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Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 3/4, Women and Development: Rethinking Policy and Reconceptualizing Practice (Fall - Winter, 2003), pp. 19-37

Published by: [The Feminist Press at the City University of New York](http://www.feministpress.org)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40003318>

Accessed: 20/02/2013 14:05

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And If the Shoe Doesn't Fit? (Wear It Anyway)

Economic Transformation and Western Paradigms of Women in Development Programs in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe

Kristen Ghodsee

Introduction¹

From its inception in 1973, the Women in Development (WID) paradigm of incorporating gender into projects for economic growth has dominated the development establishment. Although this model has been critiqued and modified over time, WID scholars, advocates, and practitioners continue to dominate the field and to set the agenda in most multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, as well as in international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in the developing world.² Since 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, aid organizations have attempted to implement WID theory and practice within the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Despite the millions of dollars of aid dedicated to gender programs and the hundreds of projects throughout the region, these efforts have met with limited success.

This article will briefly examine just one of the possible reasons why WID projects have failed to reach women in Central and Eastern Europe: the long-suppressed history of WID-funded projects, which beyond liberal notions of development, have also served as covert tools to stem the spread of Marxist ideology in the developing world. Traditional accounts of the integration of women into American foreign assistance programs have ignored the Cold War context and the U.S. government's fears that communist insurgents were successfully mobilizing Third World women for revolutionary causes. In some part, the roots of the WID model are intricately linked with the fight against global communism.

Exploring these roots will provide important clues as to why WID and its heir, Gender and Development (GAD), have been largely unsuccessful in the former Eastern bloc countries. Central and Eastern European socialism and its legacies have not yet been totally erased from the collective social and cultural memory of the region's women,

many of whom may prefer political rather than "self-help" solutions to their economic plight. This important, yet forgotten history must be reclaimed and integrated into the way scholars and development professionals study and theorize the WID model.

WID Aid to Eastern Europe

The fall of the Berlin Wall exponentially expanded opportunities for gender-related development work in Eurasia. The sudden implosion of communism was unexpected by scholars, politicians, and activists in both the East and the West. Feminists around the world were equally surprised by the momentous events that came to mark the end of the greatest social experiment of the twentieth century. Soon after, armies of democracy consultants and privatization advisers invaded the former Eastern bloc, riding a tidal wave of Western aid (Wedel 2001). Gender experts and Women in Development advocates and practitioners were not far behind.

In the early years of the transition, Western feminist scholars (both liberal and Marxist) began researching and publishing about the negative effects that economic transition was having on women in the former communist countries (Corrin 1992; Einhorn 1993; Moghadam 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Rueschemeyer 1994; Alsanbeigui et al. 1994). Some scholars also felt it was necessary to "bring the Third World in" so that parallels between the transitioning and developing countries could be drawn (Moghadam 1993; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Kotzeva 1999; Verdery 1996). This research sparked the active interest of the WID departments of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies. These agencies, in turn, began offering grants targeted to local women's groups as part of "civil society" building initiatives throughout the region.

After the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, cooperation among international women's agencies reached a zenith, and WID experts in the nonprofit sector began to "discover" Eastern Europe. International women's nongovernmental organizations based in the West recognized the plethora of opportunities available for gender-related work in the Central and Eastern European region and began applying for grants to do projects and carry out studies. "Feminist" networks, women's alliances, gender studies programs, and local women's NGOs have multiplied throughout the former communist world, and many millions of dollars have been spent on consciousness-raising activities, conferences, and gender assessments (Greenberg 2001).

For the most part, however, these activities have been unsuccessful in creating a broad-based women's movement in any of the former communist countries, even as women's status has continued to decline (Einhorn 1993; Holmgren 1995; Gal and Kligman 2000a, 2000b). In the few areas where Eastern European women have seen their status improve in the wake of the privatization of their economies, this has had less to do with Western aid efforts and more to do with the historical legacies of women's position under the previous regimes (Fodor 1997; Szalai 2000; Ghodsee 2003). Furthermore, women's NGOs and feminism in general have been met with great skepticism not only by the Eastern European societies as a whole, but specifically by the women in these societies (Kay 2000; Sperling 1999; Gal and Kligman 2000a; Grunberg 2000; Richter 2002; Jalusic and Antic 2000). Citizens in these countries were also wary because they felt that local NGOs were controlled by foreign donors and therefore had little legitimacy (Snively and Desai 1994; Ottoway and Carothers 2000; Mendelson and Glenn 2000, 2002). Many Eastern European women feel that feminism is an alien ideology that does not address the real needs of women in post-communist countries.

