

# Women's Education Worldwide 2008

## *Women in Politics*

June 5-7, 2008 Collegio Nuovo, Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei, University of Pavia

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**Pre-meeting: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4TH, COLLEGIO NUOVO**

19.00: Executive Committee Meeting (Dinner)

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## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

### THURSDAY, JUNE 5TH, COLLEGIO NUOVO

Registration 9.00

*Session open to the public*

#### **9.45 – 10.00 – Welcome**

Bruna Bruni, President of the Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei

#### **10.00 – 10.45 – The Pavia System: University, Colleges and Institute for Advanced Study**

Angiolino Stella, Rector of the University of Pavia

Roberto Schmid, Director of IUSS - Institute for Advanced Study of Pavia

Sigfrido Boffi, President of the Permanent Conference of the Italian Colleges recognised by the Ministry of Education, University and Research

#### **10.45 – 11.00 – Collegio Nuovo: challenges from 1978 to 2008**

Paola Bernardi, Rector of the Collegio Nuovo

*Break 11.00 – 11.15*

#### **11.15 – 11.45 - WEW: an advocacy role for women's leadership**

Joanne V. Creighton, President of Mount Holyoke College

Carol Christ, President of Smith College

#### **11.45 – 12.30 Women and Politics: a global issue and the Italian experience**

Barbara Pollastrini, Member of the Italian Parliament and Former Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities

13.00 Lunch

#### **15.00 – 16.00 – WEW members: round table presentation of the participants**

#### **16.00 – 17.15 – Women's Education to politics**

##### **The power of College life and Alumnae Association**

Claude du Granrut, Committee of the Regions of the European Union; Mount Holyoke Alumna

##### **Getting women into political participation: the White House Project**

Ellen McKay, Executive Department of the White House Project

*17.15 – 17.30 – Break*

#### **17.30 – 18.15 – Educating women to become (political) leaders**

Discussion led by panelists (Spelman College, Beverly D. Tatum; Spelman College, LEADS, Jane Smith; Mills College, Women's Leadership Institute, Daphne Muse)

19.30 Visit to the University of Pavia

20.30 Dinner at the University of Pavia

### FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH, COLLEGIO NUOVO

*Session open only to WEW members*

#### **10.00 – 12.00 – Women in politics in Italy and around the globe in the XX-XXI centuries**

Bianca Beccalli, University of Milan

Maria Antonietta Confalonieri, University of Pavia

Alberta Spreafico and Michela Pagano, Collegio Nuovo

*Break 12.00 – 12.15*

#### **12.15 – 13.30 – Models of Alumnae Relations**

Discussion led by: Mount Holyoke College (Mary G. Davis); Brescia University College (Rita Gardiner), Women's College University of Sydney (Yvonne Rate), Ochanomizu University (Sawako Hanyu), Collegio Nuovo (Raffaella Butera, Cristina Castagnoli), IUSS, Pavia (Anna Lanzani)

13.30 Lunch

**15.30 – 16.30 – Models of Student Government: best practices**

Discussion led by Women's College University of Queensland (Maureen Aitken), Wellesley College (Michelle Lepore and Joanne Murray)

Jesse H. Lytle, WEW Coordinator – *Presentation of the forthcoming First WEW Student Leadership Conference and Mount Holyoke Student Government Association Organizational Chart*

**16.30 – 18.00 – Best practices and Partnerships**

Kristen Renn: *Presentation of a Research Project*, Michigan State University

Don O' Shea (Mount Holyoke), Susan Bourque (Smith), Liz Boylan (Barnard College): *Funding for institutional collaboration*

20.00 – Concert Dinner and at the Collegio Ghislieri

**SATURDAY, JUNE 7TH COLLEGIO NUOVO**

10.00 – 13.00

*Taking stock of Colleges data collection* by Don O'Shea, Mount Holyoke

*Planning the 2010 WEW Meeting: Proposal of Yvonne Rate*, Women's College University of Sydney

Closing: Conference wrap-up

13.00 Lunch

## Contents

**Welcome address** by Bruna Bruni, President of the Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei

**The Pavia System: University, Colleges and Institute for Advanced Study**

Angiolino Stella, Rector of the University of Pavia

Roberto Schmid, Director of IUSS - Institute for Advanced Study of Pavia

**Collegio Nuovo: challenges from 1978 to 2008**

Paola Bernardi, Rector of the Collegio Nuovo – Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei

**WEW: an advocacy role for women's leadership**

Joanne V. Creighton, President of Mount Holyoke College

Carol Christ, President of Smith College

**The power of College life and Alumnae Association**

Claude du Granrut, Committee of the Regions of the European Union; Mount Holyoke Alumna

**Message from Emma Bonino**, Vice President of the Italian Senate

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**Excerpts from *Nuovità 2008*:**

*Three images: Barbara Pollastrini and many women on the move*

*The Italian situation: "pink"?* – Michela Pagano

*The "pink side of the world"* – Alberta Spreafico

*New girls network: going global* – Anna Lanzani

**NOTE:**

**Models of Alumnae Relations** and **Models of Student Government** will be implemented by the Share Point version under construction.

## **BRUNA BRUNI, PRESIDENT OF THE SANDRA AND ENEA MATTEI FOUNDATION**

Presidents and members of the international network of *Women's Education Worldwide*, Deputy Barbara Pollastrini, Rector of Pavia University, Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies of Pavia, President of the Conference of Italian Colleges, Illustrious Professors, Guests and Students,

I would like to give you a warm welcome to Collegio Nuovo and to Pavia, on the occasion of this third international meeting promoted by the main women's colleges in the world.

Your presence here today not only honours us and makes us proud but it especially bears witness to our determination to achieve an important goal, promoting the education and culture of women. The creation of the *Women's Education Worldwide* network is the most interesting, concrete action carried out in recent years by higher education institutions for women. Central to this action is the search for a common model of female leadership, a model able to be translated into real action, so that women can really be those who cause change in society, education, economics and politics, in all parts of the world.

For this I think we must all be grateful to Joanne V. Creighton and Carol T. Christ, the Presidents of *Mount Holyoke College* and *Smith College* respectively, who thought up, promoted and guaranteed the *Women's Education Worldwide* network. Their devotion and enthusiasm, together with their desire to resist any stereotypes about the training and abilities of women, are very close to Sandra Bruni Mattei's project, who founded Collegio Nuovo and the women's section of Pavia's Ghislieri College.

As a Mathematics graduate, Sandra Bruni worked beside her husband in creating and developing a compressors and pneumatic tools company. When her husband died, in 1955, she took over running the firm, with over two hundred employees, all by herself.

Having retired from business, she did not forget the difficulties she herself had had at university. In 1966 she decided to devote herself to furthering talented female students culturally and socially. The idea was to found lay colleges, well involved in modern life. Her first important creation was the Sandra Bruni Foundation, the female section of historic Ghislieri College in Pavia. At her own expense, she had it built to take one hundred women students from all over Italy, chosen on the basis of merit, and with scholarships for the less well-off. With the same criteria, she set up Collegio Nuovo – Sandra and Enea Mattei Foundation, in 1978. She dedicated the last years of her life to launching and furthering these two colleges and she left her personal wealth to them in her will.

Sandra Bruni Mattei was a woman who could look forward. She anticipated the future and especially believed in the value of women. She was a commanding woman, as one would say nowadays, a manager, a leader, with a strong, proud character. She loved travelling and everywhere she went she never failed to make friendships and contacts in the educational field all over the world. In the sixties, therefore, she felt the need to set up a network of international contacts, to give female students and new graduates important world-wide opportunities.

From this international vision came the idea of setting up foreign exchanges, also at Collegio Nuovo, putting women into every area. This desire has continually been realised over the last thirty years.

For Sandra, who was a Mathematics graduate, encouragement of scientific studies was fundamental. Indeed she opposed the idea that women's education should primarily be in the Humanities. Nowadays the number of girls signing on at university far exceeds the number of boys, in practically all disciplines, though it was not like that in 1978, when Collegio Nuovo was founded. And we all know how few women, still today, count in pure science and the scientific fields.

In Sandra Bruni Mattei's mind, Collegio Nuovo was intended to "really contribute to the intellectual progress of the country, providing training and cultural education for the young women on the State university role and other Higher Education institutions in Pavia, who show particular aptitude for study".

The presence of us all here today once more demonstrates that her plan to encourage "worthy but disadvantaged" young women was a specific indication of methodology. It was an invitation to engagement, dialogue and acceptance of responsibility.

The subject of *Women and Politics* is a delicate but decidedly up-to-date topic. And I am certain that Sandra Bruni Mattei's forward-lookingness, her liveliness, her tenacious entrepreneurial will to capture the spirit of the times and help young women, can be an invitation to us all to work well together. This is what I wish for you, so that women – all women, regardless of situation, race, nationality – can have access to education and thus help to build a better world.

