



“Improving, changing, and exploring the roles of women and men in planning.”

Reflections From DC Rally Commemorating 1963 Civil Rights March and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Karen Shakira Khan

I had the opportunity to attend the recent civil rights rally in DC, commemorating the August 1963 march with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. It was definitely an amazing experience that left me wondering what our role as members of the Planning and Women Division of APA should be – not only in the pursuit of Dr. King’s dream of racial and economic equality, but also gender, same-sex relationships, environmental justice, and other relevant issues.

One of the clearest messages brought to the forefront of the rally was the need for a comprehensive view of human rights today. More importantly, each and every issue discussed at the rally is an analogous planning issue that we, as women and men in planning, have the personal and communal duty to pursue in the effort to lead our communities and our country to human rights progress.

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, representing the District of Columbia spoke of the fight for DC to become incorporated, instead of the taxation without representation that currently exists for residents. Demonstrators from local affordable housing organizations were on hand to protest the lack of federal response to the growing national concern of inadequate and unaffordable housing. Representatives from organizations like NOW (National Organization for Women), the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Arab American Institute, the Black AIDS Institute and many others voiced their concerns and rallied America.

As I said, the rally was a great experience, but then again, of course it would be a good experience for me, I’m in agreement with the groups. I think the federal government should pay attention to the growing problems of affordable housing. I think women do deserve to make an equal paycheck for equal work. I do think that racial profiling is wrong. I hate that homelessness exists. And of course I believe that committed GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) persons deserve the 1000+ legal rights of opposite sex, married couples. I went to the rally because I agreed with it. However, according to Mary Beth Sheridan and Hamil R. Harris, in their article titled “Crowd Amplifies King’s Call for Equality” in the *Washington Post* on August 24th, some who attended the rally were frustrated with crowd size, which was much smaller than in previous anniversaries.

Although I haven’t heard of an estimate for the crowd, I have to say that from the pictures I’ve seen,

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The Chair's Corner

So many exciting things are happening within the division, but before I get to this news, again I want to thank Angela and Karen for continuing to put together the best division newsletter containing so much original material.

Back to the news—**2004 APA National Conference** will be held in **Washington, DC 24-28 April** at the **Hilton and Shoreham hotels in the Dupont Circle area**. Mark your calendar and start saving so you can make the trip to DC. The programs being sponsored by the division alone will be worth the trip. An added attraction on 25 April, there is a **huge march rallying around the issues of freedom of choice for women**. The organizers have a tremendous concern about the present balance in the Supreme Court. The marchers will gather at the **Lincoln Memorial** at 10 am and the march begins at noon.

For the 2004 conference, I have been successful in convincing the organizers that having a topic heading, **Women and Planning**, would be appropriate. After they did a literature research, using the terms women and planning, they discovered just how much research and literature already exists.

The division-sponsored programs for the conference so far are the **mobile workshop to visit Annapolis**, a city very well run by talented women, and an **exploratory workshop** (new term from APA national for this conference) **in conjunction with the Institute for Women's Policy Research**. The shape is still soft, but it will include women from the institute who are leading the exciting research and maybe one or two of the outstanding board members. Check out the IWPR url at <http://www.iwpr.org/> I think that this will happen at the Shoreham so we can have a session longer than the usual 75 minutes. I am still trying to put together another panel session so we might have three sponsored events. I welcome both ideas and assistance. Karen has volunteered to check out DC restaurants for the annual meeting/networking/dinner. More about this later.

Another piece of good news due to Rachael Pitts' good work, we have a nomination for the **Diana**

Donald Award to submit. I have heard nothing about **FAICP nominations** for eligible women. I do hope that you are taking advantage of the list of eligible women on the division web site.

Olivia Parry suggested putting together a **tour of buildings designed by women within the District**. I do not think that I will have time to put this forward as an official proposal; however, I do not want to lose the idea. Would several of you be interested in working with Olivia to put together an information/fact sheet containing such information that the division can post on the web site and send out to the women and division members registered for the conference. I am certain that the Building Museum and the AIA national headquarters in DC would be outstanding resources for this information.



Enough about the 2004 conference—Here are some reflections about the 2003 conference held in Denver last March. As I have previously mentioned in my email updates, the division-sponsored sessions were brilliant and so well attended—at least 100 at each session—noted by the APA national staff. You can do a quick catch up on the sessions by going to the division web site www.urban.uiuc.edu/apa-pw I have posted the presentations.

In addition to our sessions, I attended three very exciting ones on the nexus of urban form and obesity. Ours notwithstanding, these are the best that I have attended in years. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is sponsoring important research on the topic. Again, check the division web site because I have posted several of the presentations. Actually making the argument about sprawl using the premise of urban form causing obesity may be just the way to get the public's attention.

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This summer I had an educational opportunity of such outstanding value that I want to share it. Every five years, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP—the academic planning organization) meets with the similar European organization, Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP). This was the 3rd Congress held in Leuven, Belgium at the catholic university. Whenever one has the chance to meet and talk with planners from other countries, ideas abound and one comes back ready to change the world. At least this is what happened to me.

