

SWS **Network***news*

The Newsletter of Sociologists for Women in Society



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Organizers While
Acting Like
Sociologists**

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President's Message:

Thinking Like Organizers While Acting Like Sociologists

By: Joey Sprague
SWS President

As feminist sociologists, we like to think that what we do serves the cause of increasing social justice. We may teach about social research findings and help students figure out their implications for social policy and hope they learn something from us that will make them more thoughtful contributors to public debate. We may publish research that we think should be useful to activists or policy makers and we hope policy folks will have access in some way to our publications and use them to make more informed decisions. Some of us are involved with community organizations working on justice issues. But for the most part, those of us in the academy don't know if any of our standard scholarly efforts actually help facilitate change.

Many of us were initially drawn to SWS in hopes it would help us find a way to be more effective in helping make feminist change. But SWS is not a social change organization – we're not set up that way and it wouldn't make sense to do so. Our strengths lie in our roles as sociologists. We need to work in partnership with organizations that are set up to be activist. Learning to think like social change organizations do can help us figure out how we might best articulate with their efforts.

In the for-profit world, smart organizations look to their market to plan their products and service delivery. Our market is social change organizations. What are their "product demands" or needs? To help us figure that out, Judy Hertz of the Midwest Academy ran an all-day training session at the Winter Meeting in which she taught us how to think like community organizers. First I summarize her key points. Later I consider what that means for what kinds of products or services activists might find useful from us.

Move from the Problem to a Specific Solution: A problem is something that people want to do something about but just talking

about a problem won't produce change. To be successful at making change requires advocating for a specific solution to the problem. Organizers call this specific solution an issue.

Strategically Build From Short-term to Long-term Goals: We tend to think in terms of the ultimate thing we want to have happen—single payer health care, paid family leave, government programs using a measure of poverty that reflects the actual cost of a modest standard of living, workers retaining their rights to fight workplace discrimination. Organizers call these Long Term goals. However, few long term goals are attainable in one step. So what we need to identify is an Intermediate Goal, something we have a chance to get right now that will move us closer to that long term goal. But even Intermediate Goals require multiple steps (a bill must be introduced, then a committee must hold a hearing, etc.). Each of these steps is a Short Term Goal. For example, if our long term goal was that every public high school would offer a sociologically informed curriculum on gender to its students, then an intermediate goal might be to get this to happen in one particular school district and short term goals would include developing an appropriate curriculum, getting the curriculum staff at that school district to review and recommend it, getting the support of specific members of the school board, and so on.

Target a Decision Maker: Taking strategic action requires being clear about who has the power to make the desired change. The decision maker should be the target of the group's actions. A decision maker is always a person with a name, not the name of an institution. For example, to change a law requires identifying specific legislators who can do this. Organizers want a separate strategic plan for each decision maker that is a target.

Identify potential allies and try to minimize the opposition: Organizers start by figuring out the balance of power. Who are the constituencies on this issue? Who cares or could be motivated to care about it? Do any of these constituencies have any power over the decision maker? How are they organized and where can we find them? Who might oppose a particular solution to the problem? Are there ways to motivate at least some of the folks who are not allies to be neutral in the debate

rather than becoming active in the opposition?

Keep organizational strengths in mind: Smart organizers build campaigns in ways that build on organizational strengths and make their organizations even stronger in the process. They take realistic inventories of their organizational resources, such as time and money. They develop strategies that will attract new members and increase their credibility with the public while they actively develop members into leaders. They are sensitive to any problems within their organization that might inhibit its ability to be successful and address them constructively.

Pick tactics strategically: There are many options for social activists to consider. These are most common and are listed in order of increasing demands on organizational resources as well as on potential impact: letter writing, petitions, coordinated phone calling, public hearings, group visits to decision makers, media events, rallies, actions, and sessions in which constituents hold elected officials accountable for their actions on the issue.

SWS as an organization is currently in the process of identifying an issue on which we will focus significant organizational attention and resources over the next two years. See the discussion forum on our website. (<http://www.socwomen.org/phpbb/index.php>). This is an exciting step toward being more activist and an opportunity to experiment with ways to work with social change organizations most effectively. Once we figure out our game plan, we can use it on more issues in the future.

We have many resources: skills in research and in teaching, the sociological perspective and the knowledge bank it generates. We have credibility as professionals and have a highly respected scholarly journal. We have significant financial resources. I want to share some ideas about ways our strengths and resources could serve activist organizations' needs.

