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**NEWSLETTER**

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## Notes From the Chair

Since we last met in Chicago at the Annual Conference, libraries have been feeling the economic downturn and the shrinking budget, and have imposed painful decisions with serious consequences. Reduced operation hours and increased responsibilities for librarians due to hiring freezes are some examples of the libraries' diminishing ability to respond to our user needs. While everyone wrestles with these issues, what are the implications for the Women's Studies librarians and librarians working with women's and gender studies collections? Could this scarcity of resources impact negatively the interdisciplinary and emerging areas of investigation such as women's studies or gender and sexuality studies? How can we, as engaged professionals, articulate our concerns as

contributors to the academic missions of universities and point to unique solutions for the future of libraries?

We all know that our library infrastructure has remained consistent over the course of the last century, and current lack of financial support certainly invites an alternative model of library operation. I firmly believe that the understanding of feminist texts, interrogating dominant discourses and offering new paradigms, and the tacit experiences of the Women's Studies Section members enable us to contribute towards a new model for library operation. I highlight below two texts that serve as inspiration.

The commitment to differences is expressed in Luce Irigaray's essay "Sexual Difference" which offers a feminist critique of patriarchy. Rejecting the phallogentric premises of Western philosophy, Irigaray proposes a new starting point taking into account the two sexes, men and women. Irigaray points to the significance of women, in particular to female body's transformative power, reversing existing values that tend to erase women's contributions. Another example is a critical view of the issues surrounding the construction of identity in the context of history, presented by Joan W. Scott. In "Fantasy Echo: History and the Construction of Identity," Scott argues against the designation of

### Inside this issue:

Notes From the Chair	1
Introduction to Women's Issues, recap	2
WSS Joint-Study Information	3
WSS Annual Poster Sessions 2009	4
WSS Committee Reports at Annual	5
WSS Member Profiles, News & Notes	6
WSS Awards & Winners	7
Welcome, New Members	8

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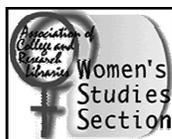
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The *WSS Newsletter* welcomes contributions from members. Please send articles, items of interest, and news to the editors, preferably in electronic format.

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**WSS Officers 2009-2010:**

- ◆ Kayo Denda, Chair
- ◆ Jane Nichols, Vice-Chair/  
Chair-Elect
- ◆ Stacy Russo, Secretary
- ◆ Kimberly L. Clarke, Member-at-large
- ◆ Jennifer A. Nace, Member-at-large



## Women and Workload: Strategies for Empowerment

Introduction to Women's Issues, the annual offering cosponsored by Women's Studies Section, Feminist Task Force & COSWL is lead on an alternating basis by each of the groups. Women's Studies Section was in charge of this year's program.

WSS Chair, Diana King began the program with an introduction to the circumstances in which many of us have found ourselves; shrinking budgets mean less staff and multiplying job responsibilities. Managing workload is a major struggle for librarians and library staff members in these situations. What followed was an informal discussion of strategies for balancing workload and additional job responsibilities and for knowing when or how to say "no" to new projects and assignments. Attendees included librarians and staff from all types of libraries and all levels of position.

Discussion echoed the concerns listed above with suggestions about how to cope while trying to juggle multiple priorities. Attendees shared that they had become their own advocates, sought support from colleagues, approached bosses with facts about the effects of the situation on their ability to do their core job, and questions were asked about the role of gender and society's perception and expectations of women.

In all, those present were dedicated to their jobs but recognized that in today's work climate women will have to take care of themselves, be aware of work life balance, and find ways to create reasonable situations in the workplace through a variety of strategies.

**Get Involved!**

ACRL division and section committee volunteers are an integral part of the association. If you have been looking for a way to become more involved, ACRL Vice-President/President-Elect Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe invites you to volunteer for a section committee for the 2010-11 term. The ACRL volunteer form at <http://www.acrl.org/volunteer> will be available until February 15, 2010.

### Study on the Presence of Gender in ALA Presentations

Have you ever sat in an ALA Annual Conference Presentation, not sponsored by WSS, Feminist Task Force or COSWL and wondered if there are more men presenting at ALA than women in spite of the fact that our profession is over 80% women? That was the question asked a little over a year ago on Feminist, the listserv of ALA's Feminist Task Force. FTF decided that it was a perception that should be examined and so began a study jointly sponsored by FTF, Women's Studies Section, particularly the Research Committee, and COSWL. Chaired by Dr. Dolores Fidishun, the goals of the study seek to: address the perception that there are more male speakers at ALA than female, evaluate whether certain divisions or other entities have more female or male speakers, examine whether certain topics have more male or female speakers, and determine if certain level programs, such as President's programs, have more female or male speakers.

