WORKING WITH OUR DIFFERENCES
Chasms
Bridges
Alliances?

**Report of an international conference
June 19-20, 2001**

CENTER FOR GENDER IN ORGANIZATIONS

SIMMONS SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

CGO

Linking gender and organizational effectiveness

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Working With Our Differences: Chasms, Bridges, Alliances? was a learning conference that featured presentations and discussions of cutting-edge work to explore possibilities for understanding and joint action across the boundaries of social identity groups. Work on this theme began at the Center for Gender in Organization's (CGO) June 1999 conference, *Gender at Work: Beyond, White, Western, Middle-Class, Heterosexual, Professional Women,*[1] which focused on gender and its intersection with other social identities. For two years, CGO collaborated with scholars and practitioners of diverse backgrounds to explore this theme both theoretically and practically. The conference planning team designed *Working With Our Differences* with an eye toward better understanding what distinguishes successful alliances from unsuccessful ones and toward generating an improved theoretical and practical approach to building alliances across differences. The presenters were selected for their applied work on working across differences in the social realm.

The conference also sought to apply to organizations the concepts and lessons drawn from the presenters. To bring to life the challenges and opportunities presented by working with chasms, bridges, or alliances and to apply the learnings from the presentations to organizational contexts, conference participants worked on cases in small, facilitated groups. The cases drew on real-life experiences of change agents from a variety of settings, including private and non-profit organizations in South Africa and the United States. This report summarizes the speakers' presentations and pre-conference papers.

A small group of conference participants discusses how learnings from the presentations apply to real-life organizational situations.

As Deborah Kolb, CGO Co-Director, pointed out in her welcome, all organizations can see the economic benefit of conventional, large-scale forms of alliance-building, such as corporate mergers. But they often fail to recognize that small-scale, internal alliances across social identity groups also produce economic benefits by increasing the efficiency and efficacy of the organization. As a result, organizations may perceive working with differences across groups to be *only* an issue of social justice and hence, outside their interests.

The conference objectives were:

- To broaden our understanding of the ways in which efforts toward alliance-building operate by engaging in a dialogue about how different social identity groups view and make sense of these opportunities for partnership.

- To consider the processes and/or practices that enable diverse groups to sustain connections.

- To examine barriers that can impede interaction among diverse groups.

- To explore how a consideration of differences helps us effect meaningful and fundamental organizational change.

The following questions helped to frame conference discussions:

- Are there times when attempts to work across differences in effect widen them?

- How can pathways of interaction be successfully built among groups?

- What is the role of alliances in bringing about organizational change?

- How can diverse groups with complex histories work constructively together toward a common goal?

I. FRAMING THE CONFERENCE

SPEAKER: Karen Proudford

Karen Proudford is Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Gender in Organizations and an Assistant Professor of Management at the Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management, Morgan State University, where she teaches courses in organizational behavior, human resource management, and related disciplines. She received her MA and PhD degrees in Management from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to beginning her career in academia, she held positions at Honeywell, Inc. and IBM. Dr. Proudford has consulted to public and private organizations and coached executives from around the world at Wharton Executive Education Center, concentrating on issues of leadership, organizational change, conflict resolution, and motivation. In addition, she has delivered lectures on the challenges of managing organizational development and growth to executives from South Africa and Slovakia.

Karen Proudford

During her year as a Senior Research Fellow at CGO, Karen Proudford researched and developed the theme of building alliances across differences. She began her framing talk by explaining that she had received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in business, and had worked in large U.S. corporations. She acknowledged that talking about alliances and coalitions in a business environment is not unusual, and that there is abundant and well-established literature on those subjects. But she also added that she felt confident that participants had not come to this conference to discuss "the strategic implications of new venture alliances in the semiconductor industry" or some similar topic. Nor does the group and intergroup organizational literature address alliance-building in quite

the same way as this conference intended. Indeed, based on her experiences in the business world, Proudford argued that the notion of building alliances across social identity differences is a significant challenge to the predominant framework in organizations.

The particular challenge that this conference addressed was forging alliances between and among social identity groups. This strikes at the heart of the Weberian foundation upon which many U.S. organizations, with their accompanying images of professionalism, are based. As such, much in the way that people continually ask for the "business case" for diversity, the question arises, "Why would people want or need to connect across race, gender, cultural, or sexual orientation lines?" Even if they *could* do so, why *would* they do so? And if they were successful, how would that contribute to important organizational outcomes, even though it may contribute to important social outcomes (assuming the line can be easily drawn between the two)? These types of questions may indicate skepticism about the importance and relevance of forming such relationships; they might also speak to the fear of what might happen if people form coalitions in order to bring about fundamental change to the way business is conducted.

CGO's work clearly indicates a commitment to and belief in the importance of acknowledging differences. CGO also believes that by making what is already operating informally in organizations more salient, we can work with it in a way that ultimately helps all employees achieve at higher levels—thus, allowing organizations to meet their goals. However, as we engage with people in organizations, it is clear that the link between fostering connections among social identity groups and, for example, improved performance is not self-evident. It is not so clear to those in organizations whether or not they should commit resources to such efforts, how and under what conditions to commit resources, or how to measure the efficacy of such efforts. Moreover, individuals may be loathe to engage in these efforts for a variety of reasons: because it often requires them to draw on a set of skills that they feel they do not have; because the "end state" is unclear; or because the implications for individuals of fundamental organizational changes are uncertain—particularly if these efforts occur while the organization is in the midst of a financial downturn or finds itself struggling in an increasingly competitive environment.

As CGO began to work on this topic, we realized that there were many questions we had to ask and that, as often happens, asking the right questions is as—if not more—crucial than being able to answer them. That realization, as much as any other insight, has informed our approach and thinking as we explore this area.

The story of how the question mark came to be at the end of this conference title is an important one for understanding some of the dilemmas encoutered while attmpting to work across differences. The report of CGO's 1999 conference indi-

cates that the next conference was to be titled *Building Alliances Across Differences as a Strategy for Organizational Change.* However, early in the planning stages, it became clear that the movement from the previous CGO conference theme, *Beyond White, Western, Middle-Class, Heterosexual, Professional Women,* to the "Building Alliances" theme had not been seamless—in fact, there were multiple perspectives on the decision.

Evangelina Holvino,[2] Research Faculty at CGO, noted that the alliances theme did not flow from feedback at the 1999 conference, nor was it the next "logical" step; rather, she argued, white liberal feminism was at work. She suggested that white liberal feminists tend to move quickly to wanting to make connections, rather than staying with and more deeply exploring the intersection of race, gender, and class. Her comments stopped the conference planning team short. Had this happened? If so, what did it say about the whole notion of building alliances? Was it indeed "easier" in some sense to move past exploring differences into connections?

Some who participated in the planning wanted to move forward, to get on with the business of how we can work together to bring about change, while others wanted to stay with further exploration of dimensions of difference that influence relationships among women and between women and men. Hence, the conference title, *Working with Our Differences: Chasms, Bridges, Alliances?,* and the question mark. The planning team decided to question our initial assumption of reciprocity. We broadened our discussion to include the ways in which people do—or do not—want to connect, and we adopted an approach of self-reflection.

It was thus decided that the range of issues that the conference addressed should be broad. It included *dilemmas*, and what sometimes appear to be *chasms*, as well as the ways that we try to connect, be it through what we have come to think of as *bridging*, *coexistence*, *coalitions*, or *alliances*.

> **Framework for Working Across Differences**
>
> *Chasm:* barrier that appears unbridgable between two identity groups
>
> *Coexistence*: two or more identity groups occupying the same social space but having separate civic and social institutions
>
> *Bridging*: representative of identity group engaging in joint activities with another identity group
>
> *Coalition*: short-term partnership between two identity groups in the service of a concrete goal or task
>
> *Alliance:* long-tern relationship between two identity groups

A FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCES

Proudford provided a framework for working across differences, which came out CGO's research and learnings from discussions and seminars. This framework, not intended as a definitive statement, is an effort to define a starting point for discussing the range of possibilities.

Chasms might exist when groups are unwilling to acknowledge that they may be connected to each other in any way. There is virtually no interaction, and the bonds within each group are very strong. A chasm seems to present little opportunity for change. Organizationally, this form looks like separate companies/units.

Coexistence might appear when groups are more willing to acknowledge their interdependence. They may interact with each other occasionally. Their interactions tend to be structured and the intensity of interaction tends to be low. When coexistence occurs, groups occupy the same space without engaging with one another. Or they may interact only when necessary, either individually or through representatives.

Bridging, which occurswhen representatives from differing identity groups work together, provides an opportunity, though limited, for bonds to develop between the groups while the bonds within each group remain strong. There is some potential for change to come about as a result of interacting across group boundaries, though it may happen incrementally. An example of bridging in an organization might be a highly stratified company/unit and the presence of formal or informal organizational leaders who act as ambassadors between strata.

Other forms might appear when groups are willing to acknowledge their interdependencies. They may interact periodically (as with a *coalition*) or continuously (as with an *alliance*). The intensity of interactions tends to be high, though that intensity may fluctuate, rising when particular issues are addressed and then waning afterwards. The bonds within each group are weaker than with the other forms, perhaps because of the acknowledgement of interdependencies and the frequency of interaction. This presents opportunities for stronger bonds to form between groups. There is the potential for substantial change, whether in the short run—as might happen with a coalition built around a particular issue—or in the long run through a long-term alliance. Examples of these forms in organizations might be ad hoc employee groups and mentoring relationships.