Help identify workable solutions: Sociologists often conduct research that has direct implications for solutions to problems. Where appropriate, we could encourage authors publishing in *Gender & Society* to consider the policy implications of their

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Networknews

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Graphics Editor.....Allison Alvarez Hedrick

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Material for publication (including advertisements) should be submitted to *Networknews* Editor: Leslie Hossfeld, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of North Carolina at Wilmington
601 South College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403. Phone: (910) 962-7849.
Email: HossfeldL@uncw.edu

Deadlines for submission:

Summer - May 15; Fall - September 15;
Winter - November 15; Spring - March 15

Attention: For those submitting time sensitive materials, target dates for publication and mailing are: Summer-June 15, Fall-October 15, Winter-December 15, Spring-April 15.

Fee schedule for advertisements: Full page-\$200.00; Half-page-\$100.00; Quarter-page or less-\$50.00; Job announcements-\$25.00. Invoices will be sent after announcements appear.

Please send membership and change of address information to: SWS Executive Office, URI Sociology, Chafee Social Science Center Kingston, RI 02881
Office: 401.874.9510
Fax: 401.874.2588
Email: sws@etal.uri.edu

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research and when an article is published that has a policy angle we can issue a press release calling the attention of the media to it. Highlighting one article at a time would complement the work of the Social Action Committee publishing and publicizing an accumulation of feminist sociological research relevant to a social problem or issue in *Fact Sheets*.

Help put the short term goals in broader context: Issue focus is essential for the success of the activist organization but putting that issue in a broader context can enhance public understanding and increase the likelihood of building to the long term goal. We could create curricular units on the issue for college and for high school social science classes and work on our campuses and in our communities to get these adopted. We could generate a set of bullet points that our members can use in talking with the media, writing op-eds, or letters to the editor for their local papers.

Help analyze power structures: Decision makers do not hold power on their own, they are sponsored by often invisible others. Sociologists have developed tools for studying power structures. We could develop our own skills in power structure analysis, create a toolkit for social change groups to use to analyze the power relations governing their issue and some members could work in collaboration with local organizations in conducting those analyses and publishing the

results. These tools would also be useful for teachers who want to build students' skills in methodology and understandings of the social structure of their communities.

Play to our strengths and work to get stronger: While we work to help others we should do it in ways that build on our strengths and make us even stronger as an organization. One significant resource we lack is time. As members of a discipline in which the work expectations are ever-expanding and as people who are likely to have significant care-taking responsibilities both at work and in our personal lives, we are chronically short on time. We cannot get stronger by making political action a job that few of our members can find time to do without sacrificing career or personal life. On the other hand, we will not get stronger if we spend all of our resources hiring professionals to do what we could do. Our challenge is to use our financial resources strategically to hire specialists to do what they can do more easily - write the press release, develop the curriculum, construct the software template for local cost/benefit studies, etc -- and design our tactics to make it easy for any and every one of us to find a place in our lives to make a contribution to our mobilized effort.

Pick tactics strategically: I've offered several tactics here which I hope make you think of others. We won't really know which of these are the most strategic until we know what issue we choose to work on. So please visit and participate in that forum on our webpage.

Call for Applications:

Networknews Editor

By: Toni Calasanti and Kerry
Ann Rockquemore

Publications Committee Co-Chairs

The Publications Committee seeks applications and nominations for the position of Editor for *Networknews*. Consistent with guidelines provided by the Publications Committee, the Editor is responsible for publication of four issues per year, averaging 34 pages per issue, with a circulation of over 1000. Editorship responsibilities include: design, printing and distribution of the newsletters; solicitation of articles and material for publication; managing budget and reports to Publication Committee at the winter and summer meetings. The appointment is for four years, beginning January, 2009. SWS funds the production and mailing of *Networknews*, and will pay some expenses for travel to summer and winter meetings. For the

editorship, desirable resources and skills include experience with journals, editing and publishing. For more information on the requirements and work of the position, please contact the current editor, Leslie Hossfeld, HossfeldL@uncw.edu, 910.962.7849.

Applications are due July 15 and should be emailed to Toni Calasanti, Co-Chair of Publications Committee (toni@vt.edu). The application should include: 1) a statement of background and interest; 2) a statement of goals for the publication; 3) a CV; 4) a statement of supportive resources from the institution, including (but not limited to) the extent to which institutional administration supports this work in terms of such things as space, management, travel and similar issues. We encourage applicants to attend the summer meetings, if possible, so that they may meet with the publications committee at that time.

