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**THE NEXT MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE:**  
**Ending Domestic Violence**  
**Plenary: Women of Color in the Movement**  
**Beth Richie**  
**August 30, 1999**

Page 1  
BOS: kmc

Side 1

WILLIAM D. RILEY: This morning we have a -- what we'll try and maintain is the same level of presentations, and I hope there are no more conspiracies this morning. But I'd like to welcome you this morning. If there are a few of you who have not been in attendance during Sunday, your colleagues will indeed tell you about it. This morning I think -- this morning we have a special guest, and it's my pleasure to present Karen Meyer as your keynote speaker this morning. Karen Meyer joined the ABC network, ABC 7, as a contributing editor for issues pertaining to people with disabilities in July, 1991. Ms. Meyer's segments appear every Thursday and Sunday on ABC Channel 7 news. The program is called "This Morning." Ms. Meyer has a personal and professional interest in issues pertaining to people with disabilities since 1992. Ms. Meyer has had her own consulting firm called Karen L. Meyer & Associates. She's also Director of the Office of Students with Disabilities at DePaul University. Although profoundly deaf, Ms. Meyer is an active public speaker for various organizations. She represents and has worked to enact legislation to better the lives, homes and jobs of both the homeless and the disabled. Please this morning welcome Karen Meyer to the podium.

(APPLAUSE)

KAREN MEYER: Good morning. Thank you. Can you hear me? I move around a lot, not too much now that I'm recovering from a broken ankle from roller skating, you know? Just one of those things that happens. It's an honor to be here this morning. For those of you who are not from Chicago, welcome to Chicago. It's a wonderful city. I'm here to speak about a topic that's very close to me. It's the population of people with disabilities. For those of you who are not familiar with the population of people with disabilities, we represent 54 million Americans \_\_\_\_\_ have one or more disabilities. That's about 22% of today's population. Unfortunately, for many of us being a person with a disability we're often overlooked. We're often under-represented. \_\_\_\_\_ especially for women with a disability who are often a victim of abuse physically \_\_\_\_\_. Now, how many of you have seen the movie or remember the movie "What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?"? \_\_\_\_\_ people make fun of the movie. People often make references to Bette Davis' character in "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" but, unfortunately, those \_\_\_\_\_ are still happening. Unfortunately, many individuals with disabilities, especially women, are not able to speak out for themselves or are afraid to speak out for themselves. There are many shelters around the country, but,

unfortunately, there's two things that happen. First, it's not much the accessibility issue but \_\_\_\_\_ their caretaker. They're afraid that if they voice a complaint that they will become more abused. There's also a fear(?) of trust. Can they trust the agency \_\_\_\_\_?

What I would like to do is make some recommendations to how to not hopefully end domestic violence but improve the situation so that more people disabilities can access the shelters and the services that's available around the country. First of all, \_\_\_\_\_ somebody in the media, and I understand the power of the media. It's more public awareness and education. We need to educate shelter \_\_\_\_\_ service agencies, women \_\_\_\_\_, disabilities \_\_\_\_\_, state and city agencies, hospitals, our legal system on how to understand or recognize the situation when a woman with a disability is being abused. I mean recognize and understand some of those \_\_\_\_\_ on the individual \_\_\_\_\_, understand what's acceptable and what's not acceptable. You know there's a lot of individuals like individuals \_\_\_\_\_. They can't always speak out for themselves or they're not always clear, but there's a behavior that you could recognize, that maybe that individual that needs help. Maybe you need to bring in another person who understands how to communicate with an individual with a disability, how to recognize that

that individual is calling out for help.

Secondly is when the individual has been identified as a victim of abuse. What do you have available to assist that victim? \_\_\_\_\_ any funding to establish personal assistance if the individual needs the personal assistance? Is \_\_\_\_\_ funding available to help the individual find housing? What about access to communication? What about if the individual needs a telecommunication device for the deaf and that person is deaf? Do you have those equipment or accommodations available for individuals with disabilities to assist them in your shelter or do you understand what those are or how to find the individual? Three, accessibilities \_\_\_\_\_ communication \_\_\_\_\_ in shelters. Yeah, many shelters by law have made accommodations, one room only, maybe one bathroom and one room only, but what about when you have group sessions? Is that room available? Accessible? Do you have interpreters available or \_\_\_\_\_? What do you do with an individual who has what we call \_\_\_\_\_ disability, has more of some form of mental retardation? How do you communicate that information that may be too intellectual or too broad(?) for the individual to understand? Who do you contact to bring those people in there who have better tools to work with those individuals?

My \_\_\_\_\_ recommendation is to contact the Center

for Independent Living. All across the United States we have over 400 Centers for Independent Living. No matter where you live there's a Center for Independent Living right by you. They are your best resource. In Chicago we have \_\_\_\_\_ . Fortunately we have a session set up on domestic violence. We're lucky here. But not every city has that. However, what they do have is \_\_\_\_\_. They have individuals with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_ who have the resources that will be able to assist you with disability, with communication. And you know, more importantly, is something that can't be taught. It has to do with the attitude of your staff. I'm a real big believer in attitude because even with \_\_\_\_\_ with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_ is the law. We can change the law tomorrow. But something about attitude. You can't teach people about how to be comfortable, how to approach an individual with a disability. \_\_\_\_\_ attitude is through experience(?). Ask the right questions. Work with a peer(?) who's not a victim but somebody who can really teach you about the life of an individual with a disability.