In fact, we wondered whether we had constructed a continuum on which groups could move from coexistence and bridging to more "desirable" conditions of coalitions and alliances. Similarly, we observed that we had missed some forms altogether. For example, we had no form of interaction that captured intense, frequent, and harmful exchanges. We were reminded that each form might have an "ideal" or "desirable" state. Also, we saw some forms as more likely to lead to organizational change, which we viewed as desirable. However, meaningful learning could take place between individuals, groups, and units that could produce fundamental shifts in those relationships, if not in the entire organization.

Connecting Across Difference: Some of What CGO Learned

Proudford used her experiences at CGO both to illustrate her point about moving from dialogue to debate and to begin the discussion of what CGO had learned during the two years of work on working across differences. The motivating question was: Was the move from discussing the intersection of race, gender, class, etc. to discussing building alliances, at some level, a move *away from* exploration, as much as it was *toward* alliance-building? Is it, or is it not, extraordinarily difficult to be asked (or expected to) "sit with" one's privilege? To listen

to, have to respond to, the experiences of others that indicate that, actively or passively, you may be contributing to what others experience as being silenced, being marginalized, being discounted, being oppressed?

For Proudford, it was easier to actively move toward working together around some concrete task—increasing the number of women in an organization, holding a networking event, or making a presentation to the Board of Directors, for example—than to sit with her privilege by listening to the experiences of those from outside the U.S., from lower socio-economic classes, or from gays/lesbians. However, if we are not willing to sit with our privilege, we end up engaging with someone we really do not know. We may think we know them (or their experiences), but we realize later that our knowledge is superficial or that we really learned more about our own privilege as a U.S. citizen/heterosexual, etc., than we did about them. And if we proceed with an alliance, we run the risk of inviting "the other" in, being surprised when we learn about the depth and scope of the oppression and then feeling confused about why the alliance did not proceed as we expected.

The insight CGO gained from revisiting the conference title surfaced again and again in different forms. In short, CGO learned that there are consequences associated with trying to engage with someone you do not know. Proudford had encountered this in her research on race in the U.S.[3] She explained that she offered the following example not because race is more important than other differences, but because it is the one with which she is most familiar. White women seem enthusiastic about forging some kind of connection with black women, and it soon becomes clear that they are not sure who they have chosen as allies. They do not have a sense of the concerns, struggles, preferences, priorities, or sensibilities of black women. Often, they do not have a sense of how they themselves contribute to the ongoing subjugation of black women. Black women tend to be more, though certainly not fully, informed about the experiences of white women. The white women , on the other hand, prefer to stop focusing on differences and to focus on what unites white and black women: gender. If black women continue to introduce race into the conversation, white women may feel black women are being resistant or difficult. After all, how can the two work together if they continue to focus on their differences? Better to proceed with a concrete outline of what the women can accomplish together. Frequently, white women assume that black and white women see each other as equals as they forge an alliance. For black women to remain in the alliance, however, sometimes requires that they suppress their viewpoints, or continually challenge those of white women. Therefore, black women may pay a heavy price if they do not continue to discuss race. In the end, their interests are lost while those of white women are served or the alliance disintegrates.

Proudford invited the audience to consider if acknowledging differential experi-ences was not suffiecient for people to connect across differences. She continued to discuss the implications of her example of black and white women. To establish a coalition between black and white women makes sense, and both groups may

learn a good deal about how they interact with one another. They may reach a point when their interactions can proceed with relative ease and at which they feel as if they have significant common interests based on gender. However, this conference focused on forming connections *that bring about organizational change*, meaning that the coalition is attempting to influence some other group—most likely, white men. What happens when white and black women, working together, then attempt to influence white men?

Proudford asserted that moving from a dyad to a triad sets into motion a different set of dynamics which probably have not been addressed or fully understood when the white and black women were working together. What would it mean for white women to continue to explore the ways in which they interact with black women, *and* how they interact with black women when in the presence of white men (which surfaces issues of attraction and sexuality)? What would it mean for black women to have to explore this?

Perhaps it is more comfortable to move away from this level of engagement as a primary concern and to move to the more comfortable level of developing strategies for working together. Groups can have meetings to discuss strategy—and engage in considerable debate about it—without ever having to delve into the contradictions, stresses, and strains that exist in their relationship. And they can do so without ever having to be reflective about how they may be contributing to silencing one another.

Proudford offered these examples to illustrate factors that can make some alliances tenuous. To be sure, others would describe these dynamics differently. Rarely do the divisions between "white" and "people of color" or "U.S." and "European" (and so on) break down neatly. However, Proudford described them in this way to make clear the assertion that—even as we consider ways to connect—one of the things we have learned is to remain open. And that if we do not, those of us who are in positions of privilege—be it related to race, country of origin, sexuality, religion, etc.—run the risk of participating in silencing those with whom we have formed an alliance. As a result, alliance-building can be slow and painstaking work. Part of what CGO learned is that building connections is a process of ongoing discovery.[4] To keep connections alive and vibrant, we have to continue learning about race, class, sexual identity, and other dimensions of difference. We cannot assume we know enough.

CGO realized we should not assume that everyone wants to build alliances. Some may still experience themselves as too vulnerable to build an alliance; they may need more information about the other individual/group or may feel that the other group needs more information about them. How then can we have a discussion about whether or not we should connect? The planning team left this question open for this conference, preferring to acknowledge that there are asymmetries in these relationships. Some asymmetries may appear to be chasms and dilemmas. However, working through the chasms/dilemmas may be a necessary first step in finding a way to work together. People change as they interact, allowing for the form of interaction to evolve over time.

A third learning that has emerged as CGO has taken up this topic is "who is first." Making such a determination touches competitive nerves, which can be difficult to acknowledge given that we often critique the competitiveness in organizations. Still, there is the challenge of thinking about whether all dimensions of difference (that are relevant in a particular context) can be addressed simultaneously. Negotiating this is an incredibly difficult task. If one concludes that every type of difference cannot be given the same attention and urgency, then which—race, culture, class, sexual identity—receives primary attention? What does privileging one do and mean to the others? What is the importance of time in fostering these connections?

Proudford concluded:

> It is my hope and expectation that what we accomplish in the next several days will continue, conversations will continue, writing will continue, informed by our time together, which will slowly but surely influence our ability to think about, research, intervene and participate in efforts to bring people who are different together, in ways that produce stunning results for organizations.

II. DILEMMAS AND CHASMS

Presenters for this session considered the challenges and rewards of articulating and confronting dilemmas in working across social identity differences at the international and interpersonal level. Amina Mama discussed the challenges facing postcolonial women's movements, drawing on her work on state and civil society women's organizations in Nigeria and other African contexts. Andrea Ayvazian and Beverly Daniel Tatum engaged in a public conversation about their cross-race relationship and shared insights regarding the challenges and rewards of engaging in a dialogue that surfaces dilemmas.

BRIDGING LEGACIES, BUILDING FUTURES: REFLECTING ON AFRICAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

SPEAKER: Amina Mama

Amina Mama

Amina Mama is the Chair of Gender Studies and the Director of the African Gender Institute (AGI) at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Before coming to the AGI, she taught social studies and gender studies at a number of European and international institutions. She has also worked outside the academic mainstream, as a researcher and consultant to various international bodies, and with an array of non-governmental and women's organizations. She holds a doctorate in Organizational Psychology from the University of London. Her major research projects have addressed women in government and politics in a

variety of African contexts, militarism, women's organizations and movements, and race and subjectivity. She is the author of two books, Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender and Subjectivity *(Routledge 1995) and* The Hidden Struggle: Statutory and Voluntary Sector Responses to Violence Against Black Women in the Home *(Runnymede Trust 1989, repub Whiting and Birch 1996), and a range of other publications.*

Drawing on her experiences organizing and researching Nigerian women's organizations, Amina Mama addressed the complexities of advancing social change agendas for women. Mama began by stating what she feels is one of the major barriers to advancing change in Africa: Westerners do not "know" African women, their organizations, accomplishments, culture, history, or future. Mama discussed the barriers that prevent the collection and dissemination of knowledge about African women.

Mama began by recounting several efforts made to disseminate information about women in Africa to other parts of the world via Western journals. Mama found that, under the guise of promoting scientific objectivity, Western journals often reject articles that are written, even intentionally, from a local standpoint. As she put it, "[There are] pressures to adopt Western paradigms at the expense of local realities and political goals of women's organizations in Africa."

Mama moved on to address African women's organizations' frustrations with the requirements of Western funders. Mama argued that many funders apply a "one size fits all" approach, even to women's liberation. In fact, funders often require that proposals include "objective" measures of performance, or quantifiable outcomes. These measures, designed to assist large Western-founded organizations, may not appropriately evaluate the outcomes of all organizational types, particularly transformative organizations.[5] Transformative organizations, whether they are transforming others (as with organizations that work for women's liberation) or themselves (as with organizations working to grow and change within) require flexibility that is excluded in an externally imposed structure. Mama explained that some organizations find that they need to hire outsiders to show them how to comply with these rules of accountability, thereby requiring more funds.

