

Mass Dissent

Massachusetts Chapter

National Lawyers Guild

14 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

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ANNUAL MEETING

MARCH 17, 5:30pm

14 Beacon St., 1st Fl.
Boston

International Women's Day

Every year on March 8, the whole world, except the United States of America, celebrates and recognizes women's achievements. To stick with the world, every year our NLG Chapter devotes the March issue of *Mass Dissent* to women, their victories and their challenges.

In the spring of this year, the Massachusetts Chapter will celebrate its 40th anniversary of being reborn from the ashes of McCarthyism. In February 1969, a group of BU law students, led by Jeanne Mirer, Kathee Allen, and Steve Kehoe, noticed a flyer in a school elevator announcing a conference on radical lawyering at Columbia University. They went, met Guild students, came back, called a meeting with "forgotten" Guild members, and in April reconstituted the Chapter. The rest is history.

To mark this very important occasion, we give you a brief overview of the Chapter's grand beginnings

and how women created and shaped the organizations.

Cary Playter, though not a "founding mother," joined the Guild in 1971 and has been a vital force and influence in the organization. We sat down with Cary for a talk about Guild women during the first years of the organization, and we present to you the results of this fascinating discussion.

The influence of Guild women continues and **Mary Lu Mendonça**, a young attorney who graduated from Suffolk in 2004, recaptures Guild women she has met since law school, who have played an important role in her professional and personal life.

Sheila Ellenbogen gives us her analysis of the importance of (finally) having women holding top political positions of power.

We finish with **Laura Alfring's** presentation of very disturbing developments in sex trafficking in the U.S.

- *Laura Alfring & Urszula Masny-Latos* -

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Massachusetts Chapter, Inc.**

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Join a Guild Committee

Street Law Clinic Project: The Street Law Clinic project provides workshops for Massachusetts organizations that address legal needs of various communities. Legal education workshops on 4th Amendment Rights (Stop & Search), Landlord/Tenant Disputes, Workers' Rights, Civil Disobedience Defense, Bankruptcy Law, Foreclosure Prevention Law, and Immigration Law are held at community organizations, youth centers, labor unions, shelters, and pre-release centers. If you are a Guild attorney, law student, or legal worker interested in leading a workshop, please contact the project at 617-723-4330 or nlgmass-slc@igc.org.

Lawyer Referral Service Panel (LRS): Members of the panel provide legal services at reasonable rates. Referral Service Administrative/Oversight Committee members: Neil Burns, Neil Berman, Joshua Goldstein, Jeremy Robin, and Azizah Yasin. For more information, contact the Referral Service Coordinator at 617-227-7008 or nlgmass@igc.org.

Foreclosure Prevention Task Force: Created in June 2008, the Task Force's goal is threefold: (1) to draft and introduce policies that address issues that homeowners and tenants of foreclosed on houses face, (2) to provide legal assistance to these homeowners and tenants, *and* (3) to conduct legal clinics for them. If you are interested in working with the Task Force, please call the office at 617-227-7335.

Independent Civilian Review Board: In coalition with the American Friends Service Committee and Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition, the NLG has been pushing for the creation of an independent civilian board to review complaints against Boston police officers. To get involved in the campaign, please contact the office at 617-227-7335.

NLG National Immigration Project: Works to defend and extend the human and civil rights of all immigrants, both documented and undocumented. The Committee works in coalition with community groups to organize support for immigrant rights in the face of right-wing political attacks. For more information contact the NLG National Immigration Project at 617-227-9727.

NLG Military Law Task Force: Provides legal advice and assistance to those in the military and to others, especially members of the GIRights Hotline, who are counseling military personnel on their rights. It also provides legal support and helps to find local legal referrals when needed. The MLTF and the Hotline exchange many questions and information through their listserves. For advice and information, GI's can call 800-394-9544 (800-FYI-95GI) or 877-4474487. To get involved, please contact Neil Berman (njberman2@juno.com) or Marguerite Helen (mugsm@mindspring.com).

COALITIONS:

Jobs with Justice, a coalition-based organization addressing workers' rights. The NLG is a member of Jobs with Justice; any interested Guild members can attend meetings & events.