Other thing is any type of publicity you do, you have \_\_\_\_\_ . Do you include a line item about assisting a person with a disability? Then it's important that you also remind us individuals with disabilities that we're included in any type of program you have available,

and by doing that just make sure you mention that. Maybe you have a TTY number. Put that down. If you don't have a TTY number, \_\_\_\_\_. That's a sense of comfort for us. I \_\_\_\_\_, and I read all these promotions for services. Very seldom do I see any mention of disability or anything that \_\_\_\_\_ related to a TTY number, and I \_\_\_\_\_, and honestly I ignore them \_\_\_\_\_. I don't feel proud of that program, but if you incorporate that information on your pamphlet \_\_\_\_\_, that will make a big difference. That will open doors, but that would also let the victim know that there's an opportunity to go out and get some help.

The issue is not going to go away overnight. It's a long process. But I really believe that if we work together, we can make a difference. Let people like me, a person with a disability, educate you about how to work with another person with a disability, especially a deaf person. What many of you don't know is my first career is social worker. I was a social worker. I worked with many individuals with disabilities, especially deaf kids who were a victim of sexual abuse \_\_\_\_\_. I worked with the police. I'd teach them about \_\_\_\_\_. I mean we're talking over 20 years ago. Things were very different back there(?). Yes, we've come a long way, but we still have a way to go. So, I want to

thank you for this opportunity, and I hope you always remember that we're part of the system, that people with disabilities are always going to be here. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Thank you. (APPLAUSE) I think that we need to bear in mind the points that Karen just made, and particularly she mentioned the -- a nationwide network of Centers for Independent Living. You know, as we look to collaborate and work with other organizations, particularly as we try and improve our services and do our reach out, we need to do that. And another telling point that we all need to incorporate and keep in mind is the attitude that we carry, and that will affect and indeed sort of characterize our relationships and our ability to work with folks with disabilities. Thank you again, Karen. It's just been great. It's nice having you here. (APPLAUSE)

This morning -- again, easiest job in the world, I've got it -- I have the pleasure of introducing to you two well-known advocates, and they'll be each presenting remarks. I'll introduce them both at this time, Beth Richie, which all of you know, and Beth has been an activist and an advocate in the movement and domestic violence for the past 20 years. Beth was a child prodigy. The emphasis, however, has been on ways that race, ethnicity and social position affect women's experience of violence, focusing on



the experience of African American battered women and sexual assault survivors. She has been a trainer and technical assistant to local and national organizations and is a frequent lecturer for grass-roots, as well as academic, organizations. Dr. Richie is on the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Women's studies at the University of Chicago and the Senior Research Consultant with the Institute on Violence. She is the author of numerous articles and books including Compelled to Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Black Battered Women. Her current work is on the relationship between violence against women and women's involvement in illegal activity and the mass incarceration of low income women of color in this country.

Karen Artichoker. Karen is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux tribe, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. She has been doing domestic violence work specifically in native communities over 18 years. Karen was another child prodigy. Ms. Artichoker is a co-founder and member of the management team for Cangleska, Inc., a comprehensive domestic violence prevention and intervention program located on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation. Cangleska, Incorporated, provides shelter, outreach, advocacy, domestic violence probation, housing development, and coordinates and monitors tribal institutional response to violence against Oglala women. Ms. Artichoker is also

the Director of Sacred Circle, a project of Cangleska, Incorporated, that acts as a national resource center for providing technical assistance, training and consultation to Indian country on the development of tribal strategies to stop violence against Native women. Ms. Artichoker is a Bannerman Fellow and a 1997 recipient of the Marshall's Peace Prize. She is the mother of three daughters and grandmother of six. I'd like to present this morning, in turn, Beth Richie. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

BETH RICHIE: Good morning. I'm thrilled to be sharing this time with Karen as we reflect on this odd time that we're in, this time when we're trying to envision the future by looking at the lessons that we've learned. I'm spending the time between now and the millennium looking not only at what I want to happen next but also at some of the mistakes that we've made in this movement. In particular this morning Karen and I have been asked to share lessons that women of color have brought to this movement. I'm pleased to do so in part because I feel like I grew up in this movement. I grew up as an African American woman struggling to figure out gender oppression, as a feminist trying to make this a fairer world, from an African American feminist perspective, as a lesbian trying to figure out how to be out at a time when we're facing increasing danger in this country, as a woman over 40 whose body is challenging me in different

ways. I want to bring lessons that I've learned from the times that I have felt afraid but also from the strength that I've gotten from women of color all around this country who since the beginning of this movement have been on the cutting edge of radical social change.

As Sandra Camacho suggested, we need to not only talk about our pain and degradation but indeed our joy and our survival in this movement. And I want to take a moment to pay particular attention to this conference. Tillie Black Bear who we honored yesterday was a founding member of the anti-violence movement in this country, and here we are facing the millennium at a conference where Vickii Coffey & Associates, Bill Riley, Laurel Consulting Group, Office Services, the advisory committees, the steering committees, the young people were all led by people of color.

(APPLAUSE) Make no mistake. This conference is a success because of the leadership of people of color in this movement. (APPLAUSE) And still I travel around the country and hear that organizations can't find women of color and other people of color to do the work.

The first lesson that I want to talk about today is a lesson that I'm calling the little-did-we-know lesson. It celebrates, I think, both the things that we've done -- little did we know that there would be facing the millennium 1800 people at this conference, but it's also a message

about little did we know how hard our work would be. As the Polaroid video showed last night, we began this work as an advocacy movement at the grass roots where we listened to women in communities, in our families. Some of us listened to the secrets in our own lives, and we knew that women were being battered, we knew that women were being raped, and we knew it had nothing to do with who they are, where they live, what they did, what they said, what they wore, or how hard they tried. We were clear that it was about gender oppression, male dominance, and a system of patriarchy that held victimization in place. Little did we know, however, that by challenging male dominance and patriarchy we were naming as our enemy one of the most profound systems of degradation in this country, in this world. Little did we know that we were taking on male-dominated police departments and community-based organizations and universities, a male-dominated Congress, male-dominated foundations, and male-dominated streets that were mostly White.

