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NEWSLETTER

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Women's Studies Section: 25 Years of History, Connections, Resources and Professional Development

The following is an excerpt of the WSS History written by Dolores Fidishun. To read the complete history visit <http://www.libr.org/wss/committees/WSShistory.html>

Twenty-five years ago women from academic libraries established a "home" within ACRL for those of us with an interest in Women's Studies and women's issues. In my conversations with past and current members it is appropriate to call Women's Studies Section our "home" because so many of us consider the section to be a place where we find like souls, where we learn and grow.

The women who formed our section were activists who were deeply involved in feminist and equality issues throughout the profession and found expression of their beliefs in various divisions and sections of ALA. Sara Pritchard described the scene in 1983, explaining that "Women's studies librarianship, and more broadly feminist issues in librarianship, was just starting to "diversify" into several different groups. Having all started from the Task Force on Women (now the FTF), we had committees or discussion groups forming in RUSA (RASD), ALCTS, LAMA, Council (that is, COSWL)." Sara noted, "in some ways the ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group was among the last of these spin-offs, partly because aca-

demia itself was just starting to focus on the field, and maybe partly because there wasn't as much [Women's Studies] librarianship until we had gotten beyond the centrality of the broader feminist/equity issues."

Joan Ariel spoke about how "a small group of feminist librarians interested in Women's Studies talked about creating a place for this dynamic, still new discipline in our libraries and professional organizations." At the Midwinter meeting in San Antonio these women, led by Joan Ariel, Ellen Broidy and what Ellen calls the "Women of the Winter of 83," a petition was circulated to establish an ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group.

Joan and others who supported the formation of the group thought it would provide a forum across professional specialties to discuss women's studies within the context of academic and research libraries. In addition, feminist academic librarians needed involvement in ACRL to get funding for conferences, and some felt that collection building issues relevant to academic libraries were not being addressed in other venues. Finally a new discussion group would tap women who had not previously been involved, and women's voices certainly needed to be heard in the male dominated ACRL.

More and more women showed up for meetings and lively discussions ensued. The Discussion Group took on new projects and gained a positive reputation among academic librarians. By 1985 the Discussion Group had grown to nearly 200 members. It soon became apparent that becoming a section would provide improved visibility and access to better resources. In 1986 the Women's Studies Discussion Group petitioned ACRL to become a section to, according to Joan Ariel, "represent librarians and others who specialize or are otherwise professionally involved in the cross-disciplinary field of Women's Studies." In the 1987 membership year we became a full section!

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Women's Studies Section

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Editor

Julie Biando Edwards
Maureen and Mike Mansfield
Library
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59812
406-243-4505
julie.edwards@umontana.edu

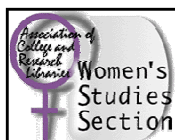
Assistant Editor

Margaret J. Anderson, M.S.
Texan A&M University Libraries
MS 5000 Room 111.1M
College Station, TX 77843-5000
979-862-1893
margaretanderson@tamu.edu

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 2007-2008:

- ◆ Diana King, Chair
- ◆ Kayo Denda, Vice-Chair/
- ◆ Chair-Elect
- ◆ Jennifer Nace, Secretary
- ◆ Kimberly L. Clarke, Member-at-large
- ◆ Marilyn A. Dunn, Member-at-large

**Notes from the Chair**

Greetings to all our new, prospective, and returning members to the Women's Studies Section! Fresh from an ALA conference that celebrated our 25th Anniversary as a Section, I want to heartily thank outgoing Chair Jennifer Gilley for all her hard work this year, along with the terrific committees, individuals, and sponsors who helped make the Anniversary Social happen (temporary emergency evacuation, Anaheim location, and all)! Thanks also to all the amazing founders of the Section for sharing their stories and to Dolores Fidishun for putting together a slideshow that records our history—now available on the WSS website. I've heard quite a few compliments on the WSS 2008 conference program, "Feminist Publishing: The Evolution of a Revolution," which was an absolutely fitting topic



for the Section's anniversary. I would like to remind all our members (549 of you out there as of June 2008) that we have a presence on both Facebook and MySpace. So, please do join us there if you have an interest in social networking beyond the listserv. I have found it a great way to learn more about my colleagues in other states and institutions beyond the crazed scheduling of on-site conferences.