GUILD NEWS

NLG HAPPY HOUR

The NLG Massachusetts Chapter's Happy Hour - for Guild members and non-Guild members - takes place on the **2nd Wednesday of every month, 5:30 - 7:30pm, at Kennedy's Mid-Town Pub** (44 Province St., 2nd Fl., Boston, close to Suffolk Law School). We hope you will join us for the next NLG Happy Hour on **March 11** - and bring friends!

MENTORSHIP BRUNCH

The Chapter's annual Mentorship Potluck Brunch will be held on a **Saturday, March 28, 12:30-3:30 pm**. Once again, we will be hosted by Nancy Kelly and John Willshire-Carrera in their **Jamaica Plain home**. The brunch serves as a great way for Guild students to meet and develop professional networks with Guild lawyers and legal workers. Please call the office (617-227-7335) for the address and to RSVP.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Chapter Annual Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 5:30pm (14 Beacon St., Conference Rm, 1st Fl., Boston)**. All Guild members are invited. After a short but tasteful reception, the meeting will start at 6 o'clock with **elections** of the Chapter Officers and members of the Board of Directors and a **presentation by Steve Schnapp** from United for a Fair Economy on "*The Left Take on the Current Economic Crisis*." If you would like to serve on the Board of Directors, please contact Urszula Masny-Latos at 617-227-7335.

VENEZUELAN JUSTICE

The Massachusetts Chapter of the Guild will welcome Justice Fernando Vegas from the Venezuelan Supreme Court. Justice Vegas will visit Boston in April to deliver lectures at several local law schools. Justice Vegas is a longtime friend of the Guild, and our Chapter will host a dinner for him and several guests of the Venezuelan Consulate in Boston. **The dinner will be held at Judy Somberg's house in Inman Square in Cambridge on Saturday, April 18, from 5:00pm**. Guild members are invited. Please RSVP at 617-227-7335.

Street Law Clinic Report

The following Guild members conducted trainings for law students and/or clinics for members of Boston area community organizations and agencies:

February 3: *Stop & Search* clinic at Cambridge Cares About AIDS, by **Myong Joun**.

February 10: *Tenants' Rights* clinic at Tempo Young Adult Resource Center in Framingham, by **Neil Berman** and law students **Amber Beaverson** (New England), **Erica Ferdinandi** and **Hee Kim** (Suffolk).

NLG NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

April 4, 2009

**Mount Snow Resort, 39 Mount Snow Road
West Dover, Vermont 05356**

Reservation: 800-451-4211 *Info:* Jeff Thomson at jeff@iddream.com

OFFICES FOR RENT WITH NLG MEMBERS

BOSTON - Great Downtown address - large and small offices, includes internet, conference room, copier/printer and fax machine. Perfect location for solo with referral possibilities. Shared space with two other attorneys primarily doing immigration and plaintiff discrimination work. Contact Joshua Daley Paulin at 617-482-4669.

BOSTON - Newly renovated office suite has 1-3 additional offices for sublet from Segal Roitman, LLP, a union and employee-side labor and employment firm. Downtown, one block from State St. T stop. Space sharing can include access to secretarial services and equipment. Contact Anne Sills at 617-603-1423.

ARTICLES FOR MASS DISSENT

The April issue of *Mass Dissent* will focus on the current housing crisis.

If you are interested in submitting an article, essay, analysis, or art work (cartoons, pictures) related to the topic, please e-mail the articles to nlgmass-director@igc.org.

The deadline for articles is March 15th, 2009.

2009 NLG TESTIMONIAL DINNER

We are proud to announce the 2009 NLG Dinner honorees. This year, the Massachusetts Chapter will honor two outstanding lawyers and longtime Guild members **Barb Dougan** and **Stephen Hrones**, legal worker **Steve Meacham** and **City Life/Vida Urbana**, and student **Lori Hill**. The Chapter will also honor **Barbara Rabin** with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Barb Dougan is a highly committed and very active Guild member. She is the Massachusetts Project Director for Washington, D.C.-based Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM). Before joining FAMM, Barb spent over 20 years as staff attorney at the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights.