So, we were not only trying to challenge husbands and boyfriends, but we were also trying to challenge landlords and lesbian lovers and parole officers, prison guards and teachers, and, yes, even shelter workers and hotline counselors and advocates who ignored us or embarrassed us or sold out on us because it's too expensive to make a building

accessible, for example, or because you couldn't understand the languages that we spoke. From our position as women of color in this movement we realized that the system was the enemy, and we realized that most of the power in those systems was White. We understood a lot about the power of patriarchy in and of itself, but we also understood how patriarchy was linked with other systems of domination. I think we all knew that in this movement, but I think there are some who chose to not believe it, or so it seems when I reflect back on some of the work we do which explains to me in part why so much of our work is working in a criminal justice system as if it would truly liberate women, or we work with foundations and other funding sources that determine who we hire, and we work with coordinat -- coordinating with community-based organizations who don't have a clue about our radical roots and our vision of social change. And while we have a rhetoric that talks about patriarchy, we find ourselves, as we look back on our history, having colluded with it in some places as if we didn't know that it exists.

Women of color in marginalized groups in this country have known for a long time because we know that racism makes patriarchy worse for us. We know that poverty makes patriarchy worse. We know that being marginalized because of an addiction, being out as lesbians, being young, being

differently abled, and then being battered and raped and harassed, we understand not only patriarchy but how patriarchy is linked with other systems. And I think that we could have taught this movement a few things about that had the movement listened before we're facing the millennium.

That brings me to the second lesson that I want to talk about. I want to talk a bit about how this master's tool will not dismantle this master's house. You all remember that. This is a lesson (APPLAUSE) about how hard it is to work against patriarchy if we don't also work against racism, sexism, heterosexism, able-bodism, and other forms of oppression. In fact it's more than just hard; it's impossible. Racism is violence. So is the degradation of poverty. So is keeping people out of this country because of their HIV status. So is keeping people out of our programs because of their addiction. When we ignore the reality of young people who love each other, we lead to their victimization, and when we ignore the reality that some of those young people who love each other love people of the same gender, it leads to their death, and this is a life-and-death lesson that we need to learn. We cannot work to end violence against women without naming patriarchy as our enemy, and we will not dismantle patriarchy using patriarchal tools. We can't end inequality without -- with

regarding privilege with more privilege. We will not end violence against women by only hiring people with advanced degrees. The police will not set us free. (APPLAUSE) When we play don't-ask-don't-tell games around questions of immigration status or sexuality of people who turn to our services, these are the master's tools. They do not uphold the rights of all of us to live in dignity. Women of color in the anti-violence movement understand this lesson very, very well.

We challenge you to rely on other strategies, not the master's tools, to create social change, which brings me to the third lesson, that we as women of color in this movement have come to understand. We cannot live without our lives. We cannot work in anti-violence programs that ignore our race, our culture, our background, our experience, not only our experience of oppression but also our experiences of strength and survival. We cannot participate in coalitions that don't value our work at home and our communities, and we want to go home again. We want the struggles for health and safety and dignity and livelihood of our communities to be valued as part of this anti-violence agenda, and we want your support for that work. We cannot engage with you any longer on your terms. We are not tokens just here to color up your programs. We bring skills and ideas and commitment and energy just like you do. We can plan one of the largest

national conferences to end violence against women.

(APPLAUSE) And we sometimes bring our anger, and our voices may be louder than what you're used to. We bring our sensitivities from the hurt that has been caused us maybe even before we knew you, and if you want our gifts, like our history, like our leadership in this movement, then you have to accept the other parts of us as well because we cannot live without our lives.

The fourth lesson is about us, those of us who represent groups that have not been recognized as leaders yet in this movement. That's the lesson about how silence won't protect us. Of course you all remember Audrey Lord told us that over and over again. As women of color, some of us as lesbians, as women over 40, some with complicated health problems, histories of incarceration, some with painful stories of abuse that we're still living in, we must not let fear keep us silent. We can't be silent about who we are, where we've been, what we need, who we want to be, and as we agree to be out in this movement, courageously out about what we've done, we have to also be honest about our mistakes. We have to be willing to change, and we have to struggle to continue to be strong leaders and courageous advocates in this movement. We have to commit ourselves to that, and in return we ask respect. We ask that you be open to differences, and we will continue as a movement then to



be self-reflective because being silent about the truth that we know will not protect us. It won't protect battered women, and it won't protect this movement.

Lesson 5 I want to get to right away because I think these lessons are hard lessons, and I know when I feel in a position to learn hard lessons sometimes I lean back on how tired I feel. I feel old. I feel Black. I feel tired. And I let my oppression rise up and overcome my willingness to listen and to learn. This is a lesson about horizontal hostility. Some of you remember Pat Parker, the Black lesbian poet, who talked about this. It's when we feel so oppressed as women that we refuse to take responsibility for the ways that we have excluded girls in this movement, or the times when as lesbians who have a passport we ignore the issues of immigrant rights, or for those of you who are White who may feel like your class status exempts you from working to end racism, and sometimes because our programs don't have enough money we stop thinking about what it feels like to not have a phone to call us or car fare to get to a support group or health insurance to cover costs of our injuries or food for our children to eat. There are lots of examples of this, and there are lots of times in this movement where we've operated from a place of horizontal hostility. We need to take a lesson from the past and not make this same mistake in the next millennium.

