

# **V**oices *for* Media Democracy

45th Anniversary 1972-2017

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**Women's Institute**  
*for* **Freedom of the Press**



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# 2017 Women and Media Award Vinie Burrows

Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press is deeply honored to present Vinie Burrows with the 2017 Women’s Media Award. Activist, storyteller, and actor only begin to describe the role of Dr. Burrows in advancing media representations of women of color. She holds a Bachelor’s and a Master’s Degree in Performing Arts from NYU, followed by an Honorary Doctorate from Paine College as an Activist and Scholar.



Her education demonstrates the moving integration of racial representation and theatrical performance that guides her purpose in life. As a result of her disappointment in these one sided portrayals of life and the world, Ms. Burrows created and produced a series of eight one-woman shows. Her body of work illustrates a subversion of the traditional white dominant roles in plays and cinema. She has performed over six-thousand shows

all across Europe, and most recently, Russia.

This extraordinary Emmy-nominated actress, who began her career on Broadway, found her voice as an activist for South Africans. In order to further her goals of peace and racial equality, she works as the Permanent Representative for the Women’s International Democratic Federation- an NGO with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

She actively pursues the encouragement of women’s rights and social and economic stability in South Africa. Her support of female equality extends globally, especially to WIFP, where she has been affiliated since 1980. Her continued contributions to the multi-faceted representations of people of color in theatre and the incredible political work to attain peace in South Africa makes her a splendid and truly deserving recipient of the Women’s Media Award.

Vinie was unable to attend the event at which the award was announced due to her performing in a production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. She was honored at WIFP’s “Women’s Voices and the Media” program on July 13th.



# 45 Years of WIFP

2017 marks the 45th anniversary of the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP). The organization was founded by



Dr. Donna Allen (pictured above) in 1972 as an activist group which is dedicated to media democracy and media justice.

WIFP and its founder launched *Media Report to Women* in 1972 to cover "what women are thinking and doing to make the world's communications media more democratic." *Media Report to Women* pioneered discussions of the ways women are represented in TV journalism, broadcast, advertising and movie programming. It challenged the normative and male-centric mass media and established a well-rounded network for women who want to work against the male-dominant media industry. It was one of the first feminist media monitors. From the beginning it provided important information regarding women and

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especially the status and working conditions of women in the mass media professions.

*Media Report to Women* reported on important sexual discrimination complaints filed by groups of media women against the *Washington Post*, *New York Times* and other corporate media. A special 13th issue published in December 1978 was entirely dedicated to the *New York Times* settlement.

In 1987, *Media Report to Women* was transferred to Communications Research Associates, Inc. It has since evolved into a quarterly journal, edited by Sheila Gibbons, a WIFP associate.

In January 1975, WIFP released the first annual print *Directory of Women's Media*. The goal of the *Directory*, edited by Martha Leslie Allen, has been to increase communication among women nationally and internationally in a variety of media forms including periodicals, publishers, news services, music, film, and media organizations. It was published by WIFP 1975 through 1989, and in 2001 it was once again published annually by WIFP.



During the 1990s, the National Council for Research on Women, based out of New York, published two editions. A current online version is available for free on

WIFP's website.

In 1977 WIFP established an Associate network made up of activists, journalists and academics interested in the shared WIFP goals. An associate newsletter was sent out periodically, but in 2000 the newsletter became an annual publication which took on the name *Voices for Media Democracy*.



In the 1970s and 1980s WIFP conducted seven conferences at the National Press Club on "Planning a National and International Communications System for Women." The organization proceeded to also hold two international satellite teleconferences from the U.N. World Conference of Women of the U.N. Decade for Women. One teleconference was based in Copenhagen in 1980, and the second was in Nairobi in 1985.

To celebrate women who have made outstanding contributions toward expanding women's voices in the media, WIFP began an annual award titled the "Women and Media Award" starting in 2013.

The leadership of WIFP is filled with strong women who are active in the fight for media democracy and justice. Dana Densmore serves the President of the organization. She worked closely with founder Donna Allen on research and media philosophy. Martha Leslie Allen is the Director. She was started working

full-time at WIFP in 1975. From 1978 - 1985, she served as the Associate Director and Director since that time. Her doctoral thesis *History of Women's Media: The Development of Communication Networks Among Women, 1963-1983* can be found on the website. Elana Anderson is the Associate Director. She became affiliated with the organization in 2011. WIFP also has a diverse support team as an informal staff. Associates and interns play key roles as well.

Over the years WIFP has held regular media and women events. In addition this year WIFP hosted a 45th Anniversary Reception after the huge Women's March on January 21, 2017 in which activists and associates participated. In 2016 February WIFP hosted an informative talk by Dr. Tobe Levin, founder and CEO of a press dedicated to the issue of Female Genital Mutilation, UnCut Voices/Press. The year prior, associate Dr. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz received WIFP's "Women and Media Award" and spoke about her book *An Indigenous People's History of the United*



*States.*

WIFP has been a key player in the media justice and media democracy movements in the past 45 years: 1972 - 2017. Stay in touch through the website: [wifp.org!](http://wifp.org)



# 45 Anniversary Reception



Following the Women's March on Washington, January 21, 2017, WIFP held a reception as part of our 45th Anniversary. Associates and friends gathered for an evening of relaxing, networking, and strategizing with other out-of-town and local activists after a successful march on the capitol.

The hosting WIFP staff included our President Dana Densmore who came from Santa Fe, NM, along with both directors, Martha Allen and Elana Anderson. Almost all the Board of Directors, including members who travelled a great distance like Kimberlie Kranich from Illinois, were in attendance.



Support team members, including Danielle Maldonado and Otgon Altankhuyag, as well as our winter intern Brody Fernandez from University of California, Davis joined us. WIFP Associates, including Ariel Dougherty, Pamela Creedon, Carolyn Byerly and Nyamsuren Munkhbat, and friends contributed to the lively discussions.



We were happy to be joined by members of our partner organization, Global Woman Peace Foundation, including members Aisha Kamara and Julie Taitt. Others making an appearance were members and the president of the Inter-African Committee.



Intersectional Feminism

Vy Vu, WIFP





The team sporting the new Net Neutrality banner (left to right) Arya Boris, Hazar Badin, Martha Allen, Srujana Sinha, Sunaya Padmanabhan, Lauren Garczynski, Aia Khalaila, & Andrea Barb



Srujana Sinha, Hazar Badin, Arya Boris, Martha Allen, & Aia Khalaila Sunaya Padmanabhan, Lauren Garczynski, & Andrea Barb

**HAZAR BADIN**

*A Glimpse of Palestinian Media*



Brief description of Palestinian Media and a list of the major Palestinian press and news websites. The focus is on electronic news and magazines, not mentioning

TV channels nor Radio stations.

Hazar is from Palestine and a member of New Story Leadership. She is studying environmental engineering at Technion- Israel Institute of Technology Haifa. Hazar is currently involved in a social program encouraging equal opportunities between Arabs and Jews at the Technion.

**ANDREEA BARB**

*Activism using Social Media: with a Concentration on Women's Use of the Hashtag*



Andrea spoke about activism and how social media influences modern methods of activism with the use of the hashtag. Andrea specifically looked at four movements started by women which relayed on the hashtag too see if their outcomes were successful or influential.

Andrea is a rising senior at Gettysburg College majoring in Sociology. Andrea is very interested and involved in issues pertaining to human rights and social change on a local and global scale. This can be seen in her past experiences internationally and domestic like serving with AmeriCorps and in an internship in Berlin, Germany.

**ARYA BORIS**

*Yes, I'm Legal: A Snapshot of Modern Slavery*

There are an estimated 150,000 underaged individuals in the United States at any given time. The largest platform for sales is now online, and as a result there is an extensive court battle to end this process. While this seems like a cause which should result in an open-shut case, one of the largest players, BackPage.com keeps winning cases.



Arya is a rising senior at Elon University majoring in Studio Arts and minoring in Psychology and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She is interested in preventing domestic violence, along with speaking up for women's healthcare and LGBTQ+ rights. Her goals for the future include helping young activists find their voices in the modern sociopolitical climate.

**LAUREN GARCZYNSKI**

*The Harmful Media Depiction of Female Politicians*

When women are running for office, media coverage is vastly different than that of their male counterparts. With a tendency to focus on appearance and personality rather than policy, the media's portrayal of female candidates can alter their electability and prevent women from running.



Lauren is a rising junior at Kent State University majoring in public relations with a minor in political science. In 2016, she was an intern for Ohio Together, Hillary Clinton's campaign in Ohio. She has been a member of her school's PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) chapter since her freshman year and currently serves as secretary. She has a deep interest in policy and advocacy public relations and hopes to make a career of it

**AIA KHALAILA**

*The Israeli Media from a Palestinian Eye*



In her presentation discusses how she sees the Israeli media as a person who speak both Arabic and Hebrew and can read the news on an event from both sides perspective, simultaneously. and how the Media contents affect the lives of Israelis and Palestinians directly and unconsciously. Furthermore, she touches on why there was a need for several of different active organizations in the region to cover political and social events.

Aia is a Palestinian who graduated from The Hebrew University in Jerusalem with a BBA in Occupational Therapy. Aia is on a work placement with WIFP through New Story Leadership. Aia has worked with Creativity For Peace where she returned as a public speaker, workshop facilitator, and fundraising coordinator. At WIFP she writes about the Palestinian perspective.

**SUNAYA PADMANABHAN**

*American Media and Violence Against Women*



The way women are portrayed in the media continues the cycles of abuse by adhering to traditional gender norms that allow for the dominance of men over women- normalizing the notions that men should have the ability to physically and sexually control the "fairer sex."

Sunaya is a rising senior at the University of California San Diego majoring in Linguistics (focus on Society and Language) minoring in Literatures of the World. In 2015, she became the Networking Chair of the Rehabilitation Therapy Club on her campus. She works at Traveling Stories as the Imperial Beach Story Tent Captain, promoting literacy and a love to read to underprivileged children.

**SRUJANA SINHA**

*Transforming Asian-American Political Representation*

In her presentation she discussed how mainstream media outlets portray Asian-Americans as a stagnant, monolithic, and largely "nonpartisan" voting demographic, and how this representation is harmful to Asian-Americans. Furthermore, she discussed the importance of Asian-led media representation of Asian-Americans, and how Asian-American journalists, scholars, and political commentators can change and reshape the narrative of Asian-American voting patterns to increase Asian-American political visibility and importance.



Srujana is a rising junior at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, currently double-majoring in political science and BCN (biopsychology, cognition, and neuroscience). She is invested in feminism, particularly as it relates to South-Asian women and other women of color.

# 45 Anniversary Associate Reflections

*I started working with the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press in 1974, editing the first edition of the Directory of Women's Media and indexing Media Report to Women. The following year I officially relocated to work full time with the founder, Donna Allen, my mother. I had the privilege of becoming the director of WIFP in 1985 and working closely with Donna in WIFP for twenty-five years.*

*WIFP formed the Associate Network in 1977. As a celebration of our 45th year, I asked some of our long-time Associates to reflect on what WIFP has meant to them. I suggested a few questions they could respond to if they chose:*

1. What has WIFP meant to you (at any or several points in our 45 years)?
2. What impact has WIFP made in its decades of existence?
3. What motivated you to become an Associate?
4. What is needed for women in media (and in general) to make more progress?
5. What is needed to bring us closer to media democracy? (WIFP is once again working on Net Neutrality.)

*I also asked them to say something about themselves. These are the thoughtful and kind reflections.*

*Martha Allen, Director*



**Susan J. Kaufman, PhD**

It was 1977 when I first joined WIFP, and I was working in radio in Upper Michigan. I read about the Houston Women's Conference organizers calling for journalists to work on a publication. I called your mother. The next thing I knew I was helping to cover the U.N. Decade for Women Conference in Houston, TX working on the daily newspaper "Houston Breakthrough." It was the beginning of a long and amazing journey and an absolutely joyful professional relationship and personal friendship with your mother and you and hundreds of other women across the globe. Thank you for making it possible for ensuring generations

of women in media to reach out to each other, developing networks that continue to bring the changes that must come, if democracy is to survive and thrive in subsequent decades.