In addition to requiring their own forms of accountability and measurement, Western-based funders may also impose Western practices regarding social issues as a funding requirement, sometimes to the point where the non-Western organization espouses the imposed practices at a higher rate than its Western counterparts. As an example, Mama remarked that the rate of change regarding the increasing numbers of women in government was higher in Ghana, Uganda, and South Africa than in the United States. "African women have fought for space in government," Mama said, "but, there are also resonances between local struggles and international policy directives."

The use of specified or "substitute" language also poses a unique challenge for women's organizations in Africa. By requiring the use of substitute language in

proposals, Western-based funders inadvertently weaken intellectually and politically meaningful concepts. Mama explained, "When funding agencies require changing terms—for example, when the phrase 'women's liberation' is replaced by 'women in development' or 'mobilization' is replaced by 'participation in development' or 'political action' is replaced by 'skills training'—a deal has been done that produces slippages away from a transformative feminist agenda. It is more than words that has been changed."

In each of these instances, whether the funder is requiring that certain measurements be used, certain social issues be addressed, or some language be changed, local groups may comply with funding rules in order to advance a short term agenda in ways that do not necessarily advance the kind of gender politics that are needed for African women to move forward.

While research on African women's organizations has improved since 1995, much of it has not been generated by African women and fails to represent their perspectives. Moreover, there is no meaningful information on a region so diverse that a single country like Nigeria can have as many as 350 languages and three major religions. Finally, the work that does exist is concentrated on colonial conditions and apartheid. There is still a lack of effective continental networking among organizations.

Mama suggested that moving forward requires much stronger "organically connected movements" and networks, working with a clearly articulated transformative agenda. The strategies should involve developing engagements between different layers of civil society and those in power, and pressuring those in power to remain accountable, particularly to women. She pointed out that many of these women's networks are already organizing along their strategic goals rather than their communal identities, a sophisticated mode of organizing with a trend toward greater democratization.

> **BURNING QUESTION**
>
> How do we account for issues of power, authority, and privelege that face women from diverse national, racial, ethnic groups?

To illustrate, Mama shared the experience of a recent ABANTU for Development[6] research project, which aimed to develop strategies to strengthen the capacities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and to engage in policy from a gender perspective by identifying key partners among Nigerian women's national organizations. This national component was part of a regional research program that includes five other national studies on women's organizations. Their sample of 200 organizations that address gender was drawn from five of the thirty six states in Nigeria. In a national workshop held to develop networking strategies, they found that their sample included thirty eight language groups, three different religious groups, groups that include both female and male gender activists, and a range of political opinions. Diversity is deeply imbedded across local, state, national, regional, and international networking. Mama concluded that fruitful alliances would not be made without acknowledging and working in full cognizance of these differences.

Mama argued that placing gender politics at the center of the frame highlights the need for different kinds of community building and for Africans to "think beyond the decisive legacy; to construct new and more inclusive imagined identities that are more compatible and empowering in the context of global discourses on democratization, human rights, and last but not least, women's liberation."

WOMEN, RACE, AND RACISM: A DIALOGUE IN BLACK AND WHITE

SPEAKERS: Andrea Ayvazian and Beverly Daniel Tatum

Andrea Ayvazian is the Dean of Religious Life at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA. An activist, ordained minister, expert on interracial relations and racial identity development, author, and musician, she has served as Dean since 1998. Ayvazian holds five advanced degrees and has 15 years of expertise in anti-racism education, with a dozen spent closely working with colleague and friend, Beverly Daniel Tatum. Ayvazian has served as Mount Holyoke's protestant chaplain since 1996, a position that she retains. Ayvazian's United Church of Christ congregation at the College is one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse congregations in New England. She received her PhD in racial and ethnic studies in 1994 and a divinity degree from Yale University.

Andrea Ayvazian

Beverly Daniel Tatum is Dean of the College and Professor of Psychology and Education at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA. Appointed to the Mount Holyoke College faculty in 1989, her work focuses on race relations in America–particularly black families in white America, racial identity in teens, and race in the classroom. Her 1997 book, Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?: And Other Conversations About Race *exploded onto the national scene just as President Clinton's Initiative on Race was developing. She has toured extensively, leading workshops on racial identity development and its impact in the classroom, and has published numerous works on race and educational issues. A clinical psychologist and a professor of psychology and education, Tatum earned a BA in psychology from Wesleyan University and an MA and a PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In December 1997, she was one of three authors to appear with Clinton at the Akron national town meeting on race.*

Beverly Daniel Tatum

Andrea Ayvazian, a white woman, and Beverly Daniel Tatum, an African American woman, met 13 years ago in the context of administering nationwide workshops on anti-racism. As they traveled together and their friendship grew, they made a commitment to each other to explore the complexities of building friendships across race.[7] In the early 1990s, one of their workshop attendees asked, "Is it possible for Black women and White women to ever truly connect as friends?" It was then that Ayvazian and Tatum decided that it was important to publicly discuss and analyze their inter-racial friendship, and have

continued to do so ever since. At the conference, Tatum and Ayvazian conducted a public dialogue with one another about their inter-racial relationship. In particular, they discussed "mutually empathic relations" and their role in preventing personal chasms. Mutually empathic relations include: *Critical Junctures; Separation without Disconnection; Choosing the Margin*; and *Common Differences*.[8] Below is an outline of these four key issues in working across differences in interpersonal relationships.

CRITICAL JUNCTURES

Tatum described the "critical juncture" in her relationship with Ayvazian like this:

> I am a member of a Presbyterian church. At this writing, that denomination is in the midst of a struggle around whether or not to ordain gay men and lesbian women. Andrea is a Quaker and belongs to a Meeting that is openly gay-affirming and sanctions and supports same-sex commitment ceremonies. . . . Andrea said to me that she didn't understand how I could be a part of a religious community that was exclusionary in the way that the Presbyterian church currently is, and in fact suggested that I should find another church. When she first said it, I was taken aback by the comment, but had some trouble figuring out exactly what it was about it that bothered me. In fact, I shared her concern about the heterosexism in my denomination, and in my local church. I have raised, and continue to raise, questions about this issue with my pastor and with fellow parishioners. On the other hand, my local congregation is a relatively progressive, predominantly Black, Afrocentric congregation which is very affirming of my racial and spiritual identity in many ways. I experienced Andrea's suggestion that I should leave this congregation as an affront. . . . It occurred to me that there was really a lot of White privilege in her statement. As a Black woman living in a predominantly White community, there are not many opportunities for me or my children to be part of a community where our African-American heritage is explicitly affirmed. . . . [Andrea] was taking for granted the many churches or worship communities that she can choose from because almost all of them are predominantly White. . . . Her statement to me was a failure to recognize that privilege.

When Tatum shared her analysis of the conversation with Ayvazian, Ayvazian acknowledged that Tatum was correct. As Ayvazian explains:

> When Beverly raised her feelings and concerns with me, two things went through my mind—two things that I knew she and I had said specifically to White people many times in the past! One was that when a person of color tells you something you have said or done is racist or reveals your inattention to White privilege, take a deep breath and begin by assuming they are correct until proven otherwise. The other point is that as White people strive to be strong White allies, we do not have to hold ourselves to a standard of perfection. It

is impossible, given our socialization, our background, the struggle, the sensitivity and the pain surrounding these issues, that we can be perfect White allies. . . . Beverly was exactly right. . . . I believed that this was an opportunity for me to not attempt to be perfect or defensive, but to say, "I'm on a journey, and have not yet arrived." That was [an] important juncture, a disconnection threatened, but we managed to talk it through.

SEPARATION WITHOUT DISCONNECTION

Tatum and Ayvazian went on to talk about "separation without disconnection," which they define as a temporary but necessary separation to explore sensitive topics within one's own social identity groups. Coming together again after a separation can facilitate better understanding in the relationship itself. Following the verdict in the Rodney King case,[9] Ayvazian explained the need for Beverly and her to separate for a short time and immerse themselves in their own racial groups to work on these issues. They recognized that the separation did not need to be a disconnection. They maintained the connection between them, but recognized that there are times when it is more appropriate to seek comfort, support, and planning time with, in Ayvazian's case, White anti-racist allies, and in Beverly's case, members of the African-American community. They explained that it may be that when the issues are extremely charged, as it was (and is) with the King verdict, we cannot risk that the other may not understand us. Further, we cannot afford to teach the other about who we are at these moments. We may hopefully reach a point when it feels safe enough to talk to one another and use our varied perspectives on a topic to teach one another about ourselves.

CHOOSING THE MARGIN

Tatum and Ayvazian explained "choosing the margin" as a concept based on the premise that certain individuals, by virtue of membership in privileged social identity groups, wield greater power and influence and have greater access to resources. Therefore, they are in a better position to promote a progressive agenda than those individuals who do not have privileged social identities.[10] Ayvazian, a White, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied woman, acknowledged that she is privileged on many measures of social identity. She explained that her privileged social positioning allows her to assert a more progressive agenda, and therefore occupy a marginal status, whereas those with less privileged identities do not have the same freedom to dissent.

