



# WOMEN'S STUDIES SECTION NEWSLETTER

Volume 12, No. 2  
Fall 1997

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*Issued by the Women's Studies Section, Association of College and Research Libraries  
a division of the American Library Association*

## “What is Women’s Studies Librarianship?”



### Women’s Studies Section Midwinter Discussion New Orleans



Monday, January 12, 1998  
9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

The Women’s Studies Section discussion meeting in New Orleans will be Monday morning, January 12, from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Our topic this year gets down to basics: what is Women’s Studies librarianship? How is this realized at different institutions, and in different kinds of positions? The discussion will provide the opportunity for experienced members to re-energize by hearing what’s happening in Women’s Studies at other libraries; for newer members, it will provide a good overview of what’s going on in the field.

Come, bring a colleague, and be ready to talk about your current experiences, both difficulties and successes.

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The *WSS Newsletter* is available to all section members at no additional cost.

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The *WSS Newsletter* welcomes contributions from readers. Send articles, items of interest, and news to the editor or to the appropriate column editor, preferably in electronic format.

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**WSS Officers 1997/98:**

Jessica Grim, Chair  
Kris Gerhard, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect  
Bernice Redfern, Secretary  
Mary Faith Pankin, Member-at-large



Visit the WSS website at:

<http://www.lib.siu.edu/dcallaha/wsshp.html>

**Notes from the Chair**

Greetings all!

There are a lot of exciting things going on in the Women's Studies Section right now, and I want to mention just a few of them here.

Included in this issue of the newsletter you'll find a WSS Membership Survey. The primary purpose of the survey is to find out more about who you are, and how women's studies fits in with your professional lives. From this information we hope to better inform ourselves about the needs of the membership, and in particular, what we can do in the way of programming and other activities to meet those needs in creative and challenging ways. The survey should take only a couple of minutes of your time, and the greater the response, the more we'll learn - so please don't forget to complete it and send it in!

Speaking of defining who we are and what we do, I'd like to urge all those attending Midwinter in New Orleans to come to the WSS Discussion Meeting on Monday, from 9:30 to 11 a.m., entitled "What is Women's Studies Librarianship?" It promises to be an active, eye-opening discussion for both new and experienced members (please see the general announcement of the Discussion Meeting on page 1 of this issue).

I'd also like to mention a recent letter that went out from the Executive Committee, at the impetus of Kris Gerhard, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. The letter was sent to the Worst Serial Title Change of the Year Committee (ALCTS-SS), in response to their decision to include a "most politically correct title change award." What was being ridiculed with this award was the title change of Churchman's Human Quest to Human Quest. If you'd like a copy of the letter, or more information on this, please contact Kris Gerhard (kgerhard@iastate.edu).

Finally, discussion is underway about creating a WSS award. The idea to do this was brought up by Bonnie Jean Cox, Past Chair, at last Annual, and there seems to be a lot of interest and energy towards getting this up and going. If you have ideas or suggestions relating to this, please send them to me (jessica.grim@oberlin.edu).

And last but not least, if you're going to be in New Orleans, don't forget to come by the Women's Studies Section Social Hour (Sunday 6 - 7 p.m. in the lobby of the Royal Sonesta Hotel, 300 Bourbon Street); even if (or especially if!) you've never been actively involved in the Section, this is a great opportunity to meet other Section members, and have a good time!

Jessica Grim,  
Chair, ACRL Women's Studies Section

**Join us at the Section Social Hour!**

6 - 7 p.m., Sunday, January 11,  
Lobby of the Royal Sonesta Hotel, 300 Bourbon Street  
New Orleans

### Women's Studies Section Survey of Membership, 1997

The Women's Studies Section is interested in learning more about its membership, and what kinds of connections, if any, members have with women's studies both within the library and institutionally. Please take a moment to fill out this questionnaire. Results will help us better understand who you are, and give us a valuable tool both for evaluating our current structure and programming, and for planning future activities that are responsive to the needs and interests of the membership.

Please send completed forms to Jessica Grim (address at end of form).

Thank you in advance for your time!