SWS Winter Meetings: So What Happened in Vegas?

By: Liz Legerski
Presidential Aide

I'll confess, when I first heard that the Winter Meeting was a "business meeting" I thought to myself, "How exciting can that be?!" Little did I know when I arrived in Las Vegas that I would leave feeling so energized and excited about being a part of SWS.

The 2008 SWS Winter Meeting, held February 7-10 at the beautiful Alexis Park Resort Hotel, drew 202 SWS members. The meetings kicked off with an opening reception, featuring an abundance of appetizers and plenty of opportunities to mix and mingle thanks to Tamara Smith who arranged an exciting game of networking bingo. After the reception SWSers headed off to restaurants around town for small, organized dinners hosted by veteran SWS members at a variety of locations featuring Spanish tapas, Mexican, Indian, and Thai cuisines.

Over 40 SWS members participated in a total of 11 research roundtables held over breakfast. Topics ranged from applied sociology, to contemporary issues in immigration, and beyond. Each roundtable was well attended, providing participants with ample opportunities to share their work with other SWS members and gather helpful feedback.

The first day of the conference provided SWS members with intensive training in how to organize progressive social change. Led by Midwest Academy trainer and director of special projects, Judy Hertz, we learned how to "think like organizers" (see Joey's column in this issue) and practiced strategizing through a group exercise where we planned how to influence a fictional congresswoman to support a universal healthcare initiative. At the end of the training SWS members complemented the usual organizing criteria for choosing an issue with criteria specific to who we are as a feminist sociological organization.

Another highlight of the meeting was a panel of SWS members who demonstrated how they "think like organizers" as they teach, do research, and serve in their communities. Tracy Ore, St. Cloud State University, shared with us her course on the Global Politics of Food, where, after

conducting independent research, students are asked to produce "fact and action sheets" describing the politics of a particular food item. These fact sheets are then posted online (see <http://web.stcloudstate.edu/teore/Food/FoodPolitics.htm>) so that the information is made public. The process of independent research and the public dissemination of their findings gets students excited about learning.

Natalie Bennett, DePaul University, described her experience teaching undergraduate courses in immigration and Caribbean studies where she requires students to tackle local social problems such

as inadequate housing for immigrant populations in the area. She has found that bringing students "face-to-face" with local inequalities opens their worldview and radicalizes students in a way that simply isn't possible when we stick to teaching abstract problems in the confines of the classroom. Professor Bennett told of finding out (after the fact) that students who had been assigned to interview local housing authorities for their class project took the assignment to a whole new level by holding a press conference covered by local television.

Leslie Hossfeld, University of North Carolina Wilmington, described her community-based, participatory research project *Jobs for the Future* (www.povertyeast.org/jobs/), which brings a variety of community members together to collect data on

local poverty and unemployment in North Carolina. Professor Hossfeld's team works hard to publicize their findings. Together, she and 150 community members traveled to Washington D.C. to present their research to the Congressional Rural Caucus, and Professor Hossfeld has provided testimony at Congressional briefings on the consequences of job loss.

Finally, Barbara Risman, University of Illinois Chicago, described her work as an executive officer for the Council on Contemporary Families (www.contemporaryfamilies.org), a non-profit organization designed to disseminate non-partisan



research on contemporary families to the public. One of the organization's main goals is to expand media coverage of family research which highlights the strengths and needs of all contemporary

families. Because of the Council's efforts, journalists from major news sources such as the New York Times, National Public Radio, USA Today, and Newsweek regularly turn to CCF for the latest research on families, enhancing the quality of public information on contemporary families.

During the business meetings members took the historic step of agreeing to focus significant organizational resources and efforts for the next two years on one policy issue. Participants identified ten social problems that SWS might want to work on.

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A forum in which members are invited to discuss the potential strengths and limitations of each of our choices is in the Members Only section of our website (www.soc-women.org). Please visit and add your insights or questions so we can give each topic the fullest airing. Soon you will be invited to vote online for the issue we should choose in a process that will use Instant Runoff Voting.

Another highlight of the meeting was the Taskforce on Feminist Transformation of the Academy's (Now the Committee on Academic Justice) Disrupting the Culture of Silence session, "You Think It's Just You?!" Led by Abby Ferber and Gail Murphy-Geiss, participants were split up into groups according to career stage to identify issues of concern for women in the academy. Discussing, venting, and working with their peers to brainstorm possible solutions to these problems left SWS members reassured that they are definitely not alone.

