



The theme of the conference was “From Science to Action.” In 35 sessions, attendees discussed the practical application of scientific knowledge in areas such as HIV, infectious causes of chronic diseases and other infectious disease–chronic disease relationships, gender roles in infectious disease transmission and prevention, sexual coercion and its effect on infectious diseases in women, sexually transmitted diseases, health disparities, healthcare workers and caregivers, immunization, effective community-based strategies, the role of cultural competence in women’s health, and more.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation sponsored 26 ICWID scholarships, which allowed persons from non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations from 10 countries and four continents to attend who otherwise would not have had the opportunity. These ICWID scholars will amplify the conference’s impact by taking the knowledge and insights gained back to their home countries and organizations.

The conference successfully illuminated the female face of infectious diseases. While celebrating successes in the prevention and control of prenatal and neonatal Group B *Streptococcus* infections and achievements in other arenas, participants emphasized the many challenges remaining for the future. With the continuation of such efforts, the newly spotlighted female face of infectious diseases can also be the face of hope and progress.

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The Woman at the Dig

Tired from running a combine
all day through acres of wheat,
alone in front of the TV, I pay
attention because the show’s about
scientists digging up an ancient site.
I have no special interest in bones,
pottery, spearheads, or prehistoric
garbage dumps, and I always look past
the man describing animal migrations,
burial rites, or building design and try
to catch a glimpse of the women
working at the site – one of them
might be wearing cut-off jeans
and a halter top, clearing a patch
of ground with a trowel or brush.
These women are all experts.
You can tell by the way they look
at a bone chip or a pottery shard
they understand worlds about
the person who left it. Sifting soil,
they show more grace than contestants
in a Miss Universe pageant.
Years from now, when these farms
are ancient history, an expedition
with such a woman might come along.
I could drop something for her to find,
a pocketknife, a brass overalls button.
If only she could discover my bones.
My eyes would be long gone,
But I can see her form coming into focus
above me as she gently sweeps aside
the last particles of dust – her knee, thigh,
hip, shoulders, and finally, set off by sky
and spikes of sunlight, her face – a woman
who recognizes what she’s found.

Leo Dangel (b. 1941)

From *The Crow on the Golden Arches*,
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