

Research\Action

Midyear Brief

Bringing the Power of Data to the United Nations



Quality research supports effective policy change, better programs, and improved conditions for women around the world. The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) brought this important message to the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York, NY, this past March.

As part of its internationally focused “Power of Data” series, WCW hosted the parallel event, “The Power of Data: How Gender Focused Research Institutes in Africa Can Support Rural Women and Girls,” which coincided with the priority theme for the CSW — empowering rural women and girls.

Panelists from WCW were joined by researchers, advocates, and program staff who live and work in Africa to share their expertise and discuss ways that research can improve the lives of women and girls in rural African communities. They also highlighted examples of work from their individual

organizations, which could serve as examples to other NGOs looking to incorporate research into their operations.

Presenters included (pictured above, left to right): **Abigail Burgessson**, special programmes manager at the African Women’s Development Fund and member of WCW’s Council of Advisors; **Dorcas Coker-Appiah**, executive director of The Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre in Ghana; **Clementina Furtado**, Ph.D., director of the Center for Research and Training in Gender and Family at the University of Cabo Verde; **Tracy Gladstone**, Ph.D., associate director and senior research scientist at WCW; and **Layli Maparyan**, Ph.D., Katherine Stone Kaufmann ’67 executive director of WCW.

The program was recorded and is available on the WCW website along with slides and handouts from the event: wcwonline.org/researchandaction

Jennifer Baumgardner Named Editor in Chief of *Women’s Review of Books*

Feminist writer and activist **Jennifer Baumgardner** has been named editor in chief of *Women’s Review of Books*, the long-running publication from WCW and Old City Publishing that provides a forum for serious, informed discussion of new writing by and about women.

“Jennifer’s feminist writing and spirit of innovation are an ideal match for this important publication,” said **Layli Maparyan**, Ph.D., Katherine Stone Kaufmann ’67 executive director of WCW. A writer, activist, filmmaker, and lecturer, Baumgardner was most recently the executive director of the Feminist Press — the longest running women’s publisher in the world. She will be the third editor of *Women’s Review of*

Books, after Amy Hoffman and *Women’s Review of Books* founder Linda Gardiner.

To get to know her better, **Sitara Zoberi** ’19, a Wellesley College student and communications assistant at WCW, interviewed Baumgardner this spring for a Q&A article.



Read the interview: wcwonline.org/researchandaction

From the Executive Director



Last spring, WCW took a major step to be more eco-conscious and align with the expectations of our increasingly digital world. We've cut down on paper use by publishing only one comprehensive *Research & Action Report* every December accompanied by an abridged midyear brief every spring.

This publication is our first midyear brief. Within it, you will find highlights from our panel at the UN Commission on the Status of Women; updates on our findings, presentations, and publications; and short articles that you can continue reading on our website. Take a look to see the recent steps we've taken to advance social change, and connect with us online or on social media to stay in touch until our next *Report*.

Layli Maparyan, Ph.D.

Katherine Stone Kaufmann '67 Executive Director

Shaping a Better World through Research & Action
Wellesley Centers for Women

The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) is the largest academic, women- and gender-focused, social-change-oriented, research-and-action institute in the United States, located at Wellesley College.

wcwonline.org/researchandaction



New Findings, Publications, Presentations

Understanding and Preventing Sexual Violence

There is a growing body of research examining the criminal prosecution of child sexual abuse, however there are significant methodological and ethical challenges in the conduct of this research. One key component of success is assuring that the efforts involve close collaboration between researchers and practitioners. At the May 2018 Massachusetts Children's Alliance 8th Annual Statewide Conference in Framingham, MA, **Linda M. Williams, Ph.D.**, senior research scientist and director of the Justice and Gender-Based Violence Research Initiative, and her colleague Stephanie Block, Ph.D., discussed the importance of relationships between researchers and practitioners during their workshop, "Research Collaboration on the Prosecution of Child Sexual Abuse: Challenges and Outcomes." These relationships are critical to frame research questions and to reliably code, analyze, and interpret the data so it is useful to the field.

Sexual Harassment in Schools

Senior Research Scientist **Nan Stein, Ed.D.**, was the guest speaker at a May 2018 meeting of the U.S. Attorney's Education Working Group, sponsored by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Boston, MA. The information in her presentation, "Sexual Violence/Harassment in K-12 Schools," offered great resources to the many education and civil rights advocates in attendance.



