

# NWEC

## NEWSLETTER

### NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAMME



The NWEC women's studies programme marked its ninth anniversary in August 1988. The programme provides a forum for discussion of various women's issues and presents information that contributes to the development of women's studies in general. Since 1983, NWEC has developed programme themes in cooperation with researchers from four women's studies associations.

The first six years of the programme revealed a disconcerting gap between how men and women behave and how they think they do. The sexual division of labour myth, in which men work outside the home and women in it, still affects both men and women, despite the diversity of their roles in work, society, education, and the family. Basic studies were proposed to help solve this everyday problem, among them was an in-depth look at assumptions that appear in such phrases as "roles intrinsic to women" and "women's intuition."

Since 1986, the primary theme of the programmes has been "The Study of Sex, Sex Differences, and Sex Roles," with sub-themes "Nature and Sex" in 1987 and "Society and Gender" in 1988.

#### NATURE AND SEX

During this conference, some denied any biological differences between the sexes, citing case studies of "wild" children. Others, while conceding the physical difference in such aspects as physical strength, insisted that despite this difference women are no less able than men. Participants also concluded that some aspects of the evolution seen in the society, culture, and technology have destroyed the body's natural rhythm, giving rise to the concept of different roles and sexual discrimination. Factors cited were: the spread of environmental contaminants and their effect on future generations, surrogate motherhood, pornography, and increased automation in the workplace.

#### SOCIETY AND GENDER — WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

In the 1988 discussion, participants analysed that the traditional concept of women as the sex that stays home and gives birth has been forced to change in the course of social changes and agreed that the liberation of women implies the liberation of men through shared responsibilities in the family, reduced working hours, and diversified working patterns.

Activities in the fields of education, literature, arts and mass communications must also be checked by such measures as a comprehensive review of language from the feminist point of view, and the promotion of women's works in artistic fields through critiques of feminist literature and screenings of films directed by women. To expand the scope of grass-roots works that NWEC and other women's groups undertake, there must also be cooperation between higher education and social education institutions.

Future tasks assigned during the programme include study of women's issues in rural areas and comparative study focussing on women's status in developing countries.

Under NWEC women's studies programmes, nearly 400 participants across the country have annually exchanged information and opinions. NWEC has in this way attempted to bridge "research, education, and practice" concerning women's issues, though it is only the first step.

In 1989, commemorating the 10th anniversary of the programme, the Centre will hold an international seminar, inviting participants from several countries to review the accomplishments of the past nine years and clarify our goals for the future.



**NWEC ACTIVITIES****WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN'S  
EDUCATION CENTRE STAFF  
STRESSES SELF-AWARENESS**

With "Development of Women's Capabilities and Women's Education Centres" as the theme of discussion, 90 people representing 78 women's centres attended this conference, which was held between 1 and 3 June, 1988. Centre employees accounted for the largest number of participants, followed by the directors and heads of centres. A large number (73.3%) of attendants were women, 35.6% were in their 50s, and 22.2% in their 40s.

The first speaker, Makiko Arima, Japan's Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, spoke on "Women of the World Today." On the following day, Teruko Ono, Director of the Women's Education, Science, and Culture, outlined "Present Conditions and Issues for Women's

Education Centres." Workshop participants were then divided into four sub-groups for lively discussions on self-discovery, the study of women's issues, women's participation in society, and work — and reached the following conclusions:

Leadership training and various programmes should be developed to help women achieve the self-discovery so important to the development of their personal capabilities. Despite the ratification of the U.N. Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, women are still obstructed from equal participation in society. This situation must be recognized and understood to promote the full participation of women. Women's education classes must also consider ways to support women.

Another way to promote women's participation is by introducing programmes to teach practical and vocational skills. In order to be more effective, training programmes designed to help housewives reenter the work force need to take account of the societal changes and needs of the private sector. Furthermore, in order to help women know themselves and gain vocational skills, women's education centres need to help women find jobs. On the other hand, training programmes for men, to help them gain living skills, are no less important than programmes for women.

**WOMEN'S INFORMATION  
PERSONNEL PRACTICE  
REFERENCE SKILLS**

Although this new programme was designed for 20 people, 33 participants showed up at NWEC's Information Centre for Women's Education from 31 May to 1 June, to discuss ways to more effectively disseminate information directly to women-oriented centres. With the theme "What to Expect from Information Services," the Centre presented as

examples the development of its information network, "Thesaurus on Women and the Family," and database for magazine articles on topics related to women and family issues.