Ayvazian described some of the ways she pursues a more progressive agenda and "chooses the margin." For example, she does not pay a portion of her federal taxes in protest of military spending. For this, Ayvazian stated, she has complete support from Tatum. Also, she and her male partner have chosen not to marry in support of gays and lesbians who are not allowed to legally marry. Ayvazian stated that she has not lobbied for Tatum to take these or similar actions since Tatum does not hold the same center of privilege.

By virtue of her race, Tatum begins closer to the margin. As she has accepted a position of greater power—that is, a position as the dean of the college and as acting president of the college—she understands this as moving toward the center. Tatum pointed to the complexities of moving toward the center by voicing her concerns that individuals run the risk of emulating "the oppressor" in order to establish and maintain a relationship with the oppressor. Tatum offered a third choice, which is to choose the margin and thereby seek to make society a more just one. Tatum labels this a choice of connection with those who affirm our identities and experiences.

Common Differences

Tatum and Ayvazian moved on to discuss the concept of "common differences," or areas that appear at first glance to be similarities, yet this sameness is manifested and experienced differently for members of different social identity groups. For example, while they both have sons, Ayvazian's son attends public school and Tatum's son attends private school. Tatum reasoned that:

> [U]nlike White boys for whom physical maturity is often a social advantage, being Black and big for your age places you at some psychological risk. Seven-year-old Black boys may be thought of as cute; fourteen-year-old Black boys are often perceived as dangerous. The larger you are, the sooner you must learn to deal with other peoples' negative stereotypes, and you may not be cognitively or emotionally mature enough to do so effectively.

Conclusion

Ayvazian clarified that her friendship with Tatum is not based on the "false goal of color-blindness." Rather they both recognize the differences in their life experiences, and have built a "sturdy bridge across that divide." Understanding that the chasms themselves inform us and offer us opportunities to build sustainable bridges requires courage.

Burning Question

What would happen if a leader of an organization introduced the notion of "common differences" and "critical junctures" together with the notion of naming and staying with the cahsm longer? Would it make a difference in how peopled worked and the outcomes from that work?

III. Approaches to Resolving Dilemmas and Repairing Chasms: Coexistence and Bridging

This session explored possibilities for addressing the dilemmas and chasms outlined in the previous session. Two approaches drawn from the socio-political arena—establishing the conditions for coexistence and methods for bridging differences—were discussed. Sara Cobb presented her analysis of the efforts of women in Rwanda to create spaces for working together cooperatively in the aftermath of the 1995 genocide. Adina Friedman and Ibrahim Sharqieh shared their experiences of dialogue and bridging in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict, and how—through bridging—there may be hope for reconciliation in the future.

Imagine Coexistence: Narratives From Fieldwork in Rwanda[11]

SPEAKER: Sara Cobb

Sara Cobb has served as Executive Director of the Harvard Law School's Program on Negotiation since 1999. Cobb also served as a faculty member and Associate Dean for the Human and Organization Development Program at the Fielding Institute in Santa Barbara, CA. She received her PhD in communications in 1988 from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Prior to her appointment at Fielding, she taught at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of Connecticut, the State University of New York at Albany, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She was also president of, and a trainer/consultant with, Dialogue International, a private firm specializing in conflict management and organizational change issues. Her clients included a variety of major corporations and organizations in the United States, South America, and Europe. Over the years, she has contributed extensively to the communication literature in English and Spanish, particularly as it relates to mediation, conflict management, and human rights. Her current research focuses on how the construction and transformation of conflict "stories" take place in both organizational and international settings.

In this presentation, Sara Cobb shared insights gained from her fieldwork in Rwanda. Specifically, she explored the processes through which the survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide rebuilt the public and private institutions in their community and their lives. Cobb began by presenting a theoretical framework. She then shared a narrative of a group of women that was engaged in a rebuilding effort after the genocide, and she concluded with an analysis of the group's rebuilding processes.

Theoretical Framework

Cobb conceptualized the process of rebuilding social institutions after genocide as a linear one in which the society moves through five phases. These phases are violence, coexistence, cooperation, collaboration, and interdependence. She further posited that as the society moves from violence to interdependence, there would be greater interaction among the diverse identity groups and greater relational complexity among the members of the society. She focused on articulating the processes that can tip a conflict system in the direction of interdependence. She began by discussing the notions of co-existence and cooperation, and then discussed the notion of "tipping" in detail.[12]

Cobb defined coexistence as a stage in the process toward interdependence. Within the coexistence phase, the focus is on preventing violence from erupting between the conflicting parties and to rebuild separate institutions for each of the parties involved in a conflict. Peace is maintained by the presence of a third party, such as security forces. Separate institutions are built in several sectors—economic, civic, and social.

She distinguished coexistence from cooperation in that the latter "is a more connected case than coexistence." She described two kinds of cooperation: one in which group A agrees to participate in some realm of social or economic life according to the rules set by group B, and another in which both parties in a conflict jointly determine how to act in realms of social or economic life. In the second case, the society's infrastructure is integrated and all groups participate.

TIPPING

"Tipping" refers to the process by which social epidemics are fostered. Tipping does not require knowledge of outcomes or a desire to be an architect of specific outcomes. Rather, one must understand the processes that shift a system so that momentum toward interdependence takes hold. Drawing on this idea, Cobb asked, "How do you tip a system [in the direction of interdependence]?"

Based on an analysis of her fieldwork, Cobb identified several aspects of the tipping process toward interdependence, including:

Increasing the breadth and depth of social networks. Cobb illustrated this point by comparing genocide survivors' networks before and after the genocide. The networks of the survivors had been severely impoverished after the genocide. They had lost relationships in both the public realm—composed of actors in civic and economic realms of life—and the private realm—composed of family members, friends, and neighbors. Consequently, she indicated that it was important to re-populate this impoverished network. Relationships needed to be fostered with people who could fill important roles in the individual's world in both the private and public realms.

Altering frames in the telling of what happened. Cobb indicated that the second process involved constructing new narratives of what happened. Ideally, these narratives would alter the problematic inter-group relationship. New narratives enable the emergence of "new polarizations, new construct systems, new plot events, new character roles, and new values." The problem, however, is "how [to] change the constructs when they are tied to a story of what happened." If the use of these constructs leads to placing blame on the other group, inter-group relations will remain problematic.

Cobb recounted the narrative of a group that formed after the genocide. She then reflected on whether this group was characterized by the presence or absence of the three aspects of the tipping process described above.

Group formation. The Widows Co-op formed when three women who had known each other for a long time came together to informally set aside time for mourning their husbands, all of whom had died during the genocide. All three women were Tutsi. Two of them had lost Tutsi husbands one had lost a Hutu husband. All three were homeless and had lost most of their family members and relatives in the genocide.

Growth of the group. The Tutsi woman who was married to a Hutu man had a widowed Hutu sister-in-law who had been married to a Tutsi man. Growth began when this woman asked her fellow mourners if her sister-in-law could join them in their informal mourning sessions. Eventually, the women started to bring in other widows and the group grew to 35 women who came together to cry.

Frames for understanding what happened. In the process of mourning they tried to make sense of what happened. Their first stories placed blame on the Hutu: "Look what they did to us—what the nasty Hutu did to us." Over time, their accounts changed and the blame was placed on the political machinations between the government and the Rwandan army. In this case, Cobb concluded, the stories captured the process through which communities are created through caring.

Conflict over resources. The group then began to notice that, as widows, they had common needs, such as housing. In the process of trying to work out how to provide for these needs, they started arguing over who had more resources, more responsibilities, and suffered the most. Their challenge at this point was "to articulate a shared world view when there were vast differences in how the genocide affected them." Despite the "shouting and crying," however, the group stayed together and thrived. During this conflictual period, the women took care of one another.

Building houses and expanding activities. In order to alleviate their homelessness, the women began building houses. They undertook this activity at night because it was socially inappropriate for women to climb ladders due to the skirts and dresses they traditionally wore. However, because they had to work at night, the houses they built were not structurally sound; many had roofs that caved in. The group members decided to write a grant to fund the purchase of trousers so that they could work during the day. They received a grant from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, bought trousers, and built structurally sound houses.

As the group grew, their organizational arrangement became more complex. They developed a governance structure and system. They also expanded their activities

to include fundraising. For example, they were able to send three women to college, establish a very large agricultural venture, form a soccer team for the children, and start literacy and vocational educational programs.

ANALYSIS

Cobb emphasized the importance of the liminal space in the widows' group, created as the women cried together about their losses and "interactively witness[ed] each other." Their conversation was not about "needs and interests;" instead the women expressed mutual empathy in response to the grief expressed by its members.

Drawing on the work of Seyla Benhabib, Cobb went on to attribute the widow co-op's success to their ability to engage with the "concrete other." Benhabib makes the claim that the needs/interest conversation is problematic because it creates "the view [of the other] from nowhere."[12] That is, you do not gain an understanding of the "place" that the other person is coming from.

> By taking the perspective of the other we mean taking the position of a generalized other. This is an analogized other, like somebody with that problem or [those] issues but not that person him or herself. Taking the perspective of the other removes us from the individuality or concreteness of the other. Unlike the generalized other, the specific other has a particular locality, specificity, and particular sufferings. Benhabib says that the only way we connect with the other is through empathy ... This is the liminal space where something happens. It is a state in which we witness the concreteness of the other.

