

Gifts of Speech News

v.2 #12 - December 2007

January 8, 2008

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1. Allison Kimmich on Women's Studies

Allison Kimmich, the executive director of the **National Women's Studies Association (NWSA)** recently discussed the value of Women's Studies in an interview with **Free Exchange on Campus**. The NWSA had been attacked in an editorial by David Horowitz which appeared in the [Weekly Standard](#). He had asserted that teachers (in departments such as Women's and Gender Studies) are no longer held to standards of "scholarly" or "scientific" or "intellectually responsible" discourse. The gals at [Feministing](#) had a few things to say in response to the Horowitz article too. Check out the discussion by starting with the Kimmich interview below.

Link: http://www.freeexchangeoncampus.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=805&Itemid=72

2. Mormon Women & Romney

Julie B. Beck is the general president of the Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The Relief Society is an official LDS philanthropic and educational women's organization. In October 2007, at the 177th Semiannual LDS General Conference, Ms. Beck made a speech entitled "Mothers Who Know."

Beck's "speech described ideal mothers as not delaying childbearing, being responsible for children and recognizing the

importance of a tidy house." --[Peggy Fletcher Stack in the Salt Lake Tribune](#)

A large group of LDS women took issue with statements made in Ms. Beck's speech. In response, they created a website called "What Women Know," where they listed 13 thoughts in opposition to the statements made by Ms. Beck. They all appended their names to the document. Two of the assertions made by this group of women who "regularly discuss religion and women's issues" online were these:

1. "The choice to have children does not rule out other avenues of influence and power."
2. "We reverence the responsibility to choose how, when, and whether we become parents."

Julie Smith, a Mormon blogger for the group blog [Times and Seasons](#), reacted to the "What Women Know" web site with a post titled "**Children Are Not Optional**." In it she says, ". . . unless the signers (of the What Women Know web site) understand something different than I do by 'whether,' then I think that their statement is not in harmony with the established teachings of the Church. In the context of a temple-married LDS couple, children are not optional."

One-hundred and eighty-five Mormon women wrote in to either support or argue against the idea that Mormon women **MUST** have children, before comments on the post were closed .

What in the world does this have to do with women who are not Mormon?

With a Mormon presidential candidate in the offing, it pays for all women to know exactly what the LDS church teaches about women's place in society and their right to control their own reproduction.

Read for yourself at the links below:

- [Mothers Who Know by Julie B. Beck](#)
- [What Women Know by the undersigned](#)
- [Times & Seasons - Children Are Not Optional by Julie Smith](#)

3. Interview with Nonie Darwish

[Now They Call Me Infidel: Why I Renounced Jihad for America, Israel, and the War on Terror](#) by Nonie Darwish was published in November of 2006.



""Nonie Darwish was born in Cairo, and in the early 1950s moved with her family to Egyptian-occupied Gaza, where her father, Lt.-Gen. Mustafa Hafez, was appointed by president Gamal Abdel Nasser to command Egyptian army intelligence. Hafez founded Palestinian fedayeen units to launch terrorist raids across Israel's southern border. Between 1951 and 1956, the fedayeen killed some 400 Israelis. In July 1956, when Nonie was eight, her father became the IDF's first targeted assassination. He was immediately recognized as a shahid - a martyr for jihad. Nonie eventually graduated from the American University, and later worked as a journalist. In 1978 she moved to the US, where she has become a Christian." --Lela Gilbert in the Jerusalem Post

Read the interview with Nonie Darwash at the link below.

Link: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1192380626879&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FPrinter>

4. Highest Maternal Death-Rates Not Slowed

Globally, the number of women who die in pregnancy and childbirth is not declining fast enough to achieve the global target of reducing maternal deaths by three quarters by 2015, United Nations agencies warn.

"Of the more than 535,000 women who died annually of maternal causes in 2005, 99 per cent of them were in developing countries. In addition, slightly more than half of the maternal deaths – some 270,000 – occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, followed by South Asia with 188,000. Together, these two regions accounted for 86 per cent of the world's maternal deaths in 2005." --UN News Centre

Read the complete article below.

Link: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24282&Cr=&Cr1=>

5. December Site of the Month

United Nations Development Fund for Women - UNIFEM

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is a United Nations fund that provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies around the world that promote women's human rights, political participation, and economic security. UNIFEM was created by a United Nations General Assembly resolution in 1976, and its mandate is to:

- * Support innovative activities benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities;
- * Serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream

development activities, as often as possible in the pre-investment stage; and
* Play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations' overall system of development cooperation.
--from the UNIFEM FAQ

Visit their site at the link below.

Link: <http://www.unifemusa.org/drupal/>

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