These same frustrations and misunderstandings between East and West have been cited by many other feminist scholars and activists throughout the region (Funk 1993; Drakulic 1993). This essay, however, will focus on trying to untangle why WID and GAD paradigms designed to incorporate women into capitalist development have had such a hard time taking root in Central and Eastern Europe. Many misunderstandings might stem from incomplete accounts of the history of WID and GAD in the United States and the developing world. Without a nuanced exploration of how the threat of communism in the "Third World" propelled the incorporation of WID into the development efforts of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), an understanding of the underlying tensions that hamper successful cooperation between women born and raised on either side of the capitalist-socialist ideological divide will be obscured.

History of WID

Work for the Revolution is more important than my marriage. Will the family disappear as a result? Fidel says, "Only love will hold the family of the future together."
(House of Representatives 1971)

Many scholars of WID mark the beginning of the field with the publication in 1970 of Ester Boserup's landmark book, *Women's Role in Economic Development* (Tinker 1983, 1984, 1990; Mosse 1993; Parpart 1995). They also cite the general influence of the United States women's movement on the United Nations and the international development community. Then there was the growing recognition of the failure of traditional development models in the Third World, which created industrial "growth" at the expense of social harmony and increased poverty. Taken together, these factors led to the inclusion of Section 113 in the 1973 amendment to the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act; this Percy amendment officially incorporated women into U.S. aid programs for the first time.

Other scholars (Kabeer 1994) recognized that the general atmosphere of social unrest and protest, both domestically and internationally, that marked the late 1960s and early 1970s may have shaped the ideas and opinions of the development community. Radical critiques, such as dependency theory coming out of Latin America, forced development practitioners to rethink their goals and priorities, and ultimately to consider the plight of those left out of more traditional development models that were focused exclusively on economic growth.

Yet in addition to the factors mentioned above, it is important to remember that the field of WID, like the project of Third World development itself, was created partially in response to fears of the spread of world communism.³ In the context of the Cold War, the United States' recognition of women as an important constituency in development may have had less to do with genuine concern about the unequal hardships that modernization produced, than with the perceived threat posed by communists who were successfully mobilizing disenfranchised women (and rural peasants) for revolutionary causes throughout the developing world. This is not to say that the WID scholars and activists themselves were promoting WID as a way to fight Marxist ideologies, but that the U.S. government's fear of communism may have been one important reason why the Percy Amendment was accepted by the overwhelmingly male congress in 1973. Moreover, funds to support WID programming should be seen as part of a larger shift from direct military aid to more socially oriented types of aid that the 1973 amendment to the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act accomplished.

The history of how and why women became integrated into the international development establishment in the context of the Cold War has been largely lost. Reclaiming it will, in some small way, assist both scholars and practitioners in understanding why so many problems arise

when WID projects are transplanted from the Third World to Eastern European soil. After all, if WID as a development paradigm was produced in response to the perceived successes of socialist and communist countries in granting women greater political and economic rights, it might prove difficult to apply the same model to the very women who were beneficiaries of the socialist system that the WID model was trying to displace.

The Birth of Development and “Basic Needs”

The goals of foreign aid to the Third World were bound up intimately with the Cold War and the need to suppress communist uprisings in the newly independent states emerging from colonialism across the globe (Leebaert 2002). Indeed, the rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc countries that employed the communist model served as a powerful example to new nations hoping to modernize and catch up with both the First and Second Worlds. One of the foundational texts of development economics was Walter W. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960). This book outlined a progressive, linear path to economic development that relied upon and celebrated individualism, entrepreneurship, and private property in contrast to the communal, centrally planned, state-owned economies of socialist and communist models.