The Banquet and Silent Auction were held at the Culinary Training Academy, a nationally and internationally recognized labor-management partnership which trains thousands of employees for work on the Las Vegas strip. Although for some members getting there was more of an "adventure" than we had hoped, we all eventually arrived. We celebrated one another's accomplishments and then bid on



a wide array of items for the Silent Auction. Thanks to the organizing efforts of Ronni Tichenor and Denise Copleton, and the amazing audacity and standup comedy of Auctioneer Carla Howery, our treasurer, Tracy Steele, collected over \$2,000 for the Women's Development Center, which works to assist Nevada families in achieving long-term economic self-sufficiency.

2008 SWS President Joey Sprague, Ana Prokos and a fabulous local arrangements committee, Jessica Holden Sherwood and the SWS Executive Office, SWS officers past and present, and countless other member volunteers for all their work — you made this winter meeting a success. This was my first Winter Meeting, and it definitely *won't* be my last.

Over the course of our stay, members were able to enjoy the beautiful weather of Las Vegas, the camaraderie of SWS colleagues, and the dazzling spectacle of the Las Vegas Strip. From Cirque du Soleil and the Sirens of Treasure Island, to the Mirage Secret Garden or the Flamingo Wildlife Habitat, there was so much to do and see in Las Vegas that not a moment was wasted! Most importantly though, SWS members in attendance were able to experience more than just a business meeting or the excess of the strip — we left the Winter Meeting energized by our reunion with SWS peers and empowered by our training from the Midwest Academy. We can "think like organizers" as we do our work at home. And we are excited to combine our resources, talents, and expertise as an organization over the next two years to help make real, positive, feminist change.

Thanks to



Public Sociology in SWS: Going Public

Editor's Note:

Public Sociology in SWS is a regular column featured in *Network News* to highlight the work of SWS members engaged in Public Sociology. Please contact Leslie Hossfeld at HossfeldL@uncw.edu to submit an article describing your projects and involvement with various publics.

By: Barbara Trepagnier

Texas State University-San Marcos

Author: *Silent Racism: How Well-Meaning White People Perpetuate the Racial Divide*

Whether doing public sociology will revitalize the discipline as Michael Burawoy suggests is not clear; however, putting sociological ideas into the public imagination, it seems to me, would surely benefit the general populace. Furthermore, doing public sociology puts us, as researchers and writers, into the arena, where although we might stumble (read: be misunderstood), we have an opportunity to further critical issues, and make a larger difference. This story of *going public* has two parts; one is about backstage activities that put forward my research findings for public consumption, and the second is about the experience of being "on stage" in a national forum.

Although having a book is not a necessary condition for doing public sociology, I do not believe I could have gone public except for *Silent Racism (SR)*. From the beginning I wanted the sociological ideas I found regarding racism to reach an audience outside of academia. And although *SR* was not published until ten years after the research was completed, I did not give up on my dream that the general public would read about silent racism. Having said that, I never imagined that I would find myself in Manhattan at an event sponsored by *Glamour Magazine* titled, "Women, Race, and Beauty."

Local resources: When *SR* was released in paperback in the spring of 2007, I began a campaign intended to reach my targeted audience—well-meaning white people in the general public using local resources. I submitted *SR* to the Texas Book Festival

even though it did not fit squarely into the suggested categories (fiction, history, biography). I also joined the Writers' League of Texas, located in Austin. When I got word that *SR* had not been chosen for the festival, I made arrangements to present it at the Writers' League table scheduled for the event. The Writers' League has been helpful in other ways as well. For example, I put announcements about publications in the Writers' League newsletter, which is read by 2300 Texas writers, and I am scheduled to present a talk about group interviews on sensitive topics at the Writers' League monthly meeting. The meeting is held at an Austin bookstore (Barnes & Noble) and is open to the public.

The Internet: While both the book festival and the Writers' League have been helpful in publicizing silent racism at the local level, the Internet and email have been my most valuable tools in letting people around the country, and around the world, know about silent racism. A dear friend designed a website for me (www.SilentRacism.com), which I believe has been the single most important step in taking silent racism public. The site, which has six pages, chronicles all of the relevant events, with links to radio interviews and newspaper/magazine articles. The homepage tells about the central ideas in the book, announces upcoming events, and has a sign-up list for anyone interested in joining the email list. The homepage also has links to Amazon.com and Paradigm Publishers where people can purchase a book or order an exam copy. My web-mistress also signed me up with SiteMeter, which provides information about visits to the site. I checked while writing this article and found that, of the last 100 hits—which came in over the last five days—Australia, Austria, Canada, China, New Zealand, and Norway are listed, along with cities across the United States.