We have much to look forward to this year as well, including a program on popular culture collections at the 2009 Chicago conference, WSS planning for the annual Introduction to Women's Issues Program as part of our ongoing collaboration with COSWL and FTF, and an ACRL Action Plan supporting a panel at the 2009 NWSA conference on Information Literacy Standards for Women's Studies. ACRL Action Plans are submitted far in advance, and can be generated from many different possible committees or individuals from within a Section. They can also be the source of some confusion and/or mystery, with a submission date that occurs shortly after the Midwinter meeting. Therefore, one of my goals this year is to conduct more information sharing and brainstorming within WSS on what an Action Plan actually is, and what possibilities we can pursue for putting one together in the future. Look for more soon on WSS-L about this.

As the Vice-Chair this year, I became very aware of the challenges faced by prospective committee members and chairs to participate in the Section as fully as they would like. I believe that procuring funding for travel, the current limitations placed on virtual participation, confusion about committee assignments and responsibilities, and changing or increasing primary job responsibilities all weigh heavily on the minds of many. In consideration of this, I've come up with a few goals which will hopefully help alleviate some of these barriers—though of course not eliminate them:

(continued on page 4)

WSS Programs a Success at Annual!

WSS Poster Sessions at Annual

During the WSS General Membership Meeting at the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim there was much interest and lively discussion surrounding the 2008 Poster Sessions offered. This was the first time poster sessions were part of the meeting, allowing a great opportunity for members to discover new research. In line with the welcoming nature of WSS, the poster sessions, hosted by the Research Committee of WSS, were created as a venue for seasoned and beginning librarians and researchers to share their work. The Research Committee uses a blind review process and considers the significance of the topic and originality of the project when reviewing submissions. Three poster sessions were presented for this first year:

- ◆ Kay Ann Cassell (Rutgers School of Communication, Information, and Library Studies), "Programming for Women in Public Libraries"
- ◆ Lesley Farmer (California State University, Long Beach), "Web 2.0 and GURLS"
- ◆ Cynthia Johnson and Brian Williams (University of California, Irvine), "UC Irvine's TXT a Librarian Program"

Information about the sessions above, including presentation materials, is available at <http://libr.org/wss/committees/research/postersession/2008postersession.html>

~ Stacy Russo, Chapman University

WSS 25th Anniversary Social

Our 25th Anniversary Social was a great success. Over 50 people mingled in the room at the Sheraton, reconnecting with old friends or making the acquaintance of new ones. The highlight of the evening was a presentation by Dolores Fidishun on the history of the WSS. She interviewed the founding members and recounted the section's evolution from a discussion group to section, then highlighted some of the important projects and programs the section has worked on over the years. One unexpected but fortunate outcomes of Dolores' research was to gather all of the section's newsletters together for the first time! After the talk we all enjoyed the food, drink, and wonderful conversation. This social would not have been possible without the generous support of Alexander Street Press and the Schlesinger Library, so thanks so much to both of them.

~ Piper Martin, Wright State University

Feminist Publishing Subject of WSS Program

This year's Women's Studies Section program at the 2008 ALA was entitled "Feminist Publishing: The Evolution of a Revolution" and took place on Monday June 30th. The panel sought to explore feminist publishing with participants with a wide variety of publishing experiences.

Florence Howe of the Feminist Press at City University New York spoke of her accidental entrance into publishing as a result of attempts to get female-written books

published so university educators could begin to break away from a male-centered curriculum. Kris-

ten Bender, reporter at the Oakland Tribune and freelancer for Women's eNews, spoke of the difficulties of getting stories both by and about women published in major newspapers. Internet news sites such as Women's eNews are helping to bridge this gap by providing stories about women of all backgrounds, ages and cultures. Tedra Osell of the blog BitchPhD. spoke of women writing in new media as a way of connecting with new audiences. Jennifer Nace, librarian at Penn State Worthington Scranton, presented on her time as a member of the Left Banks Books Collective. She talked about the complementary relationship between feminist presses and independent bookstores, as well as the intersection of feminism and anarchism.