Furthermore, it is not possible to know the concreteness of the other indirectly—it must be witnessed. Thus, Benhabib "argues for witnessing the concreteness of the other. This in fact allows us to focus on differences. You cannot know the other without hearing their voice." The widow's co-op was built on the foundation of "witnessing the concrete other."

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS DIFFERENCES: THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CASE

SPEAKERS: Adina Friedman and Ibrahim Sharqieh

Adina Friedman grew up in Israel, and after finishing the Israeli military service went to California where she earned her BSc in Biology. In 1992 she returned to Israel, and since then has been actively involved in working with Israelis and Palestinians, as well as Jordanians and Egyptians. She has worked both informally and with various NGO's including Ecopeace, IPCRI, ECF, and Windows. Friedman received an MA from Tel Aviv University in Middle East History (concentrating on Palestinian socio-political issues). She also
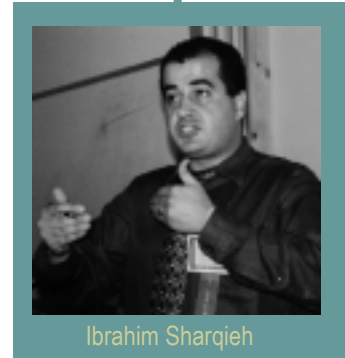

Adina Friedman

received her MS in Peace & Development Research from Goteborg University in Sweden, a joint Israeli-Palestinian-Swedish endeavor entitled "Peace College." Her main fields of interest include issues of identity, culture, memory, and nationalism. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University and hopes to continue her work in the Middle East upon completing her degree.

Born and raised in the West Bank, Palestine, Ibrahim Sharqieh received his undergraduate degree in Sociology and Masters in International Studies from both Birzeit and Amsterdam Universities. Sharqieh has been a featured speaker in many conferences and training seminars organized by recognized international organizations in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Among them were Friedrich Nauman Foundation in Germany, Center for Peace Research at the University of Bari in Italy, Olof Palme Center in Sweden, and Eastern Mennonite University. He worked for a long period of time on conflict issues and regional cooperation in the Middle East. Currently, Ibrahim is working on his PhD in the Philosophy of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University.

Ibrahim Sharqieh

Adina Friedman, an Israeli, and Palestinian Ibrahim Sharqieh shared their experiences with activities and projects designed to build bridges between their two communities. Based on their experience, Friedman and Sharqieh presented some of the effects of mutual activities as well as some guidelines for bridging differences.

Sharqieh described the kinds of mutual activities Palestinians and Israelis have engaged in over the years. These bridge-building activities fall into three broad categories: political, professional and academic, and grassroots. Many activities were defined as 'coexistence' activities between different segments of both societies. Other activities were simply joint endeavors built around common interests or goals, such as medical cooperation, environmental projects, and meetings of women's organizations. In these latter activities, coexistence was usually a simple and inevitable byproduct. Engaging in joint activities encourages parties to treat each other as peers, thus gaining mutual respect for one another and dismantling stereotypes.

Friedman and Sharqieh described joint activities on the political level including political negotiations and some dialogue (in, perhaps, the narrower sense of the word). Participants included political leaders and activists on both sides, including members of political youth movements. One of the main aims of joint political youth activities was to form, or gain, support for the politicians on "track 1" and for the political processes taking place. The presenters gave two examples of bridge-building activities at the political level. The Middle East Youth Leadership Network project was funded by UNISCO and administrated by the Peres Center for Peace. The project aimed to create cooperation between youth activists from Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. Another example is the *Young Leadership Conference*, an annual conference that was held by the German Friedrich

Naumann Foundation. Youth activists Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine were invited to discuss problems facing regional cooperation in the Middle East.

On the professional and academic level, organizations and other academic institutions were involved in dialogue and activities whose goal was to create joint projects aimed at benefiting both parties.

The presenters gave several examples of activities at the people-to-people (or grassroots) level. EcoPeace is a joint Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian and Egyptian environmental project which promotes sustainable development. The presenters also described the Peace College, which is a joint Israeli-Palestinian-Swedish MS degree program in Peace & Development Studies.

Friedman and Sharqieh stated that there are a number of lessons to be learned from the different styles of bridge-building with regard to their long- and short-term success and sustainability. The presenters shared the following guidelines for bridging differences:

> *Burning Question*
>
> Regarding the Israeli/Palestinian issue, there is an assumption that encounters with the "other" will dismantle stereotypes. But contact alone will not necessarily ldismantle stereotypes. These encounters could: a) Perpetuate/reinforce stereotypes; b) Provide "exceptions"; c) Create a *parallel* reality. What specifically *helped* or led to dismantling or significantly shift stereotypes?

- *Invoke an impartial third party*. Sometimes a third party is essential to opening a dialogue and building trust. Also, selecting a meeting place that has no historical significance for either party can be facilitated by the use of a third party.

- *Address each party's needs*. Some intervening organizers make the mistake of trying to get parties to forget the problems. This does not work because affected parties want to talk about the larger issues.

- *Develop new interests for the parties*. Develop projects that foster interdependence and help shift emphasis away from a hostile history.

- *Overcome power imbalances*. One person or group may have the upper hand. For example, a Palestinian needing a visa to travel to Israel requires the support of an Israeli. Recognizing and overcoming power differences is essential for bridging differences.

- *Have encounters change something "on the ground."* People can not simply continue talking without seeing some tangible results.

- *Overcome stereotypes and prejudices*. Listen to others' narratives and try to understand how they think about the issue.

- *Increase the level of participation*. Be welcoming of others who have not previously participated in joint activities. This increases legitimacy and the chances of success.

- *Persevere in the face of a harsh reality*. Understand that the friendships formed away from conflict are just as real as the conflict itself.

Sharquieh explained that with any conflict, there will be different definitions of the beginning of the problem, and referring back to history will not lead parties to an agreement. In fact, it may lead each side to demand concessions from the other as a condition for their own cooperation. Instead, the goal should be to focus on building relationships for the future. Friedman pointed out the impact that identity has on negotiations. She said that the identities of Israelis and Palestinians did not include knowledge of the other, making negotiation much more difficult. "There is not one thread that extends from 3,000 years ago to today," she said, "but rather a process of selective memory. You have to use different arguments for different people, but you have to be future oriented."

IV. Approaches to Resolving Dilemmas and Repairing Chasms: Coalitions and Alliances

This session explored two additional possibilities for addressing the dilemmas and chasms of working across differences: forming effective coalitions and forging long-term alliances. These two forms offer the potential for substantial change, whether in the short run, as might happen with a coalition built around particular issues, or in the long run through a long-term alliance. Beth Robinson discussed the successes and challenges of building a coalition of straight and gay people in Vermont to support efforts to expand the rights of gay and lesbian couples in the state. Ginny Cutting and Pat Reeve talked about building alliances at the intersection of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. In particular, they addressed the opportunities and challenges posed by doing this work in the context of the labor movement and the changing workplace.

The Vermont Freedom to Marry Movement

SPEAKER: Beth Robinson

Beth Robinson is an attorney with the firm Langrock, Sperry & Wool in Burlington, VT. She was one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs in the landmark Vermont Supreme Court case Baker vs. State. In its decision, Vermont Supreme Court retained jurisdiction of the case while mandating the legislature create a system providing the benefits and protections of marriage to same-sex couples. The Legislature adopted a comprehensive Civil Union bill and Vermont Governor Howard Dean signed the bill into law on April 26, 2000. As of July, a same-sex couple from any state who are at least age 18 and not closely related by blood may apply to Vermont town clerks for a civil union license, have that license "certified" by a justice of the peace or willing member of the clergy, and then receive a civil union certificate. Given her role in this case, Robinson has traveled and spoken extensively about the successes and

Beth Robinson

challenges in building a constituency to support the Freedom to Marry for gays and lesbians in Vermont. Specifically, she has addressed the creation and the work of the "Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force," an organization that continues to work for the rights of gays and lesbians in Vermont as well as in the U.S. more broadly.

Robinson discussed her coalition-building experiences within the context of the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force. This activist group has as one of its goals full equality under the law for same-sex couples, which includes the right to marry. The Task Force has engaged in broad-based public education and outreach throughout Vermont on the freedom to marry issue since 1995. In 1999, the Task Force and its companion organization, Vermont Freedom to Marry Action Committee, worked intensively, both in the statehouse and throughout Vermont's communities, in support of the civil union bill. Thanks in large part to the efforts of the Task Force, the bill created a new legal status for same-sex couples, paralleling marriage in almost every respect. It was signed into law in April 2000. Robinson explained why and how the coalition was able to be successful in its efforts.