And there's a final lesson I want to talk about this morning that's actually a bunch of lessons combined. They come together, like most of these lessons, in the lives of survivors, particularly women of color, and there's one survivor that I want to talk about today briefly. I want to talk about Kimba Smith. August 28, just a few days ago, was her 28th birthday. She spent it in a federal correctional facility for women in Danbury, Connecticut, where she's sentenced to 24.5 years of her young life. She's there for her minimal involvement in a drug distribution conspiracy. Kimba was a first-time offender with no previous criminal record. She's young. She's Black. She was a student at Hampton University, the mother of a preschool child. She's deeply loyal to her family, deeply loyal to her race. And she was battered by a very dangerous man who was -- who terrified her. And she was lied to and manipulated by a criminal justice system that didn't understand her or chose to ignore who she really is. Her most recent attempt for appeal, one of the last options that she has, was denied a few weeks ago. So, she's not only a victim of his abuse. She's also a victim of a mean-spirited criminal justice system with increasingly harsh sentences. (APPLAUSE) And we need to not let her be a victim of our movement's indifference. We need to change the laws. We need to not let them disproportionately hurt young women of color who

are vulnerable and who are battered, and we need to look at our involvement in the criminal justice system not as one to make it work for some but one to work for all. (APPLAUSE)

We're trying to get Kimba Smith clemency, and we need support from the anti-violence movement. Information will be passed around after this morning's session and later in the conference, and we have a petition that we ask people to sign in support of her case, but, more broadly, we ask you to reevaluate your role and your responsibility in working with the criminal justice system so that it is about rights and dignity for all because the final lesson really is about justice. Without justice there will be no peace, and there will be no dignity. We've made tremendous progress since those little-did-we-know days, but our work remains seriously undone. We've built thousands of programs in this country, lots of hotlines, many community intervention services, but we still have more battered women in jails and prisons than in our programs. We have national resource centers at universities and papers that are presented and journals and academic courses, but there are still fewer people of color in higher education because of our erosion of affirmative action in this country and dwindling commitment to public education in low income communities. (APPLAUSE)

We have training programs that train police and judges,

and more and more women are being arrested in this country, and we have higher rates of police brutality and excessive use of force than ever before. (APPLAUSE) We work with health care institutions, but we seem to have given up the fight for national health insurance as central to our work in this anti-violence movement. We have workplace initiatives, but we don't include pimps as employers, and we ignore the exploitation of prison labor in this country, and we don't worry anymore about working conditions for people in so-called welfare-to-work programs. These are sites of violence against women. We have hate crimes in urban areas and on reservations in this country and very little response from the anti-violence movement. Is that because it affects communities of color? We have INS detention centers full of women, and we do troubling little work on the question of immigration in this country. Is that because those are women of color? We have national legislation concerning violence against women, and we worked very hard in this movement to create an exemption for battered women in some of the repressive welfare reform policies. We forgot to say that welfare reform as it was proposed was simply wrong. It was wrong for all women. (APPLAUSE) And women of color can tell you that systematic and persistent poverty is a form of violence against women. We must learn that without justice there will be no peace. This is a lesson that is more than

just about our survival. It's about our liberation for, after all, we are a justice movement, and survivors, battered women, women of color, lesbians, young people, women who are aging, differently-abled women have told us that this movement is about liberation, justice and dignity. We've brought that message to the anti-violence movement over and over again. It's time to listen as we face the new millennium.

We have this opportunity here at this conference. I think of it as this little light of ours, and we have to let it shine and shine and shine not only on our success but on our rage. There are almost 2,000 of us here. We are the ones we've been waiting for, and we have to get ready to go down with this work for justice, peace and safety for all women, for Kimba Smith and for the hundreds of thousands of women who are struggling to survive in places very far from this hotel. I fear if we don't learn this lesson soon about our radical roots and our integrity, then we'll lose the very soul of this movement because we'll lose our commitment to all survivors. For the ones we need to save this morning, I believe, as we envision the future of this work, are really ourselves. We need to save ourselves from apathy, from compliance, from confusion, from self-righteousness and from conservative struggles to be accepted by those who we named early in the day as our enemy. So,

are we on our way to the freedomland? I believe we are if and only if we learn these lessons from women of color and others in our movement whose voices have not been listened to closely or carefully enough. Then we shall indeed overcome because I believe there's courage, wisdom, skill and strength among women of color and that we can guide this work in the new millennium. You promised us something, and if you let us lead, we'll take you to the promised land. That's a place as a movement that upholds the rights of dignity and peace for all women. \_\_\_\_\_ . (APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Karen Artichoker. (APPLAUSE)

KAREN ARTICHOKER: Thank you, Bill. I'd like to extend a handshake from my heart to each of you, and in the traditional way of Native people I'd also like to ask that you accept my apologies for anything that I might say that might offend any one of you. We're all different. We all have our own ways. And certainly it is not my intent to harm anyone here. Also in the ways of Native people we begin any presentation by telling you who we are, and Bill described for you what I do, but for us as Native people it's important that we connect on a different level, and in doing that the way that we do that is that we tell you who we are. So, who I am is -- on my mother's side my mother is Hortense Horst. Her maiden name is Horst, H-o-r-s-t. She's a German. Her grandparents immigrated from Germany and

assumed residency on the Rosebud Indian reservation during the time when Indian land was open for White settlement, after having been stolen, but -- little aside there.

(LAUGHTER) On my father's side that's where you get the name Artichoker, and in my bio Bill told you that I'm an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux tribe which I'm very proud of, but the name Artichoker actually is Ho Chunk. When I say -- I always say enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux tribe because that's my legal pedigree with the United States Government, and as Native people we are the only people in this country that do have legal pedigrees.