The panel ended with presentations by two feminists at more mainstream publishing venues. Kimberly Guinta, History Acquisitions Editor at Routledge Press spoke of the history of her press as an academic publisher with a strong emphasis on cultural studies. She discussed some challenges, such as the need to respond to market pressures and working with editors and staff who may not be feminists. Lisa Pierce, editorial manager of The American Mosaic database for Greenwood Press, spoke passionately of working as a feminist in a corporate environment in her presentation "Feminist Advocacy at For-Profit Publishers." She emphasized the need to feminists to infiltrate the publishing field at all levels.

The audience was enthusiastic and attentive to the speaker's descriptions of feminism in action in many facets of publishing.

~Daina Dickman, Mills College



*Feminist Publishing panel
By Kelly Barrick*

WSS: 25 Years

(continued from page 1)

Through the years we have partnered with other women's groups in ALA. Theresa Tobin has been instrumental as a connection between the groups. For a number of years we have rotated the leadership of the Intro to Women's issues at ALA program between WSS, the Feminist Task Force and COSWL. We have held a number of joint socials with the Feminist Task Force. Our most recent project is a joint FTF/COSWL/WSS research study of the gender of ALA presenters led by Dolores Fidishun.

During Jessica Grim's term as chair, she carried out a suggestion made by outgoing Chair Bonnie Jean Cox that we should have an award for achievement in Women's Studies. Jessica worked with a special committee to establish the awards, including soliciting sponsorship from Greenwood and Routledge. The first WSS Awards were given at Annual in 2000. Susan Searing received the award for Career Achievement in Women's Studies Librarianship sponsored by Greenwood Publishing, and Lynn Westbrook accepted the Award for Significant Achievement in Women's Studies Librarianship sponsored by Routledge Press.

In 2006 the Research Committee, under the guidance of Jennifer Gilley, completed the Research Agenda for Women's Studies librarianship. This agenda was used by Hope Olson in her Feminism and Librarianship course and gave library students a glimpse into current issues in Women's Studies Librarianship.

As I write this article 2008 continues to be a banner year. An action plan was approved to send section members to NWSA 2009 to present our information literacy standards and Annual 2008 in Anaheim, CA saw the first set of research poster sessions.

What we are truly about can only be described in the words used by those who emailed and spoke to me regarding the history of the section and what the section has meant to them over the years. These words included "sisterhood," "support," "mentoring," "learning," and "advocating," but most importantly, connections between women who have like beliefs. We nourish peoples' souls. As Sue Searing said "WSS has been my emotional and spiritual home in ALA. I have made and sustained wonderful friendships." This statement was made in a number of ways by many of the individuals who took time to share what the section means to them and is definitely the reason the section continues to be so vibrant and successful after twenty-five years.
~Dolores Fidishun, Penn State Great Valley

New Assistant Newsletter Editor

Margaret J. Anderson, Social Science and Education Librarian at Texas A&M University (TAMU), is the new Assistant Editor of the WSS Newsletter. Margaret provides instruction, liaison, and collection development services to two TAMU departments: Women's Studies and the Health & Kinesiology. She serves on the TAMU Libraries' Tech Trends Committee, which presents programs on Web 2.0 technologies, virtual worlds, and more and has also taught several graduate courses. Her research interests include systematic review methods, disasters, health literacy, and women's health. Margaret received a BS in Psychology from Texas A&M University, a MS in Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas with a specialty in Health Informatics, and is currently finishing a Masters in Public Health with a focus on Health Promotion. She is glad to be a new member of WSS and to learn more about the section and its members.