Steve Hrones's devotion to the Guild is exemplary. He is a partner at Hrones, Garrity & Hedges in Boston and he is one of the leading experts on wrongful convictions and is credited with several exoneration verdicts.

Barbara Rabin retired from Greater Boston Legal Services where, for over 30 years, she worked in the housing unit representing and advocating on behalf of tenants.

Steve Meacham and **City Life/Vida Urbana** are major forces in Boston fighting for and advocating for low-income tenants. Their leadership in providing assistance to those affected by the current housing crisis is exceptional.

Lori Hill is a 3rd year law student at Suffolk Law School and President of Suffolk's Student Organization. For over a year, she has been coordinating the NLG Street Law Clinic project and is a student representative on the NLG Foreclosure Prevention Task Force.

We hope you will join the Guild in celebrating the achievements of our honorees and will attend the Annual Dinner.

The Dinner will be held on **Friday, May 15, 2009, at the Colonnade Hotel in Boston.**

STUDENT CORNER

NEW ENGLAND

The NLG Chapter teamed up with the Immigration Law Association to co-host a panel this spring on **immigration raids** around the country and how detention and deportation of parents affects children left behind. Our focus will be on the New Bedford raids. (date TBA)

NORTHEASTERN

The NLG Chapter and other student groups are organizing an event series, **New Year, New President, What's Next?** that examines the impact of the past election on socially marginalized groups and the implications for social justice movements. The first event of the series will be held on **March 4th**, and it aims to lay out the political post-election landscape. This panel event will grapple with such questions as "Is racism dead?" and will consider the impact of specific ballot decisions on LGBT, immigrant, and other marginalized communities.

The Northeastern NLG Chapter will also hold another presentation of the Politics & Law Seminar Series titled "**Current Legal and Political Developments in Combating Sexual and Human Trafficking in Nepal/India and the International Human Rights Response.**" It will take place on **March 5, 7:00-9:00pm**, Northeastern School of Law, 400 Huntington Ave., Dockser Building, Room 230, Boston.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

IRIS GOMEZ recently and happily sold her first novel, which will be published next year. Tentatively titled "*Cartagena Paper Girl*," the book deals with such themes as deportation, mental illness and Latino identity. Iris would love to hear from Guild members who belong to book clubs or have bookstore contacts and would like to hear more about her book.

HALIM MORIS represented the Guild at two forums in February and will conduct a workshop at the Annual Juvenile Justice Conference in April:

- February 6: "**Careers in Criminal Justice**" at Cambridge Rindge & Latin School for students interested in pursuing a career in criminal justice.
- February 26, 12:00-1:30pm: "**Immigration Issues Facing Mixed Status Families**" at the Boston Bar Association, organized by the BBA Immigration Committee.
- April 24, 10:30am: "**Immigration - Consequences and Opportunities**" workshop" at Suffolk University Law School.

LAURA ALFRING will also present at the April 24th conference on Juvenile Justice. Her workshop, "**Dispositional and Post-Dispositional Advocacy**," will start at 2:45pm.

40th Anniversary of the Chapter and Guild Women

On Friday, February 13, 2009, Laura Alfring and Urszula Masny-Latos sat down with CARY PLAYTER to talk about the beginnings of the Massachusetts Chapter and what role women played in the establishment of the Chapter.

- This year, the Massachusetts Chapter celebrates its 40th anniversary. When and how did you get involved in the Guild? -

In 1970, I was a student and also working as a legal worker. Boston University held a seminar on civil rights and because of my interest in that issue, I decided to participate. At the seminar, I met Jan Solet who at that time was a staff person for the newly recreated Massachusetts Chapter of the Guild. I didn't know much about the organization then, but Jan gave me this inspiring overview of the Guild history, and I thought it was for me. Jan invited me to Guild meetings. At that time, the Guild office was on Columbus Avenue in Boston, in a small room by a garage, close to Park Square.

- What made you decide to go to law school? -

I was inspired to go to law school because of the Vietnam war and also the civil rights movement. I desired to have an influence on these issues, to make a difference, and I saw a law degree as a tool to achieve that.