Hands-on experience was an important part of the programme. Divided into small groups, participants used computers to practice searching for reference materials. The enthusiastic response led the Centre to plan more workshops, including planning and study programmes which can provide specific skills for information personnel, as well as programmes to facilitate the formation of women's information networks.

## **NATIONAL SEMINAR EXAMINES EFFECTS ON CHILDREN OF PARENTS' ATTITUDES**

The National Seminar for Leaders of Parent Education Classes was held for three days from 6 July 1988 with the participation of some 80 local education officials, members of PTAs and leaders of parent education classes.

The conference opened with a symposium led by a pedagogical scientist, a psychologist, and a women's issues journalist. "Parent Education for Raising Children to Manage the 21st Century - Parents' Self-reliance and Childrens' Self-reliance" was the theme of this discussion. On the second day, five working groups took up the subjects of parent education issues, including working mothers, fathers, sex education, school and family, and the local community and the

family.

As the conference wrapped up, the focus of discussion turned to ways of changing parental attitudes. Participants concluded that fathers should be shown the joy of raising children rather than being forced into it out of a sense of "responsibility," and that mothers cannot instill enthusiasm in their children unless they themselves have the sense of excitement gained by a "life design." Changing these attitudes will call for relevant training programmes that unite families, schools, and communities, and encourage societal changes and awareness for mothers, as well as more training programmes specifically for fathers.

## **INTERNATIONAL MEETING PROMOTES UNDERSTANDING**



From 10 to 24 July, in conjunction with the Japan Foundation's Japanese language programme, 96 teachers of Japanese from 33 countries visited the National Women's Education Centre for firsthand experience of Japanese language and culture.

During their stay at the Centre, nearly 170 Japanese women interested in international exchange attended the Women's International Cultural Exchange Meeting. Discussion topics included the advancement of women in society, discipline at home, lifestyle of the elderly, education in Japan, and the spread of the Japanese language in foreign countries. Participants agreed that in promoting international exchange at the local level, complacent, myopic exchange must be avoided, and that to form a better international community for all, true respect for the cultural differences between nations is absolutely necessary.



**SURVEY REPORT**

**A STUDY ON SOCIAL NETWORKS OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN COMMUNITIES**

A number of studies, including the Second Report of the National Council on Educational Reform (1986), have noted a need to activate the educational functions of family and community alike, since they are being weakened by a variety of inexorable changes: urbanisation, smaller families, and a lessening sense of community.

In March, 1988 (FY 1987), the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture conducted a questionnaire survey on social networks formed by urban parents and children, with the cooperation of the Community Network Study Group (Chairperson, Professor Yoriko Meguro of Sophia University). The study aimed at obtaining fundamental data to renew cooperation among the home, school, and community. Nine hundred pairs of fourth graders from eight primary schools in Tokyo, Saitama and Chiba and their mothers were surveyed. The results can be summarised as follows:

On the average, mothers have five acquaintances gained through their children, relatives, and neighbours, know nine of their children's friends from school, six from children's community clubs, and four from private extracurricular schools. Children have an average of four frequent playmates and five houses where they go to play. Of mothers'

close acquaintances that children know, seven are relatives, six are neighbours, and eight are friends. Those friends who meet through their children, neighbours and relatives are the ones mothers count most on to "visit for a chat, invite children to stay over, look after children in case of illness, and exchange information on daily life."

Mothers with broader networks are more socially active in study and sports groups and PTAs, and know more about their children's friends, while children with broader networks enjoy more playing time with friends, and have more friends whose houses they can play in. Both tend to use community facilities frequently, and feel a strong affinity with their neighbourhoods.

To help out with the social adjustment of others' children, 90% of mothers admonished them, and 63% received children into their houses when they were reluctant to go home. On the other hand, while 82% and 50%, respectively, of the mothers thought other parents did the same for their children, only 66% of the children answered being admonished, and just 27% said they were welcomed into friends' houses. In any case, the study made it clear that family and relatives in the neighbourhood are considerably involved, as are extracurricular school teachers. Still, 35% of the mothers surveyed wanted someone to admonish and instruct their children. The children had a different viewpoint; 65% of them wanted someone to praise and teach them.