Notes from the Chair

(continued from page 2)

- ◆ Gather and disseminate clear information on various forms of virtual participation within the Section, and encourage this whenever possible for members who cannot attend two conferences a year. This has been a recent topic of conversation at ALA council, and the current guidelines may be changing. ALA is also working on new software that promises to be far more user-friendly than the current online community system.
- ◆ Further explore the possibilities of wiki technology when appropriate for a more collaborative way of sharing ideas either within the section or with a larger audience.
- ◆ Gather a small task force to create a more nimble and updated version of the Section's current Orientation Guide for Committees and Officers. The current documents, though very informative, can be streamlined and more focused on the specific responsibilities of different incoming officers and individual committees.

I wish everyone the best as the Fall ramps up and all that comes with it knocks at your door, and I look forward to working with you all this year.

~Diana King

Committee Reports From Annual in Anaheim, CA

Collection Development & Bibliography Committee

The Collection Development & Bibliography Committee had a productive meeting in Anaheim. The committee discussed our work on the WSS Collection Development Resources site, including new updates to the WSS Core Journals list, and the "Collection Development Policies," "Women's and Gender Studies Publishers," and "Collection Development in Women's Studies: A Bibliography" pages. Carrie Kruse (WSS Core Books co-editor) shared some updates about the Core Books database. The database includes a new list this year: South and Southeast Asian Women. Carrie also solicited feedback on the final draft of a survey to assess the usage and functionality of the Core Books database. The survey was distributed to WSS-L in August.
Sharon Ladenson, Chair

Instruction Committee

The Annual Meeting in Anaheim was a productive one for the Instruction Committee. To sum up, the Instruction Guides will be updated. The committee divided the ACRL Information Literacy Standards to reflect the Women's Studies Instruction perspective and a write literature review. Three committee members have created virtual membership survey for the purpose to explore virtual meetings due to the rising costs of traveling and limited professional development funding.
Chimene Tucker, Chair

Membership Committee

The membership committee successfully launched a WSS Facebook page prior to ALA Annual. We were able to list our events there--as well as on our MySpace page--and now there are photos from our events at the Annual conference. Please become a fan if you're on Facebook! We finalized our draft of targeted communication to our library school student members emphasizing the fact that you do not have to be a women's studies librarian to be active in our section; we'll send it out in the fall. For our next tentative project, we decided to contact some of the smaller ACRL sections to see if they would be interested in a collaborative promotion highlighting the fact that it is easier to get involved and gain experience in the smaller sections.
Piper Martin, Chair

Program Planning Committee

The 2009 Program Planning met bright and early at Midwinter to discuss our future plans for the upcoming Annual Conference in Chicago. Our

preliminary title for the program is "Popular Culture in Academic Libraries: Developing, Maintaining, and Researching Collections." The committee discussed the ACRL timetable for budgeting and scheduling speakers, and worked on refining a list of potential speakers and co-sponsors for the program. For this coming year, we will be maintaining the traditional WSS program time of Monday (8:00-12:00), but based on some feedback we also recommend that Executive Board discuss other potential time slots for future programs. We are excited about our speakers for this upcoming program, so stay tuned for more information!

Diana King, Chair

Publications Committee

There was one agenda item left over from the Midwinter meeting, which the committee approved and moved on to the Executive Committee. There was no other new business. This committee will look at conducting a virtual meeting at the next Midwinter in Denver due to the number of members who are unable to attend meetings at conferences.

Julie Biando Edwards, Chair

Research Committee

The Research Committee sponsored the first ever Poster Session during our General Membership Meeting at the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim on Saturday June 28, 2008. The purpose of our poster session is to provide beginning and established researchers and librarians an opportunity to present research or work in progress, and receive collaborative feedback and recommendations for future publishing and/or new initiatives. We had three posters from Kay Ann Cassell "Programming for Women in Public Libraries"; Lesley Farmer, "Web 2.0 and GURLS"; and Cynthia Johnson and Brian Williams, "UC Irvine's TXT a Librarian Program". The posters were well received, and all may be accessed from the Research Committee Homepage <http://libr.org/wss/committees/research/> Highlights from our meeting on Sunday June 19 included: we will continue to sponsor poster sessions at annual; we plan to move the Research Agenda to a wiki; the committee website will be updated this summer; and we discussed two research projects.