Have a good day's work, everybody, and thank you.

## PAOLA BERNARDI, RECTOR OF THE COLLEGIO NUOVO

Dear Colleagues, Authorities and Friends of Collegio Nuovo,

today is really a day destined to remain in the history of Collegio Nuovo. Today the dream comes true which I carried with me coming back from the first exciting meeting on June '04 in Mount Holyoke and Smith College. A dream immediately shared by our President and Board of Administrators, our Staff, our Alumnae and our Students: that of having at Collegio Nuovo, in the same year in which we celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the worldwide leaders of the university institutions committed to the women's education. Therefore the dream of putting our college in the middle of worldwide discussion and dialogue about women's university education. Really this is a great day for us and I would like give thanks again to the persons who allowed us to realize our dream. First and foremost I'd like to thank Joanne V. Creighton and Carol T. Christ, the Presidents of Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges, the people who really thought up and promoted our network. Then thanks to all of you who came here from so far away.

Dr Sandra Bruni Mattei, the Collegio Nuovo Founder, would certainly have approved this meeting. It fulfils 30 years of activity and obviously it is for us a new starting point for further growth. Because being 30 means for us to be *already* thirty years old, with all the solid experience this implies. But it also means being *only* thirty years old, in other words we are obliged to look to the future and care for the new generations of women students.

I'll start with few words about our college. It is not an emerging new one, despite its name (Nuovo means New) since it was opened in 1978. The college hosts roughly 120 undergraduates and 50 postgraduates, with 70% enrolled in scientific schools. It is a fully residential, private college, framed in the Sandra and Enea Mattei Foundation, but it is also one of fourteen Italian university colleges that have been granted special status by our Ministry of Education, Universities and Research as "Centres of Educational Excellence". Merit is the criteria for selecting incoming and continuing students at Collegio Nuovo. In addition to promoting talent, the college supports the most deserving students by reserving a number of free places and by applying subsidised rates (on average 40% of the costs) to all the others.

The structure is independent from the University of Pavia, but anyway it has strong academic links with it. Firstly, all our students are enrolled at the University of Pavia. Moreover, thanks to a clause in the regulations of our University, the College organizes many classes (10 in the current academic year) accredited by the University and open to University students of all Schools. Among these: Digital and Multimedia Communications, Scientific Journalism, Journalistic Methods and Techniques, Semiotics of the Arts, Chinese Law (with a teacher from Shanghai) and short specialized classes in Medicine. In addition the College is the seat of the Master's in Media and Science Technology also held in Tunis. This Master's course is promoted in collaboration with the Institute for Advanced Studies of Pavia, the third Italian Higher Education and Research School, of which the College is a foundation member and now an institutional partner, together with Pavia University and the other colleges of Pavia based on merit. The IUSS School offers undergraduate programs to our students which complement those of the University. So, thanks to these two new possibilities, the Oxbridge model, which has been a dream for centuries in Pavia, is now becoming a concrete reality.

The College also provides study guidance and tutoring services, internal courses in computer studies and foreign languages, training experience, internships, conferences and meetings also open to the public, with leading figures from the worlds of culture, research, politics, business and industry – often women. A few years ago, also as a direct consequence of participating in the WEW network, Collegio Nuovo focused on women's education, offering its undergraduates meetings with influential women, classes for developing skills at work and training courses at work expressly for women.

Collegio Nuovo provides its students with grants, in order to facilitate advanced studies all over the world and hosts visiting foreign students and postgraduates. Exchange schemes have been established with the University of Mainz (1981) and Heidelberg (1992) and with New Hall College of the University of Cambridge (1997). And since 2004 of course with the colleges of the *Women's Education Worldwide* network.

The College also provides its students with resources and facilities for study (multimedia main and other lecture theatres, studies, computer and newspaper reading rooms, library, free Internet access in the studybedrooms too) and also for leisure: living-rooms, TV lounges, video library, indoor and outdoor sport facilities. Since its very opening, Collegio Nuovo has always had specific aims. Three primarily: to select its students on merit, to provide them with a rich cultural program in addition to that of the University and the IUSS, and to look for an international dimension.

Well now some numbers: in 30 years of activity Collegio Nuovo has selected 789 students, including the current ones, coming from all the Italian regions. More than 650 are now graduates, almost all with top grades, the seniors (but seniors less than 50 years old!) have already reached high-ranking positions (among them a Full Professor in Medicine at the University of Oxford), the younger ones are embarking on brilliant careers. A great group of talented women, doctors, teachers, scientists, lawyers, engineers, managers, judges, journalists and so on. Investing in merit, really is giving excellent results. Clear evidence of this comes from a recent survey of our younger Alumnae: 44% of them find a job or start a paid research activity within 3 months of graduation, with this percentage rising to 80% by 6 months. With, I am sure, something special coming from having been students of Collegio Nuovo.

In the same period the College organized more than 500 cultural meetings with keynote speakers together with professors of the University of Pavia. And hundreds of other specialized meetings and classes. But, because we are now in an international context, I would like to focus on the international outlook that our college is adopting more and more, hosting foreign undergraduates and young researchers, giving its students and Alumnae grants for studying abroad, and setting up international partnerships. The international outlook of the College is precisely the subject of the book *Collegio Nuovo goes international*, published for this meeting and which we are pleased to offer to our guests today, to our international partners, both current and those who, we hope, will become partners in the future. Its aim is to tell how Collegio Nuovo came onto the world stage and at the same time to provide a basic account of its history and the life of the College within the context of the University which is also such a feature of Pavia as a town. It is interspersed throughout with more than 50 accounts from students and Alumnae, both foreign and Italian, who have come to Collegio Nuovo and left it to travel abroad.

As far back as its first year of opening, together with the first 24 Italian women students the College had its first overseas guest, a Somalian graduate, who was a student in Banking, and the following year another, this time from the United States. In the very first year the College set up its first in-house language courses. This continued to expand over the following years, to the point where the College can now count among its thousands of students, both past and present, a high number of foreign Alumnae, most of whom stayed for nearly the whole year and even for several years, that is 249 or 25% of the total, as well as, of course, an even higher number for shorter periods. They have mostly been European (around 80%), but a fairly good number have come from other continents.

They have mostly been students in the Humanities, but with a number of students from other disciplines too, such as Medicine and Science.

Throughout the world they form a precious heritage for our College. Not only have they enriched and broadened the community of the College with their presence but they now form an incalculable cross-border network of relations and links. Most of them are still in contact with us, most of them sometimes came back for the annual meeting of the Alumnae, most of them have good memories of their period at the College, as we can read in their accounts in the book. Among them we can now include the Vice Chancellor of Amravati University in India, several University Professors in Europe but also in Tokyo, Jerusalem, Peking, Ankara, Vassar College, Caracas, several teachers, managers, lawyers, doctors and so on. Some of them now live in Italy, mainly because in Pavia they have found their husbands too!

In recent years a new typology of foreigner students has begun to arrive at Collegio Nuovo: not simply guests, but college students, having passed entry examinations. They are the daughters of recent immigrants to Italy from the non European countries. It's an important sign which, I am sure, will bring to the College and our country further richness of human capital, more possibilities of interaction and growth, as real integration, gets through to schools and education.

Another important feature of the international stance taken by Collegio Nuovo has been the awarding of grants for study abroad, since 1981, for summer grants aimed at language learning and at work experience in labs and research centres. Since 1987 annual grants have been awarded for postgraduate course in universities, labs and research centres, included Harvard, Sloan-Kettering, Oxbridge, Paris Sorbonne, Karolinska Institute and the Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Peking! Also in this instance the number is extremely high, that is 405, of which 131 for postgraduates. It means that more than 50% of Collegio

Nuovo Italian students stand a chance of going abroad thanks to our College. Those postgraduates travelling the most were scholars in Humanities, recent graduates in Medicine, Biology and Physics, but also Law and Political Science. The main destinations: the United Kingdom, Germany, France and the United States. Some of the Collegio Nuovo postgraduates ended up staying abroad for several years with other grants which they were offered once they were there. 27% of them stayed abroad permanently, mostly in the United Kingdom, Germany and the USA.

Collegio Nuovo Alumnae abroad are a truly mixed group, a sort of global university, an international "network of knowledge", which, as also with the foreign students, puts the College onto the world stage.

We can surely say that Collegio Nuovo has always worked hard along the road toward the internationalization. So you can easily understand with what delight I received, on 22nd of January 2004, the invitation from Presidents Joanne V. Creighton and Carol Christ, on the recommendation of Anne Lonsdale, President of New Hall, to take part in the first gathering in June '04. The theme was the importance of women's education in order to gain true equality with men, especially in the scientific fields. I have met women used to facing the challenges that being a woman today still involves in the world, women ready to offer their students the appropriate tools for attaining self-confidence in their abilities and therefore leadership. It is a real challenge for all of us in our different contexts and not merely a declaration of principle that is already widely discussed and shared.

