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**NEWSLETTER**

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## Whither Women's Studies?: Feminism, (Inter)Disciplinarity, and the Future

It has been 37 years since the first Women's Studies course was taught, with a concentration on feminism, women's health, women's history, and women's literature. The first Women's Studies program was established in 1970 at San Diego State University (SDSU). From humble consciousness raising groups to rigorous interdisciplinary programs, Women's Studies programs have prospered at SDSU and other national colleges and universities. Pure women's studies curriculums have integrated with gender studies and myriad other disciplines. This programmatic change has affected how librarians approach both collection development and instruction.

The ACRL Women's Studies Section (WSS) was formed to discuss, promote, and support women's studies collections and services in

academic and research libraries 25 years ago. As WSS approaches its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is a time of introspection and commemoration. The ACRL Women's Studies Section took the time to reflect on Monday, January 22, 2007, at the Renaissance Hotel with a discussion entitled: "Whither Women's Studies? : Feminism, (Inter) Disciplinarity, and the future."

This discussion was well attended and included women's studies librarians representing colleges and universities nationwide. An active discussion addressed current trends, new interdisciplinary foci, challenges with collection development, and the future of women's studies.

Some of the current trends in women's studies represent a return to ephemeral materials and a focus on cultural microcosms (ex. girls' studies, third wave feminism, and motherhood). These new areas of study incorporate blogs, comics, and zines in a very intellectually stimulating yet pedagogically challenging approach to teaching.

Women's studies librarians are challenged to keep up with new concepts and jargon that students and faculty use during reference and instruction sessions. Often, the Library of Congress subject terminology uses vastly different terms than what is current.

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**Women's Studies Section**

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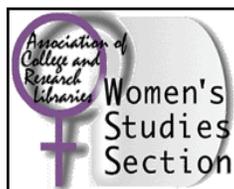
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**WSS Officers 2006-2007:**

Kelly Barrick, Chair  
Jennifer R. Gilley, Vice-Chair/  
Chair-Elect  
Diana King, Secretary  
Cynthia Johnson, Member-at-large

**Notes from the Chair**

We can all expect to find librarian gear advertised in our monthly *American Libraries* magazine, whether it be @ your library® pins or READ posters but recently I got an extra-special surprise. When I opened an issue of *Bust* magazine, there, under an ad for buyolympia.com, I spotted a "Future Librarian" t-shirt. Upon further investigation, I found a "Reading is Sexy" t-shirt at the web site. How cool!! But what does all this have to do with the Women's Studies Section or women's studies librarianship?

Well, I've been noticing a trend lately. I'm seeing women's studies librarianship out there and in the vanguard. We (whether that's us as librarians or as resources that support women's studies or as pop culture objects) are starting to become more visible. For example, Section members are publishing and presenting on a variety of topics in a variety of places. Jennifer Gilley published "Information Science: Not Just for Boys Anymore" in *American Libraries* (June/July 2006). Jane Nichols and Susan Searing presented at ACRL's 13<sup>th</sup> National Conference. Women's studies resources such as *Ms. Magazine*, the nation's oldest feminist magazine, exhibits at ALA conferences and its publishers attend WSS Social Hours. Women Make Movies (www.wmm.com) showed up for the first time at the ACRL Conference and joined us for the ACRL WSS Dinner with Colleagues in Baltimore (a popular and fun event!). Alexander Street Press (a mainstay in the academic publishing world of women's studies resources) has started a free online community called "The 'Second Wave' and Beyond" (<http://scholar.alexanderstreet.com/display/WASM/>). The visibility of pop culture artifacts promoting the cool side of librarianship, such as the t-shirt mentioned above, librarian trading cards on flickr.com; or the infamous Nancy the Librarian action figure, is at an all-time high. We librarians are out there! We're exposing ourselves, our users and the people around us to new things and we're being asked to collaborate with others.