Cindy Ingold, Chair

No Report Submitted by:

- ◆ Awards Committee
- ◆ Electronic Resources and Access Committee
- ◆ Nominating Committee

WSS Co-Sponsored Program Looks at Gender Stereotypes

The Anthropology and Sociology Section (ANSS) of ACRL sponsored the program "The Lady, The Tramp and the Lion King: Mixed Messages About Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in Disney's Magic Kingdom" on Sunday June 29th at the ALA 2008 Annual Conference. The program was co-sponsored by WSS and African American Studies Section (AFAS) and was chaired by Rebecca Blakeley, Government Documents Librarian at McNeese State University. This year's convention location provided the perfect backdrop to the presentations and spirited discussion of the program.

Betsy Hearne, PhD, of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, discussed the revisions and adaptations made by Disney to stories often lifted from folklore and examined some of the implications of such revisions. Keith M. Harris, PhD, Associate Professor of English at University of California, Riverside, presented on the manifestations of race and a multiracial/cultural society in the cult favorite Disney animated television series *Gargoyles* (1994-1997). Claudine Michel, PhD, Professor of Black Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara, showed clips from Disney productions and discussed the stereotypes embedded within. Patricia Little, PhD, Assistant Professor of Sociology at California State University, San Bernardino, discussed the ubiquity of Disney in children's society due to marketing and compared early Disney films to later Disney films with regards to racism, sexism and classism. This interdisciplinary panel of speakers provided a wide range viewpoints from which to consider the cultural impact of Disney – all while the participants were located in the heart of the Magic Kingdom

~Daina Dickman, Mills College

2008 WSS Award Winners!

Dolores Fidishun, head librarian at Penn State Great Valley, was presented with the *Career Achievement Award* at Annual in Anaheim. She was recognized as a mentor and for her many contributions to research involving adult learners and women and technology. The award was sponsored by Greenwood Publishing, Inc. to honor significant contributions to women's studies in librarianship.

The recipient of the *Award for Significant Achievement in Women's Studies Librarianship* was Jane Sloan, Media Librarian at Rutgers University. She won the award in recognition of her newly published book *Reel Women: An International Directory of Contemporary Feature Films about Women* (Scarecrow Press, 2007). The award is sponsored by Routledge to honor a significant or one-time contribution to women's studies librarianship.



Nominate someone for a WSS Award!

The Women's Studies Section awards are given annually to honor distinguished academic librarians who have made outstanding contributions to women's studies through accomplishments and service to the profession. The awards recognize those who have made long-standing contributions to the field during a career (the Career Achievement Award) and those who have made significant one-time contributions (the Significant Achievement Award). Nomination Forms: <http://libr.org/wss/awards/index.html>

Contact Person: Jennifer Gilley, Head Librarian, Penn State New Kensington, jrg15@psu.edu
Deadline: December 5, 2008

Member News and Notes



Cover of
Portal

Sarah Pritchard (Northwestern) has been named the editor-in-chief of *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, effective with the 2009 volume year.

Kayo Denda, (Rutgers) will be the Head of the Margery Somers Foster Center, in addition to her duties as Women's Studies Librarian. She will be responsible for the programs of the MSF Center, which focuses on women's leadership globally in areas that support the priorities and strengths of the Department of the Women's and Gender Studies and affiliated institutes and centers that focus on women's issues. The MSF Center's goals include creating a digital environment and services that connect people with information resources to enhance research and learning.

WSS Member Profiles

Jane Nichols

Humanities/Social Sciences Librarian, Oregon State University



Education: MLIS Dominican University; BA-History University of Wisconsin-Madison

What do you do in your current job?: The usual reference, collection development and instruction for the History, Women's Studies, Philosophy and Ethnic Studies departments and the Women's, Black Cultural, and Asian-American/Pacific Cultural Centers. We just re-organized and a new focus is researching new initiatives for the library. Add to this, my work with our usability team and Library a la Carte.