Sue Kaufman, Ph.D., Professor Emeriti Eastern Illinois University

## Birgitte Jallov

WIFP has had a significant impact on my life. During the UN conference in Copenhagen 1980, I was lucky that one of the two women we hosted in our small student apartment was Donna Allen. We shared what we had and it was received in that spirit. We had wonderful talks and grew close. Half a year later I was accepted to become an intern with the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press. I was there, full time from September 1982 to January 1983.

During my time at the WIFP I assisted with the many menial tasks required to make the institute run during half of my time time – and the other half time I spent working on projects related to my own area of study and interest: alternative communication, women's radio and freedom of speech. The WIFP with Donna and Martha was a very inspiring space of freedom, challenge and growth. I experienced liberation and release of energies in a very new way. With Martha I experienced concerts with Holly Near and Sweet Honey in the Rock, who both have accompanied me ever since. This experience was magic to me, opening new inquisitive corners of my mind, new freedoms and an intellectual and personal openness.

Two sentences from Donna Allen, which I carry with me in all I do, are:

Women should speak for themselves – All should speak for themselves.

Don't just plan and implement! Remember to allow yourself to immerse yourself in creative confusion. That is necessary to break new ground, to find new and unexpected connections and answers.

WIFP has meant all of that to me. I was reconfirmed in my belief that you have to stand up and fight for what you believe in; I learnt a lot more about what 'women and media' is all about; and my basic participatory approach to my work, which I have become known and recognized for ever since, is rooted in the DA/WIFP principle that 'Women/People should speak for themselves'.

I was honoured to be invited to become an Associate and I was very happy to be part of this network of powerful women who, like I, in their work and beyond, worked to secure the public spaces that will never be freely given. I felt good there.

I believe firmly that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the best set of guiding principles towards a just world – it gives us a set of values, based on which wrong can be determined from right. Democracy is the best organising principle I know, for a space where people are treated along the Human rights principles. Media is recognized as the fourth pillar of democracy, to keep and uphold the division of powers in check as free media are the single best guarantee of a democracy – also when they cannot do the 'trick' all by themselves, of course!

Birgitte Jallov is Director, Coach, Adviser, Trainer and Consultant at EMPOWERHOUSE. She is the author of the excellent book Empowerment Radio.



The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press provided an international outlet for me to express my opinion on gender imbalance within the Rastafari culture as promoted by many males who had taken leadership roles. It also served as an umbrella that shielded me from persecution, during the terrorism unleashed on the Caribbean, and enabled me to go in and out of the island safely.



The media is one of the main means of keeping people's freedom and consciousness subdued. It promotes and encourages women's subjugation and encourages them to become the playthings of males. By giving women around the world, the opportunity to develop and express themselves and by fighting for freedom of the press, the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press is providing leadership in breaking down barriers erected to prevent press freedom. The task that WIFP has set out to achieve and the progress it is making to attain its goal has encouraged me to become an associate.

Women in the media need to develop more solidarity among ourselves. We need to establish forums and meeting places where we can exchange ideas and get to know one another. More emphasis needs to be placed on strategizing about overcoming the media bias that still exists against press freedom and the stereotyping of women. The training of young girls to unleash their possibilities so that women of the world rise to their true capabilities needs to be promoted and prioritized by women writers. Women who believe in net neutrality need to raise their voices for freedom and peace while shouting with their pens against war, injustice, and tyranny.

Farika Berhane was born in Kingston, Jamaica. Known then as Norma Hamilton, she was a journalist at *The Gleaner*, Jamaica's national newspaper and editor of the Pan African Secretariat's Pan African Digest. Farika organized the first international Rastafari Women's Conference at Howard University in 2003. She was featured at WIFP's "Women's Words Now: Resistance, Reflection, Remembrance" in 2015 after her latest book was released *I-LAN IV Di SUN*.



Tobe Levin, Ph.D.



For 45 years, the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press has been advocating to increase equity and visibility for women journalists and women's issues in a media landscape formerly dismissive of females' importance. I'm honored by the invitation to share my views on this accomplishment, for women's media means so much to me personally – as a publisher of books about female genital mutilation (UnCUT/VOICES Press) – and for the specific injustice I have been working to avert for 40 years. In 1977, not coincidentally, it was media – an article in the German feminist magazine *EMMA* (our counterpart toMS) – that first informed me about ablation of girls' genitalia. Based on interviews with infibulation victims in Sudan, the piece, titled simply "Clitoridectomy" (what's that? so many readers asked...) ended with a plea. "Here no one talks about it. TV, radio, newspapers are silent. We depend on an outcry from abroad." That appeal ignited campaigns in Germany that continue into the new millennium, bringing welcome opportunities to share news about projects against FGM. In fact, the theme of my last talk at WIFP, February 14, 2016, was networking. I introduced efforts to bring together on this issue journalists, scholars and activists, including Women's Action against FGM – Japan (WAAF) where I had recently presented. What happened next is rewarding: reporting on media in Germany and the UK, I showed the Japanese three cartoon films made for children – titled *The True Story of Ghafi and Rhobi; My Body, My Rules; and Needlecraft*. WAAF asked FORWARD (UK) for the rights and has produced the tales in Japanese. Thus, the global reach of the present movement against female genital mutilation owes a great deal to media outreach and the strong stance women have taken against the abuse of FGM.

Thank you for all you've done to make suppressed voices heard, and congratulations on reaching this landmark, your 45th anniversary.

Tobe Levin is a professor, translator, and activist who speaks 6 languages, a Ph.D. in comparative literature from Cornell University. An activist against female genital mutilation since 1977, she founded UnCUT/VOICES Press in 2009; co-founded FORWARD – Germany in 1998; and is active in the EuroNet-FGM. She blogs at [www.uncutvoices.wordpress.com](http://www.uncutvoices.wordpress.com).

Join the Walk to End FGM on October 21, 2017 in Washington, DC.

Register at [www.globalwomanpeacefoundation.org](http://www.globalwomanpeacefoundation.org)





WIFP is important to me - and to many others, I'm sure - because it addresses issues that frequently are overlooked or downplayed in the mainstream media. I believe a robust democracy needs numerous streams of opinion, but I do not believe in promoting hatred or a breakdown in civil government. I remember that Dr. Donna Allen, when she founded WIFP, stressed that its aim was not to attack others but to raise important subjects through a feminist lens. I originally was inspired by the passion that Dr. Allen showed for social change through the media. I continue to be inspired and impressed by the committed young people

who participate in internship programs under the direction of Dr. Martha Allen. Her love of learning (like that of her mother) and dedication to progressive causes give me hope that the world can be made a better place.

WIFP has been a leader in identifying areas where women have been mistreated and used a fact-based approach to point out their subjugation. WIFP does not deal in "fake news." It deals with the lives of real women all over the globe. It gives them respect, and I personally certainly respect its achievements.

On a personal level WIFP published my first book (coauthored/edited with Sheila Gibbons) *Women in Media: A Documentary Source Book* because no commercial publisher would. Dr. Donna Allen helped me greatly - she through the WIFP made me feel my work in women's history was important, while others shrugged it off. What can we do to improve the status of women in the media today? One answer: Make women more aware of their history.

On that note I would like to add that I have just published a new book: *Ruby A Black: Eleanor Roosevelt, Puerto Rice, and Political Journalism in Washington* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 20017). Dr. Donna Allen encouraged me to go more deeply into Eleanor Roosevelt's press conferences for women reporters only and this book is one outcome of my research into these conferences.

I am a retired professor of journalism at the University of Maryland who has found Dr. Allen's enthusiasm for Eleanor Roosevelt guiding me in academic writing for some four decades.

It was an amazing opportunity to learn to think critically about democracy and the role of the media. It was also an opportunity to learn a little bit about how D.C. functions. What I learned during my internship and through the work of the WIFP informs my teaching on social change to this day.

The organization and Dr. Donna Allen made such an impact upon me that I wanted to maintain my association with the WIFP and to stay current and knowledgeable about the work being done. I think it is meaningful work, and I wanted to stay associated with it in some way.



The mere ways that women are represented needs to be altered in order for their voices to be effectively heard. As long as women are used and represented as objects, it remains difficult to create gender equity.

I am an associate professor of Human Relations and an adjunct associate professor in the Women's and Gender Studies program at the University of Oklahoma. My work is focussed on communities recovery from large-scale trauma, especially women are impacted.

So many people owe so much to WIFP. In the early 70s, many of us were scrambling to find information, networks, ideas for activism in journalism. Donna Allen's *Media Report to Women* provided us with national and international reports, names, resources, plans, conferences, inspiration and motivation.



We were all very active in those days, but I think that Donna (who seemed to survive primarily on carrot sticks eaten at her desk) was the hardest working woman I knew. She had both vision and concrete plans, and was always eager to work with others around the world.

Martha Allen inherited and improved on those earlier plans, also eager to working with many others for the promotion of women's work in the media. A great deal of work by many has been built on and around the platform of WIFP and the work of all the associates and interns. Our work to protect and increase media democracy and net neutrality is needed more than ever. Thank you for all that the WIFP continues to do!

Cheris Kramarae is an activist, author, and former teacher. She is co-editor of the Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women, and of many recent articles on social media and gender.

I first came into contact with WIFP in about 1978, through *Media Report to Women*. I was doing a review of research, actions and networks in the field of women and media for UNESCO (eventually published by them as *Unequal Opportunities: The Case of Women and the Media*). *Media Report to Women* was completely unique at the time – a treasure trove of information, research and contacts that spanned the globe. In 1979, I met Donna Allen in Washington. Her energy, breadth of knowledge and generosity were so impressive, and we remained in contact for the rest of her life, sometimes collaborating on projects, and regularly sharing information and ideas.



From the outset, WIFP was a truly visionary initiative. It's impossible to quantify, but vast numbers of people must have been educated, informed and inspired by the ideas that flowed from WIFP – a communication revolution for women, creation of a democratic media system, an international communication system for women. At a practical level, publications such as *Media Report to Women* and the *Directory of Women's Media* have been tremendously important in helping to build women's networks globally. Some of the WIFP initiatives – for instance the Women's News International (WNI), which was established to report news from the UN Women's Decade Conference in Nairobi in 1985, were revolutionary and pre-figured later international women's news services that were eventually made possible with digital technology.

It's such a terrific source of information and contacts, and it's an honour to be associated with one of the foundational movements for women and media. Endless creativity, analysis and reflection. The ground is constantly shifting. The women and media situation is part of a much bigger set of issues to do with political structures, economic/commercial power and influence. We need to work on all fronts simultaneously. Misogyny continues to be a huge problem.

Thoughtful, analytical activism to optimise use of the new/alt media/social media networks and tools. Media structures are changing, and with them the power of the established media is no longer as impregnable as it seemed a decade ago. Think digital. I am optimistic.

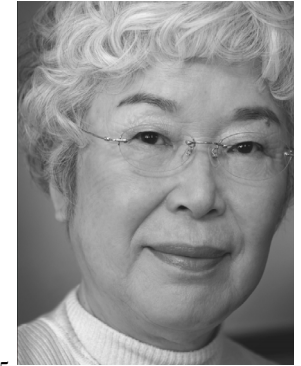
Margaret Gallagher (Ireland). Independent scholar and activist. Currently I am working to support the involvement of young women in public life, and am a member of the International Steering Committee of the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG).

Haruko Watanabe

Currently I am the Chairperson of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan and organize press tours and cultural events after serving on the Board for six times. "Women Pioneers" series are now put in book forms together with DVD and are used as textbooks in women studies and Japan studies courses. Several academia has taken a part and has added footnotes and bios.

