

# Rethinking the Family

## From Multicultural Perspectives

A conference sponsored by the Grinnell College Noun Program in Women's Studies

and The Iowa Humanities Board

October 28-29, 1988



# Schedule of Events

## Thursday, October 27

8:00 p.m. Count Basie Band Roberts Theatre

## Friday, October 28

8:15- 9:00 Coffee, rolls Coffeeshouse  
 9:15-10:45 "The Family on American Television"  
 J. Fred MacDonald South Lounge  
 11:00-noon "The Celibate Mother:  
 The Politics of Family Sexuality & Reproduction"  
 Sally Kitch South Lounge  
 Noon-1:00 Box Lunch North Lounge  
 12:30-1:00 "Reading from New Work"  
 Meridel Le Sueur South Lounge  
 1:00-2:00 "Confronting Family Violence"  
 Ellen Pence South Lounge  
 2:00-2:15 Response  
 Jenny Etter McCoy  
 2:15-2:30 "Sexual Violence"  
 Jennifer Nugent, Kathryn Thurber  
 2:30-3:00 Open Discussion, coffee break Coffeeshouse  
 3:00-4:00 "The Family, the Economy, and Public Policy"  
 Heidi Hartmann South Lounge  
 4:15-6:00 Panel Discussion on Hartmann Talk  
 Senator Bruner, Mary Kramer, Byllye Avery, Julie Van Gorp  
 South Lounge  
 6:30-7:45 Dinner JD's  
 8:00-9:00 Poetry Reading  
 Gwendolyn Brooks Herrick Chapel  
 9:00 Reception Fine Arts Lobby

## Saturday, October 29

8:15-8:45 Coffee, rolls Community Center Lobby  
 8:45-9:00 Welcome, summary comments  
 Paula Smith, Kathy Simonds Community Theatre  
 9:00-10:00 "La Familia—Ayer, Hoy y Siempre"  
 (The Family--Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow)  
 Ila Plasencia Community Theatre  
 10:15-10:30 Break  
 10:45-11:45 "Families in a Changing Age"  
 Grace Warfield Community Theatre  
 11:45-12:45 Lunch (on your own)  
 1:00-1:45 "What Black and White Families Can Learn from Each Other"  
 C.V. Willie Community Theatre  
 1:45-2:30 "Intimate Invaders; Relationships in American Stepfamilies"  
 William Beer Community Theatre  
 2:30-3:00 "'Oh do not ask what is it . . .': Life/lines of One Family"  
 Richard Coburn Community Theatre  
 3:00-3:15 Refreshments  
 3:15-4:15 "Growing Up Female: Towards a More Caring Society"  
 Ruth Sidel Community Theatre  
 4:30-5:30 "The Diversity of Iowa Families"  
 Representatives from Mesquaki Indian Family,  
 Southeast Asian Refugee Family, Amana Family,  
 and an Iowa Farm Family Community Theatre  
 6:00-6:30 Social Hour (cash bar) Oakroom  
 6:30-8:00 Dinner Oakroom  
 8:00 Recital  
 Margaret Lucia Herrick Chapel

**Traveling Art Exhibition: "Working Women in Iowa"** Fine Arts Building



**BYLLYE Y. AVERY**

A women's health-care activist for more than ten years, Byllye Avery is co-founder of the Gainesville Women's Health Center and BIRTH-PLACE, an alternative birthing center in Gainesville, Fla. Since 1980, she has served as executive

director of the National Black Women's Health Project. Prior to her entry into the health-care arena, Avery taught special education and emotionally disturbed students, and consulted on learning disabilities in universities and public schools. She is a former member of the board of directors of the National Women's Health Network, and currently serves on the board of the New World Foundation.



**WILLIAM R. BEER**

A professor of sociology at Brooklyn College and a visiting professor at New York University's Institute of French Studies, William Beer has written several articles on French history and linguistics. He has also done extensive research into

alternative family structures, and is the author of *House-husbands: Men and Housework in American Families* and editor of *Relative Strangers: Studies of Stepfamily Processes*. *Strangers in the House: The World of Stepsiblings and Half-Siblings* is currently in press. In addition to his teaching duties, Beer serves as a trustee of South Huntington Public Library in Long Island, and is an elder of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow. The recipient of a B.A. degree in history from Harvard University, he earned the certificat d'études politiques at the Fondation Nationale des Sciences in Paris, and holds a Ph.D. degree in sociology from the New School for Social Research.