The allure of communist ideologies in the developing world became especially relevant during the Vietnam War and the United States' failure to “save” the South Vietnamese from socialism. No one understood the consequences of communism in the developing world better than one of Rostow's colleagues in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Robert S. McNamara. Fresh from his tenure as secretary of defense after having fallen out with President Johnson over American involvement in Vietnam (McNamara 1995), McNamara assumed the presidency of the World Bank in 1968. He had spoken and published widely on the idea that poverty bred communism, and that the only way to fight socialism around the world was to raise the living standards of the poor and to soften the worst inequalities created and perpetuated by capitalism (McNamara 1968). He writes,

Given the certain connection between economic stagnation and the incidence of violence, the years that lie ahead for the nations of the southern half of the globe look ominous. This would be true if no threat of Communist subversion existed, as it clearly does. Both Moscow and Peking, however harsh their internal differences, regard the modernization process as an ideal environment for the

growth of Communism. . . . It is clearly understood that certain Communist nations are capable of subverting, manipulating and finally directing for their own ends the wholly legitimate grievances of a developing society. (1968, 147–148)

McNamara's thirteen-year presidency of the World Bank ushered in an era of lending for projects based on a new paradigm—one called “redistribution with growth” by the World Bank and “basic needs” by the United Nations. This new paradigm focused on improving the living standards of the poor. World Bank lending would increase from \$883 million per year in 1968 to \$12 billion per year in 1981 when McNamara left the bank (Leebaert 2002). This new focus on human development saturated the development establishment and fundamentally altered development theory and practice.⁴ Instead of focusing efforts on building roads, dams, factories, and airports, the World Bank and USAID began funding such things as water wells, primary schools, and hospitals.

Special attention was given to those who had been previously left out of development's modernization efforts: poor, rural populations and women. These two groups were particularly important because of their vulnerability to communist co-optation. On February 16, 1962, a classified telegram from the American embassy in Thailand warned that the communist National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam had begun to infiltrate the south through the formation of “various affiliates [*sic*] bodies,” including the Liberation Farmer's Front and the Liberation Women's Front (Department of State 1962). While a September 1966 intelligence memorandum, “The Organization, Activities, and Objectives of the Communist Front in South Vietnam,” included a list of the leaders of Hoi Phu Nu Giai Phong, the liberation women's organization, with detailed biographies (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] 1966). This list demonstrates that the CIA recognized women as important leaders of the communist movement and marked them as potential enemies.⁵ Another CIA report spoke of the “usual array of mass organizations (women's, youth, peasant and labor groups)” (1972, 47) that the Vietnamese communists mobilized for their own ends. The dedication and mobilization of Vietnamese women as soldiers for the communist cause (Turley 1972) must have also concerned the U.S. government.

Between 1970 and 1974, the Committee of Internal Security of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress held a series of hearings, the Theory and Practice of Communism. These hearings were held because the U.S. government felt that

there exists a world-wide Communist movement whose purpose it is by espionage, sabotage, and other means to establish a totalitarian dictatorship in countries throughout the world . . . and that the Communist organization in the United States, together with other circumstances of the international Communist movement, presents a clear and present danger to the security of the United States and the existence of American institutions. (House of Representatives [HR] 1970, 4631)

The U.S. government had to acknowledge that women were an integral part of this clear and present danger. Testimony presented at the hearings supports the idea that women's organizations such as the Third World Women's Alliance and the Women's International Democratic Federation were considered "communist fronts," "founded and supported at all times by the international communist movement" (HR 1974, 2693). Moreover, the devotion of women in Cuba to Fidel's communism (Smith and Padula 1996) was yet another example of how leftist parties were successfully able to integrate women into revolutionary causes. A pamphlet prepared by two American women active in the U.S. women's movement and included in exhibits for the hearings demonstrates that communist governments had already included women in development—well before the capitalist world:

In every Cuban neighborhood women get together to discuss topics ranging from Jose Marti to day care, and from the struggles in Vietnam to problems of picking citrus fruits. Larger units of the Federation [of Cuban Women] organize women's work brigades to combat on one front or another Cuba's number one problem: underdevelopment. (HR 1971, 5569)

As the 1970s progressed, there were growing references to the role of women in the developing world. In later testimonies given in support of further incorporating women into USAID's projects and for soliciting funds from Congress to support the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, advocates argued that women were essential for carrying out a basic needs paradigm of development (HR 1978).