Now, 4 years after that historic meeting, I can repeat that it was really exciting to meet world leaders in women's university education and to discover too that we speak a common language and face similar problems beyond those very many differences in culture, religion and political and economic models. The '04 meeting had direct repercussions on the internal life of Collegio Nuovo and of the Italian colleges, of which I took over the annual presidency on behalf of Collegio Nuovo that very year. All or nearly all Italian colleges in our group, even the co-educational ones, started to work on the subject of women's education. At the end of that presidential year there was even a conference here on *The making of women leaders – The role of the Colleges*, attended by university professors, company managers and journalists. It ended with speeches by four Alumnae from different colleges, all now in important positions, to show that women can achieve positions of a high level. During my subsequent international meetings outside the WEW meetings, I have never stopped speaking with people about the importance of women's education. The last time was two weeks ago with woman Professor Yu Hang, Executive Dean of the College of Mechanical Engineering at Tongji University in Shanghai, partner of University of Pavia and IUSS Institute. And, of course, I have always tried to transmit to our students what I have learned in such conversations.

For our students indeed the WEW network is also very important. As from that same year, '04, one or two of our students can attend the international meeting *Insight Dubai* every year, with a grant from our College. This is a five-day conference focusing on women and empowerment in the Arab World, organised by Dubai Women's College, which we can now rightly include among our partners. To date six students have attended, all of whom have returned full of enthusiasm and enriched by a truly special experience. I am sure the two Collegio Nuovo undergraduates selected for next week's first truly international students' conference, cohosted by Mount Holyoke and Smith College with the participation of Wellesley, will come back with the same enthusiasm. In addition we are looking for start-up contacts with some more colleges to enlarge the possibilities for our students to go abroad and to enrich our community with students coming from other colleges. I think that is an important result of our network and I am sure that we will all go hard at this.

In conclusion I would remark once again on the relevance of our network. Often the majority of people, and even many of our women students, think that in all the countries in which women have long had access to education, the struggle for equal opportunities is only a past memory. They think that if women students give strong performances at university and graduate with high marks, they will not have problems to find a job and to achieve success they merit. We all know, on the base of experience, that this is not true and that women have still to face a lot of problems all over the world. This is the importance of an international coalition, which forces more and more discussion about the relevance of women's education and can become, too, an international force committed to the advancement of women in the world. Not only for making women successful in their activities but also for giving them the opportunity to be agents of social and economic change and so help to build a better world.

This is the reason why our College has suggested that WEW members choose "Women and Politics" as the subject for this conference. Despite our differences, which are also one of our strengths, we all are ready to do this. And we are proud to be protagonists of such an important discussion, between such persons.

## PROFESSOR ANGIOLINO STELLA, RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PAVIA

I want to thank the President of Collegio Nuovo, Bruna Bruni, and the Rector, Paola Bernardi, who have invited me to bring the greetings on behalf of the University of Pavia to the Third International Meeting on *Women's Education Worldwide*. Collegio Nuovo has the honour to host a meeting that makes Pavia one of the centres of international debate on an issue of high interest and future prospects: *Women and Politics*.

I was pleased to accept this invitation because it is an occasion to meet the Presidents and the representatives of important colleges from all around the world and to present you the University of Pavia and its college network. The college network, to which the Institute of Advanced Study (IUSS) has been added recently, is unique in Italy.

The University of Pavia is a public institution and one of the oldest universities in Europe. According to an edict issued by King Lotharius, the first higher education institution in Pavia was established in 825. Initially, it focused on law studies and was later selected as the main education centre in Northern Italy. Enlarged and renovated by the Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, it became the University of the Duchy, and was officially established as a *Studium Generale* by Emperor Charles IV in 1361.

Alessandro Volta (1745-1827) is only one of many famous professors who taught at the University of Pavia. To mention just a few, Girolamo Cardano, who invented the "cardanic joint", Antonio Scarpa professor of anatomy and medicine, Camillo Golgi who was awarded the Nobel Prize in medicine in 1906, and poet Ugo Foscolo.

Today Pavia is a Research University, offering a wide variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary education in nine faculties: Economics, Pharmacy, Law, Engineering, Literature & Philosophy, Medicine & Surgery, Science, Political Science and Musicology. It offers 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level degree courses, Masters and Specialization courses, Doctorates and courses in its Post-Graduate Schools. Research is carried out in departments, institutes, clinics, centres, and laboratories in close collaboration with public and private institutions and enterprises.

The University of Pavia enjoys a strong tradition of international student and teacher exchanges: bilateral agreements involve, among others, the historic universities of Coimbra, as well as many other universities in Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, the United States, China and Japan.

Our university is unique not only because of its prestigious historical origins and outstanding achievements, but also because of its leading role in the "Pavia Network", characterized by 16 colleges – such as Collegio Nuovo – and residences where thousands of students can live, study and practice sports. The oldest colleges, *Collegio Borromeo* and *Collegio Ghislieri*, were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century; more recently new male and female colleges have been founded through both public and private initiatives.

As you can see, there are many good reasons for my presence here today. The quality of student life at the university and colleges, the creation of a network of international relations dealing with topics of mutual interest, and in particular the role that women can have, are all topics of interest for me.

The best graduates of the University of Pavia come from the university colleges. They are young responsible people that have been trained to collaborate and exchange ideas. The fact that the University of Pavia is among the best ten universities in Italy, confirmed by the ratings of the Times Higher Education and Shanghai, can be attributed to its traditions, quality of teaching and research, good international relations, and the presence of the university colleges that welcome students from all the regions of Italy and abroad. The college network is one of the reasons why Pavia is at the top of the Italian university system, in which the right to study merges with other initiatives of higher education.

The colleges that are reunited at the Association of Colleges – Conferenza dei Collegi – represented by the President, Professor Boffi, are recognized by the Ministry of Education, University and Research as institutions of "high cultural value". The colleges date back to the Medieval tradition and to the birth of the history of universities in Europe. In Pavia there were two illustrious patrons during the Renaissance – Cardinal Carlo Borromeo (in 1561) and Pope Pius V Antonio Ghislieri (in 1567) – who gave birth to two colleges that have been named after them and still today represent a prototype of Italian university colleges. In the centuries that followed, the rich bourgeoisie, entrepreneurs as Sandra Bruna Mattei, professionals or university professors have been founders or generous benefactors of several similar structures, initially reserved to outstanding male students and from the mid 1900 open also for female students. Even today, only outstanding students are admitted to these institutions, which are not only places to live, but also places for cultural exchange where university courses are being held. They are centres of high relevance, destined to intellectual elite, but they are not reserved to a privileged group of people; they also have a policy of free places and discounts on student fees for those who cannot afford to pay the full fees.

Today in Italy, especially the business world considers universities as prime producers of knowledge, without which research, innovation, development and competition cannot exist. I think that each of us, whether a Rector, a President or a Professor, is invited to contribute actively to the development of his country, to educate men and women who are skilled, engaged, aware of their role in society, and able to compete in the international market.

The University Colleges are certainly an excellent partner for the University of Pavia and its 25.000 students to reach these objectives, at both national and international level. Some years ago, I had the privilege of chairing the Almo Collegio Borromeo, of which I am also an alumnus, and the Italian Association of University Colleges, and I know well the added value of a university that can count on several colleges and on a dense network of alumni. These institutions value merit, talent, and social solidarity and they offer an excellent occasion to have an outstanding education. They are key partners of universities and the business world. Also, the presence of foreign students and the high number of places in the exchange program facilitates considerably the acquisition of foreign languages and the openness to internationalization.

The University of Pavia with its colleges and houses of residence offers a model of student welfare and interdisciplinary and international interaction, which can be highly useful even in the working life. A university campus facilitates the movement of ideas and people and prepares students to work in teams and exchange their views. It allows the build a vast community; a network, whose purpose is high-quality education, within which nobody should feel marginal. In the last few years, this network has acquired an international profile, both for the efforts to develop international relations, and because of the changes in the geo-political boundaries and the increased circulation of ideas and people.

In welcoming the representatives of the women's colleges from around the world, I join them in advocating a stronger expansion of high education among the young, and among women in particular. In this regard, I think it is necessary to strengthen the network and join competences, to foster international social movements, and give an increasing weight to society and politics.

You all, when speaking of women's higher education, are well aware of how tiresome it is to achieve a high-level education and to reach leading roles and top professional positions. I am sure that, thanks to your network, to your capacity to mediate, to your relationships with decision makers, you will be able to diffuse as much as possible this educational model and help all women, especially in developing countries, in their difficult path towards the awareness of their role. With no doubts, this is a priority for those who are engaged in "Women's Education to Politics".

I wish you a successful and fruitful conference.  
Thank you for your attention.