- Tell us about your years as a law student, and any issues you faced unique to being female. -

I went to law school in 1971 and was very involved in the student chapter of the Guild. I started at New England School of Law where, in a night program, I was

one of three women students out of 99 students in the program. Though these numbers might be viewed as shocking, what's even more astonishing is the fact that New England law school was established 60 years before then as the first and only law school for women! After two semesters, I transferred to Northeastern University Law School where 50% of all students were women. What a difference!

- What did women in the student Guild chapter work on? -

Female members of our student NLG Chapter were very active. We were involved in issues that at that time were very revolutionary. For example, we had a group of women Guild members who ques-

to challenge the process. However, we had already accomplished a lot by bringing the issue to the public, making the court aware of the problem. This was a real big first step for the future reform of the federal jury pool system.

- How did you find the Massachusetts Chapter then? -

The Chapter was very energetic then. Everyone was quite excited about having a chapter in Boston, especially women who had fought hard to be part of the organization. As you know, at this time, the legal profession was very male-dominated. Almost all lawyers were men. Women worked either as legal secretaries or legal workers, and because the Guild at that time admitted only lawyers as its mem-



Cary Playter in the Guild office during the interview.

Photo: Laura Alfring

tioned how juries were selected and then challenged the federal court jury pool process on racial grounds. We reviewed jury questionnaires and statistics and then argued that the jury selection process was not neutral – minorities were under-represented and juries never looked like the communities they were selected from. Unfortunately our client pleaded guilty, thus destroying our standing

bers, the Guild was also very male-dominated. Students were admitted to the Guild in 1968 at the Santa Monica NLG Convention, but legal workers were still not allowed in the organization. In 1970, a group of young lawyers, legal workers, and students stormed the banquet at the Guild convention in Washington, D.C., and forced the Guild leader-

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ship to amend the constitution and let legal workers and jailhouse lawyers join the organization. When a year later, in 1971, the constitution was amended (it was at the convention in Boulder) and legal workers could join the Guild, women's Guild membership grew significantly.

- *What role did women play in the Chapter's political work?* -

In 1972, several women who as law students reconstituted the Chapter in spring of 1969, graduated from law schools and created the Women's Law Collective. Among them was Jeanne Mirer, one of the strongest forces behind the establishment of the Guild and the Collective, who is still very active in the NLG International Committee. In 1974, I joined another Guild law collective. All of us were members of the Guild, and Jeanne was part of the Women's Collective along with Kathee Allen, Kathy Weremuik, Wilma Rosenberg, Ruth Flaherty, Sandy Moody, Emily Spieler, Judy Salzman, Elly Schmidt Leary, Pamela Taylor, and Betsy Foots. Their office was at 698 Massachusetts Ave. in Cambridge, and my law collective shared office space with the Guild and two Guild-affiliated law communes at 595 Mass. Ave.

Women in the Guild Chapter had a very special bond and worked closely with each other on many cases of national and regional importance. The times were tense and the Guild

Collectives were taking very important cases – we were working on women's reproductive rights, family law, prisoners' rights, tenants' rights, gender and race discrimination, immigrants' rights, anti-racism, police brutality, workers' rights and labor law, school desegregation, and the anti-Vietnam war movement. We worked on the Attica case; we worked on the Boston school desegregation case; before *Roe v. Wade*, we challenged the country's anti-abortion law. I was involved in the school desegregation case on behalf of Puerto Rican and Hispanic children from the mid-70s through the '80s. My last court filing on this case was in



In 1971, down the hall from the Guild office in Cambridge, (l.-r.): Jan Saalfeld, Jim Donnelly, Cary Playter, Rob Doyle, Steve Kehoe and Mandy.

1990! And this case was a Guild case – it was filed under the NLG Massachusetts Chapter – but we worked very closely with the Puerto Rican Defense Fund on the desegregation of schools in Boston.