1. What type of institution do you work in?

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> university      | <input type="checkbox"/> college                 | <input type="checkbox"/> community college |
| <input type="checkbox"/> high school     | <input type="checkbox"/> public library          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> special library | <input type="checkbox"/> other (please describe) |  |

2. What is your current job title?

3. Do you have specific responsibilities for women's studies? If not, please skip to number 4. If so, in what area(s):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collection Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Reference               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) |

Is your work in women's studies as noted above included explicitly in your job description?

4. What percentage of your professional time is currently spent on women's studies related issues/projects:

- 0-10%       10-20%       20-40%       50% or more

Please list briefly the areas outside of women's studies which take up your professional time (i.e. reference, systems, technical services, administration, etc.)

5. Which of the following contributed the most to your ability to work in women's studies librarianship?

(Please number selections in accordance with importance, with 1 being most important, 2 second most, etc., using each number only once. Leave blank any that do not apply.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> undergraduate level women's studies coursework          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graduate level women's studies coursework               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a librarian colleague/mentor                            | <input type="checkbox"/> coursework in library school                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a library school professor/mentor                       | <input type="checkbox"/> a women's studies colleague or professor mentor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal feminism/activist interests                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> membership/participation in the Women's Studies Section |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (please describe)                                 |  |

(Continued on next page)

Women's Studies Section, Survey of Membership—page 2

6. Does your institution have an official women's studies, feminist studies, or gender studies department or program?

If so, how are you involved with the department or program? (check as many as apply):

- not involved, attend programs, sit in on class(es), teach part of a course, teach one or more courses, attend department/program governance, participate as member of department/program in governance meetings, offer individual research consultations to students and/or faculty, other (please describe)

7. Does your institution offer a major in women's studies, feminist studies, or gender studies?

A minor? Does it grant undergraduate degrees in this area? Graduate degrees?

8. Do you keep up (or make an attempt to keep up) with scholarship in women's studies/feminism? If so, how?

9. Are you interested in pedagogical issues relating to feminist librarianship? What particular issues most interest you?

10. Please let us know why you chose to be a member of the Women's Studies Section.

11. What do you find most beneficial about being a member of the Women's Studies Section?

12. What kinds of annual programs or other activities would you like to see the Women's Studies Section offer? (please be as specific as you can, and attach additional sheets if necessary)

Please send completed surveys to:

Jessica Grim, Oberlin College Library, 148 West College Street, Oberlin, OH 44074



## ALA Annual Conference

San Francisco, CA — June 30, 1997

### *HIV/AIDS INFORMATION FOR WOMEN: From the Archive to the Street*

The annual program sponsored by ACRL Women's Studies Section was a lively and diverse panel presentation. Topics included the history of women and AIDS, information sources for documenting and researching women and AIDS, and a performance piece used successfully in educating women about safe sex. Presentations were given by Will Walker, archivist for the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and previously archivist for the AIDS History Project, Cristina Campbell from the Public Health Library at University of California - Berkeley, and by Lani Ka'ahamanu and the Safer Sex Sluts. The panel was moderated by Ellen Broidy, library publications officer of University of California - Irvine.

Mr. Walker demonstrated that from the very beginning AIDS was not a gay, white-male disease. He cited as evidence an early case in which four members of the same family, including children, succumbed to AIDS and the fact that their care giver became a medical expert for the AIDS community. He also spoke to the many ways women were vulnerable and involved with AIDS from the very beginning. Women care-givers, community organizers, safe-sex advisers, and lesbians were affected. The AIDS History project collected organizational records, surveys, community publications, and ephemera. It operated with an advisory board drawn from various constituencies.

Cristina Campbell described the library collections and staff at the Berkeley Public Health Library. She went on to discuss a variety of information resources on AIDS and talked about the percentage of titles or data devoted to women. She analyzed and tracked from 1987 the rate of records relevant to women. Earliest findings revealed 8 of 343 records catalogued to indicate specific relevance to women. Today 3.5% of all records indicate special attention to women. She reviewed her bibliography on AIDS, leading participants to good current titles. In addition, she spoke about the growth of AIDS information that, in her experience, has gone from a clippings file to several comprehensive Internet sites including the UC Berkeley site and JAMA's HIV/AIDS Center. Campbell concluded that the availability of AIDS information has greatly improved in recent years.