What Books Have You Read Lately?: I'm working on *Library 2.0: Initiatives in Academic Libraries* ed by Laura B. Cohen. Looking forward to reading Oregon Reads 2009 Selection *Stubborn Twig* by Lauren Kessler.

What Do You Enjoy Doing in Your Spare Time?: Almost anything outdoors and away from the computer. My latest favorites are mastering my frisbee toss and riding my motorcycle.

Why Did You Join WSS? I joined because WSS was very welcoming and let me quickly get involved with meaningful work. I stay because this is still true!

Cindy Ingold



University of Illinois
Library

Women and Gender Resources Librarian, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Education: MS in Library and Information Science, University of Missouri-Columbia.; BA History, MA English, Western Illinois University

What do you do in your current job? I serve as the liaison to the Gender and Women's Studies Program, the academic department on campus, and to the Women and Global Perspectives Program, a research unit on campus. I am the fund manager for Women's Studies and LGBT studies; I do library instruction for GWS classes; I work on the reference desk in the Education and Social Science Library; and I participate in a wide variety of committees in the Library and on campus. I also spend 25% of my time as the

Faculty Liaison for IDEALS, the University of Illinois institutional repository. Beginning in November 2008, I will serve as the acting head of the Education and Social Science Library for a sabbatical coverage.

What books have you read lately? I am currently reading *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* and *Three Cups of Tea*.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Traveling, gardening, reading, going to movies, visiting my parents.

Why did you join WSS? I joined WSS in 1987 before I ever had formal responsibilities as a Women's Studies librarian because I am a feminist and I wanted to be in an organization that was committed to the ideals and values that I hold. The WSS has been a tremendous resource for me over the years.

Kayo Denda

Head of the Margery Somers Foster Center & Women's Studies Librarian, Rutgers Libraries



Education M.L.S., Rutgers University; B.S., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro; Diplôme de Troisième Degré, Université de Nancy, through Alliance Française do Rio de Janeiro (equivalent to B.A. in French Language and Literature)

What do you do in your current job? As the head of the MSF Center, I will focus on providing support on women's leadership, one of the priorities and strengths of the university. The MSF Center's goals include creating a digital environment that connects people with information resources to enhance research and learning. As the WS librarian, I do collection development and serve as liaison to the WGS Department and affiliated centers and institutes. I also serve as the Information Services Team leader

at Douglass Library, the unit library where I am based.

What books have you read lately? *Bom Crioulo: the Black man and the cabin boy* by Adolfo Caminha.; *Sociology confronts the Holocaust: memories and identities in Jewish diasporas*, edited by Judy Gerson; *Southern Discomfort: women's activism in Tampa, Florida, 1880s-1920s* by Nancy Hewitt.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Walking; swimming; taking yoga classes; reading; traveling.

Why did you join WSS? I first joined WSS in 2001 in order to network with other WS librarians and learn about common issues and concern.

Welcome New Members!

Adetoun Adebisi Oyelude
Craig Martin
Carolyn Head
Kay Lopez
Craig Martin
Erin Fritch
Mary Marix
Donald Kenney
Asma Jamal Yagoub
Tracy Hall
Barbara Schoenfeld
Margaret Anderson
Fiona Grady
Marissa Ball
Robin Blanckenbaker
Amy Gons

Sherilyn Bird
Sue Parks
Kathryn Crowley
Linda Wolf
Patricia Hartnett
Michael Morris
Bridget Canavan
William Simpson
Karen Gilles
Elaine Goettler
Charlotte Droll
Sharon Dyas-Correia
Elin Waagen
Makiba Foster
Jennifer Brinley
Evan Boyd

Women's Studies Section
Julie Blando Edwards, Editor
Margaret J. Anderson, Assistant Editor
c/o ACRL / ALA
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611

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