However, it's important for me (APPLAUSE), and so I don't get in a lot of trouble also, to let you know that the name Artichoker is actually Ho Chunk or Winnebago, Ho Chunk being the traditional name in the Ho Chunk language for who we are. The name Artichoker actually comes from my grandfather who received the name when the census people came. He's #26 on the Ho Chunk census meaning that he was the 26th person to be enrolled in the tribe when the Federal Government was starting the pedigrees there. And his name was \_\_\_\_\_. Now, my grandfather's name -- father's name was Little Priest. His name wasn't Artichoker or \_\_\_\_\_. So, unlike a Western system of taking the names of the fathers to indicate ownership by the father, in a Native system we all had our own name. And my grandfather's name was

\_\_\_\_\_.. That was his maternal grandfather's name, and his maternal grandfather raised him until he was about six years old, and his maternal grandfather gave him his name at which time then he took a different name because he had given his name away. And so he gave him the name \_\_\_\_\_.. That means blue wing in Ho Chunk. And when the census people came my grandfather was given the name John because you had to have a Christian name. And I always say I'd sure like to meet that guy that turned \_\_\_\_\_ into Artichoker. (LAUGHTER)

So, our name actually is only several generations old, but I think it's a telling story in that as Native people we were tribal, a collective people, but also very much individuals, and in being individuals we had our own names, and so we like to say that like, for instance, Sitting Bull, who is a very, very famous chief, he had four wives, and those women weren't Mrs. Sitting Bull I, Mrs. Sitting Bull II (LAUGHTER), Mrs. Sitting Bull III. Those women each have their own names and their own identities. And pioneer women's journals describe the relationship between Sitting Bull and his wives and the respect and the caring that was there and also the lack of jealousy between those women, but it's for us a very important and -- telling stories. These stories are about who we are as Native people, a recognition that we are a spirit walking in this body, and, you know,



our bodies are comprised of all of the same elements as the earth. So, we're spirits walking in these bodies, and we're not here on a physical journey. We're here on a spiritual journey, and we're walking around in the physical, and our people knew that and respected that about women. So, when we talk about our struggle in many ways it's much different because our struggle is about reclaiming who we are, our personal sovereignty as Native women, knowing that in our communities we were equal, knowing that we had a place that was respected and valued, that we were sacred.

(END SIDE 1, BEGIN SIDE 2)

KAREN ARTICHOKE (CONTINUED): --to brag(?). (LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE) So, when we talk about the role of Native women in this movement we've always been here. It is, though, through women like Tillie Black Bear, and I again want to acknowledge Tillie as a matriarch of the battered women's movement (APPLAUSE) and certainly a matriarch for Indian country, that we've come to some visibility within this movement, and I think Tillie has brought a lot of women, Native women. She's always thoughtful and considerate and always makes sure that people come and have the opportunity to come, and so she's brought a lot of us along with her, and for that we appreciate and acknowledge you, Tillie.

I know when I went with Tillie to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence during committee meeting

I was an innocent babe. (LAUGHTER) I sat at that meeting, and I thought these women are so smart, and I thought what in the world am I doing here? What are we doing here, Tillie? (LAUGHTER) There were concepts and ideas. I mean I'm from South Dakota. (LAUGHTER) I didn't have a clue. Well, I'd gone to an NCADV conference before that, before being on the Steering Committee, and so I have to admit I did have a little bit of clue about how much I didn't know. I thought the best tact(?) was to be quiet so I didn't get myself in any trouble, but I always remember at the Seattle NCADV conference, I mean it was so wonderful. It was like being born. And I was sitting next to -- we brought some of the -- our grandmothers, and I was sitting next to one of our grandmothers, and, I forget, somebody was talking about homophobia in one of these wonderful keynotes, and I thought all those women should have been president, you know, but -- (LAUGHTER), and this grandma leaned over, and she said what is that, Karen? and, to tell you the truth, I sort of faked it because I wasn't really sure myself (LAUGHTER), and she said, oh, that's terrible! (LAUGHTER) And I said yeah.

But we got home, and it was -- I thought what was so wonderful was that we had -- because White Buffalo Calf is a membership society, we had a meeting, and this grandma, she started talking. She said, well, I want to know if Tillie's still the boss here. Where's Tillie at? Oh, she's coming,

Grandma. She says okay. She said, well, you know, we went to that conference. She said that was real good. And she said I -- what I want to know is these women that they were talking about, that they have girlfriends, they care about other women, she said I heard about them. She said I think we have some of them around here. (LAUGHTER) She says but I don't really know. She said but what I want to know is -- and about then Tillie walked in, and she says, Tillie, I want to know could those women that love other women -- could they come to our shelter and be safe and be comfortable? because, you know, that's -- we've got to do that. We have to protect all women here. And it was very simple. There is nothing complicated about it at all. And so, you know, we've always involved elder women. We've looked to elder women, and that's been part of a reclamation for who we are. We've looked for proof and evidence that we were equal in our communities. We find it in our oral history. We find it in our songs. And we find it also documented by White women largely.