The Process of Coalition-Building

The Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force's (Task Force) primary goal is to educate the people of Vermont about the injustices endured by same-sex couples as a result of their legalized second-class citizenship. The Task Force's energies have been directed at an ever-widening circle. Initially focused on gay- and lesbian-related organizations, they next targeted civil rights organizations, women's groups, and other progressive groups. Additionally, they reached out to progressive faith communities such as the Unitarian Universalists and Reform Jewish communities. Over time they began reaching beyond progressive churches to middle-of-the-road churches and clergy whose support they did not necessarily presume, such as Episcopal, Congregational, Presbyterian, Conservative Jewish, Methodist, and other communities of faith. They also began to form coalitions with professional associations who brought diverse and helpful perspectives to bear on the issue. Examples of these associations include: the Vermont Psychiatric Association, the Vermont Psychological Association, the Vermont Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Vermont Pediatric Association, and Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility.

Although much of their coalition-building dovetailed with educational outreach, some educational efforts were targeted at more diffuse audiences and were not directly designed to help build coalitions. For example, they have regularly sponsored booths at over one dozen county fairs around the state for the past several years. Other educational outreach includes: public forums in libraries and other public spaces, newspaper advertisements, and speaking to civic associations such as Rotary Clubs. While not all of these individuals, groups, and organizations necessarily took a position on the issue, this outreach has enabled the Task Force to reach community leaders with their educational message.

While the Task Force had many successes building their coalition, they also faced several challenges along the way. Robinson identified the following challenges:

- The "gay community" is itself a coalition of diverse groups.

- For a variety of reasons, not everyone in the gay community supports the extension of marriage rights to same-sex couples. The Task Force bridged this chasm by emphasizing support for everyone's right to *choose* marriage, rather than focusing on one's own interest in getting married.

- Many members of the gay community embrace the differences between themselves and heterosexuals. Hence, seeking the same right accorded heterosexuals was viewed by some as an attempt to assimilate the gay community into the mainstream. To address this, the Task Force discussed the civil union bill in the context of "common humanity" rather than as an attempt at assimilation.

- Some gay people suffer from internalized homophobia and therefore do not feel that gay people deserve the right to marriage.

- Speaking from one's own experience makes it impossible to speak for the entire gay community. Yet, working on any task that benefits at least some members of the gay community requires a unified voice.

Robinson made the following observations about the experience of coalition-building in the context of the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force.

- The majority of the activists in the Vermont freedom to marry movement are heterosexual. For example, organizational boards include some heterosexual representation. Professional lobbyists and campaign managers are predominately heterosexual. The overwhelming outpouring of support from heterosexual allies has been inspiring and essential for success.

- The backbone of the Vermont freedom to marry movement has been found in faith communities. The Task Force found that several faith comminutes were motivated to differentiate their church from those who exhibit malice toward the gay community. Clergy from a wide range of religious traditions worked effectively together to support the Task Force's efforts.

- Women comprised the majority of volunteers, both at the grassroots level and in leadership positions. This may have been because the organizations were formed and led by women and because the groups grew out of personal connections within the lesbian community. While this was not necessarily a source of friction between women and men, it has been a source of frustration in that the Task Force was not more successful in drawing more men into their work.

- The leadership, key volunteers, and regional coordinators come from all walks of life and varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Although class issues have been significant in the broader community debate about the freedom to marry in Vermont, they have not been particularly significant within the organizations working for the right to marry.

Interestingly, according to Robinson, the most difficult fault-line they navigated involved regional differences rather than identity differences such as race, gender, and class. The Vermont Freedom to Marry movement is constantly challenged by varying perspectives and the varied needs of grassroots members, as well as by the logistical challenges of working across significant geographic distances.

Conclusion

Robinson shared a few general lessons about coalition-building. First, coalitions form more easily when working on a concrete task such as producing a video, training speakers to speak at various churches, civic associations and other public forums, and arranging private conversations over lunch with important community leaders. Education about issues can engender alliances and coalitions. In addition, being able to "market" needs in the context of the others' needs is critical. While it may seem that to do so would be overly strategic, ignoring the interests of others could mean a missed opportunity for addressing shared or complementary goals. Robinson went on to state that alliances *can* form around particular issues among seemingly discordant groups. Even if coalitions dissolve after an issue is dealt with, they should still be considered successful. Having completed their task, it may not be necessary to continue to work as a coalition.

> **Burning Question**
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> The stories of building alliances across differences at the individual level reveal the need to "encounter the other" or to understand the other as "concrete" and build deep multifaceted connections in order to build the trust required to "stay at the table" and work through difference. How can this process be replicated at the group level where internal connections get reinforced, relations across groups are diminished, and the "concrete other" is much more difficult to identify?

Can the House of Labor be a Home for Queer Workers?

Speakers: Ginny Cutting and Pat Reeve

Ginny Cutting has been a labor activist for most of her adult life. She was first drawn to union work as a member organizer in 1968. She was one of about 60 employees of New England Telephone and Telegraph who helped to organize 32,000 members across New England for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Cutting was one of the founders of the Gay & Lesbian Concerns Committee of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 509. She was also an early member of the Gay & Lesbian Labor Activist Network (GALLAN) and has continued to work with GALLAN since then. Her work with the Women's Institute for Leadership Development has allowed her to bring together her passions for unions, her commitment to helping women attain leadership positions in their unions, and her ability as a trainer. She has taught and spoken in many venues about domestic partnership benefits, women

and unions, and anti-homophobia and diversity. She is currently a member of the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), and is employed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a Training Specialist for the Disability Determination Services.

Patricia A. Reeve is the Director of the Labor Resource Center, located at the College of Public and Community Service (CPCS), University of Massachusetts, Boston. Reeve first became involved in the labor movement in the early 1970s when the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees organized university clericals at Illinois campuses. She then relocated to Boston in 1978 and worked with 9to5 Organization for Women Office Workers, serving as Director from 1983 to 1985. In 1986 Reeve was appointed Associate Director of the Labor Studies Program at CPCS. Currently she is a member of the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network and Service Employees International Union, Local 509. She is currently completing a PhD in U.S. history, focusing on the cultural and political dimensions of employers' liability reform in Massachusetts.
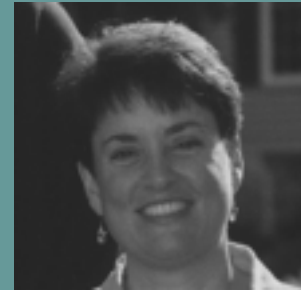
Pat Reeve

Queer[13] labor activists Pat Reeve and Ginny Cutting shared their efforts to both make a home for queer workers within the labor movement and bring the perspectives of workers into gay communities. They defined the challenge for pro-labor queers as bringing a different perspective to gay organizations and their members in order to help them understand the issues confronting those in the workforce. In turn, the challenge for queer trade unionists is to ensure that trade unions encourage the full participation and representation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered workers. Reeve and Cutting described how they had addressed these challenges in the Service Employees International Union, Local 509 in Boston.

Organizing Labor Activists for Queer Civil Rights

Reeve and Cutting began by explaining that, in the labor movement in the U.S., queer caucuses often grow out of either Women's Committees or Civil Rights Committees, as these constituency groups have all struggled to be heard in many unions. In their own union—the Service Employees International Union Local 509—the Gay and Lesbian Concerns Committee (GLCC) grew out of the Women's Committee.[14] Not surprisingly, many of the activists who worked for queer rights in the union were members of the women's and civil rights committees, where they acquired important leadership and advocacy skills. Drawing support from these and other identity-based committees, queer labor activists began to advocate for Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgendered (GLBT) rights.

Queer labor activists also garnered support from Local 509, which enabled the creation of the GLCC through supportive leadership. For example, some GLBT union members did not want to be seen at the local union hall as participants in the GLCC meeting because they were afraid of being harassed. GLCC organizers persuaded the local union to agree that no one else could use any of the other

rooms during GLCC meetings, thus resulting in increased attendance at GLCC meetings. The GLCC became a standing committee of Local 509 in July 1988 and succeeded in placing sexual orientation language in the anti-discrimination clause of their contract. They met monthly to talk about "coming out" in the workplace and to begin documenting harassment experienced by GLBT persons in Local 509. Local 509's GLCC Committee, the first queer caucus in a Massachusetts union, is one of only a handful across the United States.

ORGANIZING ACROSS UNION LINES AND ACROSS SEXUAL IDENTITIES

They next explained the development of a Boston-wide organization for queer unionists. Approximately fifteen years ago a small group of metro-area queer trade unionists began meeting at Service Employees International Union Local 285, and from this emerged the first Boston organization for queer trade union-ists, the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network (GALLAN). Soon after the founding of GALLAN, its members decided to go public with an event that had three main goals: to bring GALLAN and its agenda to the attention of organized labor and community-based organizations serving queer constituencies; to create the basis for coalition building among these organizations; and to mobilize les-bian and gay union members to educate labor leaders about their concerns. With these goals in mind, GALLAN decided to hold a benefit for Fenway Community Health Center, long identified with Boston's gay and lesbian populations, to help underwrite Fenway's capital campaign. In return, Fenway's Board committed to using union labor to construct its new building.

GALLAN succeeded in bringing together a diverse group of union representatives, including many from construction trade locals. The event raised needed funds for the construction of the health center and brought together a diverse crowd of labor unionists and queers. Unfortunately, Fenway reneged on their promise to use union labor, citing the high cost of union labor as justification. Cutting ex-plained her sense of betrayal by Fenway. The Fenway Board would not even allow her to come to a meeting and talk with them. The labor movement, however, continued to support the efforts of queer labor activists. An ally from the Greater Boston Building Trades Council had joined them in meetings with the Fenway committee and could attest to the fact that GALLAN had done everything in its power to have the health center hold up its end of the bargain, thus preserving GALLAN's credibility in the labor movement.