Immigrants, Networks, and Entrepreneurship

How do U.S. businesses owned by immigrants differ from those owned by non-immigrants? **Sari Pekkala Kerr, Ph.D.**, senior research scientist/economist, and William R. Kerr, Ph.D., investigated this question in their April 2018 National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper, "Immigrant Entrepreneurship in America: Evidence from the Survey of Business Owners 2007 & 2012." They quantified the dependency of the U.S. as a whole, as well as individual states, on the contributions of immigrant entrepreneurs in terms of firm formation and job creation. They described the differences in the types of businesses started by immigrants and the quality of jobs created by their firms. First-generation immigrants create about 25 percent of new firms in the U.S., but in some states this share is over 40 percent. Immigrant-owned firms, on average, create fewer jobs than native-owned firms, often explained by the industry and geographic location of the firms. Additionally, the researchers found that immigrant-owned firms pay comparable wages, conditional on firm traits, to native-owned firms, but are less likely to offer benefits.

New Findings, Publications, Presentations *continued*

Preventing Youth Depression

Adolescent depression is a public health issue that demands attention and action. To help prevent depression before it starts, **Tracy Gladstone**, Ph.D., senior research scientist, and her colleagues developed CATCH-IT, a web-based primary care intervention program for teens at risk for depression. Results from a federally-funded clinical trial of the program suggest that at-risk teens who engage with technology-based interventions through primary care may experience decreased depressive symptoms over time. In April and May 2018, Gladstone discussed this data in presentations and poster sessions at the Annual Meeting of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America in Washington, D.C.; a Wellesley Centers for Women Lunchtime Seminar; and the Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting in Toronto, Canada.



Sustaining Out-of-School Time

Georgia Hall, Ph.D., director of the **National Institute on Out-of-School Time** (NIOST), spoke at the March 2018 National AfterSchool Association Convention in Atlanta, GA. The presentation, “Blurring Boundaries: Conversations on Gender,” gave

out-of-school time (OST) professionals language, resources, and ideas to help their OST setting be inclusive of youth of all gender identities and expressions and LGBTQ families. Hall’s NIOST colleagues, **Ellen Gannett**, M.Ed., senior strategist, and **Kathy Schleyer**, M.S., director of training and quality improvement, presented at the National AfterSchool Association Convention as well. Their session, “How Do You Measure Quality When You Can’t See It?” showed attendees how evaluation tools, such as those offered by NIOST, can help programs to self assess, improve, and grow.

Teen Sexual Health

Much research about family sexuality communication is focused on teens and their parents. Research Scientist **Jennifer M. Grossman**, Ph.D., is expanding this topic to include conversations with extended family members to capture the broader context of teens’ family communication and understand how extended family members can help teens make smarter decisions about dating, sex, and relationships. In April 2018, Grossman and her team – **Amanda Richer**, M.A., research associate; **Linda Charmaraman**, Ph.D., research scientist; **Ineke Ceder**, research associate; and **Sumru Erkut**, Ph.D., former senior research scientist – published “Youth Perspectives on Sexuality Communication With Parents and Extended Family,” in *Family Relations*. The research showed that extended family played a somewhat different role than parents in teens’ sexuality communication, though they shared a common set of values. This difference indicates that extended

family could be a valuable sexuality communication resource for teens.



Women, Work, and Family Support

After completing their study on Women’s Leadership in Theater, **Ineke Ceder**, research associate, and **Sumru Erkut**, Ph.D., former senior research scientist, found that flexibility in setting one’s own schedule is not enough to boost women’s ability to sustain their careers and rise to leadership at the same rates as men. In January 2018, they expanded on that idea in their *Harvard Business Review* article, “Unpredictable Schedules Disproportionately Hurt Women’s Careers.” In a growing gig economy, unpredictability means that freelancers, consultants, and others who are asked to bring in new revenue and always be “on,” do not have access to child care or elder care when they need it. With women still doing the majority of caregiving in their families, juggling life and work demands makes it harder for women to advance their careers.

Keep reading about our work in equity, social and emotional learning, and more: wcwonline.org/researchandaction



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WCW hosted a parallel event during the 62nd United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

Shaping a
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Featuring:

Highlights from UN Panel
Changes at *Women's Review of Books*
New Findings & Publications