive.

Jhnetta Cole

I think one of our most distinguished writers on the Commission should henceforth be commissioned to do the first draft. Do we hear a vote? For Barbara, all in favor?

Commission members agree.

Ann Lewis

For the minutes we'll record that the biographer Victoria Woodholme will now write our mission statement. We know we're in good hands. Let us go to number three, and again these are all for purposes of discussion suggestion. What we heard over and over is that we should be working with technology. It is how young people get information, it's only growing not shrinking, and it enables us to do an awful lot on accessibility. So Beth you've had a conversation with AOL. Do you want to tell us what you talked to them about?

Beth Newburger

Yes, I talked to Jim Kimstreet who's the founder of AOL and it turns out that they have recently begun to focus on women in technology and they recognize that they've done a pretty poor job on it so they're really looking for this kind of a partnership and they're very interested in working with us to create and maintain the website on this project.

Again, they want to know from us exactly how we would like to see it done and I think we have gotten a lot of ideas today on local archives, building archives...What I've said in here is that the success of the project is going to have two-v I think...I've been in the software development business myself for a lot of years-is going to have two key elements. One is the search engine because we've got to make the search easy and accessible on many intellectual levels, and the second is going to be the ability to construct the materials so that it's a developing archive that does not become out-of-date. The problem with most of these things is that they become in-place and then you get all these tack-ons and they're like dealing with an octopus.

He agrees and that means that they would have to create some original software for us to suit our purposes. He thinks that AOL would be willing to partner with us and with others and this would be the place, another place where I would think our recommendation really needs to have some serious partnership and more than anything I think that's his concern-that they get the right advisors, the right consultants, and he would want us to make those recommendations. So Allida had some concerns about the groups that we would want to include and I think we should discuss that here and see.

First of all, do we want to pursue it with AOL as the potential partner because I think we could get them but you know, is that a partner you want to do?

Ellen Ochoa observed that AOL seemed focused on oral histories whereas she would like the central database network that they utilized to focus as well on women's history studies programs, among other things. **Beth Newburger** responded that this was a way to honor individuals in communities and that the scope of the project could be as large as the Commission members wanted it to be.

Barbara Goldsmith raised the point that it would be great if curricula incorporating women's history could be created for each grade level. **Ladonna Harris** observed the importance of also incorporating stories of women who were left out of history to be included in the curricula.

Gloria Johnson then asked whether or not these curricula would include living documents as well as the stories of working women, to which **Ann Lewis** responded that oral histories are ways to tell stories about mothers.

Ladonna Harris asked whether or not museums have already compiled stories of women so that the Commission could share resources, to which **Allida Black** responded that there is a museum starting at the Columbia University Press where the software is starting to get developed. She then mentioned that the Department of Education has an *Eric* database which is free and located everywhere. *Eric* offers Social Studies and Teacher Education clearing houses, providing teachers with accessible syllabi. **Johnetta Cole** joked about changing the name of the database to "Erica."

Allida Black offered to contact Kate Wittenburg, "a genius on the web."

Ann Lewis then asked the Commission members if they could address the issue of how to give teachers, students, and the general public access to the curriculum, with **Beth Newburger** stressing that it is not only important to provide access, but also important to inform citizens of how to get that access.

Johnetta Cole raised the issue that not all schools have access to a central database, to which **Ann Lewis** pointed out that the general public can still read oral histories at public libraries. **Edith Mayo** then asked how communities could interact with the site, adding that the "how-to" guide could direct community members to the site, and **Ann Lewis** suggested an interactive site where individuals could link in and contribute directly.

Gloria Johnson then expressed her concern over communities which can only provide one computer for every thirty students, or schools which are not linked to a central database. **Ladonna Harris** responded that through her experience serving on the Vice President's Commission on Telecommunications she had been informed that every school was linked; however, **Gloria Johnson** affirmed that such was not yet the reality. **Ellen Ochoa** observed that part of the challenge was being able to fill in that gap and suggested that in the meantime the traveling exhibits should target those specific communities.

Ann Lewis assured the Commission members that the President's budget is very committed to technology in schools, but stressed that citizens should also be reached by alternative mediums.

Ladonna Harris then proposed that the Commission members commend labor. **Gloria Johnson** suggested that the AFT and NEA be included in order to reach the teachers, and **Beth Newburger** suggested that the American Library Association also be contacted.