I presented the results of my research project looking at what practicing planners identify as the continuing professional development programs most important for them and preferred modes of learning for the programs. The results can be viewed at www.urban.uiuc.edu/ce. The bottom line is that clearly planners feel that planning law is the most important topic and workshops the best way to learn. This is a bit simplified so check the results because there is important information for both practicing and academic planners.

I moderated/discussed an enlightening session titled, Crossing Disciplinary and Professional Boundaries in Planning Education. I learned that The Agricultural University of Norway has recently started a masters in risk planning. The paper focused on the ethical dilemmas of such planning. Then the folks from the University of West of England and ETH Zurich separately reported about the innovative workshops that they teach integrating faculty from different disciplines, collaborating with other universities' faculty and students, even as far away as the US, and practitioners. Our US planning programs could take note and adopt some of these ideas. Stan Stein and Tom Harper, University of Calgary, talked about the successful ways they integrate planning ethics into the courses that they teach. I will post the papers on the division web site.

Then at the very last minute, literally, I decided to go on to the post conference, Future of Deindustrializing Regions, Planning for Urban and Regional Transformations, held in Dortmund, German at the university and then a post-post conference in Berlin

and Potsdam. The theme of this conference was The Ruhr and the International Building Exhibition Emscher Park. Both Belgium and especially Germany are economically in a bad time. The northern part of Germany in the Ruhr has lost almost all of the coal and steel industry, putting the area in the economic doldrums. Germany has 1M empty flats and Berlin has 100,000 empty flats. The country has not only lost industry, but also population. While we were in Berlin, I went on the mobile to look at the housing built during the 1970s and 80s in what was once East Berlin. Oh, so depressing and good examples of social engineering. These remain empty because they are not designs that today's population prefers, nor are the locations optimal. You can much more about these conferences at www.acsp.org click on conferences on the left side of the page

I took hundreds of pictures that I will eventually put on the division web site. Berlin is spread out like Washington, DC, equally long blocks, and too few mass transit stops, as DC. Berlin might end up as being an example of the history of modern architecture. Did you know that there are canals throughout Berlin?

Lessons learned from this educational trip—the US has a lot to learn from Europe about mass transit planning. Did you know that a high-speed train only takes two hours from London to Brussels. It takes 2.5 hours for me to drive to Chicago from Champaign. At least in the countries—Germany, Belgium, Netherlands—that I visited recycling is a part of life, as is using mass transit, riding bicycles and vespas, enjoying culture, outstanding and healthy food anywhere, and it was mussel season. The Europeans strongly do not like our SUVs and the complete disregard our country has for the unnecessary overuse of resources.

Finally the last bit of good news—the survey on the status of women in planning is written and being edited, as I type. With some luck, it should be online by the end of September. There will be a mass email message when this occurs. I look forward to everyone participating in the survey and sharing the word about it.

Before I left for the 2003 national conference, I asked for your input about raising the division fee from \$20

to \$25. Everyone who responded indicated that this should be done. So I presented the response at the Division Council meeting and the increase has been approved. This should go into effect at the beginning of 2004. Thank you for the help on this issue.

I will be attending the APA leadership meetings in Chicago on 11-13 September. If you have issues or ideas that you would like me to present at the meetings, please let me know.

Have a great fall,

Pattsi Petrie, Chair

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Washington, DC Rally

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the crowd did look smaller. But why? Why, in a time of such global and domestic crisis is such a poignant event so potentially under attended? Unfortunately, I think it's simply because people don't see racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, homophobia, ageism, discrimination against national origin and other forms of discrimination as relevant setbacks to total human and civil rights.

I used to feel that it was the sole fault of that pesky, naughty A word – APATHY – which haunted our communities and our planning, weaving in and out and confounding the masses. But now, I've changed my mind – it's not just apathy, it's this funky mix of feigned complacency, political ignorance (as in not understanding the intricacies and outcomes of public policy), and the overwhelming sensation that as a whole society we've just come so amazingly far, that a life better than this just couldn't be possible. Really, I'm probably just blaming the suburbanization of America for the nation's collective lack of interest in pursuing a better America for all. Whatever the case may be, I'm just frustrated in that people just don't care in a way that means action. And that then leads me back to this division.

I'm not asking whether we all think that we have a long ways to go before we can say satisfactorily declare that we are a nation of equal rights. I'm not

asking if we think that the division should have a role in realizing Dr. King's dream. These are blatantly rhetorical questions. My question is, have we, as a division, become just as complacent, ignorant, and bored with progress as the rest of society that we aren't particularly concerned with women and their struggles in cities and in planning to give our efforts to a division that seeks to promote betterment for all? Maybe we're all just too busy to act, that's a general complaint I get. But don't we generally take the time to do the things we really care about in life? If that's true, then the lack of inactivity of this division must mean that the fight against sexism, racism and so on is insignificant and the issues surrounding these "isms" no longer cause setbacks to making great communities happen. I don't know about you, but I'm pretty sure sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, etc. are alive, well, and contaminating the progress of America's communities. I'm also pretty sure Dr. King would agree. With that said, what does that mean for the future of our division, if it means anything at all?