- *Your achievements are very impressive, especially when we take into consideration the fact that less than a decade earlier there were just a handful of women practicing law, and discussions on gender and sexism were still in their infancy. How was it, working in such an environment?* - It was tough. It was a constant struggle. When I would go to court, I would try to enter the detention area where our clients were, and where attorneys were allowed to converse with their clients, and I was almost always stopped by court officers and told that that area was reserved for attorneys only, whereas my male counterparts were assumed to be attorneys. I would explain that I was an attorney and would be met with skeptical looks. Most male court employees had problems accepting the fact that a woman could be a lawyer; they always looked at us with suspicion. Other organizations and even clients were often resistant to dealing with a female attorney.

The "outside" world was not the friendliest to women in the legal profession, but on top of this, we had to fight our own prejudices inside our young Massachusetts Chapter – we grew up in the '50s and early '60s, surrounded by strong patriarchal values and rules, and obviously our male Guild colleagues sometimes were bringing patriarchy to the organization. It was apparent mostly at meetings. In the early '70s, we decided to create a "Tri-pod" – a Guild leadership body of two men

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and one woman – so we could have women among the organization's leaders.

- In your opinion, which of the legal cases that the Women's Law Collective and the Massachusetts Chapter undertook in the early '70s have had a significant impact on attitudes toward women? -

Many women in the Women's Collective worked on labor-related issues. Emily Novick, Jeanne Mirer, Emily Spieler, among others, worked on discrimination-at-work cases or with unions on organizing campaigns. For example, the Collective assisted waitresses from three Harvard Square restaurants in Cambridge in their organizing efforts. This work was essential in building these women's confidence and status in the workplace.

We also challenged in court the Common Night-walker Statute, a state law, on discriminatory grounds. The statute was used by Boston cops to do broad sweeps of the streets and arrest women who met very vague criteria. The police did these sweeps at night, and on certain streets in the city. Even though the statute was gender neutral, ONLY women were picked up and harassed by the cops. We filed our lawsuit in 1974. We lost in court, but the cops became a little more cautious and started paying attention to issues related to women.

- Are there any general differences between doing political work now and doing political work in the '70s? -

I'm not very politically active now – I will be retiring soon – so I don't know how political work is done now, but one thing that I can say is that in the early '70s EVERYTHING was political and it was in your face – in the streets, on TV, on

the radio, on campuses, there were rallies, marches, discussions, radical panels. I don't see it now. Everything now is sort of "controlled," "civil," subdued. There is no push or encouragement to take risks and radically challenge the status quo.

But this civility and control also has had positive results: today's leftist groups, including the Guild, are able to work in coalitions and put aside their ideological differences. In the early '70s, sectarianism was so severe that groups had difficulties reconciling their differences. Among strongly divisive issues were the Soviet Union and the best form of communism (New v. Old Left), and, then as now, the Middle East.

- Were you involved in any Guild projects at that time? -

The Massachusetts Chapter and several other NLG chapters ran anti-racism projects. Our Chapter had a very successful "Boston Anti-Racism Summer Project". I was involved in it in 1974; there were other women from the Chapter, for example Jeanne Mirer, who also worked on the project. I remember that we also created a "Students' Rights" booklet which was distributed at law school campuses.

- How were the cops then? -

Boston cops were definitely more aggressive then; they would do anything to intimidate us with their force. It was normal to have cops bringing police dogs to rallies. And these are not usually the most pleasant creatures. The dogs always made us a little timid – you never knew how they would react to a bull horn, chants or crowds. So we had to be creative in dealing with the dogs. A group of us in the Guild decided to bring our own dogs to rallies and see what the police dogs would do when in the

company of unknown dogs. I remember, it must have been 1972 or '73, we were at a picket line at the Spaulding Rehab Hospital where there was an organizing drive. We knew the cops would have their dogs, so I brought my dog, Picket (a boy), and Steve Kehoe, one of our Chapter's founding fathers, brought his dog, Mandy (a girl). The police dogs were so distracted by our dogs that rather than listen to the cops' orders, they paid attention to our dogs, and even tried to flirt with Mandy. The situation was just hilarious – the dogs were getting friendly with each other, the cops were losing control of their dogs, and we were just picketing.