I am amazed to learn that Fusae Ichikawa, pioneer politician, needs bio to explain her life to younger generation. However, I feel lucky that this work has given jobs for young academia.

I am much honored to tell you I am the first international associate of WIFP. Donna Allen, your mother and the founder of WIFP, was my soul friend in the media. I met her at the first UN-UNESCO Women & Media Seminar in 1980 in New York when I presented "Women Pioneer Series" video produced as a response to recommendations of the first World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975.



Actually, women in Mexico demanded "an oral herstory" using tape recorders as the printed history had been dominated by men. However, I decided recording women's history deserved the highest media technology, which was "video" at that time. HKW produced video-television documentaries of Denmark Conference of Women in 1980 with all female crew which inspired other countries to send all female crew to Women's Forward Looking Conference in Nairobi 1985.

I was drafted by UNESCO to pioneer women's media development and organized seminars and training courses in Asia-Pacific and African regions from 1981 to 1990. Utilizing Nairobi conference, HKW trained African women journalists and they produced the first documentary for television by all female crew.

During Beijing Conference of Women in 1995, HKW organized "Women & Media Center and organized seminars and workshops for women journalists and NGOs. In addition, HKW rented out 250 most advanced mobile phones to journalists and NGOs free of any charges as I know public phones were often out of order and were not fixed on time. These mobile phones were contributed by NEC and all phones were donated to the Chinese women's organizations and the Beijing Telecommunications Bureau upon completion of the Beijing Conference.

Probably, HKW's best contribution to development of Women and Media is the Creation of Japan Global Forum in New York. This is the biggest NGO Forum with 2000 participants from all over the world held in conjunction with UN Women 2000. The program of the forum includes the journalists encounter and five panels: Peace, Development Girls, Aging, Equality of Women & Men and NGO. Global leaders volunteered to serve as panelists. The forum was completed with Fiesta (Dancing.)

For these years, I also taught media and women studies at Sophia University, Tokyo contributed articles to the *Depthnews Asia*, the *Japan Times* and other media.

Dear Martha,

When I entered academia, I learned about WIFP from members of the Commission on the Status of Women. The valuable insight provided by Donna, yourself and so many others helped me develop my feminist research agenda.



After the Women's March, in January, I was privileged to be invited to the WIFP headquarters and meet you, your family, and so many others dedicated to WIFP. The interns who met with us will continue to move our agenda forward.

The support and collegiality of WIFP reinvigorates us all to continue our efforts to achieve equity for women journalists. The principles and goals of WIFP reflect my values motivated me to become an Associate. Supporting WIFP is a privilege.

Women seem to be breaking the glass ceiling in various news organizations, e.g., the *Washington Post* now has women editors of four major sports. I am concerned that today's 24/7 communication streams have cracked the glass ceiling in many directions, which means breaking the glass ceiling in traditional media may be yesterday's news. Media democracy is a tough term. We can argue that social networking--tweets, blogs, etc., has made media democratic--followers choose leaders. But what has happened to journalism and journalistic values?

Pam Creedon is currently the Acting Dean of the Zayed University College of Communication and Media Sciences, Dubai and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates and Professor Emeritus at University of Iowa. She started academic career as a professor at The Ohio State University and entered academic administration as director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Kent State University and later director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Iowa. Former President of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication, she is editor/author in three books: *The Edge of Change: Women in the Twenty-First-Century Press*, *Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values and Women, Media and Sport* and is on the editorial board of *Public Relations Review*. She worked as a public relations practitioner for 15 years before entering academe.

I'm working on a book chapter: *Media Narratives of Gender in the Contentious Conservative Age of Trump* (Routledge)

My papers for the International Association of Mass Communication Research in July are:

1). Transformation in Emirati Culture Through Gender Equity and Tolerance: A Student Perspective

2). 2019 Abu Dhabi Special Olympics World Summer Games: Cultural Coverage of Disability

Elayne Clift

I have not been very actively involved with WIFP over the years but I have always valued its mission, objectives and actions. I have fond memories of the early days when women were struggling as journalists to be printed, respected and included in the work of dialoguing about and documenting the myriad challenges that women continue to face, locally, nationally, and internationally. We always felt so supported by WIFP. Along with other feminist watch groups and activist organizations, WIFP has helped immeasurably in bringing legitimacy to the work of women in media. I am among the many members who are grateful for that.



Elayne Clift is an internationally published feminist writer and journalist. Latest book (4th anthology) *TAKE CARE: Tales, Tips and Love from Women Caregivers* (Braugher Books, 2017)

Alix Dobkin



Since I don't regularly follow and document women in the media, it is and has been deeply comforting to know that WIFP is keeping track, keeping us informed and advocating on our behalf. Giving a wide range of individual women information about our public standing as WIFP does provides us with an invaluable sense of a like-minded movement and community. My admiration for your work motivated me to become an Associate.

Needed: More naming of male violence underlying and defining patriarchy is needed for women in media (and in general) to make more progress. Also needed: More solidarity and support for feminist values among and between women and our allies is needed to bring us closer to media democracy.

Folk singer in the 1960's and currently a co-director of OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change), I have been celebrating blatant Lesbianism in song and story since 1972. Among six albums on three CDs and a songbook, I produced the groundbreaking 1973 *Lavender Jane Loves Women* and wrote a 2010 Lambda Literary Award nominee, *MY RED BLOOD: A Memoir of Growing Up Communist, Coming Onto the Greenwich Village Folk Scene, & Coming Out in the Feminist Movement*. I love being together with Lesbians in community!

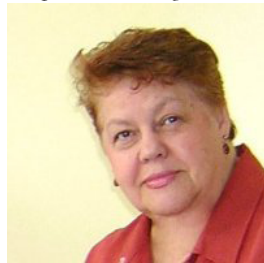


I applaud your ability to make impossible to possible and I feel extremely proud to be part of Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press. This only could be achieved by your sheer hard work and perseverance to continue your mother's legacy. Congratulations, what a great achievement after 45 years!

My memories of your mother are composed of many things; a quiet prayer, a dream and a paramount aspiration. I was looking for an opportunity to work in her organization, it was a crazy idea. How could I make myself understood, if I barely babbled English, how could I communicate my deepest desire? My heart throbbed. I called her anyway. I almost surrender but, when I hear her warm voice... it gave me the courage to speak to her and my fears disappeared.

Because she had the ability to convey humanness I was able to reveal to her my feelings. At that time (1977), I was a gloomy young Chilean journalist recently arrived, longing for my family, my newspaper and country.....Perhaps, to escape to other alignments of time where I could rectify my present, perhaps I lacked courage to confront a reality that I did not expect.

She understood my struggle to assimilate to this country and was one of the first women who inspired my desire to continue my profession; "you need to study, focus and adapt yourself to the big change. Acculturate your mind. This is your opportunity to bring out your essence, your soul under a new perspective".



During our conversation my mind was filled with restorative thoughts and my quest was expanded. She entered through my life for only ten tiny minutes, however, her mentorship contributed to the journalist that I am today. Her wisdom and love gave me the advice that I still honor. She was my big muse, she ignited great personal transformation. She recognized the blueprint and power of women's journalist, so she founded Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press. She had the vision to empower us to connect with each other; she encouraged us to be free to express the true.

This experience was necessary in my life. It taught me that individuals no matter where they are coming from, no matter their vast differences, are universally connected by love, strength, empathy and spirituality.

Since then, I started a new journey full of journalistic paths were I had found many trails with many choices, and many voices.

Nora is an experienced journalist who has worked in the Washington D.C. community for over 25 years. In 1998, she created *MUJER 2000* and *Educación Más* Spanish-language magazines under the umbrella of El Tiempo Latino. In 2003 and 2004, she becomes free-lance editor/writer for the *Washington Post*: "Celebrating the Hispanic Spirit" a first bilingual advertorial supplement addressing a wide range of Latino issues and achievements. Her essays have been published by *The Creative Woman*, a quarterly of Governors State University, Illinois. *CURE Magazine* published her essay in the book *Extraordinary Healers: CURE Readers Honor Oncology Nurses*, Volume 2.

I am originally from Peru, and I live permanently in the UK, since 2007. Since my undergraduate studies in Anthropology, I have been interested in gender, poverty and inequality issues. I recently finished my Ph.D. in the University of Durham. My thesis explores the uneven effects of the institutionalisation of neoliberalism in the economy, the labour market and the welfare state on lone mothers in the UK. One of the overarching themes of my thesis is the importance of an intersectional approach to identify unjust economic and policy measures, which impact unevenly on the population. I worked previously with the Scottish Government as a social researcher on issues concerning welfare reform, housing, and social security. I will start to work on a permanent basis with the Scottish Government in the following weeks.



I came from Peru for a six-month internship with WIFP in 2001. Being an intern with WIFP has been one of the most relevant lived experiences I ever had. It provided me with a wider perspective concerning feminist issues beyond my country of origin, and it increased my knowledge regarding the importance of the democratisation of the media to create a fairer society. I was motivated to become a WIFP associate after finishing the internship. I find essential to work in different fields to create a more equal society. Thus, I engaged with WIFP as an associate because I strongly believe in the democratisation of the media as an important element to enhance and increase the public voice of women, people with disabilities and/or people of ethnic minorities. I also believe in the fundamental need for international networks to mobilise women on the relevant issues that affects us.

### Jean Kilbourne

One summer day in the late 1970s I visited Donna and Martha Allen in the original office of WIFP in Washington, DC. Although I created my slide presentation on the image of women in advertising in the late 1960s, I had only recently found the courage to present it to large audiences. I showed it to Donna and Martha and was very heartened and encouraged by their enthusiastic support. I have been a supporter of WIFP ever since.



Especially in the early days, I relied on WIFP for research studies, national and international reports, short news clips, and inspiration (there was no Internet, after all!). So much important information about women and the media still is overlooked or trivialized by the mainstream media. WIFP also has provided an important network of

feminists and scholars. I am very proud of my long-term association and happy to celebrate the 45th anniversary!

Jean is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking work on the image of women in advertising and her critical studies of alcohol and tobacco advertising. Author of the award-winning book *Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel*, she is also the creator of the renowned *Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women* film series. She holds an honorary position as Senior Scholar at the Wellesley Centers for Women and was recently inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

### Anne Zill

I have valued the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press since I first became an Associate about a year after your mother, Donna Allen, founded it. It has been a nice antidote to media as usual whether real or fake. It was a comfort for me just to know this organization existed.

It is hard to evaluate its impact. I used to think we Americans tended to shy away from radicalism in thought, or words or deeds. This year has been a polity and its media wallowing in mud -- narcissism and nastiness, skating close to racism and right-wing demagoguery.

For two years, 1969-1971 I did a 1/2 hour radio show, mailed out to what are today NPR affiliates back in the horse and buggy days. A Federal Case was the name. Each week I made a federal case out of something related to the national politics of the day. It was lonely out there.

Needed: 1. More women in positions of authority and leadership across the spectrum of media. 2. Media democracy remains a work in process.

I am currently writing the *Tales of My Life – Out of the Main(e) Stream* is the working title.



I am having an interesting life with lots of adventures. I also run the Art Gallery at the University of New England, and have mounted two shows of women's art at the UN and one at UNESCO in Paris. I have always been a feminist, and I have four daughters, each of them also feminists and accomplished in their fields— Katherine Zill— Homeland Security lawyer in charge of national security refugees; Persephone Zill, non denominational minister and one of the heads of the Weschester County Food Bank; Oriana Zill, 60-Minutes producer; Lydia Dennett, investigator for the Project on Government Oversight (POGO). I live in Maine now, back where I grew up.

### Frieda Werden

Congratulation that WIFP is still going strong! I well remember first seeing the *Media Report to Women* newsletters, I guess it must have been in the early 1980s, and thinking, Yes, yes, yesss!!! The Principles that Dr. Donna Allen laid down encouraged and guided me and the other co-founders of the weekly syndicated radio series WINGS: Women's International News Gathering Service. The format of concentrating on women, from the countries covered speaking for themselves, was a direct result of WIFP influence, and it kept us from going down any of the wrong paths offered, where US experts gave their impressions as fact and framed the story of women in other countries to suit themselves.