There's an anthropologist by the name is Alice Fletcher. Now, I don't know if any of you have read her works or know of her, but she interviewed Sitting Bull in 1881 at Ft. Randall where he was being held prisoner. Now, Sitting Bull, for those of you who don't know who he is, was a very famous \_\_\_\_\_ Dakota chief. He negotiated -- was

one of the negotiators of the 1868 treaty, but, of course, by 1881 that treaty was in shambles, and he was imprisoned. And Alice Fletcher had come west really trying to figure out what the status of Native women was in Indian country. She was very curious. She was looking for adventure. And she met with Sitting Bull, and, of course, Sitting Bull's in the teepee with the headmen and other chiefs, and they're talking with her through a translator, and in the course of that conversation one of Sitting Bull's wives came in and put some wood on the fire, and Sitting Bull's wife was looking very intently at Alice Fletcher, and it got quiet, and when she left Sitting Bull took off a ring, and he gave it to Alice Fletcher, and through the translator he said I don't have much left, they've taken everything from me, but I'm giving you this ring as a reminder. You're a woman, and I ask you -- you say you're my friend, and I ask you to pity my women. Because of them we are who we are, and they've worked hard for us. And in this new life I see the men as being okay, but for the women I see nothing, and so I ask you to pity them and help them if you can. And Alice Fletcher for once was stunned. She was speechless. She had come to see Indian people as child-like, socially unorganized, and she's got some really outrageous stuff that she writes about it, but she did start to understand that Indian women were equal, and Indian women had power and

status in our communities. We were seen as sacred. We were recognized as spirits. She also did some other pretty horrible stuff, but we won't go into that right now.

So, Sitting Bull was worried about Indian women. He saw that our status was going to be diminished, that our power would not be recognized, and he knew that we would be oppressed, and early feminists also saw that. So, in the early feminist conventions they didn't support Native people becoming citizens, and in their platform they said why should we support Native women, our sisters, becoming second-class citizens the way we are? So, we know that we were equal, and we know that we've contributed to this movement. The other thing that we bring, and I think it's a lesson and a gift, is that we have a woman culture as Native women. We have our own ways. We have our own language. We have our own rituals. We have our own practices and the ways that we do things. We have our own ceremonies. And I was really thinking about that. I believe that most cultures of women, whether it's recognized or not, that woman culture does exist. I mean we always say it, right? Men and women are different. We know that. We communicate differently.

I think the best example I can share is Star Trek. I love Star Trek, and I'm watching Captain Pic -- I just catch the last scene, you know. It's just the last scene, and

Captain Pickard is his stateroom, and from what I gather they have battled this thing. I mean he looked like the flying dog on the never-ending story, for those of you that have children or grandchildren. (LAUGHTER) They had defeated it, and Captain Pickard is in his stateroom, and this thing that they thought they had killed comes back on the screen, his little computer screen there, and says something to him about we'll be back or whatever, you know? And he gets this, you know, look on his face, and he walks into -- onto the bridge, and he does his little (LAUGHTER), and he sits down, and he says engage. (LAUGHTER) And I turned to my friend, and I said, you know, now you know that Pickard is not a woman captain because I mean any self-respecting woman would have run out of that captain's cabin and onto the bridge and said, hey, you guys, you know what? you know (LAUGHTER). I mean what is that, engage? (LAUGHTER) They don't get it. (APPLAUSE)

So, we know that we have a family. We have a culture with each other. And, Brenda, this is for you. This is a woman culture. We know that. We're a peoplehood, again, our own language, our own -- we are not a victim culture. We are not a (APPLAUSE) client culture. (APPLAUSE) We're not a patient culture. And we're not even a survivor culture. We're a woman culture. (APPLAUSE) So, when we look at the lessons we've learned I think that for us as

Native women, at least for myself, I know that I've certainly learned a lot -- I've learned a lot more political language than I ever knew. I've also learned that there is strength in numbers and that ally-building is important. There are, again, those difficult things that we've encountered that Beth so eloquently described that I don't feel like I need to repeat, some very painful times, but for those of us that chose to think about it, and as Native people we always say if something bothers you, then it's important that you think about it. Why does that bother you? And for those of us that chose to take that journey, I think the lessons through that growth and that pain have been invaluable and have brought us together heart to heart, spirit to spirit. And I have seen social change. Coming from a very, very poor community -- I love Beth speeches. I love hearing about the erosion of our radical roots. I agree with everything that's said. But I also know that in a community where the average income is less than \$3400 a year that -- I know all of those other things that Beth was talking about also -- that people need food, people need clothes. Women need shelter. And so somehow, some way, we have to figure this out. It just has to be done. And I believe that as women working together we're capable of figuring that out. We're smart women. We can do it.

(APPLAUSE)

I would like for the staff of Cangleska and Sacred Circle to stand, please. Is it too early in the morning? (LAUGHTER) But the Cangleska staff is here. I can't see anything out there. Marlin(?) Musso(?) who is also a member of the management team for Cangleska, and we moved to a management team because there was just too much work for one director, but also the -- we have our advocate here, and since that bio was written we've added a legal department, and our attorney, Laurel Iron Cloud, is here. The advocate, Leo White Bear Claws. Brenda Hill, the education coordinator with Sacred Circle. And Donna Hawkis(?), our logistics person specialist that keeps us all organized. These women are all here, and I think it's important that we acknowledge the work that's being done by Cangleska. (APPLAUSE) And when we talk about the needs of women of color in this movement what comes to my mind immediately is the South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. If those women would stand, please. (APPLAUSE) Staff are here. Shelter advocates are here. (APPLAUSE) And I think there are great lessons to be learned from the journey of the coalition.

Now, you look at South Dakota who is -- I mean has a reputation for being the most racist state in the Union. I think the U.N. said that about it one time. I know we're the capital of the militia. We know that there were a lot



of Indian haters there and are there. South Dakota's a state where it wasn't against the law to rape an Indian woman. You could rape your wife and an Indian woman. It was legal to rape an Indian woman in South Dakota. We know that feminists campaigned by wagon, team and wagon, went across the state of South Dakota thinking that South Dakota was going to give women the right to vote, and it almost happened. At least that's the political analysis. It almost happened, except some crafty legislator added White women and Indian men. They added Indian men to the legislation. Totally killed that bill. But it's significant that Indian women weren't even worth the ink to write the word down, let alone give the right to vote, huh?