In fact, the Percy amendment was part of a foreign policy trend away from direct military intervention toward indirect economic interventions in developing countries. This new strategy coincided neatly with McNamara's call for poverty alleviation as a way to fight communism. Thus, if women were essential to basic needs, and meeting basic needs

was essential to fighting communism, then women were essential to fighting communism.⁶

The imperative to integrate women into the development process turns out to be not a product of American feminism, as some have implied, but grows organically out of the situation of poor women and the needs of development. The everyday activities of the world's poor women intersect with a basic human needs approach. (Elsa Chaney, testimony, cited in HR 1978, 9)

A good illustration of the possibilities of a new women's focus on development (and one rarely mentioned with reference to the birth of the WID paradigm) was the very important role played by Chilean women in opposing Salvador Allende's socialist government in Chile between 1970 and 1973. After the Popular Unity's rise to power and its wholesale nationalization of the economy, Allende's three-year stint in power was punctuated by parades of women banging spoons on pots and pans to protest severe food shortages. This ultimately lent support to the U.S.-backed coup that brought Ugarte Pinochet to power (de los Angeles Crummett 1977; Townsend 1993). In the March 7, 1974, testimony of Hermogenes Perez de Acre before the Committee on Internal Security, the Chilean professor is asked directly about women in Chile, "You mentioned that the women had a demonstration with regard to pots and pans. Did the women play an important role with regard to the downfall of Allende's government?" Perez de Acre then explained in detail how women's "resistance to Marxism was much more than the one from men" (HR 1974, 2556). In an exhibit attached to this testimony, there is a newspaper article entitled "Women and Their Fight for Chile," which states:

Undoubtedly the role played by Chilean women was one of the most decisive factors in the fight against Marxist oppression. . . . There can be no doubt that the women of Chile, of all ages and conditions, were the first to realize the crisis which afflicted our country. (HR 1974, 2639)

The political actions of *El Poder Feminino* in Chile proved definitively that women, if incorporated into a capitalist development paradigm, could be very valuable allies in the fight against socialism. Therefore, although the women's movement in the United States and Boserup's book were certainly influential voices, these brief examples demonstrate that the Cold War context must be considered when

unraveling the creation myths surrounding WID. I will, however, reiterate here that the women who were advocating for WID had no visible interest in using women as a tool against communism. The focus needs to be shifted to the U.S. government. Was the government's receptivity to WID inspired by altruistic concerns regarding the moral imperatives for granting women equal rights and resources, or was it motivated by the perceived threat of communist infiltration? WID's underlying alliance to capitalism and its incorporation into mainstream development would eventually open it up to sometimes harsh criticism.

Women and Development, Gender and Development

Two other models of incorporating women into economic development, both of which censured WID for its liberal feminist and First World biases, subsequently critiqued the WID paradigm. The first critique was a neo-Marxist perspective that attacked WID based on its ideological adherence to capitalism. The Women and Development (WAD) school believed that only with radical, systemic reform could women benefit from development.⁷ WAD theorists (Rubin 1975; Maguire 1984) would frequently point to the advances of women in communist countries where the state had abolished private property. In terms of the traditional development establishment, however, WAD was far too radical of a critique to be taken seriously in development practice. It fundamentally attacked the capitalist superstructure of developing societies, the very capitalisms that development was trying to preserve.

Proponents of the GAD paradigm leveled a second line of criticism. Much as women of color mounted an attack against the white, middle class feminists of the "Second Wave"⁸ in the United States, so Third World women claimed that the WID paradigm exported First World feminist values that were not applicable to their lives and experiences.⁹ Third World women in conversation with First World women created the GAD paradigm in order to modify and make WID more relevant to their lives (Mosse 1993; Visvanathan et al. 1997). GAD projects are supposed to be more participatory and sustainable than WID projects, often working to mobilize women at the proverbial grass roots. Furthermore, GAD recognizes that women in different countries, even in different regions within countries, may have very different goals. GAD strategies for development, therefore, are more varied and flexible. Despite these modifications, GAD theory and practice is compatible with WID in that it neither fundamentally challenges the capitalist model nor seriously considers a class-based analysis of women's oppression.