Ann Lewis proposed that a technology-library connection be established by Women's History Month 2000. **Ladonna Harris** noted that seeing this through could help create more permanent methods of celebrating women in American history.

Edith Mayo then suggested that a big event, rally, or national conference also be held during Women's History Month 2000. New art pieces could be commissioned, progress reports issued, and a search engine could be unveiled. **Ann Lewis** agreed, also remarking that she had been struck by Edith Mayo's observation that women's exhibits have no permanence. She then proposed that museums be encouraged to include women in their exhibits and be a part of the recommendation process.

Beth Newburger expressed her approval of the idea. **Ann Lewis** then communicated her enthusiasm over the museum on-loan program, to which **Anna Eleanor Roosevelt** added that Washington, DC can serve as an example to state capitols and cities.

Barbara Goldsmith then asked if the traveling exhibit could be funded as a line item of the Library of Congress budget. **Ladonna Harris** suggested the National Archives also be included as a possible sponsor and source of funding.

The Commission members then discussed the possibility of creating a monthly planner focusing on women which would be government funded, coming to the conclusion that without an agency mandate, no project could be funded by the government. The idea of a monthly planner could instead be included in the "how-to" guide.

Ann Lewis then asked the Commission members if a video could be created which would tell a story, or how a report could be created which would be more engaging than a raw document. **Irene Wurtzel** suggested a quick slide show, illustrating that what is important is the notion of inclusion and the voices.

Ellen Ochoa raised her concern about how the Commission members could recreate the voices, and **Johnetta Cole** replied that testimonies could be reread and also suggested that the tapes be given to an organization such as Time Warner. Dr. Cole also noted that it is important to not only include all women in the project, but also to include the ways in which they interrelated amongst themselves despite their backgrounds, whether they were working class, upper-class, or other.

Gloria Johnson reaffirmed the importance of focusing on living women as well as those who have already passed away.

At this point **Irene Wurtzel** proposed that the Commission members make a quick slide show for the President only, suggesting that a video could be made for the general public later. She offered to help select appropriate clips for the video.

Elaine Kim agreed that a video would be a great medium of presentation, proposing that a women's history video be completed by Women's History Month 2000. She also suggested making CD's, both audio as well as video, and recommended contacting Sony.

Ladonna Harris asked if there was perhaps a way to incorporate music, art, and sculpture into a presentation in order to make women's history more alive and human. **Ann Lewis** responded that a story presentation incorporating music and art targeting popular culture would be a good idea. She suggested that they reach out to the creative community who share the same values.

Irene Wurtzel then asked if popular culture should fall under its own category in the final recommendations. **Ellen Ochoa** asked how this could be done, to which **Ladonna Harris** suggested they add council ads.

Johnetta Cole then proposed that in order to raise the interest level of communities, a national contest could be held which would challenge communities to come up with ideas as to how the complexity and detail of women's history could be formatted to appeal to popular culture. She then suggested creating a kind of physical, public space for community members to interact with artistically on a daily basis, adding that this suggestion could be put in the "how-to" guide. She also added that such a space would be a way of addressing the living culture.

At this point, **Gloria Johnson** raised the question of whether or not the recommendations should include rectifying the false myths and stereotypes of women's history, arguing for instance that women were said to have returned "home" after World War II when in reality such was not the case. She also mentioned that if this were indeed a goal of the Commission, it should be stated in the mission statement.

Ellen Ochoa answered that false myths and stereotypes become rectified when accurate information is provided.

In order to wrap up the meeting, **Ann Lewis** listed the five main themes which need to be considered in the final recommendations:

- 1) inclusion-are the recommendations truly inclusive? Do they address the struggles as well as the accomplishments?
- 2) accessibility
- 3) lasting impact
- 4) feasibility of projects
- 5) truthfulness, or accuracy of information

Elaine Kim expressed her concern over the notion that women seem to be greater appreciated when they are non-threatening, illustrating her point by saying that people liked Princess Diana because she had an eating disorder and a bad husband. She continued by pointing out that as

activists it is important to find a balance so as not to keep women from stifling their true strength.

At this point **Ann Lewis** and **Johnetta Cole** closed the meeting, agreeing to converge again via conference call in order to come up with a more extensive list of possible funding sources.