## **PROFESSOR ROBERTO SCHMID, DIRECTOR OF THE IUSS - PAVIA**

Dear President of Sandra and Enea Mattei Foundation  
Dear Paola,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a real privilege and a great pleasure to welcome you on my capacity as Director of the Pavia Institute for Advanced Studies.

The Institute was established in an experimental way in 1997 within the framework of an agreement with the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research aimed at strengthening the Italian network of Schools for Advanced Studies. The mission of these Schools is that of giving talented students the possibility of fully exploiting their capacities while attending the University. As a matter of fact the programmes which are now offered by the Italian Universities at undergraduate level, in a system which is still too rigid, are tailored on the mean capacity of the students. Thus, the expectation of the students of higher capacity, in particular that of talented students, might be deceived.

Following the model introduced in France by the Ecole Normale Supérieure and in Italy by the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, the Italian Schools for Advanced Studies receive a limited number of undergraduate students attending the local University and offer them additional curricula to satisfy their needs of advanced education. The acceptance to a School passes through a rigorous selection at the national and international level. Also the permanence as students of the School is subject to severe rules. Nevertheless, the selection is so good that almost the totality of the accepted students remain in that condition until the end of their studies and receive their degree from the University and from the School in the programmed number of years and with the best marks.

The Schools for Advanced Studies also offer post-graduate programmes and they are the site of advanced research.

Now, there exist only three Schools of this type in Italy with a complete autonomy with respect to the local University. Few others follow the same model but they have been established inside the University. Finally, there are some Institutions for Advanced Studies dedicated only to post-graduate programmes.

Our Institute is a School of the first type with undergraduate and post-graduate programmes. The real specificness of our Institute within the framework of the Italian Schools for Advanced Studies is related to the very long tradition of the University Colleges in Pavia and of Pavia itself as a University town.

The official date of foundation of the University of Pavia is 1361, although Pavia was recognized as the site of higher education since 825. The first two Colleges, the Collegio Borromeo and the Collegio Ghislieri, were established in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to give talented students the possibility of completing their education at the University of Pavia, for all the poor economical conditions of their family. Fantastic, we are discovering today what in Pavia was already existing in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

This tradition of excellence of Pavia Colleges continued unchanged until now, and the Collegio Nuovo is a beautiful evidence of that. During the last decades, Pavia Colleges became more and more the sites of cultural and social enrichment. An important step forward was done at the end of the years 90's and the beginning of the new millennium, when the Colleges started to offer their students courses recognized by the Faculties of the University in terms of credits needed for graduation. I was the Rector of the University of Pavia at that time and I am very proud of this reinforcement of the linkage between the Colleges and the University.

The next step was that of asking the Colleges to work together to create a Schools of Advanced Studies according to the model previously described, without losing their own historical identity. The proposal was accepted and after many years of experimentation, the Pavia School for Advanced Studies was officially recognized by the Italian Ministry of University and Research in 2005 with the name of "Istituto Universitario di Studi Superiori, IUSS".

The presence, in a small and quite town like Pavia, of a historical University, a prestigious system of Colleges receiving students from the whole country and from abroad, and now of a School for Advanced Studies makes Pavia a unique place in Italy where to receive a high level university education.

My gratitude to the Rectors of Pavia Colleges is really deep and, today, I want to thank particularly Paola Bernardi for this opportunity of meeting you.

I do hope that, after this important meeting many of your students will decided to come to Pavia to complete their study and, we all, we shall be happy to receive them.

## **JOANNE V. CREIGHTON, PRESIDENT OF MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE**

Good morning. I'm very pleased to be here. I want to thank Paola Bernardi and Saskia Avalle and all the other colleagues from Collegio Nuovo for hosting the third biannual meeting of Women's Education Worldwide. It's wonderful to see now familiar faces as well as new ones in the alliance of some 50 women's colleges from around the world. We are honored to be part of the festivities of the Pavia system and to learn more through the theme of this conference about women and politics in Italy and in the world.

Women's Education Worldwide is now 4 years old, a baby, but an alliance that has become very meaningful and productive for many of us. The idea for such an alliance was originally that of Don O'Shea, my colleague who is the Dean of Faculty at Mount Holyoke College, who is here today. He shared the idea with counterparts at our neighbor Smith College who enthusiastically agreed to join in this effort, and Carol Christ the president of Smith and Susie Bourque, Provost, are here today too.

Smith and Mount Holyoke are part of a distinguished and historic group of American women's colleges called the "Seven Sisters" which served as formative models for the development of women's institutions in the United States and around the world. We so profited from our alliances with other institutions in the Seven Sisters and also with other women's colleges in the US in the Women's College Coalition that we wanted to extend the sisterhood internationally. With the increasingly globalized world and our wish to prepare students for global citizenship, it seemed important to expand our alliances and perspectives.

Without a database to guide us, we searched the web and issued invitations. We knew our list was incomplete and our methods less than fully adequate, but we were pleased with the wonderful response we got. Our first conference in 2004 drew together 47 leaders from 29 institutions and 5 continents. We appreciated the faith that these participants had in the experimental nature of our gathering: it was our presumption that if we came together it would open up opportunities for collegiality amongst us.

We hoped to learn from one another and to brainstorm together about how we could help each other. We hoped that the meeting would be a catalyst for further connections among the leaders of our institutions but also exchanges among students, faculty and staff. We hoped, in short, that at the meeting we would find common ground and good things would happen, and that indeed was the case. It was nothing short of exhilarating to be part of that initial gathering, which has spawned many productive connections.

That first meeting was so successful, that we met a second time in Dubai in 2006. And, as you know, this is our third biannual meeting. Meanwhile, last summer, some of us were fortunate enough to gather in Bellagio, Italy, for a planning meeting sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation. We clarified that the mission of WEW is to share best practices, to collect and disseminate data about women's colleges, to foster exchange among our institutions, and to advocate for women's education worldwide.

Though recognizing the wide variance among our institutions in age, size, wealth, and circumstances, we still find much common ground, for example, in the need to develop students' self-confidence and leadership capabilities and in the widespread concern with combating gender inequity, discrimination, and cultural barriers, and coping with access, affordability, and work/life balance issues.

Compared to the long history of men's separate higher education in the world, women's education has a short history. Indeed, it is important to realize how throughout the millennia of human history, women have been denied educational opportunity. Mount Holyoke College, which we believe is the oldest women's college in the world, is only 171 years old. The model of women's separate education began in the US in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and spread to Europe and Canada and then, exported by Christian missionaries, many of them graduates of women's colleges, around the world. Later national governments adopted the model.

Today this less-than-200-year old international women's college movement is both receding and spreading. In the US the number of women's colleges has declined from a high of around 300 to fewer than 60. Women are now welcomed into coeducational educational institutions of all kinds. In fact, women are now a majority in higher education institutions in most countries of the world. And women have advanced significantly in society. In the US, we have a woman president of Harvard, a woman speaker of the house, a woman vying to be president of the US.

Does this mean we can declare victory for women's education and no longer single out women for special attention? We don't think so. While to be sure, tremendous progress has been made in many parts of the world in 171 years, still advancing educational opportunity for women across all ethnic, racial, age, and socio-economic groups within each of our countries is an unfinished agenda. Intertwined with that is an even

more pressing issue and a much larger agenda, that of social justice for women worldwide. The education and advancement of women of the world is the great unfinished agenda of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Despite high profile success stories and considerable progress, the work that women colleges pioneered – and now share with coeducational institutions – is far from complete. It is disheartening that so few women are at the top: in the US, only 2% (10 of 500) of top CEO positions and 14.7% of board seats on *Fortune 500* companies; 21% of college and universities presidencies; 14% of senators (14) and 16% (70) of members of the House. In fact, the U.S. ranks 69<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of women's representation in national legislatures or parliaments out of 187 countries.<sup>1</sup> Four decades after the Equal Pay Act, women earn on average 77 cents of every dollar of their male counterparts.

But even more distressingly educational opportunity for girls and women in some parts of the world is nothing short of bleak, as is their access to fundamental rights and human dignity. Only 1% of the titled land in the world is owned by women; 70% of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty are women and children; 21% of the world's managers are female; 62% of unpaid family workers are female; 67% of all illiterate adults are female; 1440 women die in childbirth each day (one every minute); 85 million girls worldwide are not able to attend school.

It's distressing that in every country of the world, including the most supposedly advanced, women lag behind in their development as citizens and leaders.

What do women need educationally to fulfill their human potential? In societies that, consciously or unconsciously, treat women as inferior – that is, in virtually every society in the world to a varying degree – women need educational affirmation. They need access, respect; they need mentors and models of what they could become.

One of the most exciting parts of this alliance has been to learn that new women's colleges are emerging in parts of the world where opportunities for women have been limited. We admire the spunk and spirit of our new international sisters in the Middle East, Africa, and East Asian and are learning a great deal from them.