And, collaborating we are. At this year's ALA Annual Conference in Washington, DC please join us for some very special events. This year's social hour will take place at the National Museum of Women in the Arts on Friday from 6-8pm. Our program, "Once Upon a Furl in a Podcast Long Ago: Using New Technologies to Support Library Instruction" will be on Monday from 8-11am. And, on Sunday evening the SRRT Feminist Task Force is sponsoring "*Ms. Magazine: A Voice for a Movement*", with publisher Eleanor Smeal, from 8-10pm.

See you in DC!

*Kelly Barrick*  
Chair, Women's Studies Section

## Angela Davis Speaks at ALA Midwinter 2007

Attendees of the Alexander Street Press breakfast at ALA's Midwinter Meeting in Seattle were entertained and inspired by Angela Davis, Professor of History of Consciousness and Feminist Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Davis discussed her relationship with libraries. Davis's mother and father insisted their children go to the library and initiated summer reading contests, motivating the siblings to compete with each other over who could read the most books.

Davis has fond memories of Ms. Bell, the African American librarian at the smaller branch "negro library", whose encouragement led to her experience of the library as a "place of transcendence." As a reference, she noted the reprehensible nature of the times, which did not permit African Americans to use the main library.

Davis's talk then moved into further historical and political realms. She commented on America's "individualistic structure of history," which tends to honor the individual over the community. She called on the importance of demystifying social justice heroes. Using Martin Luther King Jr. as an example, Davis pointed out the tireless and devoted work of the women in the civil rights movement who are now hidden and forgotten in the shadow of a single icon. Davis spoke of the need to reach an understanding of legacy within a larger context.

Davis also discussed what she describes as the "subjugated legacies" of groups such as the Black Panther Party. The Party established a free school breakfast program well before the Department of Agriculture instituted a similar program; yet, Davis finds no historical connection made between the two. She asserts, "In this country, we are never encouraged to be attentive of history."

In addition, Davis spoke of her involvement with prisoners. She explained how prison can be a "space for learning" for inmates who previ-

ously neither had space or opportunity to devote themselves to learning. The program concluded with Davis fielding questions from her enthusiastic audience.

*Stacy Russo, Chapman University*

### FROM THE EDITOR

Jennifer Nace's term as Newsletter Editor ends following ALA Annual 2007. Stacy Russo, Assistant Newsletter Editor, will move into the Editor's chair. Newsletter Editors serve two-year terms, year one as Assistant Newsletter Editor, and year two as Editor. Newsletter positions are official ALA appointments.

### Newsletter Editor Opening

*WSS Newsletter* Editor needed for two year term, beginning Fall 2007 issue. *Responsibilities:* Serve staggered two-year term, the first year as Assistant Editor, the second year as Editor. Editors are non-voting ex-officio members of the Executive Committee and of the Publications Committee. Editors may divide up the editorial and text inputting tasks as is most convenient for them. Camera-ready copy is sent to ACRL for production and mailing. Editors solicit input and news from WSS Officers, committee chairs and members, and may write original copy. At least one editor should be at WSS Executive, Publications, and Program Committee meetings; Membership meetings; and Leadership Orientations. Editors also must attend the ACRL meetings for newsletter editors. *Qualifications:* Knowledge of or willingness to learn Microsoft Publisher; interest in increasing one's knowledge of how WSS operates; desire to add a national service accomplishment to one's CV. Enjoys working with an active group of dedicated librarians. Contact Jennifer Nace at [jennifera-nace@yahoo.com](mailto:jennifera-nace@yahoo.com) or Stacy Russo at [russo@chapman.edu](mailto:russo@chapman.edu).

(Continued from page 1)

## Whither Women's Studies?

In addition, women's studies topics are so multifaceted and eclectic that locating resources can present a challenge to the student. Library instruction conducted in the new climate presents opportunities for librarians to become more creative with their instruction sessions.

What is the future of women's studies? Women's studies has gradually transformed from a traditional theory-based discipline to a hybrid academic field, incorporating field work and interdisciplinary study.

As a consequence, women-specific topics and courses are dwindling as more faculty have joint appointments across disciplines. Cross-departmental obligations at many institutions are becoming the norm. This new model affects collection development and instruction. The future of women's studies will have much to behold as new topics and areas of study shape both women's studies and women's studies librarianship.