The study will look at all program presentations from the Washington, DC (2007), Anaheim (2008), and Chicago (2009) annual meetings. Thirteen members of the study group, including seven WSS members are currently combing the program sections of each conference to code for points that include topic, type of program, gender of presenters, program sponsors, etc. The results of the study will result in a white paper that will be presented to ALA Council through COSWL as well as a possibly co-authored article. For more information on the study contact Dolores Fidishun at [dx19@psu.edu](mailto:dx19@psu.edu).

~Dolores Fidishun, Ed.D.

*Penn State Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies*

#### Go mobile @ ACRL Midwinter Workshops

Friday, January 2010 - Boston, MA

*Anytime, Anywhere, Any Device: Developing a Mobile Website for Your Library*

Learn about the current state of mobile technologies both within and outside of libraries, and learn how to launch a mobile library Web site.

#### WSS Annual Social 2009

WSS held its Annual 2009 social at BIN 36, a wine bar near the river in downtown Chicago. Our large group had a wonderful time sampling wine, cheese flights, and other delicious small plates while catching up with old friends and meeting new members. Thanks to everyone who came, and for those who didn't, be sure to go in Boston!



### WSS Poster Sessions at Annual

- ◆ Carrie Donovan, Indiana University, *Do Librarians Matter? A Quantitative Look at Instructional Influence*
- ◆ Sharon Landenson, Michigan State University, *Making Waves: Feminist Pedagogy and Information Literacy*
- ◆ Michelle Maloney, University of the Pacific, *Instant Messaging Reference at Doctoral Research Universities: What IS Success?*
- ◆ Sharon Stoerger, Indiana University, *Looking Forward in the Rear View Mirror: Women's Roles in Libraries*
- ◆ Beth Strickland, University of Michigan, *Women's Way of Information Seeking: Finding & Evaluating Information in Academic Libraries*



### Submit a proposal for ACRL 2011

The ACRL 2011 National Conference, *A Declaration of Interdependence*, is scheduled to be held in Philadelphia, March 30–April 2, 2011. We invite you to participate in this exciting and energizing exchange of ideas—bring your latest research, cutting-edge practices, and innovative developments to share with your colleagues.

Complete details and submission forms are online at <http://www.acrl.org> (click on "Conferences & Events").

### Notes from the Chair (continued from 1)

categories that frame identity removed from the political, social, geographical, economic and temporal context. She highlights the fact that interpretation of events, and meanings and values of women, for example, result from engagements with the mechanisms and structure of power.

In this context, the value of women's studies librarianship cannot be underestimated. Our experience working with multiple communities and researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds, and our focus on women and gender, positions us well to serve users with diverse affiliations and research interests. Our awareness of the danger of generalization based on fantasies of collective identification allows us to be attuned to substance and recognize differences among researchers and investigations of all levels. Collectively, the Women's Studies Section members are in a position to play a leading role towards a new paradigm of librarianship. The Women's Studies Section is a perfect place to start these conversations. We certainly have an active role to play in the formulation of dynamic collaborations while revitalizing libraries adjusted to the needs of the twenty-first century.

In closing, I would like to thank Diana King, past chair, for her leadership, dedication, and guidance. I look forward to working with the Executive Committee and all section members. Best wishes to all of you, and please contact me with any questions or concerns.

~Kayo Denda, Chair

Luce Irigaray. "Sexual Difference," in *French Feminist Thought: a Reader* ed. by Toril Moi. New York: Blackwell, 1987.

Joan W. Scott. "Fantasy Echo: History and the Construction of Identity," *Critical Inquiry* 27 (Winter 2001)

## Committee Reports From Annual in Chicago

### Instruction Committee

The Instruction Committee for WSS met at ALA annual in Chicago and the primary focus of our meeting was our ongoing project to develop information literacy standards for women's studies programs. A draft of the standards are completed and we are in the process of moving to the next phase, which is to work with a consultant from ACRL who will help us develop a working paper for the project. It will probably be at least one year before the committee completes the project. If anyone would like more information about this project please feel free to contact me or any member of the Instruction Committee.