Given these results, in FY 1988, the Community Network Study Group will examine the factors to form a network that contributes to children's social adjustment.

**NUMBER OF BIRTHS HITS RECORD LOW AT 1.347 MILLION**

According to statistics of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, only 1,346,666 babies

were born last year, representing the fewest births and lowest birthrate (11.1 births per a population of 1,000) since record keeping began in 1899. Both figures have been declining since 1974 for two reasons: there are fewer women of childbearing age (20-34); and more late marriages, which result in later pregnancies.

**International Comparison of Vital Statistics**  
(Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare)

COUNTRY	YEAR	BIRTH RATE	MORTALITY RATE	INFANT MORTALITY RATE	MARRIAGE RATE	DIVORCE RATE
		per 1,000 population		per 1,000 live births	per 1,000 population	
Japan	'87	11.1	6.2	5.0	5.7	1.3
U.S.A.	'86	15.5	8.7	10.4	10.0	4.8
France	'86	14.1	9.9	7.9	4.8	'85:1.9
W. Germany	'86	10.2	11.5	8.5	6.1	'85:2.1
Netherlands	'86	12.7	8.6	8.1	6.0	2.1
Sweden	'86	12.2	11.1	5.9	4.7	2.3
England/Wales	'85	13.3	11.6	9.4	6.9	3.2



## WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN JAPAN

### JAPAN MEDICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Japan Medical Women's Association (JMWA) was founded by Sonoko Maeda and Yayoi Yoshioka (founder of the Tokyo Women's Medical School in 1900) way back in 1902. Later in 1919, when Medical Women's International Association (MWIA) was established, JMWA joined as its member. Although the activities of the Association were halted for a time following World War II, they were resumed in 1954. Japan Medical Women's Association strives to benefit both its membership and the general public.

For the medical women who are members, the Association provides opportunities to carry out advanced studies; promotes mutual understanding and friendship among medical women both in Japan and around the world;



and aims to help medical women improve their status and fulfill their social mission. The Association also contributes in medicine and public health in the community as well as to promote national welfare.

With branch offices in every prefecture in Japan, and as a member of the MWIA, JMWA is influential in both the national and international arenas. It subsidises medical services in remote areas and provides grants (¥350,000 per person) for the excellent research projects undertaken by young members.

Yayoi Yoshioka Award is granted annually to the members of outstanding academic works and who is accomplishing outstanding contributions in public health and/or welfare works. Ginko Ogino Award is granted to the medical women who have enhanced the status of medical women.

To help its members further their education, which is of vital importance especially in medicine, the Association holds academic study meetings and workshops. It also provides members with a pension plan and publishes the JMWA periodicals.

As of 1988, the membership is 3,000. Any woman with a Japanese medical license is eligible to become a member of JMWA.

### JAPANESE NURSING ASSOCIATION

The Japanese Nursing Association is a professional organization which includes public health nurses, midwives, nurses and assistant nurses in its membership.

Its activities are divided into four categories: offering specialist education and training for members, promoting exchange of research results and encouraging research, operating a nursing training school, and

learn the nursing skills for the advanced intensive care unit (ICU) and coronary care unit (CCU), as well as nursing skills necessary to perform home care for patients. In order to promote training for its members, JNA constructed a nursing training centre in Tokyo with ¥2.3 billion. JNA's prefectural affiliates are also providing their own training courses to their local members.

To enhance the research capabilities of its members, JNA holds a nursing research conference every year, covering one of the following topics: adult nursing, trends in nursing, nursing education, pediatric nursing, maternity nursing, nursing administration, or community nursing. JNA also offers financial support to those wishing to undertake graduate study.

In 1972, JNA established the Advanced School for Nursing Teachers and Researchers, and in 1983 set up a two-year training course for nursing administrators and researchers. As of 1987, graduates numbered approximately 800.

JNA belongs to the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), which help to promote the solidarity of nurses around the world. JNA also shares health and nursing technology with, and accepts nurse trainees from developing countries.

Finally, in coping with the growing number of elderly population, JNA has launched a new programme to teach nursing and health care techniques to laypersons caring for bedridden and elderly people.



promoting the international solidarity of nurses and midwives.