We find common ground in our shared commitment to the unfinished agenda: the education and advancement of women. As Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate, said at our first conference in 2004, "There are few subjects that can match the social significance of women's education in the contemporary world." When women are educated, all of society improves whether in terms of economic productivity, public health, or an engaged citizenry.

From our perspective, the best reason for the continuing existence of women's colleges is that they work exceedingly well in educating students. And, more than that, our very existence makes women and women's education matter. Women are still the world's greatest underutilized natural resource. We are in a position to help to develop it.

Together, we have strength and clout. It is on a world stage that we educators must see our work. The forces of global economics and interconnectivity are changing our world. Global responses to many problems are needed, but few structures to deal with such problems are in place. We live in an era where collective identities — nation, ethnicity, religion, gender — are called into question, but the quest for personal identity and meaning is stronger than ever.

How do we educate students in such a world? How do we encourage our students to have hopes and dreams and to have the confidence and skills to realize them? How do we encourage women to have a role in politics? This we can learn from one another. Moreover, we can work together, exploring further the programs, alliances, and initiatives that will enable us to reimagine and reinvigorate the possibilities of internationalized education in the twenty-first century. That's what this alliance is all about and I'm so pleased to be part of it. And, it is wonderful to be here in Pavia for this gathering of women's college leaders from around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.thewhitehouseproject.org/v2/researchandreports/snapshots.html>

## CAROL CHRIST, PRESIDENT OF SMITH COLLEGE

This morning I would like to reflect for a few minutes on the critical challenges facing women's education, and what distinctive resources we have, as women's colleges, to address them.

The primary challenge facing us, I believe, is the differential access that women have to education. There is a story told about Smith College's founder, Sophia Smith, that has always impressed me a vivid image of the educational deprivation of girls. When Sophia Smith was a little girl, in western Massachusetts, in the early nineteenth century, boys got to go to school all day; girls could just join the boys in the afternoon. Because Sophia Smith was so hungry for knowledge, she used to walk with her brothers to school and sit outside the school house on the steps, straining to hear what the teacher said inside. Little wonder that when she unexpectedly inherited a large fortune, she decided to use it to found a college for women that would be in every way equivalent to the finest colleges for men.

There are too many places in the world where girls still can't enter the school room on equal terms with boys, whether that schoolroom be at the primary, the secondary, or the college level. This is of course an issue of social justice, but there is much at stake for all humankind as well. As Nobel prize winning economist Amartya Sen has argued in his book, *Development as Freedom*, the education of women has a powerful correlation with the reduction of fertility, decrease in infant mortality, and therefore economic development. Sen has argued that the surest measure of the social well-being of a people is the education of its women. We must all become advocates for women's education, and who is better able to take on that role than the leaders, students, and faculty of women's colleges.

In such advocacy, we must place particular emphasis, I believe, on science and technology. Women are still significantly under-represented in those fields. Women make up 46% of the work force in the United States, for example, but hold only 12% of the jobs in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics. Women therefore cannot play the role they might in developing solutions to engineering problems, to medical problems, to environmental problems. Women's lack of representation in these fields diminishes their power because they are not playing the role that they might in the scientific and technical advancement that is so powerful a determinant of our contemporary world. By women's under-representation in these fields, we are depriving ourselves of much of the talent pool and of the diverse perspectives women might offer.

To provide women equal access both to these jobs and others, we must take on the issue of women and work. We still have a model of the successful career that doesn't provide the kind of time and flexibility women and men need to fulfill their family responsibilities. In a commencement address delivered at Smith College in 1993, the newspaper columnist Ellen Goodman said that the women's movement was supposed to travel on two legs. "With one leg we were to kick open the doors that were closed to women, and on the other leg, we were to move ahead—transforming society through men *and* women." But, she went on to say, it's been a lot easier to kick open the doors than to change society, "so that we've been dragging that second leg behind us, limping through the lopsidedness of social change." The main reason, I believe, that we've been dragging that second leg behind us is our failure to change social and workplace policies in ways that better accommodate family responsibility. Advocacy for such change should be one of our priorities.

It will be difficult to make these changes if women do not have greater access to political power. There are still far too few women in many of our countries who hold political office. Only by holding political office—in positions of executive leadership, in legislatures, in the judiciary—can women enjoy the leverage that they need to develop policies that embody their values, needs, and priorities.

So as advocates, these, I believe, should be our priorities—women's education, particularly in science and technology; workplace policies that accommodate family responsibilities; and political leadership.

What resources do we have to bring to bear in such advocacy? One of the most powerful contributions that women's colleges make is to connect one generation of women to the next, inspiring generations of leaders and pathbreakers. Smith and Mount Holyoke, like many American colleges, have just celebrated the commencement of their graduating seniors and the reunion of their alumnae. At women's colleges, these celebrations have a distinctive shape that powerfully links generations of women. At Smith, on the day before commencement, we share a ritual called Ivy Day. The seniors, all dressed in white, each holding a single red rose, line up on both sides of a path down which the alumnae march, oldest first. When the last women in the alumnae parade begin walking down the aisle of seniors, the seniors at the end begin to follow. The faculty reviewing the parade see pass in front of them all the ages and stages of women's lives, from women in their nineties to the twenty-one and twenty-two year olds just graduating. It is a moving spectacle that

brings tears to many eyes. I deliver a state of the college speech, which applauds the success both of the campus community and the alumnae, because the college enfolds all of them. The 50<sup>th</sup> reunion class gives a gift to the graduating class to provide the nest egg of the gift that those graduates will give the college at their 50<sup>th</sup> reunion. The next day, at the commencement ceremony proper, we often invite an alumna to give the commencement address. Last year, the speaker was the feminist pioneer and Smith graduate, Gloria Steinem, who had celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> reunion the year before. She closed by saying, "For now, just measure the distance from my graduation to yours -- from my class with only one student of color to your diverse class; from my era of no women's history to yours that has been strengthened by women's history. You can match or surpass that distance that we have covered.

"Now, it's true that I have every intention of living to be 100. But even I, hope-oholic that I am, know when you return to celebrate your victories and inspire the class of 2057, I won't be with you."

"But then again: I will."

It is that chain of connection among the generations of our alumnae that is our most powerful resource. The pioneers of one generation can inspire and mentor the next. And Women's Education Worldwide has another resource—the power of our connection with each other. We can connect women not only in our own countries but across our borders, learning from each other and pursuing our common agenda.

## **WOMEN'S EDUCATION TO POLITICS: THE POWER OF COLLEGE LIFE AND ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION**

### **CLAUDE DU GRANRUT**

Committee of the Regions of the European Union  
Mount Holyoke Alumna

First of all I would like to thank both Joanne Creighton, President of Mount Holyoke College, Rector Paola Bernardi and Saskia Avalle of Collegio Nuovo to give me this opportunity to talk about Women in politics and the role of Higher Education and Alumnae associations through my own experience.

In preparing this lecture I realized that I may have missed some opportunities or lacked of determination. Be sure I will not conceal them as they are part of life and may be of some use for the fight of women for political responsibilities.

From my experience and from what I have noticed in other women's political career, I may assert that to engage into a political career demands: strong beliefs, deep rooted convictions and a good education to be able to defend them and to manage a true political career

#### *1. Strong beliefs and deep rooted convictions*

As a young girl I had witnessed the weakness of democracy and the fearfulness of dictatorship and I came to the conclusion that there was something missing in the exercise of political power.

My year at MHC has given me the sense of being able to do things that very few young girls could do at that time : I had been lucky enough to study in an American University dedicated to women's higher education with an exceptional faculty, I had made friends with young people of another culture I had been on my own for more than a year and I had been acquainted with a country where everyone is eager to be a success for themselves and for the country where they have found a sense of liberty and a support for their ambitions.

It was in 1947-1948 and it meant a lot to a war orphan coming from Europe torn to pieces by the war.

Back to France and finishing my academic curriculum at Sciences Po I was ready to enter business or public life to make a career and, why not, to have an impact on the world evolution.

And then I encountered the biggest disappointment of my life: after these studious years I was offered an unqualified position: I realised that I was trapped in a dreadful net of traditions and taboos and I decided that it was an unbearable injustice.

Things had to be changed: Why should I be treated as any other student at Sciences Po and as a second rate citizen in professional life?

I turned to Journalism writing articles mostly in Women magazines on subjects that were not fashion or make up and I began to militate for women's associations. Then I had the opportunity to enter the public service: first in a government agency for professional training and later in the Labor Department where I was in charge of women's work. I found out that Public Service discriminates less than private business and that the capacity of changing society and traditions rested in the exercise of the political power and legislation. At that time they were very few women in active politics. Except for Simone Veil who had a true political power, the women who were appointed as junior ministers had no real power of decision and they would disappear as soon as there was a new government.