- Do you think the Guild still has a role to play for all legal professionals, "old" and "young"? -

Absolutely. When I started, having the Guild was very important and helpful. Especially for us women, this was really the only place where we could go and feel comfortable as progressive law students and then as progressive lawyers and legal workers. The organization gave us focus; it was an outlet that allowed us to discuss, debate, and resolve political and social issues through law. Although I don't have contact with law students now, I'm sure they view the Guild similarly as we did in the 1970s. Schools are conservative nowadays, so we definitely need the Guild to continue as a very important legal voice on the political left. What's not to like?

Laura Alfring is a member of the Chapter Board of Directors and a Clinical Fellow at the Juvenile Justice Center; Urszula Masny-Latos is the Executive Director of the NLG Massachusetts Chapter.

Local Guild Heroines

by *Mary Lu Mendonça*

Those of us who turn to legal work out of a commitment to social justice tend to have high expectations for our careers and our colleagues. When I joined the Guild almost 10 years ago, the idea of being a civil rights lawyer was as thrilling as it was distant. I have since come to realize that the people I admire are not necessarily those whose case victories are profiled in the local newspaper. My heroines are women who lead by example, contributing every day to the creation of a local legal community that values justice.

My first Guild heroine was Sarah Wunsch, a staff attorney at the ACLU of Massachusetts where I worked during law school. Though I worked with her for five years, I never got over feeling awestruck by my good fortune – not only was Sarah a civil rights lawyer, she was unfailingly kind, patient, and helpful. When she eventually asked me to do some research instead of filing, I was so crippled by performance anxiety that I never handed in the memo I had written. (Incidentally, the only time I was more star-struck by a Guild lawyer was when I met Mary Bonauto of GLAD; I don't remember a word of our brief conversation because I was busy trying not to stutter or pass out.)

Sarah was one of many role models I met at the ACLU. I also worked with Guild member (and then Board member) Vera Schneider, who instantly earned my respect by having kept her name after marriage; she worked at the State House. Lobbyist Ann Lambert surely noticed that I spent four out of five workdays at the State House during the gay marriage debate, but honorably declined to rat me out to supervisors. At graduation, I was as touched as I was mortified when she presented me with a picture of myself singing and sobbing with a sign that read "NO DISCRIMINATION IN THE

CONSTITUTION."

Wendy Zimny, a co-worker and law student, organized NLG Street Law Clinics at BU and cleared out her share of intakes with impressive speed. As a student defender, Wendy made me realize that I didn't have to wait until law school was over to begin helping people. I signed up for Suffolk's Landlord-Tenant clinic, where Ana Vaquerano fielded my harried requests with the same calm efficiency she reserved for clients on the verge of eviction.

After co-workers suggested I check out the Guild, I met Urszula Masny-Latos, Executive Director of the Mass. Chapter. I understood



My Guild heroines at my wedding - July 2007, Gloucester: Dawn Johnson, Patricia Hubbard, Urszula Masny-Latos.

immediately that this woman would be a new role model, so I handed over my life and my Blackberry to her indefinitely. (I'm partly kidding here... civic servants employed by non-profits can't afford Blackberries.)

With Urszula's help, I spent the remainder of my law school years meeting more Guild women who continue to be my friends and mentors. Nadine Cohen and Nancy Kelly came to speak at events I organized at Suffolk, as did Lynne Stewart from New York City. Judy Somberg and Astrid of Klintonberg made me feel important by listening when I spoke at meetings. During the long, boring hours I spent as a legal observer at the Democratic convention in 2004,

Barb Dougan kept me in stitches and Patricia Hubbard supplied me with cigarettes.

Jane Alper and Bonnie Tenneriello let me pick their brains on how to find a job in Boston after graduation. I skipped classes to visit Kelly Rozek and Larissa Matzek at the NLG Police Accountability Project, where we mercilessly mocked hippie lawyer fashion victims. I sang a karaoke duet with Sara Pic and drank too much at Guild dinners with Jessica Fry.

Many of my Guild friends from law school moved away after graduation, but those who have remained will be friends for life. I was unable to

find embarrassing pictures of Hayne Barnwell and Dawn Johnson to post with this article, but they were present and silly as ever at my 2007 wedding. My wife Elizabeth (thanks Mary!), is not a Guild member but occasionally accompanies me to the dinners so she can send our friends texts boasting that "Help me Hank' Phillippi Ryan is here!"