Through JNA training courses, members

## JAPANESE WOMEN TODAY

# '88 TOKYO SYMPOSIUM ON WOMEN HIGHLIGHTS COMMUNICATION

A total of 141 participants and observers attended a three-day symposium starting from 25 August which was held at Tokyo Women's Christian University under the sponsorship of International Group for the Study of Women (Chairperson, Hiroko Hara). Of those who attended, 35 were from 12 foreign countries. The overall theme of the discussion was "Women and Communication in an Age of Science and Technology," and the keynote address focused on present challenges and opportunities.

In the general session, under the theme of "Women and Telecommunication", speakers from developed countries discussed how new communication technologies affect women and how women could make the most effective use of them. However, speakers from developing countries stated that communications media and technology have so far failed to reflect the viewpoints or needs of women, and called for the creation of communications networks for women.

At this point, the conference was divided into four discussion groups. Members from six different countries submitted papers to the "women and media" group, which agreed

that in order to change the stereotyped image of women as presented in the media and increase the number of women appearing, the consciousness of all media people would have to be raised, in addition to increasing the numbers of media women.

Those discussing "women, work, and technology" concluded that there are no genuine and technological grounds for the definition of men's work and women's work. Therefore, the impact of technological changes on the work and well-being of women must be examined on a case-by-case basis.

The "intrafamily communication" group discussed the importance of personal communication within the family in an age when in many societies the form and functions of families are changing and new communication technologies are being developed. The "women and networking" group noted the appearance, in a changing society, of new networks supplementing the areas where the established organisation could not cover, and discussed how to make appropriate use of new technologies in forming networks. Participants agreed on the importance of face-to-face communication as well.

## A CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN WORKERS

There have been rapid increases in the number of Asians working at construction sites and in the entertainment industry in Japan, as well as of Asian women coming to Japan to marry Japanese men.

On 1 April and 1 May, lawyers and members of women's organizations, churches and labour unions across the country, as well as representatives of a Filipino women's organization named Gabriela gathered to discuss the establishment of a network to ensure the protection of these workers' basic human rights.

Three subgroups met to discuss the issues of female workers, male workers, and brides coming to Japan from Asian countries. Many

of those who come to Japan to work as entertainers, prostitutes, or blue-collar workers violate the Japanese Immigration Law. Therefore, though they tend to become victims of exploitation and violence, many are afraid to seek help.

The participants concluded that despite the illegal stay, foreign workers should be given more support and help against suppression. The meeting agreed to form a support network at the municipal, prefectural, and national levels. Plans were also made for building a shelter and setting up a national telephone network for prompt action against violence, injury, sickness, or the withholding of wages.



# RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND ASSOCIATIONS ON WOMEN'S STUDIES

Followings are brief outlines of representative institutes and associations conducting women's studies.

## RESEARCH INSTITUTES

### **Institute for Women's Studies, Ochanomizu University**

Reformed and renamed in 1986 as the only national institute on women's studies attached to the university, it conducts interdisciplinary studies and collects and supplies information. Its library includes 7,993 Japanese and 4,477 foreign-language books as well as 5,000 other publications. It also publishes its "Annual Bulletin" and "Catalogues of the Collections". (Otsuka 2-1-1, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112. Tel: 03-943-3151 ext. 287)

### **The Institute of Women's Lifelong Education, Fukuoka Women's University**

Established in 1985 as a public organisation, the institute holds public lectures, seminars, and symposiums as a community service. (Kasumigaoka 1-1-1, Higashi-ku, Fukuoka-shi, Fukuoka-ken 813. Tel: 092-611-2411)

### **Centre for Women's Studies, Toyoko Gakuen Women's Junior College**

A private institution established in 1979, the centre offers a variety of lectures on women's studies and provides funds to young researchers. Japanese books number 7,911 and foreign-language books 1,056. (Todoroki 8-9-18, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 158. Tel: 03-702-1111)

## ASSOCIATIONS

### **Japan Women's Forum**

Established in 1962 and having 300 individuals in its membership, this is the oldest and largest association among the four listed here. It publishes "Meeting Report." (Shinjuku 2-9-1-802, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160. Tel: 03-352-4956)

### **Women's Studies Society of Japan**

Established in 1977, the society has about 250 members and publishes "Voice of Women," "Annual Report," and others. (Nishinotoin-Nishiiru, Shimotachiuri, Jokyoku, Kyoto 602. Tel: 075-441-6905)