Today, gender has been “mainstreamed” into development projects at most multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, and grant-funding for gender-related projects has increased exponentially.¹⁰ What is relevant to our discussion is that although WID has been critiqued and modified over time, one of its central goals has essentially remained unchanged: the incorporation of women into capitalist models of development. Indeed, the WID model may have been accepted precisely to contain the spread of communist ideologies. Because of this, the design of WID projects in former socialist countries cannot understand, in fundamental ways, the needs and concerns of women there. They fail to provide useful strategies for women’s “development” because they are unable to identify underlying social and political tensions.

WID/GAD Projects in Central and Eastern Europe

Although there are many examples of less-than-successful aid projects in Central and Eastern Europe (Wedel 2001), in the interest of brevity and space, I will only focus on two specific types of WID programs. One example involves the ubiquitous WID/GAD promotion of microcredit schemes for women and/or their support of women’s entrepreneurship. Microcredit banks extend small amounts of capital to groups of poor women. These women either use the money to meet immediate basic needs or to invest in some small, income-generating project that will allow them, after having made a profit, to repay the money. Profits are then used to pay for basic needs or saved and then put to use productively in some further income-generating scheme. A typical example of a WID-type microcredit scheme is the Social Entrepreneurship Center in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, funded by the European Union’s PHARE Access Program: “The goal of the project is providing opportunity to unemployed women to integrate in new economic conditions through training on starting their own business as an active strategy for living standard increase [*sic*]” (NGO Resource Center 2002).

Support for women’s entrepreneurship picks up where microcredit schemes leave off. Once women have enough capital to move beyond meeting basic needs, they need to be given the training and encouragement to start their own businesses. The hope is that these businesses will be sustainable and will realize a continuous stream of profits, which—in turn—will allow these women to meet their basic needs, reinvest in their businesses, and eventually be able to consume nonessential goods and luxury items. In other words, these kinds of projects help women become good entrepreneurs (i.e., capitalists), so

that they can support themselves, and ultimately "get ahead" (i.e., become consumers).

A study for the Microcredit Summit Campaign (Cheston and Kuhn 2002) found that women in Eastern Europe "lag far behind" women in other parts of the world in microcredit participation. Recent USAID Gender Assessments have also found that women are far less likely than men are to take advantage of microcredit in Bulgaria (Nails and Arnold 2001) and Romania (Rosenberg and Arnold 2002). In Romania, the authors found that although women owned or managed approximately 44 percent of all businesses, women accounted for only 2.7 percent of the total amount of money loaned (loan value) in 1999. The study suggests that low levels of lending to women might indicate "a reluctance of women to borrow money," and recommends further research on the issue. In Bulgaria, there are at least twelve different sources for microlending and here too, women consistently borrow less than men.¹¹ Even when programs are specifically targeted to women, many women are reluctant to participate, even if loan amounts are relatively small. Although there has been an increase in women-owned-and-managed businesses in recent years, there is little evidence to demonstrate that this activity has been a result of microcredit schemes. Overall, microcredit in the region has met with very limited success.

The first part of the problem is the very definition of basic needs. In the prototypical developing country (the first Microcredit Bank was in Bangladesh), the women needed the money to meet the most basic needs of food, water, and shelter. These were things that the state had never provided, and the shift toward a more market-driven economy had further reduced in supply (Boserup 1970; Goulet and Hudson 1971; Mende 1972). These women never had jobs in the formal economy, few of them had educations, and many were illiterate. Despite this, development practitioners found that women were very resourceful with small loans, and that they most often used the profits they realized to increase the welfare of their families. As access to money increased, women used the profits to access the fruits of modernization: medicines, fertilizers, seed varieties, electricity, education, and more. These were "needs" newly created by development through the importation of Western technologies and Western ideas about universal education and "modern" living. Microentrepreneurship allowed women to have access to the benefits of a modernizing economy. In these circumstances, microcredit was a revolutionary strategy for empowering women and incorporating them into the formal, developing economy.