So, South Dakota, pretty outrageous state, certainly as Native women we have our own organizations. We've never really been invested in any organization. Even though Tillie was the founding mother, the coalition kind of was -- was fairly stagnant for many years, but the Victims of Crime Act came along, and South Dakota reservations got money to begin to develop direct services. Well, of course, right away those advocates figured out that the vast majority of crime on Indian reservations is about wife beating. Our courts handle misdemeanor crime. We can't handle felony crime according to the -- well, I guess we can, but we knew \_\_\_\_\_ you don't. So, programs were starting to

develop. They were developing through VOCA(?). We were told it had to be direct services. And at the same time the coalition was challenged to be inclusive of Native women, and I was hired, and let me tell you I called up Native women working in the programs on the reservations in South Dakota, and I said the coalition -- blah, blah, blah.

Please come. And they said we don't want to go because we know what it's going to be like. Karen, you know what it's going to be like. And I said, yeah, but why don't you come so Tillie and I don't have to be there by ourselves? Okay?

(LAUGHTER) \_\_\_\_\_, oh, okay. So they came, and, of course, it was exactly like we knew it was going to be. It was terrible. It was horrible. Right? And it was very painful. But out of that grew something wonderful.

The downside is South Dakota has two coalitions or a coalition and a network. The upside is that the original coalition is still the largest coalition, and it contains most of the programs that serve the largest numbers of Native women. So, we saw that as Native women, as we started to challenge coalition programs, and we said you're serving 70% Native women. 70% of the women that come to your shelter are Native women, and you don't have any Indian women advocates here, and you don't have any Indian women on your board, and we said it so nice, too, you know. We were really nice. (LAUGHTER) And nobody cared. It still -- it

was like -- my grandma says \_\_\_\_\_, no ears, sticks in their ears. (LAUGHTER) So, we struggled, and it was painful, and there was a lot of tears, but what emerged was an organization that Native women are equally invested in, that we as Native women call our own, along with our sisters who are not Native. Now, in South Dakota, folks, that's social change. (LAUGHTER) (APPLAUSE) And I hope that that feeling and that experience is routine for many of you as women of color, but it wasn't for us. We have learned that by standing together we are stronger, and I think we're also looking for some of the -- looking at some of the challenges. We are trying to figure out how can we contribute to building a global movement for people of color around the world knowing that there's violence against people of color everywhere (APPLAUSE) that manifest destiny continues, that Native people's genocide is still happening, that those tribal cultures that have so much to offer the world, a world gone to chaos, that we can look to those cultures?

You know we had a delegation come from South America, and one was wearing a beaded medallion, one guy was wearing a beaded medallion, and I thought somebody locally gave it to him, but, no. Come to find out -- we asked him where he got his medallion, and he said that his father had beaded it for him before he left because -- it was to protect him,

and, you know, we talked through Spanish translators because they each spoke their own native language, and I asked them about violence in their tribes, and one said, oh, yes, you know, we have it. We've seen it more since the missionaries came. (LAUGHTER) But he said -- I said, well, what do you do, you know? You don't have jails. You don't have courts. So, what do you do? And he said, well, you know, marriages are still arranged, and, you know, if you don't want to marry each other, you don't have to, but we kind of figure that our parents know more than we do. So, we're willing to give it a try, and if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out, but our families monitor us at least up until about the age of 40, and I thought, boy, isn't that something? because in (LAUGHTER) the Lakota lifestyle I am just actually -- I have just become a grown-up in recent years. (LAUGHTER) So, I haven't really been a grown-up for very long. So, we kept talking, and I said, well, what do you do if -- I mean does -- what about domestic violence? And he said, well, if that happens, he said, and it's not too often, but he said if it happens it's the man, and he said we give him an hallucinogenic plant. We send him into the jungle for four days and four nights without food or water. (APPLAUSE) And we expect him to come back with a spiritual understanding (LAUGHTER) that his behavior is not appropriate. (APPLAUSE)

And if he does it again, we banish him. (LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE) So, there are many lessons to be learned from cultures around the world, and I would challenge each of us to continue to look for those solutions around the world.

When we look at the next millennium, and I thought about what is my vision for the next millennium? all I could think about was that -- how for us as Native people we plan for seven generations. We're told that we must plan for seven generations. So, what do we want life to be like for seven generations, our children and our grandchildren? What do we want that life to be like for them? That's how we do our planning. And I would encourage all of you to do that kind of planning, and I find it fascinating, you know. We're known as a present-oriented people, not a future-oriented people, but we plan for seven generations. We need to get moving on in the program, but I would like to leave you with these thoughts because I sure want to see everyone get their awards, but I'd like to leave you with -- again with Sitting Bull, a man who respected women, who understood in the very core of who he was the sacredness of women, and Sitting Bull told us let us put our hearts and minds together and see what kind of future we can make for our children. That's where we're still at, and I hope that each of us will continue that challenge into the new millennium. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Thanks to both Beth and Karen. Little did we know, so telling and correct, and, Karen, so true, not what we do but who we are, and she spoke so well of cultures, that we really need to understand, and the flying dog and never-ending story was Falco(?). That's (LAUGHTER). A quick announcement. Michelle \_\_\_\_\_, you need to call work. It's not an emergency. But if you're in here, you need to call work. Okay? We're going to move quickly to the best part, not the best part but my easy part again. I have the pleasure of giving out some awards this morning, and there are three awards this morning. There are two to people that we term as visionary in the movement and also one for community organizing. Let me name them first, and then we'll call them up. Beth Richie, since she's here, you know, we'll give her the Next Millennium Award as a visionary, and Leni Marin as the community organizer, a world organizer, international organizer (APPLAUSE), and also as a visionary, my friend, compatriot, mentor, Anne Menard. (APPLAUSE) What I'd like to do, since I -- we've already heard from Beth and her -- her bio, let me just call her up, please, and present to Beth Richie this award as a visionary for the movement, so well deserved, to Beth Richie. Thank you. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

BETH RICHIE: Thank you.