I met Donna on my first trip abroad for WINGS, to the Philippines in 1991. She set up what was then called a Space Bridge so that women in the US and in the Philippines could dialogue live in a joint session. That has inspired me to do several projects along those lines.



In 1992, before the US national election, a national live public radio satellite series in collaboration with the Council of Presidents of Women's Organizations, titled "National Women's Agenda: What Women Want and How They Plan to Win it." After the September 11, 2001 attack in New York, a collaborative series of international netcast discussions called Peacecasts. And just in May 2017, a two-hour live webcast with 11 community radio women from 4 countries. I still long for a 24-hour international women's radio station, and I think it may happen soon.

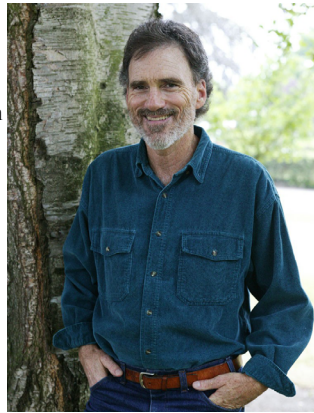
### Robin Morgan

WIFP means consistent focus, dedication, and excellence. Among many other successes, WIFP inspired me, together with Gloria Steinem and Jane Fonda, to co-found the Women's Media Center, now 11 years old. the WMC motto is to make women visible and powerful in the media. I was motivated to become an Associate by my concern over keeping a free press- and trust in the Allen Family Women! These days almost anything would help to bring us closer to media democracy.



Robin is a lifelong media user and worker, author of 21 books, book and magazine editor, journalist; current blogger, and writer/producer/host of "Women's Media Center Live with Robin Morgan," an award-winning nationally syndicated road broadcast and podcast on iTunes in 110 countries. And working on a new book.

WIFP over 45 years has helped me better understand how the monopoly of the corporate media has blocked people's movements on so many levels, and especially in regards to women's equality and freedom. When I first got to know Donna Allen in 1968, I appreciated her direct and clear explanations of how democracy requires that all people have equal access to the means of communication, but I wondered how it could ever happen. She predicted the internet would make a huge difference, and it has. Martha Allen and the WIFP have helped to chart the ways to keep fighting this battle for media democracy. I also look to Martha and WIFP as a clear bell weather when it comes to all of the issues of our day, from fighting sexism, racism, and capitalism, to fighting for Palestinian rights. I was an organizer, now a professor at University of Washington Tacoma, but in all of these years I continue to follow and support the WIFP as a vital contributor to media democracy and freedom for all.



Michael Honey, PhD, is an American historian, Guggenheim Fellow and Haley Professor of Humanities at the University of Washington Tacoma in the United States, where he teaches African-American, civil rights and labor history.

### Sheila Gibbons



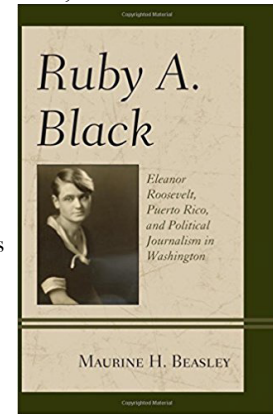
Donna Allen pushed hard, really hard, to obtain information about obstacles to advancement for women who worked in media, and to gauge the impact of how the depiction of women by media was affecting women, girls, and society in general. In 1972 she launched *Media Report to Women* to make a record of these industrial and societal shifts. I'm honored to continue that tradition as editor of *Media Report to Women* ([www.mediareporttowomen.com](http://www.mediareporttowomen.com)). WIFP has valiantly continued Donna's philosophy of creating environments in which women speak for themselves, adapting to new technologies to enlarge its work – as we all must do to continue to remain relevant and influential.

## Associate Book Review

### **Ruby A. Black: Eleanor Roosevelt, Puerto Rico, and Political Journalism in Washington**

By Maurine H. Beasley

Bringing new insight to the world of feminist writer, Ruby A. Black, Maurine Beasley weaves together an intricate story combining the personal and work life of this Washington D.C. journalist. As the first biographer of Eleanor Roosevelt, Black developed a unique relationship with her subject. Beasley indicates that their closeness both created and destroyed opportunities for Black, over the course of her life. Yet, within the context of Washington D.C. and as a correspondent for a Puerto Rican newspaper, her journalism career was groundbreaking for women of the 1920s and 1930s. However, Black, like many women of the time, found it incredibly hard to find work consistently throughout her life. From her humble beginnings, as the daughter of a Texas farmer, her father had always encouraged a love of politics within Black.



Throughout her lengthy career, at various newspapers, she attempted to make her voice relevant to the political landscape. Her proximity to the White House allowed her to exercise some of her beliefs in a truly powerful manner. Beasley reveals the transcripts of correspondence between Mrs. Roosevelt and Black, giving insight to the dynamics between the latter and the former. Her connection to the former first lady, provided her with the tools to advance the political career of Luis Muñoz Marín, Puerto Rico's first elected governor. After finishing her work documenting the life of Eleanor Roosevelt, she worked as an information specialist and White House Liaison for the Office of Inter-American Affairs. Within the confines of the time period and in the nation's capital, it was very difficult to become a famed female journalist, which the book describes as an ultimately unsuccessful aspiration for Black. However, the mark left by Black can be seen as an important first attempt to integrate feminism, journalism, and politics, in such an early time.

#### About the Author:

Professor Emerita Maurine H. Beasley is an author and writer, specializing in feminist journalism in Washington and the coverage of the first ladies. She has authored and edited many books on these subjects including, *Women of the Washington Press*, *Eleanor Roosevelt: Transformative First Lady*, *First Ladies and the Press*, *Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, and *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*. Her illustrious work has earned her many awards, such as Distinguished Senior Scholar, from the Educational Foundation of the American Association of University Women, and the Eleanor Blum Distinguished Service to Research Award, from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Her dedication to media journalism and women fuel her continued work and research as a professor at the University of Maryland.



## Aphrodite's Daughters: Three Modernist Poets of the Harlem Renaissance

By Maureen Honey

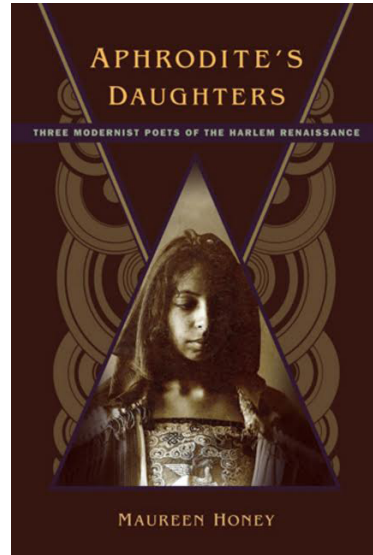
The Harlem Renaissance was a watershed moment for racial uplift, poetic innovation, sexual liberation, and female empowerment. *Aphrodite's Daughters* introduces us to three amazing women who were at the forefront of all these developments, poetic iconoclasts who pioneered new and candidly erotic forms of female self-expression.

Maureen Honey paints a vivid portrait of three African American women—Angelina Weld Grimké, Gwendolyn B. Bennett, and Mae V. Cowdery—who came from very different backgrounds but converged in late 1920s Harlem to leave a major mark on the literary landscape. She examines the varied ways these poets articulated female sexual desire, ranging from Grimké's invocation of a Sapphic goddess figure to Cowdery's frank depiction of bisexual erotics to Bennett's risky exploration of the borders between sexual pleasure and pain. Yet Honey also considers how they were united in their commitment to the female body as a primary source of meaning, strength, and transcendence.

The product of extensive archival research, *Aphrodite's Daughters* draws from Grimké, Bennett, and Cowdery's published and unpublished poetry, along with rare periodicals and biographical materials, to immerse us in the lives of these remarkable women and the world in which they lived. It thus not only shows us how their artistic contributions and cultural interventions were vital to their own era, but also demonstrates how the poetic heart of their work keeps on beating.

### About the Author:

Honey's specialization and interests include American Women's Literature of the Twentieth Century, Harlem Renaissance, Women in World War II, and Popular Culture. She is a professor of English and women's and gender studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Some of the courses she teaches Images of Women in Popular Culture, Twentieth Century Women Writers, and Women Writers and Art 1890-1930. She became an associate of WIFP in 1977.



## Wikipedia and the Gender Gap

by Andreea Barb and Sunaya Padmanabhan

A massive volunteer run free encyclopedia, Wikipedia, dominates the internet. According to the company itself, there are approximately 5,418,568 English speaking articles, averaging nearly 800 new articles per day. Wikipedia is also the 7th most visited website, with more than 18 billion pages viewed per month. However, the editors are disproportionately male dominated. Wikipedia has been working to fix the gender gap of editors and articles with Edit-a-thons, which are workshops that teach people how to edit on Wikipedia.

In a recent Wikipedia edit-a-thon in Washington D.C. on June 3, 2017, two Wikipedia volunteers, Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight and Kelly Doyle, reported that one out of ten editors on Wikipedia identify as female (Edit-a-thon). Harvard Business review reports, that a 2009 survey found that less than 13% of editors are women worldwide, and another survey in 2011 found that globally only 9% of global contributors were women, and in the United States only 15% were women. Doyle explains these statistics by consulting, "the demographics of Wikipedia which tend to be mostly white males, who have significant free or leisure time in which to dedicate time to edit Wikipedia." Since volunteers are the editors of news articles for Wikipedia, the demographics for those who contribute to the texts impact the news itself.



## WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia

The nature of Wikipedia requires other editors to delete and change other posts made by other contributors. However, the process by which other

editors work on female posts can be termed as forms of harassment. Doyle claims that "women are typically, initially, harassed on Wikipedia in "passive" ways which include taking their edits down. This tends to intimidate new users and they cease editing." Harassment occurs to new and old female users.



In a recent census, only 24% of people in the STEM field are women, making information on female scientists less abundant. This has been a massive problem for adding women to Wikipedia. Since historically many of these women were never written about, there are very few sources that can detail their accomplishments and impacts. Not having articles on females contributing to STEM, on a site that dominates the dissemination of information lessens the scientific impact and memory of these women.

Since Wikipedia requires already published sources, not primary sources, it makes finding information on women very difficult. Printed materials still often focus primarily on women's relationship to men, when it covers them at all. Without use of primary sources, frequently the most accurate information about women, correcting the imbalance will be slow. When more academics publish, utilizing the primary sources about women, increasingly happening over these recent decades, then the gender imbalance will be altered.

## Feature Articles

### *Yes, I'm Legal: A Snapshot of the Modern Slavery*

by Arya Boris

The United States Department of Justice defines human trafficking as “the use of force, threat of force, fraud or coercion to recruit, harbor, transport, provide or obtain any person for labor or commercial sex or to cause a person under 18 to engage in a commercial sex act.” The act of buying or selling an “enslaved” human being for sexual exploitation is illegal, and to do this to a minor is even more heinous and criminalized. Regardless of this, there are at least 150,000 underage victims of human trafficking in the United States at any given time.

In 2014 the Polaris Project stated there were “an estimated 21 million [trafficking] victims globally,” and while this issue was thought to originally be a foreign issue, “it is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of victims of sex and labor trafficking inside [US] borders.” According to Polaris, the leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery, in 2014 DC was ranked as a Tier Two location for the laws passed to prevent human trafficking and help the victims who have already fallen prey to it. There are only ten other states in the country which have fallen in or below the second tier; however, this is a drastic improvement from 2011 when only eleven states met the first tier’s requirements.