The only way to have some influence into the political world was to start from the beginning to get to know this strange world of men and behave as a woman who has her own priorities, her own sense of political action and her own convictions.

Hard work I can tell you: dealing with unexpected blows, not missing an opportunity to express my own views, accepting all kind of tasks, taking the floor, even when not ask to do so, in a public reunion, talking to all kinds of audiences to make them aware of what is really at stake in a government specific decision, to make a woman voice and beliefs heard by one's colleagues.

The choice of a political party is important because this is the only way to have a chance to run for an election even at the lowest level such as a municipality.

## *2. A good education*

Thanks to Mount Holyoke and to Sciences Po. I felt strong enough to struggle through this jungle and to assert myself through my arguments, to impose my remarks and to make my propositions accepted.

I realized that I knew better than many of my colleagues the French Constitution, the civil code, the administrative tiers and the articles of the Labor law which induce discrimination in women's salary and lack of opportunities to reach executive functions.

Been elected, I had to adapt myself to my new responsibilities but I wanted to do it in a woman's way. When elected Deputy Major of Senlis I proposed new budget rules which astonished the Major and I looked very carefully on every expenses I had to sign up. Public money has to be spent with even more care than a family budget because it's the money taken from the pocket of your fellow citizens. I also believed that Senlis chance was its historical heritage and it should be preserved and restored beforehand to attract new economic development.

As vice-president of the Picardy Regional Council in charge of railways infrastructures, I decided that the new trains should be able to carry strollers, bicycles and carts for disabled. In order to support territorial development I persuade the majors of small cities to get together to obtain better financial aid from the Regional Council.

In doing so I kept in mind two mains ideas: women have to prove that they have a specific view of the needs of the people and a long term vision of the future of the society and in doing so women could integrate and improve the duties and the image of the political world.

When I was appointed by the French government to the Committee of the Regions, I took sometimes to study before the opening session the principle of subsidiarity which justifies the consultative role of the Committee and the European funds criteria for regional financial aid and thanks again to MHC I could speak English with my colleagues outside the meeting rooms and it helped me to become popular among them.

I focused on some issues such as territorial cooperation between Regions and Cities, infrastructures (roads, railways, airports, canals), european institutions, citizens rights and lately Education of the youngsters and communication with the citizens on European matters.

I became a member of the Presidium, was elected President of the European Popular Party Group and was chosen by my colleagues to be a member of the Convention on Fundamental Rights (2000) and two years later at the Convention which drafted a Constitutional Treaty (2002).

I must admit that at this stage I did not feel any discrimination. On the contrary I realised that being a woman was an advantage; I was listened to even by my opponents and I was a real asset for my party colleagues who would send me when there was to be a tough argument with members of another political party. As President Poncelet of the French Senate would say "Women are more courageous than men".

After its rejection by France and Netherlands, I chaired a group for maintaining the articles in favour of the role of the Committee of the Regions and for implementing a new communication program towards the European citizens. I am taking the opportunity of the French Presidency of the European Union to organise a seminar on promoting Mobility and Multilingualism for the European scholars and students during their Curriculum.

I feel proud of what I have been able to achieve although I wished I had done more: I have not been elected as a member of the French national Assembly, I missed the Senate by an inch and I have not been a member of government.

I have not been careful enough to take or to ask firmly for opportunities. To my defence I must recall the traditional French society its taboos about women and family life at the time I was married and had to bring up five children.

Some historical data:

1945 General de Gaulle authorized women to vote. At that time, girls counted for 4% of the Baccalaureate holders. The same percentage for those who attended university. Only a few professional skills were opened to women. No contraception. Women received 30 to 35% less in salaries. A married woman needed her husband's permission to open a bank account.

Within 50 years, things have greatly changed. The number of girls in University amounts to 50% or more of the students. Women represent more or less 50% of the work force. They hold around 30% of executive functions in private business or public service. In most occidental countries women amount to 20 to 45% of the Parliament members and/or government members. They have free access to contraception and even to abortion on specific circumstances.

### 3. *About the Future*

Based on these statistics it seems that there is nothing more to do: in most European and American countries women's talents are recognized by the law and by the society and accepted by the masculine gender. Is the battle over? Should we be satisfied with the result of our day to day fights? Have all our dreams come true?

I would not say so.

Progress is not fulfilment and this improvement has touched only a small part of the female world population. We still have some duties to perform.

Now that we have gone a long way, thanks to Mary Lyon and other dedicated and visionary women, we have to make sure that the new generation which are our daughters and grand daughters, will take more social, economic and political responsibilities in their communities will they be local, national or international. They must improve what we have painfully achieved.

Not only for the implementation of their rights but also for the sake of politics and the leadership of world affairs. The political world has to be renewed and more opened to the participation of the citizens in order to be rehabilitated in public opinion. At the time of internet and television, the political sphere cannot go on as an elite club, a closed shop for ambitious male individuals, good speakers on television and tough guys to eliminate their opponents.

The world issues such as energy shortening, climate change, financial disorders, immigration, radicalism and terrorist action, unbalanced distribution of wealth, poverty, health and demography. These new issues that have to be handled, need women's voice, intelligence, imagination and global vision of the future.

The new generation has the tools: education, free use of their bodies, choice in their family planning, to enter professional and political life on an equal foot with men. They should not miss that chance. They should take it for the benefit of men and women worldwide.

That is our first and I would say easy duty.

Our second duty might be more demanding and on a longer term. We have to help the millions of women who are still discriminated, do not have access to higher education, even to basic education, who cannot consider to become economically independent, to have the children they want, to vote the way they like, to be eligible to public responsibilities. In short to help them to be regarded as persons and "first class citizens".

In doing so we must be careful not to impose our culture, our values and our sense of freedom. We must respect their own culture, their religions, their ancestral traditions and their specific issues. They have to find their own way to education, to participate in public life and to enjoy taking responsibilities outside their home.

Even if some of them have already reached a stage of participation comparable to the one we have reached because they belong to a certain level in the social hierarchy or have joined women's associations, the great majority of women living in Africa, in Middle East and in Asia still do not have access to education neither to professional activities nor to public life.

The task is huge and will need determination from those already in charge of women's education and strategy to convince public authorities to offer a chance to their female youngsters that is to give to every six years girl, rich or poor, the opportunity to learn how to read and how to write and around 10 years old to be taught on history, mathematics, sciences, new technologies and languages so that she will be in a position to ask for higher education to become a responsible adult, a real asset for the development of her country and a leader for a more balanced state of the world.

This Forum is a wonderful opportunity to measure this challenge and to establish the basis of a long term strategy. Colleges' Presidents and Alumnae associations have their capacity to take that challenge of enlarging to women of other countries their mission of giving to these students the best environment, the appropriate curriculum and the specific values to become responsible leaders in their profession with the security of the constant support of an alumnae association and the example of its successful sister members.

I know that some of them question the place of women's colleges in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century. I believe that they are still and may be more necessary to attract top female students not only in the States or some other places as in Italy but all over the world. And from conversations with Asian, Indian and other foreign students at MHC I am sure that there will be a positive answer to any proposal of creating women's college in this part of the world as it will entitled their female population to a safe higher education and to the knowledge and culture they need to become responsible adults and a new asset for their countries.

As everyone I made a dream. Let me tell it to you.

The Presidents of Women's Colleges would meet to establish a common agenda to fulfil this new mission: give to the girls of the countries where higher education is not as yet accessible the same opportunities they offer to their students.

They could consider to organise special links between these Institutions and theirs: exchange of students as well as members of the faculty; the same diploma recognised by graduate schools everywhere, common alumnae associations.

Don't you think that the vision of having truly educated women as citizens, could be a decisive argument for governments to invest in women's colleges campus in order to give culture, qualifications, ambition, sense of responsibility to half of their population.

Also, just imagine what potential power could have an Association of Alumnae of these colleges from all over the world.

I know it is a dream. I wish it could come true.

**MESSAGE FROM EMMA BONINO  
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN SENATE  
IN OCCASION OF THE THIRD MEETING OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION WORLDWIDE**

First of all, I would like to thank Collegio Nuovo for this invitation and I would also like to send my greetings to the many people from the academic world and its institutions who I know to be present.

Throughout my career, I have always kept aboard of and had a particular passion for human and civil rights and the right of women: for the latter, I have supported their full involvement in the running of the economy in their own countries. Every time that I got close to a country that I didn't know very well, the strategy of looking at the situation of women gave me some immediate insight into the culture, the freedom and the laws of its society. This strategy has never failed me.

In human and economic terms, women are the most untapped resource on our planet and therefore, initiatives like this meeting for 'Women's Education Worldwide' are wonderful opportunities to share experiences and increase the value of female potential and encourage the assertion of their rights.