**GWENDOLYN BROOKS**

The recipient of the 1950 Pulitzer Prize in poetry for her book *Annie Allen*, Gwendolyn Brooks is the author of more than 15 books of poetry, as well as a novel and an autobiography. She published her first poem at



age 11; her first book, *A Street in Bronzeville*, appeared in 1945. Her most recent work, *Blacks*, was published in 1987, and a second autobiography is nearing completion. In 1951, Brooks succeeded Carl Sandburg as Poet Laureate of Illinois, and since 1986 she has been consultant-in-poetry to the Library of Congress. She is also a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and was recently honored with the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America. A former college instructor, Brooks is a frequent speaker at colleges and universities across the United States, and often directs creative-writing workshops.

**CHARLES BRUNER**

A member of the Iowa General Assembly for the last ten years, Charles Bruner currently chairs the Senate Ways and Means Committee and is vice-chair of the Human Services Appropriations Committee. He also chairs the



National Conference of State Legislatures' Child Support Advisory Committee, serves on the Kennedy School of Government's executive session on "Making the System Work for Poor Children," and serves on the National Center for Policy Alternatives' advisory committee to the Women's Economic Justice Center. Bruner is the author of a book titled *Slicing the Health Care Pie: A Legislator's View of State Health Care Allocation Choices*. He holds a Ph.D. degree in political science from Stanford University.



### **RICHARD COBURN**

Richard Coburn earned B.A. and D.V.M. degrees from Cornell University. After getting married and beginning a family, he wrestled for many years with his sexual preference, and for six years raised his children with both his wife and his

male partner. Since divorced, he now lives with his partner, with whom he has brought up two black, one interracial, and three white children, one of whom is also gay. A practicing veterinarian, Coburn is active in the New York City Gay Men's Chorus and SAGE, and is a former member of Dignity, a national gay Catholic organization.

### **HEIDI HARTMANN**

Heidi Hartmann is director of the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, D.C., and recently joined the faculty at Rutgers University as professor of sociology and director of women's studies. A frequent



lecturer and author on feminist theory and the political economy of gender, she is editor of "Feminist Studies," a scholarly journal of research on women. From 1986 to 1987, Hartmann held an American Statistical Association fellowship at the Census Bureau, where she conducted research on women's poverty. For eight years before that, she was a staff member of the National Research Council/National Academy of Sciences, where she contributed to many reports on women's employment issues, including the 1981 report on pay equity, "Women, Work, and Wages: Equal Pay for Jobs of Equal Value." Hartmann earned her B.A. degree at Swarthmore College, and received M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in economics from Yale University.

### **SALLY KITCH**

An associate professor of women's studies at Wichita State University, Sally Kitch has done extensive research into gender roles and celibacy in egalitarian communities. She has written and edited numerous articles and book chapters, and is the author of the forthcoming *Chaste Liberation: A Symbolic Analysis of Celibacy and Female Cultural Status*, which won the National Women's Studies Association Book Award Competition in 1987. The recipient of WSU's George A. Lewis Award for Innovation in Teaching in 1976, Kitch was awarded a Woodrow Wilson Research Grant in Women's Studies in 1983, and this year received a Summer Faculty Research Grant from Wichita State. Kitch earned an A.B. degree in English at Cornell University, then received an M.A. degree from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. from Emory University.



### **MARY KRAMER**

Vice president of human resources for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa, Mary Kramer has been an Iowa school teacher and administrator and for five years was the corporate personnel director for Younkers, Inc. She serves, or has served, on the program committee of the American Society for Personnel Administration, as vice president for the Iowa Management Association, and on the Grievance Commission for the Iowa Supreme Court. In addition, she serves on the executive committee of the Greater Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Federation and on the board of directors for the Des Moines Employee Assistance Program, the Child Care Resource Center, and WOI Broadcast. Kramer earned B.A. and M.A. degrees at the University of Iowa.

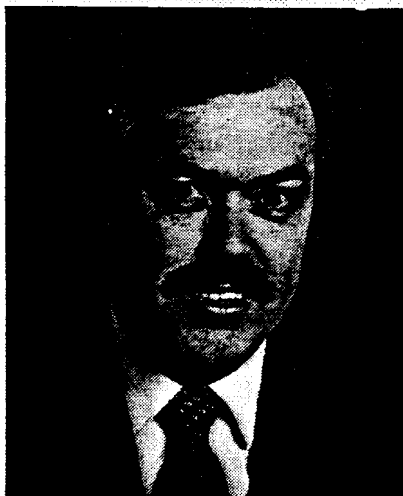
### MERIDEL LE SUEUR

For over 50 years Meridel LeSueur has published short stories, poems, novels, history, and journalism (*New Masses*, *Daily Worker*, *American Mercury*, *Pagany*, *Scribner's*, *The Anvil*, *Partisan Review*). From work rooted in Midwestern culture (*North Star Country*, 1945) to American political philosophy and history, to a celebration of ancient Indian imagery in *Rites of Ancient Ripening* (1975), she has proven herself as a deeply committed culture critic and passionately involved feminist. LeSueur received an honorary degree from Grinnell College in May 1988.