The United States has been steadily improving legislative programs which do many things including tracking transactions, developing specific task forces, educating the public, and assisting victims in recovery. Tackling this issue has been an uphill battle because traffickers enter the fold all the time, but this is not the most prevalent issue in modern trafficking. In the past victims were forced to walk to streets at night waiting for “Johns” to solicit their time; however, the concept of “working the corner” is no longer accurate for sex trafficking today. All of this is moving online. Sites like Omegle, Chatroulette, and Chatrandom allow for random text and or video chatting to occur with any user logged on at the same time.

Lisa Goldblatt Grace, Co-Founder and Director of My Life My Choice, an organization in Boston dedicated to ending sex trafficking of children and aiding survivors, reported that nearly half of the individuals her organization serves are meeting their traffickers online.



J.S., a victim of Backpage who was sold as a sex slave at the age of 15 in 2010

What people are not realizing is that there are ways of connecting with the strangers who would put victims in danger without entering random chat rooms. In August of 2016, a fifteen year old girl befriended and developed feelings for someone she thought was a boy her age on Instagram. The individual fooled her, leading to her being kidnapped, forced to take drugs, and sexually assaulted by an unknown number of perpetrators. Schools still teach the importance of remembering “stranger danger” because it is also not unheard of for pimps and spotters to pick up victims in places like malls and parks. Marian Hatcher, the Human Trafficking Coordinator for Cook County Police Department in Illinois explained, “They see any low self-esteem or they’re holding their head down or they’re walking, and they don’t make eye contact, those are the ones that they go after.” To troubled individuals, someone who praises them and promises to solve all of their problems is seemingly a ticket to paradise, but there is no fine print for these young people to read over, warning them of the hell that waits for them. Once in the trade, sex slaves are often tethered with “the leash” of addictive drugs which prevent them from leaving the life or going to authorities out of dependency.

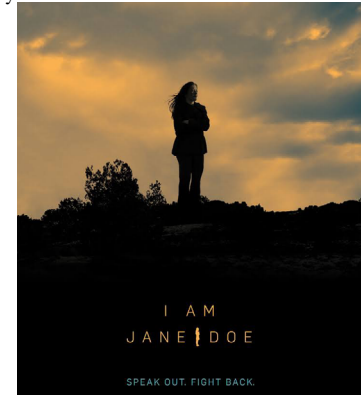
Today’s society is connected through likes on photos and swipes of approval, so it makes sense that many of the victims are drawn into sex trafficking and sold through the internet now.

A young woman in Nashville met a man on a dating app in April of 2017; on their date, she was drugged and kidnapped to Ohio where she was forced into the sex trade. The man advertised her “services” on Backpage.com, a site with a history of lawsuits filed against it for many accounts of human trafficking. The internet has brought about a new form of meeting individuals, innocently through honest dating sites but also through ads shrouded in half truths. Classified ads have been the location of searches for services and companionship for centuries. Newspapers used to contain ads of all kinds of people looking for partners, marital or sexual; one example is in the London Review of Books, “Well-educated 31-year-old London girl with sultry Mediterranean looks seeks sparkling conversationalist to take her out on an old-fashioned date.” This is a concept that was made known by Patricia MacLachlan in 1985 with her Newbery Medal winning children’s book Sarah, Plain and Tall which begins with a man publishing an ad in the paper for a mail-order bride. The difference now is that these ads are posted for millions to see on discrete sites where buyers can get pictures with less of a chance of getting caught.

And the curtain recently got pulled back on the dirty business venture that is exploiting these sex trafficking victims. I Am Jane Doe is a film written, directed, and produced by Mary Mazzio and 50 Eggs Film Company which follows as multiple mothers fight back against the people who allowed for their young daughters to be sold as modern sex slaves. Backpage.com and the competing classified ads site, Craigslist allow for ads to be placed by individuals to sell themselves. Their only requirement is that those posting their information are legal adults. The way that they confirm this, is the user clicks a single button. It is so easy to lie and claim that an individual being sold is eighteen when content suggests to interested customers otherwise. The sites have seen public ridicule and court cases for their “adult sections,” Backpage especially. The sites argue that in Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1996 that it is by law “no provider or user of an

## Feature Articles

interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider.” The law enacted over twenty years ago at the beginning of the internet acts as a get out of jail free card for these sites to dodge blame for any illegal content they host.



For years Backpage has been claiming to work in the best interest of victims. They met with a representatives from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Polaris Project to brainstorm solutions. The site hired moderators to comb through ads for potential underage girls; however, it was not feasible for these employees to be able to keep up with the ever-changing content of the site. As time went on, it became clear that the site had no interest in the victims. Liz McDougall, the sites attorney publicly stated that the site was doing “everything possible” but also that it was the fault of the internet and thus out of their hands.

Since the site is doing nothing to change its ways, private lawsuits against the site have been filed. These suits were predominantly won by Backpage pleading Section 230. It fell on the shoulders of individuals and advocate groups to band together create the change that is necessary to end this exploitation. The site saw an 82.8 million dollar increase in net revenue from 2012 through 2015. It became clear that regardless of the aspect of underage trafficking, the site was making an outstanding amount of money off of human slavery. Pleading Section 230 only works in the favor of

## Feature Articles

the sites when they have had absolutely no impact on the illegal content. When a lawsuit against Backpage finally reached the floor of the Senate at the end of 2015, it came to light that the site had a policy that stated, "If in doubt about underage, the process should be now to accept the ad. Only delete if you're really very sure person is underage." New information came to light July 11, 2017 when an unrelated court order from a real estate company led to the acquisition of 6.5 million files from Avion, an offshore internet contract company. Within this data, there are countless files which clearly link Backpage to actively participating in the creation and maintenance of ads selling sex world wide. This will hopefully be the hole in the Section 230 argument which has gotten the site out of legal trouble in the past.



M.A., a victim who was sex trafficked on Backpage at the age of 13 in 2009

In the end if this information does not incriminate Backpage and its leadership, each case gets back to the CDA of 1996 which overrides anything the site actually does. In courts, the judges are more concerned with this policy than the assaults occurring on victims. This is a blanket act which senselessly protects sites from content for which they must be held responsible. There is a great deal of pushback on this idea, suggesting that any change would violate the First Amendment. Members of Congress have already stated that they are prepared to amend the CDA to prevent child sex ads. What needs to happen is the people who stand for the victims of Backpage must come together in every way possible to ensure that Congress amends that act. This means contacting representatives and where you can, donate to organizations which are fighting this battle with feet on the ground. For more information, please visit [www.iamjanedoefilm.com](http://www.iamjanedoefilm.com).

## American Media and Violence Against Women

by Sunaya Padmanabhan

In the ever changing landscape of American media and politics women are oftentimes neglected or misrepresented. Instead of contributing to the discourse of violence against women, by exploring the societal and structural conditions that impact females, traditional media normalizes these behaviors, which perpetuate and promote gender-based violence through destigmatization. Therefore, media contributes to the problem of violence against women, rather than proposing or rallying for solutions to expel this societal detriment.



American media portrayals of women neglect to advance female representations beyond the stereotypes that bind their subjects to repressive views of women. Exposure to the uneven power dynamic between men and women occurs at a young age for most Americans. Movies directed at youth, like Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*, develop entire storylines around a dominant male character saving helpless women and claiming them as their sexual prize. In fact, the famed kiss, that wakes the princess from her slumber, is itself asserting the romance of non consensual sexual acts. Patterns that promote non consensual relationships between men and women continue to permeate society throughout the lives of the majority, however, the early onset of these ideas roots them deeply within the subconscious mind, conditioning the acceptance and normalization of abuse. In cultures

## Feature Articles

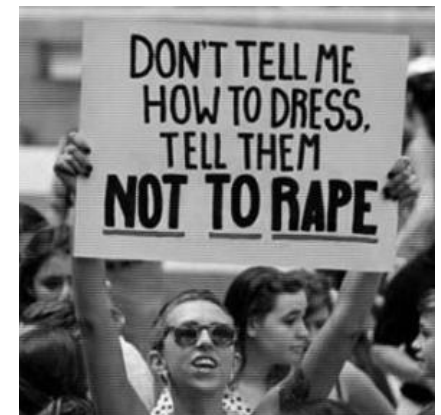
as described by the Women's Media Center. Overall, American media reproduces the cycles of abuse that negatively impact women by continuing the acceptance of male sexual dominance and normalizing its behavior by deflecting blame away from the abuser.

The coverage of violence against women reveals a greater issue within the way society views abuse towards women. In 1991, a Time questionnaire revealed that "53% of adults over the age of 50 believe a woman should be blamed for her rape." The idea that someone who had been abused should also take responsibility for their abuse, feeds into the general premise that violence against women, like rape and assault, are "women's issues." While the gender affected obviously has claim to these instances of abuse as issues that impact them, this distinction fails to underline the very situation of the rape itself. How can an issue be just about women, when the perpetrators of the attacks are oftentimes men? Rape cannot be simply a woman's issue, since women are not the only people involved. If the attackers are usually men, then the issue itself has a binary quality because the solution needs to include both sides arguing to stop and prevent the occurrence of these violences. The media impacts the lens through which the populous views instances of violence against women, by constructing a narrative that ultimately encourages the societal conditions that lead to these abuses.

like the United States, where male supremacy and dominance are pervasive themes within the media, women are depicted as passive and submissive compared to their male counterparts.



The acceptance of the physical and sexual dominance of men over women creates an atmosphere of normalcy associated with female abuse. Sexual violence emerges from the dehumanization of the victim, by asserting a power dynamic between the attacker and the target of the violence or abuse. According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 3 women will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. That staggering statistic indicates a greater global view of women as objects of control for men. Therefore, in incidents of rape or assault the media often participates in victim blaming, as opposed to focusing on the rapist, because performing the latter would inevitably lead to a grand reversal of the traditional mentality of a patriarchal society, in terms of the authority men exercise over women. At Stanford, in 2016, Brock Turner raped an unconscious and intoxicated woman, but only faced a sentence of three years in prison. The media portrayed the woman as promiscuous and tried to steer the case according to the "promising future of the All American Swimmer (Turner)." The media demonstrated an incredible lack of understanding of the female perspective on how her life was negatively impacted, rather most stories focused on how the judge and the perpetrator's father feared that Turner's life would be ruined. The idea of focusing on the male perspective in a case dealing with a violent rape against a woman, is symptomatic of a greater issue of male dominated journalism in coverage of rape and sexual assault,





Feature Articles

*The Media in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

by Aia Khalaily

Since the Palestinian media has no voice raised over the world, we decided to introduce how does this media looks, The materials included and to whom it talks. Palestinian media are divided into three regions each of which pander to a different audience:

There are different groups of media that have various agendas, ideologies, and diplomatic policies. The Palestinian media, as any other media in the world, tend to be scattered in spectrum – left, right and neutral. But unfortunately, none of them have the complete freedom of the press. The Palestinian media divided according to regions which each region supporting different authority. However, the situation is different in Israel, since the country is not separated into different governmental and geographic parts.



As every other newspaper, the Palestinian newspapers deal with politics, social and economic issues. There are about 30 Palestinian’s newspapers. Some of the Palestinian newspapers shows the Israeli perspectives by translating articles from both left and right-wing Israeli media; into Arabic, in order to expose the people to the Israeli perspectives. In the following articles you will find more information about organizations aim

to promote freedom of the press in Palestinian media. The PA had laws that guarantee the rights of journalists to express their perspectives and the free press. However, these laws is not fully implemented since some journalists have been persecuted based on articles that they wrote about covering some events or writing against Palestinian authority. Furthermore, the press in Palestine is controlled and imposed by the IDF as they restrict the journalist.

*The Israeli Media from Palestinian’s Eyes*

Israel is defined as a country that has freedom of the press, but do Palestinians agree?