~Diane Fulkerson, *University of West Georgia*

### Membership Committee

The Membership Committee met at Annual, with incoming members joining the meeting. The committee is continuing its social networking communication on MySpace, Facebook and the new Twitter account. Transferring these accounts to current members was discussed, since the members who set them up are rotating off the committee. The committee also discussed ACRL statistics for WSS and the other sections for the past year for new members, reinstated members, and dropped memberships. We continue to send emails to all of these categories to welcome new members/reinstated members or determine the reason for dropping membership. The committee has made contact with some of the other smaller ACRL sections about collaboratively promoting those sections as good places to get involved, with some positive response. The WSS socials at conference continue to be fun, well-attended times to share food, fun, and conversation.

~Connie Phelps, *University of New Orleans*

### Publications Committee

The Publications Committee met via email to discuss the review and updating of the WSS Publications Manual, the possibilities of an electronic-only newsletter, and the WSS blog. The Committee completed a review of the Publications Manual and added sections on electronic

publications, including the WSS blog, and moved the updated Manual to the Executive Committee. The blog is still in its first year and the Committee recommended that more WSS committee chairs contribute material to the blog in an effort to keep it fresh and informative. The Committee also brought forth to the Executive Committee, at the request of ACRL, the possibility of moving the section newsletter to a strictly electronic format for a trial run of about six months before being reviewed.

~Julie Biando Edwards, *University of Montana*

### Research Committee

A review of the poster sessions this year concluded that the Research Forum was a success. A call for proposals for the 2010 poster sessions will be sent to a number of discussion lists and blogs. Two ideas for future programs and midwinter discussions include women's studies versus gender studies, including what's happening with these programs at universities, and the current status of feminism. The committee thought that it would be valuable to have a discussion on one of these topics at the 2011 Midwinter Conference, with a follow-up program at the 2011 Annual Conference. Dolores Fidishun provided an update on a joint FTF/COSWL/WSS study on the presence of gender in ALA presentations, and Cindy Ingold gave an update on her research project documenting women's studies librarianship as a social movement. Cindy's project has been accepted for inclusion in Alexander Street's Women and Social Movements database. The committee is looking for new members as well as a volunteer to update the committee webpage.

~Marcia Barrett, *The University of Alabama*

### No Report Submitted By:

- ◆ Awards Committee
- ◆ Collection Development & Bibliography Committee
- ◆ Electronic Resources and Access Committee
- ◆ Instruction Committee
- ◆ Nominating Committee
- ◆ Program Planning Committee

### WSS Member Profiles

#### ◆ Lynda M. Kellam

**Education:** MA in Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2000 and MLIS, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2007

**What do you do in your current job?** Data Services & Government Information Librarian. Support those services and the political science department at the University of NC at Greensboro.

**What books have you read lately?** *The Looming Tower* by Lawrence Wright and *When Christ and His Saints Slept: A Novel* by Sharon Kay Penman

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?** volunteer DJ at the college radio station

**Why did you join WSS?** My background is in women's rights work. I worked for a women's rights organization in Zagreb, Croatia when I lived in Croatia and I've worked with our women's resource center here in Greensboro. I wanted to maintain my ties to the community even through my profession.

#### ◆ Carol Smallwood

**Education:** MLS from Western Michigan University

**Where has your research appeared?** My work has appeared in *English Journal*, *Michigan Feminist Studies*, *The Yale Journal for Humanities in Medicine*, *Journal of Formal Poetry*, *The Writer's Chronicle*, *The Detroit News*, and anthologies. With 4 books about to come out, her published books now total 22.

**What books have you read lately?** I am currently auditing classes in English so most of my books are connected with reading for those.

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?** DVD's are relaxing for me in the evening as well as entertaining my new humane society cat, Minnie

**Why did you join WSS?** I joined WSS because I'm interested in what other women librarians are doing. I'm now retired as a school librarian but am enjoying exploring creative writing and my first novel is forthcoming at the age of 70!