### JENNY ETTER-McCOY

As staff volunteer coordinator for Domestic Violence Alternatives, Inc., in Marshalltown, Jenny Etter McCoy recruits and trains volunteers, monitors a 24-hour crisis line, facilitates support groups for battered women and their children, and serves as a counselor. She has helped organize "Women Take Back the Night" rallies in two counties, and frequently participates in health fairs, workshops, and seminars. Etter-McCoy holds a B.A. degree in psychology from Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, Iowa.



### J. FRED

### MacDONALD

An authority on the history of American popular culture, J. Fred MacDonald is professor of history at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. He also serves as curator of the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago, and is editor of the Media and

Society book series put out by Praeger Publishers. He is the author of numerous articles and four books: *Don't Touch That Dial! Radio Programming in American Life 1920-1960*; *Blacks and White TV: Afro-Americans in Television Since 1948*; *Television and the Red Menace: The Video Road to Viet Nam*; and *Who Shot the Sheriff? The Rise and Fall of the Television Western*. MacDonald received his Ph.D. degree in history from the University of California, Los Angeles, after completing undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

### JENNIFER NUGENT

A native of Guttenburg, Iowa, Jennifer Nugent is a senior majoring in art at Grinnell College. She represents the art department on the Student Curriculum Council, writes for the student newspaper, and is interning at Polk County Victims Services in Des Moines. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in counseling.

### ELLEN PENCE

As executive director of Minnesota Program Development, Inc., Ellen Pence has designed and implemented three Domestic Abuse Intervention Projects that have been widely used as models by other organizations across the United States. Active in the battered women's movement for the past 12 years, Pence has extensive experience counseling both battered women and convicted batterers. She has written extensively about criminal justice intervention projects dealing with domestic violence, and has been at the forefront of several movements to reform family-violence laws in the state of Minnesota. She is presently working with city leaders in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, to establish a counselor training program by Fall 1989.

### ILA R. PLASENCIA

Ila R. Plasencia is acting administrator for Iowa's Spanish-Speaking People's Commission and national vice president of the Midwest for the League of United Latin American



Citizens (LULAC). A national board member of the LULAC Educational Service Centers, she is founder and president of Midwest Educational Resources Development Fund, Inc., and is founder and director of Los Bailadores Mestizos, a Mexican folkloric dance troupe. Before assuming her present posts, she served as a compliance officer for the U.S. Department of Labor in Des Moines and was commissioner for the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. In addition, she is a past commissioner for the Commission on the Status of Women and also served on the Spanish-Speaking Peoples Commission.



**RUTH SIDEL**

Ruth Sidel is professor of sociology at Hunter College of the City University of New York, where she also serves as co-director of the Center for the Study of Family Policy. A graduate of Wellesley College and the Boston University School of Social Work, she has worked in the care of emotionally disturbed children in Boston and

as director of social work in a community health center in the Bronx. Sidel has studied the role of women, the care of pre-school children, and the provision of human services in urban areas in the United States and in several other countries. She is the author of dozens of articles and books, including "Women and Child Care in China," "Families of Fengsheng: Urban Life in China," "Urban Survival: The World of Working Class Women," and "Reforming Medicine: Lessons of the Last Quarter Century." Her most recent work is "Women and Children Last: The Plight of Poor Women in Affluent America."

**KATHRYN THURBER**

A Grinnell College junior majoring in sociology, Kathryn Thurber came to Iowa from Washington, D.C. During her three years at the college, she has been involved with KDIC, the campus radio station, and has served as an associate editor of the "Freehand Press," an alternative literary magazine. In addition, she has been active in a sexual-abuse support group for the past year.

**JULIE VAN GORP**

Julie Van Gorp recently resigned as executive director of Des Moines' HomeCare Plus, Iowa's oldest and largest health and human services agency providing Meals on Wheels, in order to devote all of her time to raising her two young children. A member



of the board of governors of the Des Moines Leadership Institute, she was one of 28 Iowans selected to participate in the Iowa Association of Business and Industry's Leadership Iowa Program. She serves on the Governor's Task Force on Alzheimers Disease and Related Disorders, and is also a member of Concerned Women for America.