Last year when I started my current job with Suffolk Lawyers for Justice, I was delighted to find that the criminal defense bar includes great Guild women like Susan Church and Hillary Farber. I look forward to meeting and working with many more.

This year on International Women's Day, I'm sending out thanks to all of the women who have helped and inspired me over the years. Take a moment to think of your local Guild heroines – and if you haven't done it lately, let them know how great they are.

Mary Lu Mendonça works at Suffolk Lawyers for Justice.

Is 2009 the Year of the Woman?

by Sheila Ellenbogen

The new administration brings two women to the top five spots in the presidential line of succession: Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, and Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. 2009 marks the third year of this phenomenon, but the first year that two democratic females have held these posts. Condoleezza Rice (R), the former Secretary of State overlapped Pelosi as Speaker of the House for the past two years. With these outspoken females of the same political party in such high posts, what attention can we expect to see paid to women's issues?

As far as women's issues within a foreign policy context, Clinton's appointment to Secretary of State looks promising. Her accomplishments as First Lady, more than the work she was able to do as Senator, show a true passion for women as a political cause. (This may be due to the fact that she was able to set her agenda in the role of First Lady to a greater extent than she was as a member of the Senate in a Republican administration.) One of Clinton's main concerns as First Lady was the plight of women. She was outspoken and under-terred in her remarks at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995. Also, she was one of the first prominent women to denounce the treatment of women by the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban. The most lasting of her actions was her helping to create Vital Voices, an international initiative sponsored by the United States, which promotes women's human rights, economic empowerment, and political participation. In a telling move which showed Clinton's commitment to

women, she regrouped from being passed over as Obama's choice for Vice President and days later got together with Joe Biden for a conversation with women on the issues that are most important to them. The conversation was part of Obama's campaign initiatives and was publicized on YouTube. Indications point to Hillary Clinton

show interview, she defended adding money for family planning to the economic stimulus package arguing family planning will help the whole economy, that is, men and women.

On other issues, she has been equally as outspoken for women. She believes social security is a greater concern for women

Pelosi constantly asks people not to view subjects such as abortion, healthcare, and domestic violence as women's issues.

not only giving women's issues significant attention, but to her initiating groundbreaking changes affecting women's standing as decision makers in families, businesses, and politics.

Like Clinton, Nancy Pelosi is an unabashed spokesperson for issues that will affect women in her role as Speaker of the House and acting representative of California's 8th Congressional district. In her position, her purview is more focused on the domestic arena. In responses to questions, Pelosi constantly asks people not to view subjects such as abortion, healthcare, and domestic violence as women's issues. She stresses an issue's impact on society, on men and women, while also seeing subjects through the prism of a female standpoint. As I write this article, Ms. Pelosi is answering for remarks she made along those very lines. During a political talk

because they tend to live longer. She seeks to back bills that eliminate gender biases. She promotes women getting equal pay and the backing of funding for women businesses. And she is unwaveringly pro-choice.

I think these two women's personal histories and political track record bode well for the year(s) to come. Whether it is viewing a typically neutral issue with concern for its effect on females or being vocal about an issue that is typically termed a women's concern, these women will bring a long awaited, encompassing perspective to politics, both home and abroad.

Sheila Ellenbogen is a freelance writer living in Scituate, MA.

Sex Trafficking is on the Rise in the U.S.

by Laura Alfring

Sexual trafficking and exploitation of women and young girls occurs all over the world. Assumptions abound about who these victims are: women in war-torn countries, in third-world countries, in lawless lands.

But sexual trafficking is a huge issue right here in the United States. According to F.B.I. estimates, upwards of 100,000 children and young women are trafficked in the U.S. today. The average age of these children, almost exclusively female, is 11¹.