*Chimene E. Tucker, University of California, Santa Barbara*

## An Instructional Dilemma...Solved

"people sharing, trading, and collaborating"<sup>1</sup>

This is what I want to see during my library instruction sessions for women's studies courses. Imagine an instruction session where students find relevant scholarly books and articles and then post them to one web page where the entire class can view, use, share and trade resources. This describes the power of blogs, wikis and other Web 2.0 tools.

Each tool has distinct advantages. Blogs foster individual entries about a given topic and provide a place for others to comment.

Wikis can be used to create a collaborative working space. Possibly the easiest way to enable collaboration is through social bookmarking. A popular example of this is the del.icio.us Web site<sup>2</sup>. Favorite Web sites and other persistent links are bookmarked, tagged, and shared. All of these tools can be set up and maintained by one or multiple people and each allows user participation.

It's likely that you, your library or your university is already exploring different uses of Web 2.0 tools. If you haven't jumped in yet, give it a go. Sharing, trading and collaborating... isn't this what our feminist mothers established?

*Kim Clarke, Instruction Committee*

<sup>1</sup> Michael Wesch Web 2.0...The Machine is Us/ing Us <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gmP4nk0EOE>

<sup>2</sup> <http://del.icio.us/>

### Announcement

**The Women's Studies Resource room and library at CUNY Hunter College is expanding their collection of feminist and gender studies literature.**

**They are seeking donations of books and other materials. For more information, please contact Kimberly David, [kadavid@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:kadavid@hunter.cuny.edu).**

### Save The Date!

**ALA Annual Conference  
Washington, D.C.  
June 21-27, 2007**

## Committee Reports From Midwinter in Seattle

### Instruction Committee

At ALA Midwinter in Seattle, the Instruction Committee finished up a handful of old projects, and started to embark on a new legacy project. First, the committee developed a Web page on visual literacy and Women's & Gender Studies [it includes advertisements, products, and questions to think about when evaluating such media]. Second, the committee has located and compiled existing Women's Studies-related instructional materials. Third, the committee is investigating Google Scholar's coverage of Women's Studies and Gender Studies topics. After these three projects are approved by the Publications committee, the projects and the results will be posted on the WSS Instruction page. Next, the committee's latest project is to begin working to modify the ACRL Information Literacy standards for the discipline of Women's Studies. Finally, the committee has gained a new member, Chimene Tucker, from UC Santa Barbara. She will chair the committee after Kim Clarke and Deborah LaFond step down at ALA Annual.

*Kim Clarke*

### Research Committee

The Research Committee discussed avenues to advance research agenda. An email promoting the research agenda will be sent to research committees of various ACRL sections and taskforces, as well as other organizations with shared interests. As a new initiative, the committee decided to investigate the possibility to use a Wiki/blog type of environment for discussion, exchange, and feedback of research ideas.

As a new research topic, the committee recommended pursuing the research on the under representation of women speakers at the ALA conferences.

Dolores Fidishun will lead this effort and an invitation for participation will be issued to WSS members. The committee decided to submit to the Executive Committee the proposal for a discussion session entitled "Current Research in Progress" as a research forum to be held after the general membership meeting starting Midwinter 2008.