Established in 1948, the Israeli media works to document the “Israeli story.” Painting all Israelis as victims, and their neighbors, including Palestinians, as set out to destroy them. The press, in Israel, is free as long as it talks about the government and criticizing its members. However, the media does not cover violence attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip made by the IDF (Israeli Defending Forces) or settlers. For instance, if the IDF incited, suppressed, or raided Palestinians houses, the Israeli press usually refuses to mention these instances of abuse, unless it can be dramatized. Yet, when it comes to stabbings or assaults against the IDF from the Palestinian side, these violences will be covered extensively in all Israeli publications.

In the 2014 Gaza War, 66.5% of the content mentioned in the newspaper “Yediot Ahronot,” aimed to justify the operations of the IDF against Palestinians.. Simultaneously, 65% of the published materials aimed to show Israel as the “victim” and as “the weak side,” being attacked by Hamas, during the Gaza War.

The lack of the Israeli media coverage on the attacks of the Palestinians, created the need for Israeli NGO’s, that cover the attacks and the occupation on the west bank and Gaza Strip. These news organizations focus on covering events in different areas. for example, B’Tselem, the Israeli information center for human rights in the occupied territories, acts primarily to change Israeli policy

in the Occupied Territories and ensure that its government, which rules the Occupied Territories, protects the human rights of residents there and complies with its obligations under international law. This organization tries to cover human rights violations all over the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. Another organization that works mainly in Hebron is Breaking the Silence. It’s an organization of veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military since the start of the Second Intifada and have taken it upon themselves to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories. Soldiers who serve in the Territories witness and participate in military actions which change them immensely. Cases of abuse towards Palestinians, looting, and destruction of property have been the norm for years, but are still explained as extreme and unique cases.

These events, are not documented or mentioned in any Israeli media. Therefore, since many Israelis cannot read Arabic they conclude that their country and their army does nothing to suppress Palestinians. Consequently, Palestinians are always pained as “the attacking terrorists.”

These kinds of organizations are not welcomed in Israel and have been attacked by extreme right-wing Israeli citizens. For instance, a policeman, who was responsible for the evacuation of Amona settlement, was attacked by settlers and his car was burned.

Benet, the Israeli education minister, is promoting a bill against organizations that would prevent them from entering schools. With multi-party support, Benet stated: “I will not let this kind of organizations teach our kids values against the country and IDF, we will not let them ruin our values”.

Additionally, a year ago, a coexistence school that brings both Israelis and Palestinians to study together in Jerusalem was burned by an extreme right movement where they wrote Nazis statements like “death to Arabs”.

It is very important to be aware and conscious about human rights violation and suppress against

humanity, It is important to be exposed more to both sides media, Palestinian and Israeli, in order to not be biased and to shape your own opinion about the conflict.

*Israeli organizations that work in the West Bank and Gaza to cover attacks and protect Palestinians rights*

**Taayoush:** Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians — live surrounded by walls and barbed wire: the walls of segregation, racism, and discrimination between Jews and Arabs within Israel; the walls of Apartheid, closure and siege encircling the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip; and the wall of war surrounding all inhabitants of Israel, so long as Israel remains an armed fortress in the heart of the Middle East.



**Breaking the Silence** is an organization of veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military since the start of the Second Intifada and have taken it upon themselves to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories their work aims to bring an end to the occupation.

**B'TSELEM:** The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories was established in February 1989 by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Knesset members. It endeavors to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, combat the phenomenon of denial prevalent among the Israeli public, and help create a human rights culture in Israel.



## Feature Articles

### *A Glimpse towards Palestinian Media*

by Hazar Badin

I am seeking the truth, wanting to know what really happened and who exactly said what. I want to create my own understanding and develop my personal opinions based on MY values and principles. I want to take decisions according to real facts to make sure I am doing the right thing.

But how can I do that? How will I be able to recognize truth from lies? Is that even possible in a place where people are mostly trying to sell me information that is not necessarily true, or does not tell the whole truth? When I read biased articles, biased stories that are not only hiding most of the truth but also trying to shape my views by their words!

What I am trying to do with this confusing elusory situation, is to look for information from different sources, to read different coverage for "the same story". However, it is never easy, especially for me as a Palestinian living in Israel, where the major media and press bodies are Israeli that does little coverage about issues of my interest- the Palestinian people.

This article will provide a brief explanation about Palestinian Media Status. And a list of the major Palestinian press and news websites. The focus during the research was on electronic news and magazines. Hence, this report is not mentioning TV channels nor Radio stations.

Palestinian media is branched into four main branches, according to the location:

Palestinian media in the West Bank,

Palestinian media in Gaza Strip,

Palestinian media in Israel.

International Palestinian media.

The relations between the groups are complicated, and each one has different kind of restrictions and limitations.

One of the problems affecting media quality in Palestine is the political tension between the leaders in each group can be obviously seen in the media, for example you will find many articles in West bank's newsletters criticizing Hamas (The leaders

in Gaza) and less criticism of Fatah. And vice versa: The media in Gaza will blame the Palestinian Authority headquartered in the West Bank for problems they have. (The lack of self-criticism made me believe that even the privately owned press is not fully free)

However, both of these groups blame the Israeli occupation for the Palestinians suffering in all aspects.

So, It is important to note that the Palestinian media, from an outsider point of view, might be biased as well, sympathizing with the Palestinian people. For Example, It seems like Palestinian journalists, believe that they are obligated to play an active role in fulfilling the dream of creating a Palestinian state. This sentiment alone is enough to deter many Palestinian journalists from including the wrongdoings of their own people or their own Authorities in their reports.



There are magazines and newspapers that consider themselves as free press, not controlled by governmental parties nor funding bodies. There are also government owned newspapers as well. However, for me, Palestinian media seems to be still far away from being efficient in making a change.

Palestinian journalists are frequently being attacked by different groups, for example in may 2017, 41 violations were implemented against media freedom, 23 of them were by the Israeli occupation forces, and 18 attacks were committed by Palestinian parties. (The violations of the Israeli part included gas bombs, shooting, confiscation of equipment and travel bans, the violations from the Palestinian side were arrests, interrogations,

equipment confiscations and preventing from covering certain marches.)

Another example, The IDF raided the printing facilities of the West Bank newspaper Al-Ayyam, in Ramallah, after it started printing Gazan newspapers, and warned staff to cease publishing Hamas-linked content on the grounds that it incited hatred against Israel. In contrast, to Israeli journalists have access to enter Palestine, while Palestinian journalists never have this level of admission.

The Palestinian media in Israel that is mainly used for advertisements, and shallow information copied from other magazines and newsletters.

The role of women in Palestinian media is also marginalized, according to the Global Media Monitoring Project national report (2015) In Palestine, women are significantly underrepresented in the news. Only 11% of news subjects- the people who are interviewed, or who the news is about- are female and in the Internet news stories 14% are Female. Women are rarely heard from in dominant news topics: The highest overall percentage of women as news subjects reaches only 30% for Social and Legal, news related to Crime and Violence (9%), Politics and Government (6%) and (4%) in Economy. And they mostly function as providers of personal experience (25%) or as people providing Popular Opinion (19%), and rarely as experts (4%), spokespersons (14%), or the main subject of the story only 7%. Female journalists produced 16% of news stories, in television 26% and in radio 20% of the news items were presented by female reporters.

Although the shortfalls of the Palestinian media, there are some newsletters and magazines that are worth reading, that brings different views and will help for better understanding the different situations of the Palestinians. It is important to bring up the Palestinian medias voice since it covers issues that probably will not be covered by any other media.

Here, I provide a list of Palestinian electronic newspapers and magazines, trying to cover as many groups as possible, it is not necessarily the most

## Feature Articles

read by Palestinians since I am providing those that are published also in English. By the end of the list you will find a list of local magazines and journals that are published only in Arabic, that I recommend to Arabic speakers and readers.

Reading Palestinian media might be an eye opening experience for some people, for others it might be a thought provoking one. One thing for sure- it will raise more questions.



### *My Story About Media*

I am driving my car, on my way to another day at university, the sky is cloudy and everything looks terribly gray. There is a traffic jam and I realize I'm probably going to be late for the first class, so I turn on the radio: Al shams radio station is broadcasting the daily news. Two houses in Al- Led city in Israel were demolished, two Arab families with 9 children are now homeless, without any compensation, without any plan B. No where to go! One of the family members was interviewed: "the municipality did not offer us a shelter! This house that we put so much efforts to build is gone and we are left with nothing."

I became angry, how can this happen? So yeah, those houses were illegally built, but what do you expect them to do when apartments are so expensive, getting the documents to enable legal permits for building in your land is almost impossible, and no one is offering them any other option.

What option am I talking about? I'll give you a real example: when settlers from Amona settlement were forced out because it was an illegal settlement, the prime minister Bibi Netanyahu promised them to be compensated by giving them

other lands to build in, and the state offered them shelters till they get settled somewhere else. The two kinds of lawbreakers had Israeli citizenship, the difference between those two is that the first ones were Arab Palestinians and the latter were Jews! How can democratic country treat two lawbreakers differently? How can it claim being humanitarian, treating all of its citizens “equally”?

The day after, a huge fire ignites the Carmel mountain in Haifa. This is an environmental disaster and it reached to some inhabited neighborhoods. I could hear about it everywhere, Facebook, TV channels, radio, newspapers. I was not able to go to the university that day because the main street leading there was close to the fire. I was not able to study either, I was too nervous, worrying about the future of that forest, the trees, the animals, the beautiful view. I was also angry, angry because everyone forgot about that demolished house in Al- Led, including the Palestinians.



Few hours later, what I have expected happened. The media started blaming the Arabs for lighting the fire. Just like 6 years ago, claiming that the fires were “Terror attacks” aiming to destroy Israel. Absurd!

The fire is not even close to be subdued yet, and they already got to racist conclusions. No evidence, no investigations were held yet.

The day after, I hear people in the streets talking: “what a loss, the beautiful Carmel mountain is destroyed” and in my mind I agree with them, it is truly a sad event. And then it comes: “such a shame, those Arabs destroy everything, they don’t appreciate what they have” lowering their voice while saying the word Arabs, hoping no left wings would hear them being “politically incorrect”.

Here I am again, feeling angry, blamed and belittled. That’s true, they were not talking directly to me, they didn’t even know there was a young Arab woman sitting next to them. They were not blaming me because usually women are less suspected with violent vandalize acts, however they were blaming my friends, my brother, my father!

I want to argue them, to tell them that they are stupidly repeating what is heard by media without even thinking. But I say nothing, because me, as like media, have no evidence, and because I know that as soon as they know an Arab was sitting next to them they will start telling excuses, and try to defend their sayings with “I know not all of the Arabs are like this”, and then will try hopelessly enter to the “politically correct” fake conversation.

And everybody forgets about the two fresh homeless families from Al- Led.

## Save Net Neutrality

by Sunaya Padmanabhan and Andreea Barb

The internet impacts the lives of millions of people all over the world everyday. Businesses and individuals alike, require equal access to online content. Net Neutrality ensures non-discrimination practices to be upheld by not charging different rates by content, user, or platform, etc.. Therefore, all internet traffic retains equal treatment. Importantly, this long-standing principle creates a free and open space on the internet for users to connect to any website or web service, without Internet Service Providers (ISPs) controlling the content. Net Neutrality fosters equality for website development, which requires almost no money, connections, or contact with the given ISP. The globalization of the internet is contingent upon this profound level of freedom.



The thriving online businesses in America led to calls for federal regulation on internet traffic. In the United States, Net Neutrality was instituted as law by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in 2015, under the Obama administration. The discussion of Net Neutrality, and its attempted regulation, precedes the 2015 decision. On September 10, 2014, many corporations and organizations participated in Internet Slowdown Day. These protests laid the foundation, however, the support of President Obama, in 2015, encouraged the FCC to pass the laws. Since the vote, many businesses were able to expand and increase; for example, Netflix’s total capital investment increased 26 percent. Republicans often

contend that the enforcement of Net Neutrality negatively impacts business development. Under the new Trump administration, the FCC Chairman Ajit Pai encouraged the repeal of these regulations on ISPs. On May 18, 2017, the FCC voted 2-1 on a motion to repeal the 2015 regulations. If the second vote passes later this year, with a fully staffed FCC, then Net Neutrality regulations would be repealed.