### **International Group for the Study of Women**

Established in 1977, this group represents approximately 60 members and has held three international symposiums. Publications include "Women and Work, volumes I and II," and others. (Box No. 65, Central Post Office, Tokyo 100-91)

### **Women's Studies Group**

Established in 1978, the group has a membership of 33. People with information or research results on women's issues are eligible for membership. (Yakata 2-4-4-403, Shiki-shi, Saitama-ken 353. Tel: 0484-71-2223)

### **Women's Studies Association of Japan**

Established in 1979, the association has about 150 members and strives to establish a new academic structure from the feminist perspective. It publishes "Association News", (Mibaecho 17, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160. Tel: 03-359-0902)

## INTRODUCING NWECC

The National Women's Education Centre was founded in 1977 by Japan's Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. The Centre's activities include:

Training for women in the form of seminars, lectures, group discussions, individual study projects, and other educational programmes. The Centre's comprehensive training facilities are available to any group whose subject matter relates to women's education.

Exchange of information among women's education leaders from Japan and overseas, as well as others who are interested in women's issues.

Information gathered and disseminated by NWECC's extensive libraries of printed and audio/visual materials.

Research of issues touching on women's and family education.



*The Information Centre for Women's Education opened in 1987 as the nucleus of NWECC's information activities.*

Apart from NWECC-sponsored programmes, our facilities are available to women's groups and individuals for study programmes and cultural exchange free of charge (excluding meals and accommodation). To use our facilities, please complete and submit a NWECC application form no more than six months and no less than 10 days in advance.

NWECC welcomes your questions and comments.

NWECC Newsletter  
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## PUBLICATIONS

### FOREIGN-LANGUAGE OFFERINGS ON JAPANESE WOMEN



**WOMEN WORKERS IN JAPAN**  
(National Institute of Employment and Vocational Research, 8-23, Kamishakujii 4-chome, Nerima-ku, Tokyo, 177, Tel: 03-594-1111, 113 pages, March 1988. This is not for sale. Any inquiries on the publication are requested to be made to the above address.) Over the past decade, institutional changes such as enactment of

the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, and changes in economical structure — the development of a service-oriented economy, for example — have improved women's labour environment. Using the statistical data since 1970, this book closely analyses the impact of these institutional changes on women's labour.

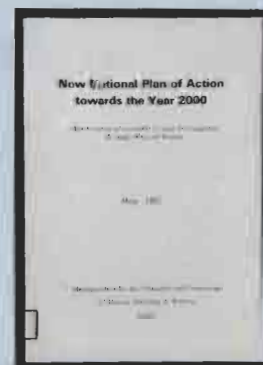
The author emphasizes the diversification of work patterns and broadening fields of occupation for women. The increase in employment opportunities appropriate to the various stages of a woman's life (i.e., part-time, dispatched work and working at home linked to the office via telecommunications), results in rising ratio of working women. At the same time, women have been taking advantage of employment opportunities in new fields. Admittedly, their wages and working conditions are far from satisfactory.

The author observes, nonetheless, that the recent trends seem to indicate a new orientation for the improvement of women's labour.

### NEW NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION TOWARDS THE YEAR 2000

(Headquarters for the Planning and Promoting of Policies Relating to Women, Japan, Prime Minister's Office, 1-6-1, Nagatacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Tel: 03-581-5003, 124 pages, May 1987. This is not for sale. Any inquiries on the publication are requested to be made to the above address.) Progress has been made, in some fields, for the advancement of women's status in Japan during the United Nations Decade for Women. During the year 1985 (Year of the International Conference in Nairobi) through 2000, various measures will be taken to achieve sexual equality in its true sense.

In order to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking strategies and promote a comprehensive, long-range women's policy in this country, Headquarters for the Planning and Promoting of Policies Relating to Women prepared and presented, as a Cabinet report,



the New National Plan of Action in December 1987. The plan sets out under its basic policy of "the creation of a society of joint participation by both men and women," the following goals: 1) improvement of people's awareness of the equality between men and women; 2) joint participation of men and women on the basis of equality; 3) improvement of conditions giving women greater choice; 4) assuring of women's welfare in old age; and 5) international cooperation and contribution to peace.