*Kayo Denda, Rutgers University Libraries*

**Awards Committee**, closed deliberations

**Publications Committee**, no report submitted

**Nominating Committee**, no report submitted

**Electronic Resources and Access Committee**, no report submitted

**Program Planning Committee**, no report submitted

#### **Bibliography of Scholarship on Women's Studies Librarianship**

<http://libr.org/wss/committees/research/bibmain.html>

#### **Core List of Journals in Women's Studies**

<http://libr.org/wss/projects/serial.html>

#### **Research Agenda for Women's Studies Librarianship:**

<http://www.libr.org/wss/committees/research/resagenda.html>

#### **WSS Committees Descriptions:**

<http://libr.org/wss/committees/comm.html>

#### **WSS Newsletters**

<http://libr.org/wss/newsletter/index.html>

#### **Women's Studies in Digital Archives**

<http://www.bama.ua.edu/~mbarrett/WSinDigitalArchives/Home.htm>

## Committee Reports From Midwinter in Seattle

### Collection Development and Bibliography Committee

The Collection Development and Bibliography Committee had a productive meeting in Seattle. Several pages on the WSS Collection Development Resources site needed new editors, including "Collection Development in Women's Studies: A Bibliography," "Collection Development Policies," and "Review Sources." The committee discussed the scope and content of the pages, and a couple of members volunteered to make updates. The committee also discussed the scope, content, and format of the "Core Journals in Women's Studies" page, which is in the process of being updated. For the purposes of updating the "Women's Studies Publishers" page, the committee discussed strategies for identifying relevant publishers. The committee also determined a timeline for updating all pages on the WSS Collection Development Resources site this spring.

Carrie Kruse (Women's Studies Core Books representative) attended the meeting to provide an update on the Women's Studies Core Books project. There will be some core list subject name changes, in order to promote consistency and effective organization of the lists. For example, "International Politics" and "U.S. Politics" will be changed to "Politics, International" and "Politics, U.S." Kim Clarke recruited several new volunteers to update numerous lists this past fall.

*Sharon Ladenson, Chair*

**Women's Studies  
Core Books Database**  
[http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/  
ACRLWSS/](http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/ACRLWSS/)

### Membership Committee

The committee continues to work on our action plan for presenting a "demystifying ACRL" talk to library school students. One WSS member presented this fall and we have several others ready to go this year. We made Seattle-themed flyers for our social and for our meetings at Midwinter. During our Midwinter meeting, we discussed other ways to draw people into our section. Some ideas included participating in Second Life and creating a MySpace page. We held a fun and well-attended social at the Wildrose bar at Midwinter.

*Piper Martin, Chair*



**Having Fun at the WSS Midwinter Social!**





**20**  
TH  
*Anniversary*  
NATIONAL MUSEUM  
of WOMEN *in the ARTS*

In honor of the American Library Association's 2007 Annual Conference  
The National Museum of Women in the Arts Invites the Members of the Women's Studies Section and the Feminist Task Force to a reception and viewing of the exhibition  
*Italian Women Artists from Renaissance to Baroque*  
Friday, June 22, 2007  
5:30 to 7:30 pm

### Interested in Getting More Involved in the Women's Studies Section?

#### Become the WSSLinks Editor!

WSSLinks is WSS's directory of Web resources, compiled by librarians across the country. The WSSLinks editor coordinates their work, ensuring this resource is up-to-date and looks and feels like the other WSS pages.

This position is a 3 year commitment and requires some familiarity with HTML and HTML editors.

Please contact Jennifer Weintraub, the current WSSLinks editor, at [Jennifer.weintraub@yale.edu](mailto:Jennifer.weintraub@yale.edu) with a brief paragraph stating why you are interested in the position and your previous experience editing Web pages.



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## Welcome New Members!

Rosa Chilton  
Ms. Raychel Maez  
Lisa Paolucci  
Danielle Culppeper  
Brandy Parris  
Melissa LeAnne Fernandez  
Emily Carr  
Erika Schiffgens  
Kate Cunningham-Hendrix  
Kelly Spiese  
Jennifer McIntosh  
Analisa Ornelas  
T. Alys Jordan  
Karla Lucht  
Amie Oliver  
Kristine Antkowiak  
Leslie Jankowski  
Karen Hendrick  
Alana Kumbier  
Alexia Hudson  
Shannon Marie Clarkin  
Karen Parlapiano Patterson

Donna Braquet  
Annie Epperson  
Alanna Aiko Moore  
Heather Vokac  
Margarita Wickham  
Diane Rofini  
Linda Carlisle  
Patricia Jean Mileham  
Janice Derr  
Eridan McConnell  
Beth McMahon  
Sarah Fay Philips  
Melissa Johnson  
Kathryn O'Hara  
Christine Troutman  
Char Booth  
Sarah Anne Buck Kachaluba  
Kaetrena Davis  
Nataasha Evans  
Detraci Regula  
Amy Killoran  
Sarah Stovall