Having developed a higher profile within the labor movement, unions began approaching GALLAN for support. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters came to them for help in their strike against the local distributor of Miller beer. In order to get sexual orientation language into the Teamsters contract, GALLAN worked to persuade the gay bars in the city to boycott Miller beer. This was a successful campaign; they were able to get many bars to boycott Miller beer and the Teamsters finally included sexual orientation in the anti-discrimination clause. In an unprecedented move, the Teamsters thanked GALLAN by marching with them at the next Gay Pride March.

GALLAN is committed to organizing across union lines and to developing alliances with heterosexual trade union members and their organizations. For example, they succeeded in gaining support from mainstream labor by working to defeat a referendum that would have gutted social service spending and thus would have resulted in thousands of lay-offs in the public sector.

ORGANIZING NATIONALLY

With support from the AFL-CIO, GALLAN members started to connect with other GLBT labor activists across the country. In 1991 a national GLBT group was established, allowing for parallel, yet independent activities, to go on in Boston, New York, and on the West Coast. It was the beginning of a national queer labor organization. In 1994 a new organization was formed, Pride at Work (PAW). In order to advance a queer agenda within the labor movement, PAW mobilized mutual support between organized labor and GLBT communities with the goal of organizing for social and economic justice issues.

MULTIPLE IDENTITIES—SEXUAL IDENTITY, RACE, AND CLASS AND THE COMPLEXITY OF CONNECTION

> **Burning Question**
>
> How do we discuss bridging and building alliances across differences without keeping people in theoretical and methodological boxes (e.g. black/white, gay/straight, Western/non-Western, middle-class/working class)? In other words, how do we account for multiple identities in understanding chasms, bridges, and alliances?

Cutting and Reeve agreed that there was a way in which the need for outside support for the GLBT agenda forced queer unionists to build alliances with GLBT and heterosexual progressives in the labor and the GLBT communities. As is illustrated in the case of the Fenway Community Health Center, however, support from the GLBT community for workers has not always been forthcoming. One explanation may be that queer organizations feel threatened and/or antagonistic toward unions. Unions may be perceived as particularly unsympathetic toward (non-union) queer organizations; hence, supporting queer union members may seem oxymoronic. Yet another explanation for this lack of support from queer organizations may be based in a class distinction. The most politically organized (non-union) queer groups are often perceived as largely upper-middle class, thus they may share few overlapping interests with union members.

Reeve and Cutting discussed strategies to deal with conflicts across race and class within gay communities, as well as to organize and revitalize the labor movement. For example, few people of color have been in staff and leadership positions in the unions in the Massachusetts labor movement, and this has an impact on the leadership of GALLAN.[15] Reeve suggested that over time, when more people of color enter the unions, GALLAN will have to face such contradictions in their own thinking.

Reeve told the story of a former president of dietary workers who had noticed that Haitian workers who voted with the local were nonetheless absent at meetings. What the president discovered was that most of the Haitians were putting their energies in the pro-democracy movement in Haiti and felt they had to choose between their ethnic identity and their class identity as workers. Accordingly, the

president was successful in creating a bridge by having the union get involved in the Hatian pro-democracy movement. Once the Haitians saw that the union was willing to use its capital to support their cause, they were much more willing to give their support to work-based struggles.

Reeve and Cutting concluded by taking stock of their experience as queer union activists:

> As we have reflected on our successes and challenges, we have noted lessons learned. Perhaps the most important is that we can't go it alone. We need to work in coalitions with like-minded groups to achieve our goals and for this reason, we must build alliances with gay and straight progressives in labor and the gay communities. We have learned that we have more influence within labor organizations than in queer organizations. Labor activists understand the issues of fairness and equity more readily. These issues and others are fundamental to labor's culture and values... We have learned and relearned the power of organizing in struggles for justice, including the redistribution of power. Knowing this makes it possible for us to continue working hard over the long haul. It is not easy to counteract perceptions of us as "the other," but it is the good fight; and we will continue as long as it takes to achieve full representation for and leadership by GLBT workers in the labor movement.

V. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Mel King, *Director Emeritus, Center for Reflective Community Practice, Department of Urban Studies & Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA*

Mel King is internationally known as an educator, internationalist, consensus-builder, environmentalist, and advocate for social justice. Born and raised in Boston's South End, King is probably best known as the creator of the Rainbow Coalition. In 1983, during his second run for mayor of Boston, he and his supporters conceived of a net-work that would link ethnic neighborhoods and other groups, such as gays and lesbians, together in order to advocate for change. The idea was so successful that it evolved into a national movement, which is still vibrant today. King is currently involved in operating another program in Boston's South End neighborhood, where he lives, provid-ing low-cost or cost-free access to information technology. A joint project between the MIT School of Architecture and Planning, the MIT Community Fellows Program, and the Tent City Corporation, The Technology Center at Tent City takes as its mission the training of people who have been excluded so far from the technological revolution, and who are therefore at increasing risk of joblessness. As a state representative from the 9th district, as a candidate for mayor of Boston, and as Executive Director of the New Urban League of Greater Boston, King has been involved in a wide range of
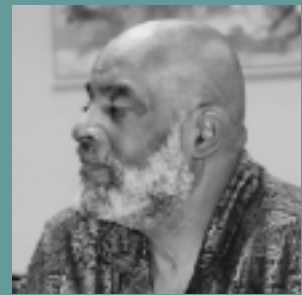
Mel King

community organizing efforts and business development programs in the Boston/Roxbury area. He has documented the development of Boston's black community from the 1950s to the 1980s in his book Chain of Change: Struggles for Black Community Development *(South End Press, 1981).*

In this inspiring talk, Mel King presented barriers to working across differences. King went on to share some strategies for overcoming these barriers that he had learned in his long career as a community activist.

King began by describing the work of YouthBuild USA. Their mission is "to create and sustain a broad based national movement in support of policies and programs which enable young people to assume leadership in order to rebuild their communities and lead responsible lives." A component of work with YouthBuild involved members thinking about the ways that institutions perpetuate ideologies of oppression and support individual acts of oppression. Members of YouthBuild identified the "I's of Oppression": *ideology* (for example, racism, sexism, and homophobia); *institutions*; *interpersonal interactions*; and the *internalization* of those ideologies that result from interpersonal interactions supported by institutions.

King added the "I" of isolation. Isolation leads to feelings of impotence when people try to change the conditions that impact their lives. As an example, he described individuals who came to social workers with similar stories of poor housing conditions. Social workers discovered that the poorly-maintained buildings were owned by the same person, and that many of the tenants within the same buildings were not talking to one another. Church leaders and agencies brought the tenants together to share their stories and to organize as a group. In the course of becoming an organized group, the tenants analyzed their situation to determine why they were living under those conditions and whose interests were served.

King reported that the tenants' group decided to attend a function at the owner's church to inform the congregation of their poor living conditions. With pressure from the congregation, the owner relinquished ownership of his buildings. Community groups gained management of the buildings and were able to improve their housing conditions. King observed, "As long as the owner could isolate people, solutions to the tenants' problems would only be isolated solutions." Real change could only occur once the tenants built an alliance.

 "We will only be successful in our efforts to change when there is a collective sense of our being deserving and having a right," King declared. The spiritual death that comes from not speaking out against injustice is to be feared much more than the consequences of our actions, King asserted. He went on to warn against the sense of "unself" that comes from keeping silent.

King emphasized the importance of being aware of the historical context in which we all act. Events do not occur in isolation of the broader economic, political, and cultural environment, and we must not underestimate the impact of institutions

on our lives. By way of example, King invited the audience to consider the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution was built on oppressive relationships, including acts of genocide on native populations, counting African-Americans as three-fifths of a person, and disenfranchising women and those who did not own land. While these relationships have changed, the structures we live under, including the U.S. Constitution, shape (and perhaps constrain) the ways in which we conceive of liberation and equality.

King highlighted the need to be attentive to historical legacies, including the relationships between identity groups. "We can't build bridges without understanding the water under the bridge."

King offered several strategies for overcoming the "I's of Oppression." First, he invited us to ask ourselves, "What kind of vision do we have?" By examining our current visions, we can develop detailed images of what is possible in our economic, kinship, community, and governing structures that escape the classist, sexist, racist, and authoritarian norms of the past. He suggested that our images include ways to accomplish essential social functions that promote diversity, human solidarity, and collective self-management. King also suggested that we refine our images into a complete social system where all the parts overlap into a consistent and mutually reinforcing fashion. We should recognize that our visions will provide a degree of clarity that will need to be continually elaborated.

King encouraged us to publicize our own struggles to make real our images, to share our successes, and to lift up our voices. "When you lift up your voice, you get to the I of inspiration."

VI. ENDNOTES

[1] To order a copy of the report from this conference, go to http://www.simmons.edu/som/cgo/publications_resources.