In an unusual coalition to regain the laws instituted in 2015, activists, organizations (including WIFP) and companies began a more concerted effort to fight for Net Neutrality. The FCC received more than 4.9 million public comments, surpassing the amount of submission of support in 2015. The Republican argument that removing internet traffic laws will help businesses, is negated by the “Battle for the Net” protests (July 12, 2017), which will have online demonstrators: Amazon, Etsy, Netflix, Kickstarter, Mozilla and Vimeo. These powerhouse online companies favoring of Net Neutrality, along with public support crucially underlines the importance of equity within the internet for everyone. Net Neutrality impacts not just businesses, but subsequently the minorities that are employed by them. Organizations like Etsy, a global creative commerce platform, allows customers to buy unique, oftentimes, hand made items. Etsy reports that 86% of their sellers are women in the USA, compared to businesses as a whole, where only one third are run by women. Etsy provides opportunities to women to become small business owners. Many of these female sellers turned to this website once they have been laid off, needed additional income, or had no previous small business experience. Organizations, like Etsy, will not be able to flourish without an open internet. Therefore, the removal of Net Neutrality undermines the advancement of female entrepreneurship and entry into the business world. Net Neutrality provides equality in the ever increasingly important online world for economic and social discourse of businesses and individuals.

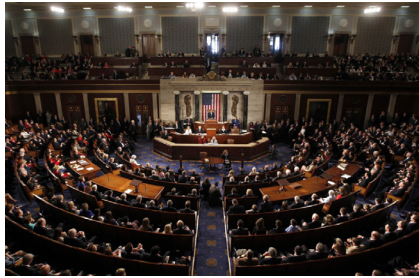


## Feature Articles

### *Media Depiction of Female Politicians: How Media Coverage of Female Politicians Shapes Elections and Prevents Women from Running for Office*

by Lauren Garczynski

In 2012, the number of women serving in the U.S. Senate was a record 20 out of 100. Fast forward to 2015, where women are representing 19 percent of all Senate and House seats, another record breaking statistic. Democrat or Republican, man or woman, city council or congress, elected officials wield the power to authorize and change policy. And as the statistics above suggest, there is a very wide gender disparity among these decision makers, one that is not by coincidence either.



When women are running for office, the media coverage is vastly different than that of their male counterparts. In fact, the way the media depicts female politicians is done in a way that both disadvantages and hinders them. From focusing on their appearance and personality rather than policy and using labels that diminish the candidate, media coverage based on a woman's looks lowers her electability. Consequently, the depiction of female politicians can shape elections, preventing women from running for office.

A woman's appearance is strongly valued in her day to day life, and this perception is enhanced in politics. However, this is not a focus that follows men. In the 2008 presidential election, both Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin were subject to enormous amounts of media produced sexism.

During Clinton's first presidential run, Fox News contributors didn't hold back while taking aim. Michelle Malkin criticized Clinton's appearance, declaring if, "that's the face of experience...I think it's going to scare away a lot of those independent voters." While Marc Rudov stated, "every time Clinton opened her mouth, all any man could think of was his wife telling him to take out the garbage."

While on the other side of the aisle, Palin faced substantial amounts of objectification. During the duration of the 2008 election, Palin was the subject of a music video called "Red, White, and MILF," had a Halloween costume named after her as "sexy Sarah Palin," and to top it off, the now former Alaska governor had a blow up doll created in her image. Even former President Barack Obama dished out his own sexist quip in 2013 when he called now Senator Kamala Harris, "The best looking attorney general in the country."

While comments like President Obama's may seem harmless, they have the same effect on female politicians as the sexism Clinton and Palin faced from the media. A 2013 study by Name It. Change It., a project birthed from The Women's Media Center and She Should Run, revealed that appearance based coverage of female candidates, even subtle or positive, can impact her chances of getting elected.



The study exposed that a media focus on appearance drew voters to perceive the candidate as out of touch, less likable, not as confident, ineffective, and unqualified. Lighter comments like President Obama's were actually proven to do more

harm to a candidate than those with intended sexist tones. Through Name It, Change It, Lake Research Partner's Celinda Lake uncovered that "mild sexism," produced a greater impact on female candidates, "calling a candidate an 'ice queen' or a 'mean girl' is just as damaging as using really overt sexist language."

The study provided evidence that appearance based media coverage is primarily only damaging female candidates, as male politicians were not harmed at all by the coverage that was chipping away at the electability of their female counterparts. Lake revealed that in polling, there are, "dial groups, and you will see the minute you mention appearance, the dials start down."



However, gender based media coverage isn't a new concept in the age of round the clock news cycles. Studies based on 1980s newspaper coverage of female candidates in election cycles exhibited the same results that are seen today as women were subject to stereotypes by having the focus be on their femininity rather than their candidacy. While more recent research from 2013 conducted by Louisiana State University Professor Johanna Dunaway, found that out of a collection of 9,725 newspaper articles detailing 2006 and 2008 Senate and national races articles about women running discussed personality more than those about men.

Ultimately, in races with female candidates,

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the media will choose to cover her personality over her platforms. If this is what women face from the media – not even the political area itself, what woman would want to get into politics? Though what is proving to be a dark spot in politics for women, has produced a movement to fight the media's treatment of female politicians.

Since its 2008 launch, She Should Run has worked to encourage thousands of women to run for public office, granting women access to useful tools and resources to help them in preparing to run. The organization works to encourage women to run for office, but it hasn't taken a backseat in addressing the rhetoric toward female politicians.

In 2010, She Should Run partnered with the Women's Media Center and Lake Research Partners with their Name It. Change It. Initiative, the organization's website describes the project as aiming to identify, "how sexism, even mild sexist language and appearance based coverage, has an impact on voters' likelihood to vote for a female candidate."

Organizations like She Should Run are working to be major players in combating the damage the media does to women in politics. If the media's depiction of women in politics is working against women running, encouraging more women to run for office by equipping them with the tools and hope they need can help move away from this. By evening the playing field, more women are given voices as policy makers, the more women represented in politics, the less novel it is, by striking down the novelty factor of women running for office, the tone and voice used by the media can change too, making the media representation of female candidates fair. After all, in politics, the media is no minor player.

## Transforming Asian-American Political Representation

by Srunjana Sinha

Asian-Americans currently constitute 5.6% of the US population and are the fastest growing racial group in the country. According to the Pew Research Center, Asian immigration to the United States has increased from 19% to 36% from 2000 to 2010. Asian-Americans currently attain the highest median income and educational level out of all ethnic groups in the country. The trends in Asian-American voter turnout have changed dramatically as a result of shifts in immigration and local migration patterns, geography, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. Despite the importance of the Asian-American voting demographic, most mainstream media outlets do not consider Asian-Americans to be a voter bloc to pay attention to in high-stakes elections. Political commentators will often discuss different demographics to pay attention to but most overlook Asian-Americans. In fact, there are more complicated issues at stake, embedded in a historical framework of racism and xenophobia against Asian-Americans that has existed since the first Asian immigrants arrived in the States in the 19th century.

Asian-Americans are viewed as a “model minority”, a stereotype that simultaneously obscures the social and political issues Asian-Americans face and conceptualizes them as “hardworking” and “robotic”. The way the media portrays Asian-Americans informs and amplifies the effects of the model minority myth. For

example, data collections emphasize Asian-Americans as people who value family (marriage and parenting skills) and “hard work” more so than other Americans do. Pew Social Trends, for instance, focuses on the “tiger mom” idea, citing that 9% of Americans overall believe that parents place too much pressure on their children, compared to 39% of Asian-Americans. Certainly there are specific cultural issues relevant to Asian-Americans. However, truisms such as “immigrants are hardworking” and “immigrant families are tight-knit” tend to be reductive. Moreover, to portray Asian-Americans as the only group of people to value academic success to such a harmful degree is detrimental to all Americans. Instead of analyzing the reasons why a specific ethnic or racial group may be inclined to value educational success, and how this translates into political action, this stereotype and ensuing representations of it exemplify the most disingenuous generalizations that characterize how Asian-Americans (and other minority groups) are portrayed by the media.

Federal, state, and local officials believe all Asian-Americans are equally well-off, compliant, and educated. Thus, they conclude that they are a group that is either politically inert or politically irrelevant. Media bias both speaks to and exacerbates this phenomenon. Asian-Americans are viewed as “socially conservative” (perhaps because they “value family and hard work”). A New York Times article titled Donald Trump Is Seen as Helping Push Asian-Americans into Democratic Arms immediately starts by playing

into this mindset: “On paper at least, Asian-Americans seem like perfect Republicans. Many are small-business owners. Their communities tend to be more culturally conservative. And a lot of them, having fled oppressive Communist governments, found comfort in the Republican Party’s aggressive anti-Communist

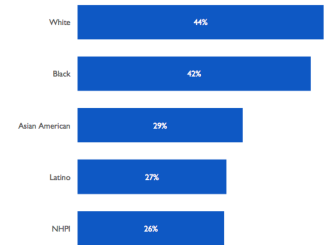
policies”. Although this article is about how Asian-Americans are increasingly voting Democratic, the language still condescendingly reduces Asian-Americans to monolithic assumptions. It is essential to portray nuance in the Asian-American experience.

For instance, why are Asian-Americans seen as “culturally conservative”? Is it because they value tight-knit families? Or because as a group they have the highest median income? Interestingly enough, Democrats also try to posit themselves as a political party interested in supporting small-business owners, families, and educational success. In fact, these things are hailed as classic, nonpartisan American values. The reason Asian-Americans are seen as quintessential Republicans is that the Model Minority Myth lumps every Asian-American into one category. While it is certainly true that Asian-Americans voted for Bush over Clinton (55% to 31%) in the 1992 election, this disparity lessened from 48% to 44% in the 1996 election (between Dole and Clinton). And in the past five elections, a majority of Asian-Americans voted for the Democratic presidential candidate, making the headline of this article misleading. It is not that Trump “pushed” Asian-Americans into Democratic arms, but rather that the multifaceted and complex problems that the Asian-American community faces have driven them to favor the modern Democratic Party over the past 25 years.

Data disaggregation refers to the practice of referring specifically to the different Asian-American ethnic groups rather than unilaterally categorizing them together. In order for media outlets – mainstream and local alike – to truly capture the multidimensional Asian-American voter bloc, it is necessary to understand the differences between Asians based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, and class. In the context of illegal immigration, the Washington Post reports that “Fully 58 percent of Asian Americans say they

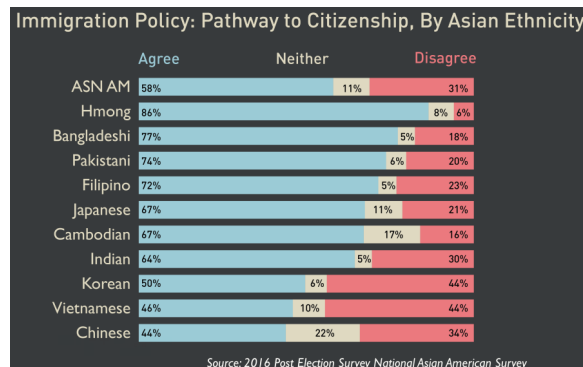
## Still, Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Were Less Likely to Be Contacted By Political Parties

Question: As you know, the political parties try to talk to as many people as they can to get them to vote for their candidate. Did anyone from one of the political parties call you up or come around and talk to you about the campaign this year?



support legislation that would create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants in the United States. Similarly, 54 percent think states should allow undocumented immigrants to get driver’s licenses”. The article also includes an infographic that disaggregates Asian-American opinions on immigration, revealing that 86% of Hmong-Americans support undocumented immigrants compared to 64% of Indian-Americans and 44% of Chinese-Americans. According to CNN, 60% of Americans overall support “developing a plan” to allow undocumented immigrants a path to legal citizenship. Though there is only a 2% difference between what Asian-Americans report in the 2016 Post-Election National Asian-American Survey and what Americans overall report to CNN, it is politically convenient for politicians and mainstream media outlets alike to portray Asian-Americans as less forgiving, more conservative, and more traditional.