**GRACE J. WARFIELD**

Grace J. Warfield is immediate past president of the board of directors of the National Gray Panthers, an organization founded in 1970 to combat ageism and en-



courage peace and social justice. A former teacher and school administrator, she has done extensive writing and editing, and served for six years as an officer for the U.S. Prison Service. Since retiring as editor of "Education Unlimited" in 1980, she has been an active volunteer with a number of community and national organizations, including the Minnesota Board on Aging. Warfield's most recent book is "Old Women Breaking the Silence," a collection of stories by battered women over 50. Warfield earned B.S. and M.A. degrees from the University of Minnesota, and received a Ph.D. degree in special education from Yeshiva University in 1975.

**C.V.**

**WILLIE**

Sociologist Charles Vert Willie is professor of education and urban studies at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. An authority on education,



health, race relations, and the urban community, Willie was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to the President's Commission on Mental Health and has served as an expert witness in several school desegregation cases. He has actively resisted racist and sexist oppression in several sectors of society, and was one of 40 men cited as "heroes" by Ms. magazine in its tenth anniversary issue. The author or editor of nearly 100 articles and book chapters, Willie has written 18 books, including "Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status" and "Black and White Families." He earned a B.A. degree at Morehouse College and received an M.A. degree from Atlanta University.

## Grinnell Area Restaurants

Back Alley Deli  
917 Broad St.

Bredeaux Pisa  
929 Broad St.

Bruce & Laura's Family Dining  
Hwy. 6 West

Country Kitchen  
Hwy. 146 South

Farmer Nick's  
915 Broad St.

Godfather's Pizza  
800 Fourth Ave.

Grandpa's Cafe  
827 West St.

Hardee's  
1019 West St.

J.D.'s Restaurant and Lounge  
922 1/2 Main St.

Kentucky Fried Chicken  
229 West St.

Koffee Shoppe  
807 Fourth Ave.

Longhorn Restaurant and Lounge  
1011 Main St.

Maid-Rite  
712 Sixth Ave.

The Oakroom Restaurant and Lounge  
Hwy. 6 West

Pagliari's Pizza  
816 Fifth Ave.

Peppercorn's  
927 Broad St.

Pizza Hut  
Broad St. & Sixth Ave.

Dickey's Prairie Home Restaurant  
I-80 & Hwy. 63 South, Malcom

Palmas Restaurant  
2002 First Ave. E., Newton

The New Peking  
1817 First Ave. E., Newton

Numerous restaurants  
I-80 & Hwy. 14, Newton

Rube's  
Montour (20 mi. north)

Amana Colonies  
(45 mi. east)

RJ's  
Hwy. 63 South, Malcom



**Grinnell Area Motels**

All telephones are within area code 515 unless otherwise noted. (I)=Interstate 80 location.

**Grinnell**

Super 8 Motel (I)  
236-7888

Four Winds Motel  
236-3125

Freeborn Motel  
236-5222

Motel Grinnell (I)  
236-6116

**Newton** (21 mi. west of Grinnell)  
Days Inn (I)  
1-800-325-2525

Mid-Iowa Motel  
792-1503

Newton Best Western Inn (I)  
792-4200

Oak Tree Inn (I)  
792-8100

Terrace Inn Motel (I)  
792-7722

**Tama/Toledo** (25 mi. northeast)  
King Tower Motel  
484-9081

Motel L Ranko  
484-2305

Zon-A-Voo Motel  
484-3148

**Amana** (50 mi. east)  
Colony Haus (I)  
319-668-2097

Holiday Inn of Amana (I)  
319-668-1175

**Marshalltown** (30 mi. northwest)

Arrow Motel  
752-3661

Best Western Regency  
752-6321

Colonial Inn Motel  
752-5489

Fairview Motel  
753-3367

Fiscus Motel  
753-6677

Flamingo Motel  
752-1533

Franklin Motel  
752-1563

Redwood Motel  
752-5485

Thunderbird Motel  
752-3631

Travelodge  
753-6681

Weeden Holiday Motel  
752-3655

**LeGrand** (20 mi. north)  
LeGrand Motel  
479-2960

**Pella** (40 mi. southwest)  
Dutch Mill Motel  
628-1060

Pella Motor Inn  
628-9500

Strawtown Inn  
628-4043



## FAMILY CONFERENCE TASK FORCE

Thomas J. Brozowski  
 A. Caroline Gebhard  
 Thomas R. Hietala  
 Heidi Johnston  
 Steven Jones  
 Maria K. Mootry  
 Barbara S. Nowak  
 Katherine K. Simonds, co-director  
 Paula V. Smith, co-director  
 Sylvia Thorson-Smith  
 Marcia G. Stephenson  
 Jenny Etter McCoy

The Noun Program in Women's Studies, under the direction of Mary Lynn Broe with assistance from Ilse Case, wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Miale-Gene Sagen.

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Books by conference participants are available at the Grinnell College Bookstore, located at the east end of Carnegie Hall, north of Herrick Chapel.



## Campus Map