In my spare time, I email people about *SR*. Although some of these go to people in academic departments who might use the book in class or to multicultural centers at universities, many go to people outside of academia. For example, I have recently

Googled "diversity trainers" and come up with many names (and email addresses) of people whose work is focused on racism. I send a short message to each person with information about the book and encouragement to visit the website. Sending emails is cost effective but time intensive, so this method may not suit everyone.

Going public: I have received a number of invitations to speak at organizations and universities since I initiated these activities, and have said "yes" to almost all of them. I do not know which of the activities outlined above resulted in the invitation from *Glamour Magazine*, the most exciting invitation to date. The *Glamour* editor who contacted me, Maryellen Gordon, had heard about my work from an acquaintance, Daisy Hernandez of ColorLines, also slated to be on the panel. Unqualified support from my chair and dean made it possible for me to participate, and I flew into New York City for the event on November 27, 2007.

In the invitation to participate on the panel, Maryellen explained that Ashley Baker—a former staffer at *Glamour*—said at a luncheon held at a law firm in NYC that Afros are a "*Glamour* Don't." The African American women in her audience were offended, and said so. Blogs hosted by black women were abuzz with talk about the incident, and *Glamour* got dozens of letters from black readers who expressed disappointment and anger. The executive editor of *Glamour*, Cindi Leive, responded in a letter to *Glamour's* readership that she was "appalled at the remark." She apologized and added that she remains "outraged that women [at the luncheon] heard such nonsense." When Cindi's letter did not quell the displeasure of the black readers, *Glamour* management decided to host the "Women, Race, and Beauty" panel discussion. Organizers went all out to assemble a diverse panel both in terms of race/ethnicity. Panel members also represented diverse work backgrounds, including journalism, business, and academia.

I knew before I got to New York that my message of silent racism was at odds with Cindi's public outrage about Ashley's com-

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ment. I understood *Glamour's* need to reach out to readers offended by the remark; clearly, an apology was in order. However, it seemed to me that Ashley was being unfairly chastised for not knowing that "Afro" translates into "natural hair" when black women hear the word. The comment was a classic example of silent racism slipping out with no intention of causing harm as silent racism typically does. But Ashley's comment had caused harm: it offended black readers and put the magazine on the defensive.

I had an opportunity to express my viewpoint to Cindi in the Green Room, just before the panel started. She was talking with a few panel members and expressed her outrage once again. I replied that white people routinely say things as ignorant as Ashley's remark. Cindi appeared surprised that the "expert" on racism did not share her outrage. However, before we could discuss the matter further, we were whisked into the auditorium where an audience of 90 to 100 invited guests, primarily black, was waiting.

I was not the only person on the panel who saw Ashley's *faux pas* for what it was—a blunder. No one on the panel expressed outrage, as Cindi had done, and Lisa Price of Carol's Daughter Beauty Products commented that Ashley was simply a white woman who "hadn't done her research." To my dismay, the moderator's questions to me were not about racism at all. I was asked if the women in my study talked about hair, and if class issues came up in the study. The short answers are "no" and "tangentially"; and even though I managed to bring in a little information about discussions in the focus groups, I wasn't quick enough on my feet to bring in what I had hoped to talk about: that all whites, including the most well-meaning, perform everyday racism regularly, often without realizing it. Except for a few comments about my work when I was introduced, silent racism and the importance of race awareness did not enter the discussion.

Although I left New York disappointed in my contribution to the roundtable, the *Glamour* article (March 2008) has brought more regional media attention than I ever expected. Has the time and effort I put into going public been worth it? Absolutely! Most sociologists care deeply about their work. Going public can be an excellent channel for that passion.

The author is grateful to her colleague and friend, Patti Giuffre, for her helpful suggestions.

News:

People and Places

Linda Grant was awarded the Graduate School Outstanding Mentor Award at the University of Georgia earlier this month.

Katja Guenther will be joining the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Riverside, in July.

Nominations:

Time to nominate a fabulous feminist mentor for the SWS Mentoring Award

Nominations due by Friday, May 30.