The NAAS survey also reports that Asian-Americans are less likely to be contacted and canvassed by political parties than other groups (29% of Asian-Americans compared to 44% of White voters and 42% of Black voters). This explains why Asian-Americans are interpreted to be more “culturally conservative” and as less partisan compared to other groups. Moreover, the survey reports that the most pressing concerns for Asian-Americans are affordability of college/general education costs, healthcare, and care of the elderly. What Asians self-report as their primary issues contradicts the picturesque version of life portrayed by media representations of Asian-Americans. In spite of the fact that Asian-Americans have the



highest median income out of all American racial and ethnic groups, data disaggregation reveals that some groups of Asians face poverty at higher rates than other groups of Asians and even more so than non-Asian ethnic groups. And even though media outlets and politicians alike believe undocumented immigration is a “Latino-specific issue”, AAPI data reports that one in seven Asian-Americans is undocumented, and that they account for 14% of the overall undocumented population. Clearly, immigration, affordable living, and education are incredibly important to Asian-Americans and thus influence their voting patterns. This is reflected in the difference between how non-Asian journalists write about Asian-Americans and how Asian journalists write about them.

Something else the dominant portraiture of Asian-Americans as a political group misses is that Asian-Americans are not actually as nonpartisan or “neutral” as they are believed to be. As the model minority myth emerged by the 1960s to create a schism between Asian-Americans and other people of color, Asian-American activists participated in the civil rights movement, anti-war (particularly anti-Vietnam War) protests, women’s liberation, LGBT activism, and the student movement as well. This speaks to the exploitative nature of the model minority myth, reflected by mainstream media’s idea of the “average” Asian-American voter. That is, politicians use this framework to control the perception of Asian-Americans, such that their “successes” are used against other people of color to convince Americans to vote against legislation that supports affirmative action, welfare, voter enfranchisement, and immigration reform. The logic is that if Asian-Americans, who have been systemically discriminated against since they arrived in the US, can “achieve success” at such dramatic rates, then other minorities should be able to without federal aid. And because Asian-Americans are portrayed as politically inert, politicians can point to their seeming nonchalant “compliance” with their situations as a method of vilifying people of color who actively resist and their associated movements (such as the

#BlackLivesMatter movement). Even though Asian-Americans have been discriminated against – often violently – since the 19th century, and targeted by xenophobic and racist federal policies, most Americans are relatively unaware that Asian-Americans contend with hate crimes and thus are involved in racial justice movements just as much as other minorities. And as Asian-Americans have pointed out, there are striking and ominous similarities between the current political climate and historical racism against Asian-Americans. If media does not do justice to the Asian activists who spend their time fighting alongside other minority groups, then important issues that face Asian-American communities will be left unattended.

Media informs political thought and action. As it stands, a stagnant cycle in which politicians create and media outlets reinforce stereotypes about Asian-Americans as a political demographic harms Asian-Americans and alienates them from the dominant political parties, even as their voter turnout increases. It is necessary to distinguish between diverse Asian groups and to understand the factors that characterize their voting patterns. In order to create a more nuanced portrait of Asian-Americans, it is imperative that media outlets make room for Asian voices to be heard, for Asian journalists to be at the forefront of the analysis of Asian-American politics, and for Asian-Americans themselves to demand that they be taken seriously, not merely as an afterthought. Asian-Americans are increasing in political and economic relevance, and if mainstream media does not catch up, it will fall behind in its depiction of a critical American group to pay attention to in the coming elections.

### Activism using Social Media: with a Concentration on Women’s use of the Hashtag

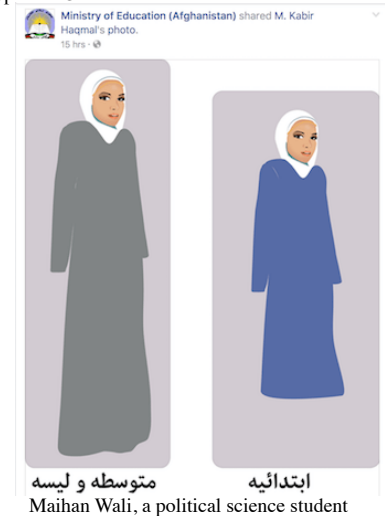
by Andreea Barb

On Monday, July 11th, 2016, President Trump tweeted, “Big wins against ISIS!” this single tweet got 8,055 replies, 13,045 retweets, and 50,897 likes. President Trump is a part of the 83% of world leaders who are on twitter. This single tweet shows how important social media has become, because the president of the United States continually uses Twitter as a platform to inform the US people. These social media platforms have been used to create change using new technologies. While there is debate if leaders like Trump should be using Twitter, there is also a massive debate if activists should be using social media to work on their campaigns.

Looking closely at activism, the two biggest social media platforms that activists use are Twitter and Facebook. After the launch of the hashtag in August 2007, many activists have started using it to start movements on social media accounts. These movements can reach a large population of 1.3 billion Twitter accounts and 500 million daily tweets. Even though reports show that even though there is a large population of accounts, roughly 24 million accounts are bots. While Facebook has 2 billion monthly active users and 50 million businesses all using the site. Since there is a large population, this population can be educated about movements and important issues. Even with these high statistics and capabilities, there are still individuals who believe social media activism does not work.

Since, different beliefs on the use of social media, social media activism is so new, there are two different beliefs about the topic. One group believes that the hashtag and social media activism is not enough. Shonda Rhimes, who is the producer of TV shows *Grey’s Anatomy* and *Scandal*, explains this when she stated, “A hashtag is not helping,” at the Dartmouth College commencement. Most of her speech talks a lot about how individuals can just post a hashtag and then continue on with

normal life. She questioned if this method is actually working, so she urged the students to go out and be an activist. Even with these beliefs, four different hashtag movements started by women were selected to see how useful social activism is. Specific Cases



at Gettysburg College, started the hashtag, #banthisuniform, to fight for women’s rights after the Afghanistan Ministry of Education released the newest and oppressive school girl uniforms. Maiha has always been involved as an activist in her home country of Afghanistan, so when the Minister of Education released a new uniform that did not fit into Afghanistan values she knew she had to do something. The uniforms released consisted of a floor-length tunic, which would mean that girls would be completely covered. This uniform has many different hazards and issues. Since the country is still a conflict zone, the uniform would make it difficult for girls were trying to run away from the violence. Also, this is also limiting girl’s participation in sports. In the past, the dresses hit just a few inches below the knee and were worn over pants leggings. This past design allowed enough flexibility for girls to walk and participate in sports while still being modest. The last issue with the uniform is the color, black, which absorbs heat, and would cause issues for the girls during the hot summer months.



## Feature Articles

Luckily, Maihan sat in on a Global Youth Advocates seminar, hosted by Global Citizen, which discussed using social media and hashtags to fight for rights. #banthisuniform was created to fight for women's rights. So, connected with a Gettysburg College colleague to create an image and then connected with her friends and fellow activists in Afghanistan to use the hashtag. Miahan was able to target Afghani women on Facebook with the hashtag. In London, Zuhra Bahman started an online petition. Using twitter, Maihan was able to target Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani and workers and officials in the US Afghanistan embassy. Close to 3:30 am, Maihan saw that Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani had overturned the uniform. This is one of the most successful movements, which later caused Maihan to start another social media hashtag campaign, #Whereismyname dealing with women being addressed by name in Afghanistan. Before these amazing strides in social activism, was April Regin and her tweet about the Oscars roster.

In 2015, April Regin tweeted: "#OscarsSoWhite they asked to touch my hair," in response to the Oscar roster being predominantly white. Mainstream media quickly picked up the hashtag allowing the greater population of Twitter and Facebook users to use and see the hashtag. Some celebrities announced they would boycott the Oscars in protest. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences eventually said it would make significant changes to its voting requirements and governing structure to increasing diversity of its membership. The next year, the roster still was not diverse. In response to this, the hashtag resurfaced again. In 2017, the hashtag was considered a success when the roster was more diverse with the nominations of Octavia Spencer, Denzel Washington, and Barry Jenkins. Yet, the fight is still not over. Even though the hashtag took three years, and even though the film industry is still filled with discrimination, this was a good step in fighting a part of the discrimination.

Ramaa Mosley started the #BringBackOurGirls after 200 Nigerian schoolgirls disappear from

Chibok, Nigeria. In April 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from the Nigerian town of Chibok. A few girls were able to escape, but most of the girls were never found. Reports state the victims have been forced into marriage, or becoming suicide bombers. The campaign got picked up by major media sources which allowed celebrities like Kerry Washington, Machel Obama, and Hilary Clinton to use the hashtag. The campaign got 3.3 million tweets with 56% of the hashtag users being women. The campaign was a success in May 2016, when Amina Ali Nkeki, a missing Chibok girl, was rescued by the Nigerian military. There are still many girls still held captive, but this one successes shows how important social media is on issue that have made a worldwide outcry. The hashtag was able to give information to many people.



Michelle Obama started the campaign #62MillionGirls because there are 62 million girls who are continuing to be denied access to an education in 2015. Former First-Lady Obama talked a lot about how the lack of resource, social issues of teen pregnancy or early marriages in parts of the world all affected women's education access. The tweet was the top tweet during its time, and had about 250K personal stories shared with the hashtag. Many celebrities also used the hashtag like, Kerry Washington, Chris Martin, and Mindy Kaling.

Even though social activism using the hashtag is so new, there have already been many accomplishments. It is amazing that three out of the four case studies were deemed a success. #Banthisuniform was able to successfully overturn the uniform in twenty-four hours, which just shows how quickly and it is possible to use hashtags to get policies and decisions turned over. While

#Banthisuniform was able to be resolved quickly, #OscarSoWhite took two years to finally get a diverse roster. #BringBackOurGirls allowed the general public to learn about the cause, and support the cause. Even though #62MillionGirls is not considered a success because it did not accomplish a goal it was able to educate and make a lasting impact. There is still a lot of time and effort still put in the hashtag, so there is still time for it to become a success. The success and usage of some of these hashtags are directly related to mass media picking up the hashtag and discussing it.



The mass media picked up three of the four hashtags and helped promote their causes. For #BringBackOurGirls, #62MillionGirls, and #OscarsSoWhite celebrities used the hashtag in support. Fans and followers of important figures like celebrities and politician were able to learn about the hashtag and then increase support. When #62MillionGirls was realized, it was the top hashtag used on Twitter, and also was used on Facebook. The mass media have helped many women and women's issues expand and get support. Since all of these hashtags were created by women, it was interesting to see that three out of the four issues were related to women rights. #OscarsSoWhite was the only hashtag that dealt

with issues that was not about women, but its success would influence African American women too. It is not surprising that most of the issues used by hashtag relate to women's right since all of them were started by women.

Social media activism is such a new form of activism, that can be shaped and molded to stand on its own or help with other forms of activism. While it will always be devoted, there is a difference of being politically active and support a movement. The hashtag allows individuals to support a movement, learn about different movements, and show how important the movements they support are. Social media activism, allows women's issues and voices are being able to be heard. It is an easy way for anyone, no matter the skill level, to use and express themselves. While not every person can always fight for every movement they are able to still support some campaigns in some way. This form of activism does not only allow for individuals who cannot fully support a movement, it allows activist to use it with different forms of activism. #Banthisuniform also used a petition. This new form of activism could be used alone or with other forms of activism. From looking at all of these a case studies, the hashtag has been very successful and will continue to be an important part of the future.

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