Women's education, especially at university level has the strategic duty to create female leadership that can establish itself and provoke change for all the less fortunate women who do not have open access to a sufficient level of education.

Exchanges experienced on an international level are ever more necessary for our young and moreover for women, given that they must fight to assert themselves in situations that are not always free from discrimination. The action taken by Collegio Nuovo is all the more precious for this reason in the promotion of educational opportunities which go beyond the nation's boundaries.

I am thus sure that you will have a very interesting debate about the future and I wish you all the very best in this task.

## EXCERPTS FROM “NUOVITÀ – 2008”

### THREE IMAGES: BARBARA POLLASTRINI AND MANY WOMEN ON THE MOVE

«In order to be here I did a little mischief that a good parliamentary like Romana Bianchi or Piera Capitelli would not have done»: the third meeting of *Women's Education Worldwide – Women and Politics* has been opened by the honourable Barbara Pollastrini, who straight away declared her friendship bond with Pavia, city where, last September she launched, together with Stefano Rodotà, the second edition of the “Festival dei Saperi”, a cultural and interdisciplinary event.

At the time of Minister Berlinguer, while Ms. Pollastrini dealt with school, research and university, she had the opportunity to study in depth «the value of merits, of the individual talents, of the deontology, of the necessary rules for a selection of the ruling class and the formation of a public ethics that could be modern and shared. This is how she introduced herself in her autobiography when she was Minister of Rights and Equal Opportunities; she particularly cares for the feminine declination of the title [in Italian: “Ministra”] because she strongly believes that “working on women’s opportunities” does not mean working for “a niche”, but to cultivate and stand up for an original point of view that is essential for all political and social aspects.

It is probably also for these shared values and perspectives that a woman like her, active in politics since her university studies in Bocconi, “flew” (also literally) from Rome in order to intervene in an international occasion, like the WEW, promoted by a university system that has always been founded and grew on basis of merit, a value that we know has no political colour, but concrete productive potentials.

Honourable Pollastrini places the women’s issue within the vaster contest of “rights”, even on a global level. «The link between memory and future» is, in the first place, in the hands of women: starting from the recurrence of the sixtieth year of the Declaration of human rights and of our Constitution (with an eye on the present and one on the future, to the Treaty on Fundamental Rights included in the European Treaty of Lisbon), Ms. Pollastrini identifies in these charters the expression of a ruling class who looked ahead and who, amongst the possible choices, took the most modern one: to place the human being and its value at the centre of all. A choice of modern democracy in which the role of women’s history has played an essential role.

Therefore, we can also explain the appearance, in a world rich of potentials and uneasiness, of many female moral leaders (amongst the others Segolène Royal, Michelle Bachelet and “Hillary”, she mentioned in the first place, Ingrid Betancourt, who was going to be released less than a month later). A cosmopolitan look and a focus on human rights allow the advance and progress of these “women on the move”: independently from economic or social (including the presence of wars), or sanitary differences, these women feel they have a common destiny, nonetheless they do not create a movement, a system nor a net.

«I say it like so» – she hazards a slogan – «do not give up the grand imaginations. It is necessary to build common ideas and sayings» and not only at a European level. Words that launch a challenge that a network like that of Women’s Education Worldwide is willing to work hard in order to face it.

In describing the Italian situation, Barbara Pollastrini, referred to three “images” and to a recently published and strongly discussed volume, *Il fattore D* [D stands for “donna”, woman; in English it would be *The W factor*], whose author, Maurizio Ferrera, has also been professor at the faculty of Political Sciences of Pavia for eighteen years.

Three images, hence.

Image 1: CRUI’s meeting [the Conference of the Italian University Provosts]: 98% male. Nonetheless, within the university field, women are growing in numbers, and similarly even within the judicial bench and in the economic fields. However, not even in the assembly held by Mario Draghi [governor of the Bank of Italy] the picture would be dissimilar. Not to mention the situation within the political system, towards which her judgement is both severe and impartial: «chief roles in politics? Let us not even talk about it. Also in my Democratic Party there has been a surprising generosity... they were saying 50% to women, where did this 50% get interrupted?». The never-ending problem of the “crystal roof” or of the “labyrinth of leadership”, according to a metaphor recently proposed by professors of Wellesley College and of Northwestern University: in any case, the backbone of the elite (cultural, political, professional) is in general male and elderly. There are only a few exceptions, but limited to areas where the dynamic elements of competition and value of merit are strongest: a woman president of Confindustria [the Italian federation of Industrials], a woman President of the Young Industrials, and the actual Secretary General of UGL is a woman, and even the first in Italy to hold such role, in addition to being the youngest Secretary General ever head of a Labour Union.

Image 2: percentage of working women in Italy: 46%. An amount that is still far from the aim that should be reached, according to the European criteria, within 2010 of 60%. Moreover, this percentage results being spread out in a dramatic way, 69% is concentrated around Milan and the remaining 31% works in the South of Italy.

Image 3: Italy is the country with the lowest demographic growth rate: in 2020 we will be, together with Germany, the country with less youngsters.

A policy that is willing to invest in the expansion of women occupation and in emergency measures to promote women's merits, Ferrera suggests, could produce an incredible increase of the GDP (+20%, bringing the level of women's occupation to the same level as male's occupation, therefore 70%).

Moreover, Barbara Pollastrini adds, with the emphasis of who remembers to have fought for an extraordinary plan in favour of women's work, through the use of economic incentives, but who is also upset for the recent cut of the funds destined to the fight against violence on women: «an economic growth. I'd say also a civil growth. If this is not desired, then there must be an illness». A disease that she identifies not only in the already criticised provincial look, but also in the conservatism of the ruling classes, that depends also on a more general «deficit of liberal and laic thought». An impeachment that does not prevent her from proposing us, amongst the last images, that of Cardinal Martini's answer to the question regarding what could and should politics do in order to regenerate itself: «allow itself to be illuminated by the feminine look».

If these pictures highlight a situation that needs more than just a push and in which, along with the awareness and women pressures, there is also their "tacit approval", the duty to put them together is left to us and, once again, we need to tie the «link between memory and future». To begin with, as Ferrera in his book suggests, considering Italy's advantage compared to other countries, we should play the card (not resolving, but however winning) of women's occupation. Option that other states, like the Northern European countries, have already applied finding themselves now in front of the challenge to increase investments and productivity throughout other ways.

## THE ITALIAN SITUATION: PINK?

The WEW meeting of Pavia, that held at the centre of the debates the topic of “women and politics”, has been a precious opportunity to discover the level of women’s emancipation in such a traditionally male – and sexist – field as politics.

As a matter of fact, although at a global level women have definitely improved their situation and not only in the more developed countries, but also in developing states, there is still a lot of space for improvement: referring to some data, we just need to remember that the quota of women head of state and head of government is, in both cases, under 5%; that women are ministers of state only with regards to fields that are typically reserved to a more “feminine sensibility” (Social affairs, Family, Equal opportunities, Education, Environment...), while, on the other hand, there are no women minister of Defence or Chancellor of the Exchequer, clearly highlighting the fact that some male strongholds are still relatively impenetrable.

The presentation that Alberta and I prepared for the foreign guests has been a unique occasion to find out how women have progressed within the Italian political world. Women’s emancipation in Italy has, without a doubt, followed the track laid down by the European and American feminist movements, nonetheless, the traditionally sexist society and the twenty years of fascism have made harder their takeover of some powerful positions: only in 1946 women have had the right to vote, for twenty years after the Second World War the government has been composed only of male members, there has not yet been a female Head of Government nor Head of State... According to a study carried out by the United Nations and updated in January 2008, Italy is the 30<sup>th</sup> country in the world with regards to percentage of women in ministerial positions and the 68<sup>th</sup> for number of women in Parliament...

The first steps have been made in the second half of the eighteenth century when women, such as Anna Kuliscioff and Anna Maria Mozzoni carried on, unfortunately without success, the battle for women’s right to vote. However, an important achievement has been attained when, in 1902, the first social law in favour of women workers was passed, clearly recognising the role that they had taken on within society.

Nonetheless, the first half of the nineteenth century has not been a fortunate era for women: after having been a fundamental element in the administration of society throughout the First World War, the “female universe” has been confined to a secondary position during the fascist rule. The woman had to be a proper daughter, a proper wife, a proper mother and any further “foolish ambition”, such as working outside one’s home or carrying on with university studies, were strictly discouraged. Curious enough that in 1923 women obtained the right to vote for administrative elections: a considerable achievement, if it were not for a fascist amendment that totally eliminated local administrative elections!

For women to obtain the right to vote, it will be necessary to wait until 1946 when the universal suffrage became a definite accomplishment; however, although approximately half of the voters were women, they were only 4,6% of the elected. Moreover, it is particularly miserable to observe that in sixty years the situation has only slightly improved: after the last elections, the percentage of women in Parliament is only of 22%.