These are just some thoughts and reflections. If you have an opinion, and we know you do, we'd like to hear it. For more info about the DC march, go to

<http://www.marchonwashington.org/home.htm> and
<http://www.civilrights.org/>.

Feminist Perspectives on Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

By Mei-Po Kwan

Despite the progress in critical GIS research in recent years, most social scientists still understand GIS largely as a tool for quantitative or empiricist spatial analysis. This understanding has led many to think that GIS methods are incompatible with critical and feminist perspectives. It makes it difficult for geographers or planners to conceive a role for GIS in feminist research and practice.

Feminist geographers have recently started to re-examine theoretical and practical issues pertinent to the role of GIS in geographical research and urban politics. A recent themed issue I guest-edited in *Gender, Place and Culture* (2002, Vol.9, No.3) include six articles that explore important questions relevant to GIS users and researchers in various fields, including urban and regional planning. For example, Sara McLafferty, Professor of Geography at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, examines the role of GIS in feminist activism through a Long Island (NY) case study on how GIS-based power-knowledge may empower or marginalize women activist groups as spatio-political scale shifts. My article argues that the debate between critical theorists and GIS researchers in geography have unintentionally marginalized the contribution of feminist GIS user/researchers. I call for a recovery of the subjectivities of feminist GIS users/researchers and the need to go beyond the understanding of GIS as largely a quantitative method unsuitable for research and practice informed by critical perspectives.

In another article published in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (2002, Vol. 92, No.4), I provide an extended discussion on the possibility of re-envisioning GIS as a method in feminist research and practice. I examine whether GIS methods are inherently incompatible with feminist epistemologies through examining their connection with positivist scientific practices and visualization technologies. I argue that GIS can be used in feminist research in ways that are congenial to feminist epistemologies and politics. I describe several ways in which GIS methods may be used to enrich feminist research. These include linking geographical context with women's everyday lives, supporting women's activism through GIS-based research, constructing cartographic narratives to tell stories about women's lives, mapping women's life paths in space-time, and revealing the gender biases of conventional quantitative methods.

Mei-Po Kwan (kwan.8@osu.edu) is an Associate Professor of Geography at the Ohio State University. Her research focuses on critical GIS, gender/ethnic issues in urban and transportation geography, and GIS-based 3D geovisualization and geocomputation. To view her article in the *Annals of the AAG* entitled "Feminist Visualization: Re-envisioning GIS as a Method in Feminist Geographic Research," please go to:

http://geog-www.sbs.ohio-state.edu/faculty/mkwan/Annals_2002.pdf

Thoughts on the Planning and Women Division

By Angela Jacobs

School starts for my daughter next week and that has me in a reflective mode. As women, we have a serious responsibility to be positive role models for young girls and boys everywhere. I often find myself taking on more things than I can juggle. Eventually I find myself overloaded and forced to decide what is a priority and what can wait until later. This marks one year of working with Karen as co-editor of this newsletter. Karen and I are both very busy individuals, but we think the Planning and Women Division is important. Sometimes I am discouraged by the apathy I perceive among the women in the Division. There is a lot of work necessary to make sure women's issues are pushed to the fore when decisions are being made.

For instance, Congress is currently considering a new transportation bill that will have a profound effect upon our country over the next six years. Are women's groups working to make sure that during the transportation decision making process the unique travel needs of women are considered? I don't know. Will this new bill make sure that future development does not impede low income and minorities (the majority of which are women) from accessing jobs, health care and other amenities? I don't know. The reason why I don't know is because the voice of women appears to be so low when it comes to these issues that we are not heard. Women make plenty of time to scream about whether they are pro-choice or pro-life, but women are not demanding that this new bill clearly address women's transportation needs. In 2003, many women are locked into the welfare system because they cannot find accessible childcare and affordable transportation in a convenient proximity to each other.

For the past year, Karen and I have requested input from our readers. The response has been so low that I put it at less than five. We need to make our presence known. Please sound off and tell us what topics we need to cover and how the division can work to address the needs of the community.

If you have any comments about the PW newsletter, please send them to co-editors:

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Important Dates to Remember

1. Deadline for FAICP nomination--Nominations are due to AICP postmarked by October 25, 2003. Please make sure you submit your nominations for Women in Planning Division members as soon as possible. Rachel Pitts agreed to process our nominations. For more info. about FAICP nominations, see <http://www.planning.org/faicp/faicp.htm> and for names of the 400+ eligible women along with their state of residency (based on the criteria of 15-years of AICP membership) see the division web page: <http://www.urban.uiuc.edu/apapw>. Submit nominations to pattsi@uiuc.edu.

2. APA leadership meetings will be held in Chicago on September 11-13. Send any issues/concerns to pattsi@uiuc.edu

3. The APA National conference will be in Washington, DC April 24-28, 2004.