The victims of sexual trafficking are often forcibly kidnapped or lured away from their homes and homelands. They are often subjected to physical and emotional abuse, rape, gang-rape, starvation, and horrific living conditions at the hands of their pimps and traffickers. In 2006, ABC News reported on cases of sex trafficking in the U.S. Debbie, a teenager from Phoenix, was abducted from her driveway one night and

forced to have sex with over fifty men and forced to sleep in a dog crate over a period of forty days. Her abductor simply collected the money. Miya, also from Phoenix, was working at the mall when she was approached by a couple claiming to be modeling agents. They promised her a modeling career if she would fly to California with them. They won her trust by taking her to dinner, and taking her to get her hair, make-up and nails done. They took photographs of her, presumably for modeling pur-

poses, but the photos were placed on an escort service website. She was then forced to work as a prostitute before eventually escaping. Sex trafficking rings have been exposed in Kansas², in Arkansas³, in Connecticut⁴, and elsewhere. San Francisco is a leading city in the international sex trafficking industry, a result partly because of the city's lax attitude towards arresting pimps, and the large immigrant population full of women and children who are vulnerable and indebted to people responsible for their move to the U.S.⁵. Numerous other metropolitan cities and quiet towns in the United States are affected by what the San Francisco Chronicle reports is now an \$8 billion indus-

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try. According to a U.S. Attorneys' Bulletin entitled "Child Protection, Exploitation, and Obscenity", sex trafficking is on the rise.

Is there any good news? Yes. In 2000, Congress passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Act, recognizing that trafficking is a "degrading institution of slavery [that] continues throughout the world" and that while it affects women and girls across racial and class lines, it is an industry that especially targets the disproportionately vulnerable: those from

impoverished backgrounds, those who are uneducated and/or who have few economic opportunities due to their country of origin, discrimination or other factors. There are also several organizations that are committed to fighting this battle. Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS) in New York was started by Rachel Lloyd, herself a victim of sexual exploitation. GEMS is recognized as a leading advocacy group for victims of prostitution and exploitation. They released a documentary, "Very Young Girls", which was critically acclaimed and featured on Showtime. It is disturbing and touching, and provides a rare glimpse into not only the lives of victims, but also into the brazen pimps and traffickers who profit from their crimes. Other organizations are also reaching out to vulnerable girls and women, several in the Boston area (such as ROCA, and The Home for Little Wanderers.)

Certainly more needs to be done to combat this unsettling trend. Young prostitutes need to be seen as victims, not as criminals. As well-said in the GEMS philosophy statement, "all young women have great beauty and worth, and the potential for future success."

Laura Alfring is a member of the Chapter's Board of Directors and a Clinical Fellow at the Juvenile Justice Center.

¹ ABC News: <http://abcnews.go.com/Primetime/story?id=1596778>

² Topeka-Capital Journal, http://cjonline.com/stories/020609/loc_385261149.shtml

³ U.S. Dept. of Justice press release: <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2009/February/09-crt-100.html>

⁴ U.S. Dept. of Justice press release: http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2008/March/08_crt_208.html

⁵ San-Francisco Chronicle: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2006/10/06/MNGR1LGUQ41.DTL>

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In the spring of 2003, the Massachusetts Chapter of the NLG initiated the Chapter Sustainer Program.

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In 1908, the school currently known as New England Law | Boston was founded as the country's first and only law school specifically for women. Aptly named Portia Law School after the heroine of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia enabled hundreds of women to achieve the previously impossible dream of becoming attorneys. For many decades, most of the women who passed the Massachusetts bar were Portia graduates.

One of these women was Catherine Murdock Dewey, who graduated from Portia in 1932. When she appeared before the all-male board of bar examiners in 1932 for the oral examination and was asked why she wanted to be a lawyer, she candidly replied, "Because I want to practice the law." The questioner retorted by admonishing her, "Women belong in the kitchen, not in the bar," and the bar examiners

failed her. She stoically returned the following year, and this time she was admitted. When she couldn't find work in the male-dominated bar, she started her own successful practice in downtown Boston. Her law firm was Curry Mowles & Murdock.

In 1938, Portia Law School became coeducational, and in 1969 the school was renamed New England School of Law and granted accreditation by the American Bar Association. This year New England Law | Boston has been celebrating its rich and diverse history with a year-long centennial program which was kicked off last September with a Convocation featuring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

On March 13, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg will honor the law school with her presence at its annual Law Day Banquet.

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