The Safer Sex Sluts are performance artists who emphasize finding audience-appropriate performances to educate. They received a Lyon-Martin Women's Health grant to do HIV prevention education for Lesbian/Bi-sexual women. Lani Ka'ahamanu demonstrated the group's method of educating women, and spoke of their history in becoming comfortable in various venues and with different audiences. The presentation ended with a strip-tease to the tune of "Marion, the Librarian" from Music Man, intended to demonstrate a safe sex device.

—Marilyn Dunn

### *Selected HIV/AIDS Web Sites*

U. C. Berkeley Public Health Library selection of AIDS/HIV resources  
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/PUBL/aids.html>

U.C. San Francisco AIDS program at San Francisco General Hospital and the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies  
<http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu>

JAMA HIV/AIDS Information Center  
<http://199.186.22.101/special/hiv>

### **Curious about the Section?**

The "Orientation Guide for Committees and Officers" is now available at the WSS Web site (<http://www.lib.siu.edu/dcallaha/wsshp.html>). It includes the basic procedures to be followed by the Section in relation to ALA and ACRL and useful information for incoming committee chairs and the newsletter editors. The topics covered are: Section Calendar, Committee Tasks and Services, Section Officers and Committee Structure, Documentation and Archives Guidelines, and WSS Committee Charges.



### **Program Committee Members Needed!**

We are looking for members who would like to serve on the Program Committee for the 1999 program at Annual Conference, when we'll be back in New Orleans. If you are interested, please contact Vice-Chair, Kris Gerhard ([kgerhard@iastate.edu](mailto:kgerhard@iastate.edu) or 515/294-4861). We will meet at Midwinter to set things in motion, and settle on a program topic. If you have ideas to contribute, please contact Kris.

## Kudos and News

Please send news items to Emily Silverman at [essilverman@library.umass.edu](mailto:essilverman@library.umass.edu)

Five members of the 1996-97 Technical Services Committee of the WSS have completed their article evaluating the four new CD-ROM products in Women's Studies—Women's Studies on Disc, Women's Resources International, Women 'R,' and Contemporary Women's Issues. The article, entitled, "From Zero to Four: A Review of Four New Women's Studies CD-ROM Products," will appear in the Fall issue of Serials Librarian. The authors, **Ruth Dickstein**, **Marcia Evans**, **Lisa German**, **Jessica Grim**, and **Sandra River**, studied the products for a year, and made a preliminary report of their findings at the 1997 Midwinter meeting.

**Bonnie Jean Cox**, during this coming fiscal year will work half-time as Collection Development Librarian and half-time as the Humanities Electronic Text Librarian on the Information Services (Reference) team at the University of Kentucky. She will identify and purchase electronic resources in the humanities, and work with patrons in the use of these resources. As of July 1, 1998, this job will become Bonnie's full-time responsibility.

**Kris Gerhard**, **Mila C. Su**, and **Charlotte C. Rubens** announce their article, "An Empirical Examination of Subject Headings for Women's Studies Core Materials," based on a research project conducted by the WSS Technical Services Committee, will be published in the November or January issue of College and Research Libraries.

**Martha Henn** assumed the position of Reference/Government Documents Librarian at Birmingham-Southern College Library in Birmingham, AL on August 1, 1997.

**Necia Parker-Gibson**, reference librarian, recently received tenure and was promoted to associate professor at Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

**Bernice Redfern** published an article with M. Liu, "Information Seeking Behavior of Multicultural Students: A Case Study at San Jose State University," in College and Research Libraries, 58 (July 1997), pp. 348-354.

