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MARYLAND WOMEN'S HERITAGE CENTER BOARD MEMBER AND ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER PUBLISH BOOKS

Baltimore, Maryland – Maryland Women's Heritage Center (MWHC) Board Member Susan Morris Shaffer has co-authored a book, *Too Close for Comfort: Questioning the Intimacy of Today's Mother Daughter Relationships*, and MWHC Advisory Board Member Ginny Gong has published *From Ironing Board to Corporate Board: My Chinese Laundry Experience in America*.

Shaffer's book, which she co-authored with psychologist Linda Perlman Gordon, explores why mothers and daughters acting as best friends can be unhealthy and shows mothers and daughters how to develop rewarding, rather than agonizing relationships.

In their book, Shaffer and Gordon argue that these types of relationships are detrimental using sociological analysis, anecdotes from their professional experiences, examples from focus groups and personal accounts of their relationships with adult daughters.

"The mother-daughter relationship is never equal" said Shaffer. "They're never at the same life stage at the same time. It's not a level playing field. The mother is always the emotional caretaker. They can be friends, but they cannot be best friends because best friendship requires mutuality."

This is the fourth book the duo has co-authored. Previous books include: *Why Boys Don't Talk*, *Why it Matters: A Parent's Survival Guide to Connecting with Your Teen*; *Why Girls Talk and What They are Really Saying*; and *Mom, Can I Move Back in With You: A Survival Guide for Parents of Twentysomethings*.

Shaffer is the Executive Director of the Maryland Parental Information and Resource Center and the Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc., a non-profit that helps educational and community-based organizations support low-income, culturally diverse children and their families. Shaffer and Gordon will appear on "Good Morning America" on October 2, 2009.



Gong's book is an autobiographical account of her life in America as a Chinese immigrant. The book chronicles her childhood in New York, where her parents operated a laundromat and her later endeavors as an educator, member of various organizations and television talk show host.

Gong sets out to portray the struggle of an immigrant straddling two worlds—the eastern environment in her home where her parents did not speak English and maintained Chinese traditions, and the western environment outside of her home. Gong hopes this book will bring comfort to immigrant children and engage others who want to learn more about the Asian American experience.

“Identifying books that I could relate to was always a challenge when I was growing up,” said Gong. “Although there were books about Asia and its people, books on the Asian American experience were seriously lacking. My hope is that this book fills that void and will be included in recommended and/or suggested reading lists of schools across this nation.”

Gong's book was approved as part of the curriculum for Montgomery County Public Schools and was nominated for the national Chinese American Librarians Association's (CALA) Award for Best New Book by a Chinese American Author in 2008.

Gong holds a master's degree in education and worked for more than 20 years as a teacher/administrator. She serves on a variety of boards and commissions and has served four terms as national president of OCA, a national pan-Asian American organization. Gong hosts a weekly television talk show called “Ginny's...where East meets West.”

The Maryland Women's Heritage Center was established to preserve the past, understand the present, and shape the future by recognizing, respecting, and transmitting the experiences and contributions of Maryland women and girls of diverse backgrounds and from all regions of the state. The first effort of its kind in the nation, the Maryland Women's Heritage Center will provide a place to learn and teach about the contributions of Maryland women through the State's history, to develop leadership by girls and women, and to hold forums to address issues impacting on girls, women and their families. The Center is an outgrowth of the Maryland Women's History Project that began in 1981 as a collaborative venture between the Maryland Commission for Women and the Maryland State Department of Education.

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