WILLIAM D. RILEY: (INAUDIBLE)

BETH RICHIE: So, as I was saying, there's this (LAUGHTER). I'm very honored. I stand proudly on the shoulders of many, many people in my family and in my families of choice. I am honored by this award and accept it because I believe that we have a commitment to the vision and that you, like I, will continue to struggle to make it a reality. Thanks.  
(APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Not only do I get to give out the awards, if you've noticed, I get hugs. (LAUGHTER) Leni Marin, would you please come up? (APPLAUSE) Leni Marin is an Associate Director for Rights and Social Justice at the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a national organization dedicated to preventing domestic violence where she has worked since 1983. Ms. Marin directs the funds(?), Battered Immigrant Women's Rights Project, and is co-founder of the national Network on Behalf of Battered Immigrant Women in the United States. An immigrant from the Philippines, she has provided advocacy and education efforts to improve the lives of abused immigrant women and children for 15 years. She has developed public policy to improve the rights of immigrant women, including a major provision within the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. She provides technical assistance to shelter workers, immigrant women's rights activists and social workers in services -- to make services more accessible to battered immigrant women. There

are a number of other items here in her bio, but I think most of you know Leni Marin. I've recently come to know Leni over the last several years. I'm so impressed. She is indeed a strength that I rely on, and it is indeed my pleasure to present to Leni Marin the Next Millennium Conference Award for community organizing. (APPLAUSE)

LENI MARIN: Thank you. Thank you, Bill. I'm really very honored to receive this award, and I would like to share this recognition with all my colleagues at the Family Violence Prevention Fund (APPLAUSE) especially

\_\_\_\_\_ for her mentorship. I also want to share this recognition to the other co-chairpersons of the National Network on Behalf of Battered Immigrant Women, Leslie \_\_\_\_\_ Legal Defense Education Fund and Gail Pendleton of the National Immigration Project.

(APPLAUSE) It's this particular partnership and building alliances amongst movements, between the domestic violence movement and the immigrant rights movement, that has helped battered immigrant women gain more accessible services. I would like to dedicate this award to immigrant women survivors who continue to inspire me with their courage in breaking barriers. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Leni -- the next award, visionary award, the Next Millennium Conference, goes to Anne Menard. Anne, would you please come up? (APPLAUSE) Anne Menard has been



activist working with battered women and sexual assault survivors for the past 20 years, a child prodigy. In February, 1994, Ms. Menard was appointed Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In June, 1998, she moved into the position of Special Projects Manager of the NRC. There she provides direct leadership to NRC's economic justice and poverty initiatives, as well as its collaboration of policy skills building projects. What this bio does not say is all the work that Anne does on a most hectic, 30-hour-a-day schedule, how she moves about the country working directly with public organizations, non-profits, private organizations, individuals, all persons involved and concerned with the movement and with the elimination of domestic violence. It is indeed my pleasure to present to my friend, agitator (LAUGHTER), mentor this Next Millennium Conference Award as a visionary for the movement. Thank you, Anne, for all your work. (APPLAUSE)

ANNE MENARD: I am honored and humbled, truly humbled, not out of a sense of any kind of false modesty but really a keen awareness of how little anyone in this work -- how anyone can do anything successful or responsible without relying on a great deal of other -- a great number of other people for guidance, support, for vision and energy. I have felt incredibly blessed and honored to have in my life and

my work a large number of uppity women and gentle men  
(LAUGHTER), too many to name here without getting into  
trouble, but you know who you are, to push me and prod me in  
my thinking, to inspire me with your strength and  
perseverance, to care for me and make me eat and play, to  
pull me back from the brink of despair or a fit of naive  
optimism, both of which are quite dangerous (LAUGHTER). I  
honor all of you and particularly the survivors in this room  
and this work and challenge us all to continue to be guided  
by survivors' voices and to struggle ferociously against all  
attempts to silence or marginalize them. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

WILLIAM D. RILEY: Congratulations to all our awardees this  
morning. Before we break, Ms. Vickii Coffey. (APPLAUSE)

VICKII COFFEY: Thanks. I know you're really anxious to get  
off to workshops, so I just want to give two, quick  
announcements. First of all, many of you know about the  
national agenda that is being undertaken on violence against  
women. There are focus groups, and we need you to sign up  
for the focus groups. Please spare your energy and time and  
expertise to contribute to the crafting of these  
recommendations and to give feedback on those that have  
already been crafted. So please, if you will stop at the  
Registration Area, let us know that you're interested in  
participating. We could sure use your good ideas, your

positive energy, and your direction in the next millennium. The second thing I wanted to say is last night we were so excited and having such a good time we didn't take the time to recognize that Polaroid has offered all of you the video that you saw. It's a gift. (APPLAUSE) We had hoped to have the videos here to distribute them. They were editing till the last hour. I think they did a wonderful job. I'm totally impressed with Polaroid, not because I was on the video but because they listened to the domestic violence movement, and they told our story correctly. So please, if you're interested in a video, this is what you need to do: You need to take your cards or go and sign up at the Polaroid exhibit area in the Exhibition Hall and simply say I want the video. Please do that. Thank you so much. Go to work. (APPLAUSE)

(END SIDE 2)