**Sue Searing** has taken a leave of absence from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is serving as visiting librarian at the University of Illinois, Urbana-

Champaign. She is Head, Research and Planning - User Services, and is also acting Library and Information Science Librarian. You can reach Sue at

306 Library  
1408 West Gregory Drive  
Urbana, IL 61801  
217/333-4456  
[searing@uiuc.edu](mailto:searing@uiuc.edu)

**Susan Turkel** began work in July 1997 as the Instructional Technology Coordinator for the Social Sciences at Bryn Mawr College. She acquires, organizes, and makes accessible large social science datasets to the Bryn Mawr community, and helps social science faculty to incorporate technology into their teaching and research. Susan graduated in May from Rutgers/SCILS with an MLS, and while there worked part-time in the Douglass Library as an Information Assistant.

**Phyllis Holman Weisbard**, University of Wisconsin System Women's Studies Librarian, is the author of "Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Archival Resources on the History of Jewish Women in America," pp. 1553-1586 in the forthcoming Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia, ed. by Paula Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore. NY: Routledge, 1997. It is expected out in October.

**Lynn Westbrook**, Assistant Professor, School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman's University, is the author of "Information Access Issues for Interdisciplinary Scholars: Results of a Delphi Study on Women's Studies Research" in the Journal of Academic Librarianship, 23 (3): 211-216, May 1997.



### WSS Core Lists—New Editors

Megan Adams  
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**Get Involved in Section Committees!**

**Collection Development** monitors collection development issues and resources in women's studies. It recommends research and implements projects to meet needs in this area including the creation of bibliographies, guides, and instructional materials.

*Flora Schrode, Chair  
fschrode@utk.edu*



**Communications** facilitates communication about the Section and its activities through a newsletter and brochure. It conducts orientation sessions for new members, provides opportunities for further involvement, communicates with other professional women's groups and plans the social hour at the annual and midwinter conferences.

*Robin Paynter, Chair  
rpaynter@oregon.uoregon.edu*



**Program Planning** plans, implements, and evaluates Women's Studies Section programs for the annual conference and coordinates Section participation in coalition programming.

*Jessica Grim, Co-Chair  
jessica.grim@oberlin.edu  
Charlene Hovatter, Co-Chair  
cehova@yms.cit.pitt.edu*

**Publications** develops and coordinates publication activities of the Section and its committees and advises the WSS Executive Committee on publication projects. It endeavors to stimulate and encourage research projects which may lead to publication under WSS auspices. It assists the Section and its committees in finding appropriate avenues for publication. The committee develops and maintains standards and guidelines for WSS publications and also serves as liaison on publication projects with ACRL and ALA.

*Argent Sue Gibson, Chair*



**Social Issues/Education** informs the Section about social, political and educational issues which affect Section administration and women's studies librarianship in general. It communicates with other library and women's groups addressing these topics and coordinates the Section's work in this area.

*Julie Nachman, Chair  
jnachman@buvax.acc.georgetown.edu*



**Technical Services** monitors technical services issues and practices having an impact on women's studies. It recommends and implements projects to meet needs in this area.

*Marcia Evans, Chair  
mbevans@gorgas.lib.ua.edu*

**Women's Studies Section COMMITTEE INTEREST FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate committees on which you are interested in serving, and number your preferences:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| _____ Collection Development Committee | _____ Program Planning Committee        |
| _____ Communications Committee         | _____ Publications Committee            |
| _____ Nominating Committee             | _____ Social Issues/Education Committee |
|  | _____ Technical Services Committee      |

Other current ALA or ACRL committee assignments:

Please mail to: Jessica Grim, Assistant Librarian (For more information, contact Jessica at  
Oberlin College Library jessica.grim@oberlin.edu)  
Oberlin, OH 44074

 **WSS Meeting Schedule for the New Orleans Conference\***

<b>Sunday, January 11</b>	9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.†	All WSS Committee Meetings
	4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	General Membership Meeting
	6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Social Hour (Lobby, Royal Sonesta Hotel, 300 Bourbon St.)
<b>Monday, January 12</b>	9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Discussion Meeting (see p. 1)
	2:00 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Executive Committee Meeting

*\*Check conference schedule for locations and room numbers*

*†Note: your committee can meet at any time within this period. You do not have to start at 9:30.*

***Women's Studies Section Newsletter***

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