Furthermore, also with regards to women in ministerial positions, the situation is not “pink”: the first cabinet with a female member was only in 1976, while in the actual government there are only 4 women out of 21 places, two of which are even ministers without portfolio.

Several ways have been tried in order to overcome this deficit: pink quotas (declared unconstitutional), economic sanctions, blocked lists with imposed alternation male-woman, etc. However, although some positive results have been achieved, especially at a regional level, it is always more obvious that a fundamental role has to be taken on by the political parties, since it is them who decide at a national level the arrangement of the candidates lists that are then presented to the electors: it is only through a consciousness raising at party level that a real balanced representation within the Parliament can be achieved.

Barbara Pollastrini, Former Minister of Equal Opportunities within Prodi’s government, has also contended a similar argument. As a response to the impeachment moved against the Democratic Party of having too few women in managerial positions, she replied that it is in the hands of the women themselves to reclaim the space that they rightly deserve, without expecting indulgence from above, but gaining decisional power thorough the upholding of their determination. The fundamental idea is that women have to fight for what they believe they deserve, without expecting that the only fact of being a woman should grant them reserved places.

The conclusions we have reached at the end of our “raid” within the world of women and politics can only partly be seen as “pink”: in spite of the progresses made, we would prefer to be able to take for granted an equal participation within the political life, without having to highlight the single cases of “women who have made it”, but underlining a global trend.

On the other hand, as far as the meeting held is concerned, the assessment can be said to be totally positive: the international guests have been positively struck from the “Pavia system”, with its university, college network and academic atmosphere. Everyone has been exceptionally kind with Alberta and I, handing us their business cards and flattering us with countless compliments for our presentation. The

atmosphere was definitely not too formal, and it was therefore possible to share opinions and receive precious suggestions for our academic and working future.

*Michela Pagano*

## **THE “PINK SIDE OF THE WORLD”**

Three days to see, study and interpret “the pink side of the world”: when and how it exists or not.

To begin with, our focus is on Italy: an Italy in which women face difficulties in order to emerge, they are suffocated and constrained by a system that is deeply infected by chauvinism and conservatism and that for too long a time imposed them the role of mothers and housewives, and later allowed them to enter (but well alert not to let them succeed) in the political, economic and judiciary fields. Women, however, who don't accept any more sexist discrimination in silence, but who, on the other hand, give birth to a women's world that is no longer organised in “movements”, but is actually “moving along” in order to change their status and obtain their rights.

The American and Australian guests, stunned by the distorted and crippling Italian “disease”, propose us “psychological remedies”, such as the studies of the American Claude M. Steele who explains how one becomes and pushes oneself as far as others believe, and consequently allow him to believe, that he can reach; or “group therapies”, such as the “Emily movement”, according to which the elderly members pass their role, after a period of guidance and team work, on to a younger “heir”: naïve suggestions made by who, even understanding from our debates several aspects of the Italian “disease”, can not even imagine the depth of this “pestilence”.

It is a dramatic issue that has solid roots within our present ruling class (that it is still the one from the 1960's): a ruling class who is afraid of all that is youth, newcomers and women, who sees them as frightening competitors and a source of risk for the “throne” that they carefully built and assured themselves throughout the years, and to which they are now morbidly attached. A ruling class, ours, who could not do anything else apart from running away from an Italian “Emily movement”. Unfortunately it is also the same ruling class who gives birth to and handles our academic system, a system in which Steele's theory is sadly inconceivable precisely because their real aim is not to encourage and inspire the growth and development of “the dangerous rising competitor's” capacities through believing and having confidence in them; but, on the contrary, the students are constantly devalued and tested through tricks and personal strikes against their ego: only the strongest survive! However, while we are waiting for admirable institutions, such as our Collegio Nuovo and revealing conferences and meetings such as this one, to change the present situation, I hope and believe that it could actually be precisely this situation that could save us: as a matter of fact, although amongst the mass there are just a few women willing to stand up and fight for their rights, the youngsters who make it are the most ambitious and eager, really ready for anything in order to achieve and fulfil their dreams; and it is like so that they can also begin to cure our precious Italy.

*Alberta Spreafico*

## **NEW GIRLS NETWORK: GOING GLOBAL**

I was talking about our College to a freshly graduated friend who is thinking about her future. I was listing (starting from the garden!) the advantages of being a member of Collegio Nuovo, when I realised that I was using the present tense although it has been years since I left the College: the active network for the Alumnae – apart from making us feel younger! – creates a bond with the College that lasts in time.

This bond and the various aspects of the network system created amongst the Alumnae has been the topic of a workshop held in occasion of WEW's international meeting hosted by our College, and that for the first time also involved representatives of the Alumnae. Within the debate all confirmed the importance for an organisation to maintain the resources that it contributed in creating. Moreover, it is significant that the most important multinational companies, such as Microsoft and P&G, and the most prestigious consulting societies, such as Mc Kinsey and Ernst & Young, also develop “Alumni Network”. The people who have worked within a group, having taken on its style and values, even once they have left it, they are considered important resources with whom the society should keep in contact (ref. *Keeping in touch*. O'Sullivan, Kate. CFO, Dec. 2005, Vol. 21 Issue 17, pp. 89-91). Furthermore, there are even start-up companies specialised in the setting up of networks of Alumni, like the famous Select Minds, founded in New York in the year 2000 (amongst its clients, not only numerous universities, but also companies such as Accenture and Capital One) and also free public Networks, as Linked-In and Plaxo, that favour professional and Alumni networks (also the Collegio Nuovo's Network is, from last May, on Linked-In!).

Discussing, within an international group, a delicate issue, such as female education, highlighted the various possible approaches to favour its development. On the one hand, there is the American colleges' experience: consolidated associations, independent and active, they go further than just offering the

opportunity of social reunions and professional mentoring as they assume the role of social networks. Mary Graham Davis, President of the Alumnae Association of the eldest female American college, Mount Holyoke, and owner of a consultancy firm in New York, underlined how her Alumnae Association's "life net", offering support and advices, helps, for example, the freshly graduated students to avoid the "burn out" from too much work in the Big Apple. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia's case: Haifa Jamal Allail, Provost at Effat College, remaining a bit puzzled in front of what seemed to her just an archive of Alumnae's addresses. (Here our Paola, switching from English to Latin, set off with a clearing that referred to the etymology of Alumnus – *al/o*, nourish – obtaining further admiration from the international guests, already charmed by the hospitality). Now that we have confirmed the importance of the Alumnae's Associations, let us move on to see how to keep them working, make them attractive for our colleagues and advantageous for the organising colleges. The identity of the Association is strengthened by three elements: a solid sense of membership towards the college, the prestige of the institution and the association's activism. As a matter of fact, the most important Alumnae's networks – at a corporate or university level – have undertaken activities that are in accordance with the initial institution's values, but are then autonomous and with a personal brand. For example, the American female universities' associations (two of the famous "Seven Sisters" that founded the WEW), organise a joint training for their Alumnae; Microsoft's Alumni have founded both the investment company, Voyager Capital, and the philanthropic "Microsoft Alumni Giving Foundation". Starting from this point we described the relatively small, but nonetheless significant, experience of the IUSS' Alumni's Network: having a "spread out" identity, tied for certain aspects to some of the colleges of Pavia, for others to the ordinary IUSS' courses and for further others to Master level courses, the Association is strengthened from the "transversal" activities organised by its members for both Alumni and Students. Therefore, the Association does not arrange social events, but workshops that could be of transversal interest regarding, for example, communication techniques, time handling and organisation, or the improvement of one's personal curriculum. Moreover, Alumni IUSS organises for its students professional meetings with companies' directors, researches, administrator delegates and professionals. Through these activities Alumni IUSS aims at being more attractive for its members while being useful for the original institutions: the IUSS, the colleges and the University.

Furthermore, it is interesting that, differently from the previous "old-boys' network" (the typical impenetrable male systems, composed of graduates from prestigious universities and a cause of social immobility), the model of female associations is based on a new set of values: it welcomes instead of excluding, it promotes solidarity instead of power, mentoring instead of nepotism, renewal instead of immobility. A recent article on the "New York Times" renamed female professional and post university networks "New Girls networks", clearly in contrast with the "old boys". And it could not be more fitting to talk of "New Girls" within the Collegio Nuovo!

However, a fresh and international debate on female networks could not have limited itself to a four hours "chat": as a matter of fact, the meeting ended with a concrete proposal and activities agenda.

We have realised the incredible potentials that the WEW network could have not only towards the colleges, but also for the Alumnae. There could be several advantages of an international network of Alumnae: reinforcement of the tie between WEW's institutions, escalation of the international exchange programs and especially of the international relations between women who, even without sharing a study experience within the same college, can link through their willingness to understand and integrate. Therefore: *New-girls network: going global?*

*Anna Lanzani*