[2] For more on this discussion, see Holvino, E. 2001. "Deconstructing 'Coalition Building': What Race and Ethnicity Have to Do with It." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the Academy of Management, August 2001, Washington D.C.

[3] Proudford, K. L. 1999. "The Dynamics of Stigmatizing Difference." *Journal of Career Development*, 26(1): 7-20.

[4] Lichterman, P. 1995. "Piecing Together Multicultural Community: Cultural Differences in Community Building among Grass-roots Environmentalists." *Social Problems*, 42(4).

[5] In 1992, The Global Fund for Women, based in Palo Alto, California, expressed frustration that benefactors and potential donors requested results in numerical form. Much of what the Fund did was to provide fiscal support to existing women's groups in other parts of the world to do the kinds of things that were not being funded by other organizations (e.g., helping the local community build water systems from the source to the village in order to free up time, as much as eight hours per family per day).

[6] ABANTU for Development is an African NGO network that brings a gender perspective to civil society capacity-building and policy advocacy work.

[7] It is important to note that the dynamics of this bi-racial friendship operate within the particular historical context of race relations in the United States. Bi-racial friendships in other parts of the world may take on different characteristics and benefit from a different kind of analysis.

[8] For a fuller explanation of these concepts, see Ayvazian, A. and Tatum, B. 1994. "Women, Race and Racism: A Dialogue in Black and White." The Stone Center *Work in Progress* Series, No. 68, Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College.

[9] In March 1991, a citizen videotaped Los Angeles police officers beating a Black man, Rodney King, near a Los Angeles freeway. The tape was shown on TV in the United States, and anger erupted over the police brutality. The anger resulted in a trial for four of the police officers. At the request of the officers' attorneys, the trial was held in a predominately White, politically conservative city, Simi Valley. In April 1992, three of the four police officers were acquitted. The fourth was found guilty of one of the assault charges. The anger over the verdicts resulted in a massive riot in Los Angeles in the African-American community.

[10] hooks, b. 1984. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston: South End Press, as cited on page 11 in Ayvazian and Tatum.

[11] Sara Cobb was unable to attend the conference. In her stead a video was shown of a presentation made to CGO in November 2000.

[12] Gladwell, M. 2000. *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Boston: Little, Brown.

[13] Benhabib, S. 1992. *Situating the Self: Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics*. "Chapter 5, The Generalized and the Concrete Other." pp. 148-177. New York: Routledge.

[14] Reeve began the presentation by drawing attention to her use of the word "queer" to refer to those who identify as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or trans-gendered. Partially it is used as a convenience and partially as a political statement to re-claim this charged word and redefine it from a slur to a positive identity.

[15] The GLCC is now called the Lavender Caucus.

[16] Ginny Cutting pointed out the following regarding GALLAN's steering committee: they have always had at least one man of color on the committee, and today, two of the five members are people of color.

Appendix I: Conference Agenda

Tuesday, June 19, 2001

Welcome

Patricia O'Brien, *Dean*, Simmons Graduate School of Management

Deborah Kolb, *Co-Director,* CGO and *Professor of Management,* Simmons Graduate School of Management

Introduction & Framing of the Conference Theme

Karen Proudford, *Senior Research Fellow*, CGO and *Assistant Professor*, Earl G. Graves School of Business & Management, Morgan State University

Dilemmas & Chasms

Andrea Ayvazian, *Dean of Religious Life*, Mt. Holyoke College

Amina Mama, *Professor*, African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town

Beverly Daniel Tatum, *Dean of the College & Professor of Psychology & Education*, Mt. Holyoke College

Moderator: Heather Wishik, *Organizational Consultant*, Wishik Consulting Group

Approaches to Resolving Dilemmas & Repairing Chasms: Coexistence & Bridging

Sara Cobb, *Executive Director*, Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School

Adina Friedman, *Doctoral Candidate*, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), George Mason University

Ibrahim Sharqieh*, Doctoral Candidate*, ICAR, George Mason University

Moderator: Elena Yang, *Independent Scholar*

Approaches to Resolving Dilemmas & Repairing Chasms: Coalitions & Alliances

Ginny Cutting, *Training Specialist,* Disability Determination Services

Pat Reeve, *Director,* Labor Resource Center, University of Massachusetts

Beth Robinson, *Attorney,* Langrock, Sperry & Wool, Burlington, VT

Moderator: Martin N. Davidson, *Associate Professor*, Darden School at the University of Virginia

Wednesday, June 20, 2001

Check in

Jodi DeLibertis, *Administrative Manager*, CGO

Bridgette Sheridan, *Interim Associate Director*, CGO

Case Groups

Keynote Address

Melvin H. King, Director Emeritus, Center for Reflective Community Practice, Department of Urban Studies & Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Closing Remarks

Deborah Merrill-Sands, *Co-Director*, CGO, and *Associate Dean*, Simmons Graduate School of Management

APPENDIX II: CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Susan Aaronson, *State Street, USA*

Andrea Ayvazian, *Mount Holyoke College, USA*

Susan Bailey, *Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College, USA*

Stacy Blake-Beard, *Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA*

Srilatha Batliwala, *Hauser Center for Non-Profit Organizations, JFK School of Government, USA*

April Clarke, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Catherine Clemente, *State Street, USA*

Carol Cohn, *Bowdoin College, USA*

Gill Coleman, *New Academy of Business, UK*

Medria Connolly, *TKA Management Consulting Firm, USA*

Susan Copas, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*

Marcy Crary, *Bentley College, USA*

W.E. Douglas Creed, *Boston College, USA*

James Cumming, *Chaos Management Ltd., USA*

Conference participants

Claire Cummings, *Newbury College, USA*

Ginny Cutting, *Disability Determination Services, USA*

Martin Davidson, *Darden School of Business, USA*

Jodi DeLibertis, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Julie T. Elworth, *Conference Rapporteur, USA*

Robin J. Ely, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management* and *Harvard Business School, USA*

Sumru Erkut, *Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College, USA*

Oliva Espín, *San Diego State University, USA*

Joyce Fletcher, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Erica Foldy, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Adina Friedman, *Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, USA*

Katherine Giscombe, *Catalyst, USA*

Janice Goldman, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA*

Sonja Greckol, *University of Toronto, Canada*

Betzaluz Guiterrez, *Boston University, USA*

Diane Hammer, *Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change, Simmons College, USA*

Jane Hassinger, *University of Michigan, USA*

Emily Heaphy, *University of Michigan, USA*

Evangelina Holvino, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management* and *Chaos Management Ltd., USA*

Sue Hyde, *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, USA*

Cynthia Ingols, *Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Jan Jaffe, *The Ford Foundation, USA*

Ronit Kark, *Institute for Research on Women and Gender, University of Michigan, USA*

Joanna Kerr, *Association of Women's Rights in Development, Canada*

Mamathe Kgarimetsa-Phiri, *Development Bank of South Africa, South Africa*

Felicia Khan, *The Ford Foundation, USA*

Bongani Khumalo, *Community Law and Rural Development Centre, South Africa*

Joyce King, *USA*

Mel King, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA*

Deborah Kolb, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Penelope Lane, *WGBH, USA*

Kimberlyn Leary, *University of Michigan, USA*

Lisa Levey, *Catalyst, USA*

Deborah Litvin, *Simmons College, USA*

Anne Litwin, *Anne Litwin & Associates, USA*

Alice LoCicero, *Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Amina Mama, *African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

Ruby Marks, *African Gender Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

Kathleen McGoldrick, *Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Eileen McGowan, *Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA*

Mary McRae, *New York University, USA*

Robin Melavalin, *Bridgewater State College, USA*

Deborah Merrill-Sands, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Debra Meyerson, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Laura Moorehead, *Joppa Consulting Partners, USA*

Laura Morgan, *University of Michigan, USA*

Kate Murray, *Massachusetts Water Resource Authority, USA*

Patricia O'Brien, *Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Julie Oyegun, *United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Switzerland*

Irene Padavic, *Florida State University, USA*

Indira Parikh, *Indian Institute of Management, India*

Toral Patel-Weynand, *Prince William Sound Science Center, USA*

Michael Piore, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA*

Karen Proudford, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management* and *Earl G. Graves School of Business, Morgan State University, USA*

Pat Reeve, *Labor Resource Center, University of Massachusetts-Boston, USA*

Beth Robinson, *Langrock, Sperry & Wool, USA*

Maureen Scully, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Pethu Serote, *Gender Education and Training Network, South Africa*

Ibrahim Sharqieh, *Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, USA*

Bridgette Sheridan, *Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Karen Solstad, *Northwest Airlines, USA*

Diana Stork, *Simmons Graduate School of Management, USA*

Susan Sturm, *Columbia Law School, USA*

Beverly Daniel Tatum, *Mount Holyoke College, USA*

Kaizer Thibedi, *Nyeredzi African Transformation Agencies, South Africa*

David Thomas, *Harvard Business School, USA*

Gretchen Chase Vaughn, *Urban Policy Strategies, USA*

Hettie Walters, *Gender and Development Training Center, Netherlands*

Judith Weisinger, *Northeastern University, USA*

Kirsten Wever, *USA*

Vicki Wilde, *CGIAR Gender and Diversity Program, Kenya*

Heather Wishik, *Heather Wishik Consulting, USA*

Elena Yang, *USA*