



Turning Promises into Action
CSW: Empowering the World's Women and Girls

Nancy Scheer and Lynn Heffron

Wednesday, March 21, 7:00 pm

Friendship Room, First United Methodist Church
715 Diamond Drive (next to Sullivan Field)

The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

During the Commission's annual two-week session in March, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities gather at UN headquarters in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality, as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women.

During this two-week period, CSW/NY (an organization of 100 organizations and individuals) coordinates parallel events: panel discussions, lectures, etc. that are related to the official U.N. CSW discussions. Members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gather from around the world to discuss issues pertaining to women and girls, to network, share strategies and lobby governments to implement resolutions and treaties they have signed.

Lynn and Nancy have attended CSW in previous years; Lynn as a representative of the Association for Women's Career Development in Hungary and Nancy as a board member of Women Graduates-USA.

Book Group

The February book is A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles. Rozelle Wright will review at both meetings. On Monday, March 5, 7:00 pm, the group will meet at Chris Sierk's, 4640 Ridgeway (662-3894, acsierk@hotmail.com). On Tuesday, March 6, 1:00 pm, the group will meet at Joan Moore's, 156 Piedra Loop ((850) 529-6871, moore.mikenjo@gmail.com). Let the host know if you will be coming.

Non-fiction Book Group

The next meeting will be on March 19 at 7:30 pm. We will discuss Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo. Rozelle Wright, 213 Barranca, will host and Denise George will review. Let Rozelle know if you will be there (662-5490, rozelle@losalamos.com).

Great Decisions

The **Morning Great Decisions** group meets at Mesa Public Library at 10:00 am. The remaining meeting dates are:

Mar 12: Russia's foreign policy: Mona Wecksung

Mar 26: China and America: the new geopolitical equation: Karin Roberts

Apr 9: Turkey: a partner in crisis: Nancy Nunnolley

Apr 23: U.S. global engagement and the military:

The **Evening Great Decision** group is led by Helena Whyte (672-9153, mozden08@aol.com); The remaining meetings beginning at 7:15 pm are:

Mar 8: Russia's Foreign Policy: Marilyn Thayer, 505 Oppenheimer Dr. #820, 662-9785

Mar 22: US Global Engagement & the Military: Helena Whyte, 100 El Morro St. 672-9153

Apr 5: Turkey: Partner in Crisis: Judy Prono, 670 Totavi, 662-2691

Apr 26: China's Geopolitics: Betsy Comly, 255 Kimberly, 672-1574

May 10: South Africa's fragile democracy: Marilyn Minshall, 536 Brighton, 672-3499

Out 'n About

Tour of **Espanola Valley Fiber Arts Center**, **Thursday, March 15, 10:00 am.**

Olimpia Newman, Director of Development of the Espanola Valley Fiber Arts Center has agreed to give us a tour of the center. She has offered us the following one-hour program:

- **Presentation** by Olimpia Newman, Director of Development, introducing the history, programs, and activities of the Española Valley Fiber Arts Center (EVFAC).
- **Viewing** of a 20-minute educational video, *An Unbroken Thread: Wool & Weaving in Northern New Mexico*, that tells a story of how wool from Navajo-Churro sheep ends up in the beautiful blankets typical of northern New Mexico weavers. After laying out the historical events that brought wool and weaving to New Mexico, it introduces viewers to shepherds, sheep experts, and weavers like Chimayó weaver Irvin Trujillo, a 2015 winner of the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts.
- **Tour** of the center explaining the equipment and all possible Fiber Arts activities that take place at the center.
- Time for questions and answers.

Those who wish to attend this event should send an email to Carol Neal at the_neals@prodigy.net on or before Friday, March 9. We will plan to meet at a designated location(s) here in Los Alamos/White Rock at 10:00 am and carpool to the Fabric Arts Center. After the presentation and a bit of time to explore the Center's gift and materials shop some or all could "do lunch" at a restaurant still to be determined in Espanola Valley.

Branch Needs

Our branch needs the contribution of time and energy of its members to continue to function. We need help with hospitality and with the nominating committee. If you are called, please consider how you might assist the branch to continue its work for members and community. Better yet don't wait for a call; contact a board member and volunteer.

Tech Trek

Volunteers to interview applicants and to read essays are needed. Interviewers will be given a set of questions for the applicant and her parent. The interviews are always conducted by a pair, and if you volunteer, you will be paired with an experienced interviewer. Essays are read by more than one reader; readers will be given instructions on how to score the essay. To volunteer or for more

information, contact Marilyn Doolen (672-3571, mtdoolen@aol.com)

The branch hopes that all members enjoyed their un-tea. Funds are still welcome; address check to:

AAUW Tech Trek NM

and mail to:

Tech Trek NM

P.O. Box 251

Placitas, NM 87043

Title IX at 45: Single-Sex Education and Pregnant and Parenting Students

from **National Coalition and Girls in Education (NCWGE) 2017 Report** extracted by Helena Whyte

Separating boys and girls in the classroom may seem like a good way to ensure that needs of both groups are being met, but separation serves neither group well. The stereotyping that typically accompanies teaching in separate classrooms can create an environment that stifles learning for both boys and girls. Under Title IX gender separation requires a strong justification, and discrimination based on sex is unlawful.