The problem with this model in Central and Eastern Europe is multifaceted. Whereas in the Third World, "needs" were imported by "successful" development projects and microcredit and entrepreneurship helped women to meet those needs, in the socialist context these "needs" already existed (at least rhetorically) as the basic *rights and entitlements* of the citizen. In other words, the introduction of "modern" technologies and institutions in most communist countries (i.e., universal education, Western medicine and health care, modernized agriculture, heating, electricity, etc.) was intimately bound up with the idea that it was the state's responsibility to provide them without cost to society. The communist or socialist state legitimated its existence through the provision of these goods and services to all citizens (Verdery 1993). Indeed, one of the greatest achievements of the communist countries was the high level of human development that they achieved. This was one of the core Marxist criticisms leveled at capitalism: that although communist and socialist citizens may not have been "free," they were certainly not hungry, uneducated, or unhealthy.

In the post-socialist period, these rights and entitlements have all but disappeared. The collapse of the communist states has relegated these "rights" to the status of "needs" for the first time in the history of many of these countries. This, for example, means that countries that were electrified under communism never had electricity that was not provided by the state as a public good. In other words, electricity did not exist in many places before it was introduced by the communists as proof of successful modernization by the "dictatorship of the proletariat."¹² In the First or Third World context, where for the most part these things were always constructed as needs (although even capitalist states have granted many social entitlements at different historical periods), programs and projects to support women's "self-help" in regards to meeting these needs are more likely to be successful. In the Central and Eastern European context, however, microcredit and women's entrepreneurship projects will be less easily implemented. Many women have not fundamentally accepted that it is their responsibility to meet these needs in the first place. Women in Central and Eastern Europe might have incentives to work for consumer items or to save money to travel abroad, but many might resist the idea of taking loans to start businesses to earn money to pay for the very same things they once had without cost, especially if they are expected to pay interest on the money they borrow (which can be as high as 26 percent). Studies have confirmed that women are less likely to start their own business (United Nations Development Report 2000), and the fact that women in Central and Eastern Europe are still more likely to vote

for left-leaning or outright communist parties demonstrates an intransigent resistance to capitalism (Jalusic and Antic 2000). WID/GAD projects aimed at alleviating women's poverty based on microcredit or entrepreneurship programs fail to realize that Central and Eastern European women may prefer to put their energies into finding political solutions to their rapidly declining standards of living rather than participate in a system with which they fundamentally disagree.

Furthermore, WID/GAD projects often fail to recognize that Central and Eastern European women are highly educated, with many years of participation in the formal economy. Indeed, the former communist countries could once boast of the highest labor-force participation rates for women in the world. A further assumption or misconception is that Central and Eastern European women are not concerned with politics. On the contrary, Central and Eastern European women are politically savvy and incredibly discerning about the political process. Many projects based on increasing women's activities in politics, therefore, are also met with resistance or simply go unnoticed.

For instance, throughout the region, there are several grants for local NGOs to organize high-profile media campaigns to increase women's political participation.¹³ These grants, usually originating in the United States and Western Europe, are given to local NGOs (whose directors disturbingly often do have the "right" political affiliations) to advocate for "democracy promotion." However legitimate the need to encourage women to take part in the political process, many Central and Eastern European women believe that advocacy campaigns to "get women to the polls" are partisan efforts and that foreign governments use local NGOs to promote political parties favorable to the funders' interests. Furthermore, Central and Eastern European women may view *not* engaging in politics as a political act. A more useful project might explore why women are not involving themselves in the polity, rather than simply assuming that getting women to vote and stand for election (in a political system that they do not yet believe in) is somehow intrinsically in their own interests.