### Member News & Notes

- ◆ Sue Searing, Sandy Wolf and Lori Miller, received the 2009 Distinguished Service Award from the Library School Alumni Association of the University of Illinois.
- ◆ Kellam, L., Cox, R. & Winkler, H. (2009). Hacking Blackboard: Customizing access to library resources through the Blackboard Course Management System. *Journal of Web Librarianship* 3(4).
- ◆ Evan Boyd graduated from Dominican University's GSLIS with an MLIS and is currently the Reference Graduate Assistant at Memorial Library and is a new graduate student in the Gender & Women's Studies Program of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences at Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- ◆ Carol Smallwood is a 2009 finalist for the Eric Hoffer Award for Best New Writing; 2009 National Federation of State Poetry Societies Award Winner.
- ◆ Jane Nichols, Oregon State University, "Library a la Carte: Research and course guides made to order" in *College & Research Libraries* May 2009 issue.
- ◆ Rebecca Tolley-Stokes, East Tennessee State University, "Try on a new pair of sensible shoes: What libraries can learn from Zappos about customer service and organizational culture" in *College & Research Libraries* May 2009 issue.
- ◆ Lauren Pressley published, *So You Want To Be A Librarian*, in July 2009. A companion blog was created at <http://laurenpressley.com/librarian/>
- ◆ Julie Biando Edwards presented a poster session at the IFLA Conference in Milan, Italy in August 2009. The poster, developed with her co-author Stephan P. Edwards, was titled "Symbolic Possibilities: The Cultural Semiotics of Libraries."



### WSS Awards & Winners

**2010 WSS Career Achievement Award nominations are due December 4!** This annual award honors individual career achievement in Women's Studies Librarianship. Nominees should have demonstrated significant achievements and contributions in one or more of the following areas:

1. Service within the organized profession through ACRL/WSS and/or related organizations;
2. Academic/research library service in the area of women's studies;
3. Research and publication in areas of academic/research library services in women's studies;
4. Planning and implementation of academic/research library programs in women's studies disciplines of such exemplary quality that they could serve as a model for others.

An award of \$1000 will be presented by Greenwood Publishing. We need your help to identify individuals that are deserving of this prestigious award.

**The WSS Awards committee is currently accepting nominations, and the deadline is December 4, 2009. More information about the award can be found in the Awards & Scholarships section of the ACRL Web site, [www.ala.org/acrl](http://www.ala.org/acrl), and on the WSS website at <http://www.libr.org/wss/awards/index.html>.**

*Unfortunately, Routledge has withdrawn support for the longstanding WSS Significant Achievement Award. The Women's Studies Section Awards Committee and Executive Board are working on the recruitment of a new sponsor, and hope to offer this award again soon.*



*(left to right) WSS Significant Achievement Award Winner Ken Middleton, with Awards Committee member Connie Phelps; 2009 WSS Career Achievement Award Winner Linda Krikos, with Awards Committee member Connie Phelps; 2009 WSS Program speakers (left to right) Angela Winand, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, and Marilyn Dunn.*

### New Assistant Editor

Marissa C. Ball, Electronic Information Services Librarian at Florida International University, is the new Assistant Editor of the WSS Newsletter. Marissa also serves as the liaison to the Women's Studies Center offering instruction and collection development services to the department. Additionally, she serves as Secretary on the FIU Faculty Senate Technology Committee and as ACRL Representative on ALA's Web Advisory Committee. Her varied responsibilities in emerging technologies, social media, and Women's Studies are also reflected in her research interests which include women in film, gender and technology and techno-feminism. Marissa received a Bachelor of Arts in English (with a concentration in Gender Studies and a minor in Women's Studies) from the University of Florida and a Master of Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida.

**Women's Studies Section**  
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## Welcome New Members!

Alexis Burson	Danielle Salomon	Kevin Wade Merriman
Alycia Sellie	Dajah Rubel	Kim Okahara
Amy Gons	Dianne Keeping	Kristi Kohl
Amy Mark	Donald Kenney	Kristi Jacobi
Anna Cook	Emily Drabinski	Leslie Firth
April Martinez	Fiona Grady	Margaret Anderson
Asma Jamal Yagoub	Gail Roy	Margie Ruppel
Barbara Schoenfeld	Jessica Harris	Mary Matix
Barbara Trilhe	Jill Anderson	Melissa Guy
Bethany Farmer	Jill Barr	Nadia Kotula
Betsy Hageman	Joan Ruckel	Nancy Nyland
Brenda Rodriguez-Giraldez	Julia McGarey	Nicole Vetter
Carolyn Caffrey	Julian Prentice	Nina Clements
Carolyn Pearson Jenkins	Julie Carmen	Rebecca Miller
Carrie Bertling	Karla Jean Strand	Robin Blankenbaker
Catherine Crohan	Katelynn Vance	Tiffany-Kay Sangwand
Christine Fagan	Katherine McCardwell	Tracy Mitchell Hall
Claudia Holguin	Katie Yockey	Vesna Cilib
Debra Gold	Katrina Frazier	Victoria Kogler