Single-sex programs often violate the law by failing to offer equal educational opportunity. The rationale for separation is often based on flawed notions about gender differences in brain development, psychological differences, and learning differences.

Under the 2006 Title IX regulations and 2014 guidance, schools can exclude boys or girls from a class only if that exclusion is justified on the basis of one of two objectives: 1) improving the educational achievement of students through established policies of providing diverse educational options, or 2) meeting the particular, identified educational needs of students. It is recommended that schools “consult with legal counsel prior to offering single-sex classes” to ensure compliance with both the Constitution and federal law.

Research has shown that separating students by gender keeps boys and girls from gaining valuable opportunities to learn from each other. Spending time together not only promotes mutual understanding, it also influences interests and behaviors that can affect academic performance. For example, girls who spend time with boys tend to be more interested in sports and building activities than those who don't, while boys who spend time and space with girls develop better verbal and reading skills.

Pregnant or parenting students frequently face policies that segregate them, exclude them from class or extracurricular activities, or punish them for excused medical absences. These discriminatory practices can have devastating consequences. Faced with missed work and other obstacles, many pregnant and parenting students drop out of school, thus lowering their chances of finding stable employment that will let them support their families.

Students may not be prevented from attending class on the basis of pregnancy. Separate programs or schools for pregnant and parenting students must be completely voluntary and must offer opportunities equal to those offered for students who are not pregnant or parenting. Absences due to pregnancy or childbirth must be excused for as long as is deemed medically necessary by the student's doctor. Schools must let students make up work missed because of pregnancy or related

conditions, including recovery from childbirth, and absences related to the illness of a student's child. If a teacher or professor awards "points" or other advantages on the basis of class attendance, students must have an opportunity to earn back credit from classes missed because of pregnancy. If the school provides tutoring or homebound instruction services to other students with medical conditions or temporary disabilities, it must provide such services to pregnant or parenting students on the same basis. Parenting students must be permitted reasonable breaks to express breast milk during educational programming and should have access to a private space that is not a bathroom in which to do so. Schools cannot terminate or reduce athletic, merit, or need-based scholarships because of pregnancy.

Inspired by President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative, many school districts have pledged to help black males with special programs. The proposals for these programs frequently fail to consider the equally pressing needs of black girls, who are presumed to be doing well despite evidence to the contrary. For example, the Washington, DC, Public Schools have created an Empowering Males of Color initiative that includes mentoring and tutoring for males in coed schools and the creation of an all boys college preparatory high school. Yet the district's own data demonstrates that both girls and boys of color need the interventions planned just for boys.

Although the initiative refers to "Males of Color", its programs are open to all boys regardless of race. The initiative's attempt at inclusiveness does not, however, extend to female students. Vigilance and advocacy will be required to ensure that girls of color, already too often overlooked, are not once again left behind.

Resources:

The Pregnancy Assistance Fund, a component of the Affordable Care Act, provides \$25 million annually for fiscal years 2010-2019 for the purpose of awarding competitive grants to states and Native American tribes or reservations. The law provides for up to 25 grants of \$500K to \$2 Million a year. As of fall 2015, 17 states and three tribal entities had received awards for programming to connect young families with the support services they need and to ensure a focus on important outcomes such as graduation rates, maternal and child health outcomes, and parenting skills.

NCWGE Recommendations:

Teachers and school administrators should look to evidence-based practices to meet the needs of all students without relying on sex stereotypes that limit learning.

Sex separation should not be instituted for administrative convenience or for any other reason without an exceedingly persuasive justification. Sex separation should be instituted only as a last resort, after other methods have been attempted.

School districts with single-sex programs should increase transparency by fully informing parent of the rationale and curricula for these programs and by making such information publicly available. Parents and other stakeholders should seek greater accountability by demanding that schools disclose program data, including evaluation outcomes, for all single-sex programming.

School districts should ensure that educational programs aimed at addressing the racial achievement gap benefit male and female students equally.

Dropout prevention programs should target the needs of students affected by pregnancy and parenting, including support measures to help both male and female students remain in school.

Branch Calendar

Mar	5	Book group, evening
Mar	6	Book group, afternoon
Mar	8	Great Decisions – Evening group
Mar	12	Great Decisions – Morning group
Mar	19	Nonfiction Book Group
Mar	21	Branch Meeting
Mar	22	Great Decisions – Evening group
Mar	26	Great Decisions – Morning group

Coordinating Council for 2017-18

Marilyn Doolen	Co-Facilitator	672-3571	mtdoolen@aol.com
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Appointed positions			
Helena Whyte	STEM	672-9153	mozden08@aol.com
Marilyn Minshall	Historian	672-3499	mjbminshall237@q.com
???	Hospitality		
???	Nominating Chair		