In the two brief examples given above, it should be clear that some WID/GAD projects effectively promote women's integration into the capitalist system, and actively discourage the creation of a more socialistic, welfare state closer to the Scandinavian model. Neither of the paradigms is sensitive to the political sophistication or ideological history of Central and Eastern European women, many of whom are still trying to negotiate their roles in society after 1989. A more appropriate paradigm for women in Central and Eastern Europe would be one which does not assume, *a priori*, that free-market capitalism is the only

possible model for successful economic growth—not necessarily because this is not true, but because Central and Eastern European women may have yet to believe it. Furthermore, WID scholars, practitioners, and advocates (Tinker 1990) need to recognize that essentially free education, health care, child care, electricity, central heat, water, public transportation, etc., were and may remain basic *rights* in the popular imagination. Many Central and Eastern European women feel that these entitlements were taken away from them without adequate compensation—“freedom” has yet to pay the bills. Projects to address the needs of women may need to include politically “dangerous” strategies to help women decide for which “needs” they will work and for which “rights” they will fight. Only then will international efforts to raise the living standards of women in Central and Eastern Europe be both sensitive to the social and political history of the region and relevant to the daily struggles of women living through a most tumultuous (and often uninvited) period of economic transformation.

NOTES

1. The author would like to thank Irene Tinker for her comments and encouragement and Ed Lejewski at the WID department of USAID for taking the time to consider and comment upon my ideas.
2. The terminology used to refer to different regions of the “developed” and “developing” worlds has changed over time and displays particular affiliations with specific development paradigms. In this paper, while recognizing the political implications of different terminologies, I will use the terms First, Second and Third Worlds, core and periphery, less-developed countries (LDCs), and the global south interchangeably.
3. Arturo Escobar (1995) has done an excellent job of discussing the Cold War context of development as a whole.
4. McNamara 1973; Chenery et al. 1974; World Bank 1975; and International Labor Organization 1976 were all influential publications which legitimized the idea that poverty alleviation was an essential goal of development.
5. Similar lists of women in left-leaning women’s organizations affiliated with the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI) were included in the lists that the CIA handed over to General Suharto of Indonesia in 1964. Suharto used these very lists to carry out one of the most brutal massacres of the Cold War—murdering an estimated 250,000 men, women and children in order to purge his country of communism (Leebaert 2002).
6. It should also be recognized that the development establishment would begin to recognize the importance of women in the Third World exactly as calls for women’s liberation at home also began to point to the successes of the socialist model abroad (House of Representative 1971; Jenness 1972).

7. Informed as it was by dependency theory, WAD thinkers argued that the First World had underdeveloped the Third World in its own quest for development. The linearity of Rostowian stages of economic growth was challenged, with global capitalism seen as the system that would always and inevitably perpetuate inequality and exploitation. Just as proletarian classes were exploited by bourgeois classes within nations, so countries in the "periphery" were exploited by those in the "core." For the large part the ideological divide between the WID and WAD models fell along the same lines that traditionally divided liberal and socialist feminists for over a century; whereas the former believed that women were oppressed by patriarchy the latter laid the blame at the feet of private property. WAD theorists believed that poor men shared the same structural disadvantages as poor women and that men and women needed to work together for development.
8. Second wave refers to the U.S. women's movement in the 1970s when women advocated for legal and economic equality as well as reproductive rights.
9. Both women of color in the United States (for example hooks 1981; Lorde 1985; Anzaldúa and Moraga (1983) and "Third World" women (for example Mohanty et al.1991; Narayan 1997 and Bulbeck 1998) have criticized the white, middle class bias of cultural feminism in the U.S. women's movement and the WID paradigm.
10. For instance, the World Bank now requires "Gender impact assessments" for all of its development projects.
11. For instance, The NACHALA Cooperative, The Resource Center Foundation, Caresback-Bulgaria, The Phare Program, Catholic Relief Services, The Bulgarian-American Enterprise Fund, National Network for Micro-Funding, etc.
12. Of course, the provision of these services in practice by the communist government was less than perfect. Power and water outages were endemic in both rural and urban areas, and the quality of these services was rarely consistent.
13. Two good examples are Project Parity, funded by USAID and implemented by the Women's Alliance for Development in Bulgaria, and a USAID project in neighboring Macedonia by two American gender consultants (Greenberg and McDonald 2000) aimed at increasing Macedonian women's political participation.

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