The mentoring award was established in 1990 to honor an SWS member who is an outstanding feminist mentor. While the word "mentoring" is commonly used to describe a faculty-student relationship, this award has shown the breadth of ways in which feminist mentoring is practiced. In establishing the award, SWS recognized that feminist mentoring is an important and concrete way to encourage feminist scholarship.

Feminist mentoring includes not only anticipating needs and providing concrete guidance and feedback for junior colleagues, but also: compassion and guidance with regard to feminist concerns, helping colleagues (junior and senior) to write and effectively communicate as authors, activists and teachers; providing support, strategies and models for balancing family and work; offering gendered understandings of institutional biases and strategies for overcoming them; building of formal and informal institutions that

support feminist interests (personal, career research and teaching); and a philosophy and practice of inclusion inside academia, especially with those most marginalized.

Nominators should gather supporting letters from people with a variety of perspectives about the nominee and include a cover letter summarizing the supporting material. Current offices and officers-elect of SWS are not eligible for nomination for this award, nor is the Editor of *Gender and Society*.

Please remember that the nominee must be a current member of SWS. The award will be presented during the SWS summer banquet during the ASA Annual Meeting. Committee members are past winners: Judy Wittner, Barbara Risman, and Linda Grant. If you have questions about the materials or procedures, please contact me at llemper@umd.umich.edu

Nominations and supporting materials should be sent to: Lora Lempert, 735 Dolores #1, San Francisco, CA 94110

The Membership Committee would like to thank and publicly acknowledge the "senior" members who volunteered to be mentors in the Hand Program at the 2008 Winter Meeting.

Lisa Brush	Myra Marx Ferree	Shobha Gurung
Jessica Holden Sherwood	Carla Howery	Heather Laube
Kate Linnenberg	Meika Loe	Bandana Purkayastha
Barbara Risman	Sarah Sobieraj	Tracey Steele

Note: we will be sending out a call for participation in the Hand Program for the Summer Meeting soon. Junior folks, or those of you who will be attending your first Summer Meeting, don't hesitate to request a mentor. Know that this organization and its members all take mentoring seriously and that we'll do what we can to ensure your Summer Meeting experience is warm and welcoming.

Winter Meeting Photos



Winter Meeting Business Minutes and Reports

SWS Winter 2008 Business Meeting

February 9, 2008, 10:30 am

Presider: Manisha Desai

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mimi Schippers, Secretary

I. Welcome and Report from President

A. Manisha Desai thanked all of the panelists, participants, and attendees to the SWS winter meetings.

B. Temporary change in procedure of the Business Meeting. All reports were posted on a bulletin board in the back of the room. They continue to be published in Network News. Only committees with matters up for vote will make verbal reports.

II. Reports

A. Treasurer

Kathleen Slobin reported that SWS finances are in a strong position. Until 2011 we will have increasing funds, so we have money to do things we haven't done in the past, and we might consider managing/investing the funds differently.

Currently, monies are in socially responsible IRA's. EOB has been considering other options through a very deliberate process to select how to invest.

Report on where funds go, in order of expense: *Gender & Society*, Meetings, Executive office, Awards, Sage, membership, donations, registration, etc.

Tracey Steele will be taking over as treasurer and Kathleen thanked the organization for the opportunity to be treasurer.

B. Committees

Nominations Committee

Chris Bose gave a special thanks to all of the people willing to run for officer, committee chair, and committee member positions. She then announced the newly elected officers, chairs, and committee members.

Executive Office and Budget

Vote on the "Proposed Bylaws Change" to establish the new Committee for Academic Justice. Passed unanimously.

III. New Business

A. Moved by Executive Committee and amended from the floor: SWS to make a 2 year commitment of resources, attention and action to no more than two social issues relevant to women in society.

Discussion: A question was raised about who will be responsible for making sure action is happening. Manisha Desai suggested that the president will oversee, but that all standing committees and resources must make sure action is taken. Joey Sprague suggested the President might shepherd, but it will depend on what the issue is. We will need to think about organizational structure. Tracy Ore said that we need to ensure that committees don't come off their own mission in order to focus on this. Myra Marx Feree suggested that perhaps there could be a person who oversees this mission and has involvement with other committees. We might consider establishing a task force that works with the

president. The process of choosing an issue or issues will begin at the business meetings at this winter meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Manisha passed the presidency to Joey Sprague.

Joey thanked outgoing president Manisha Desai and all the other leaders whose term of service on Council and committees ends with this meeting.

IV. Move to choose 2 issues.

The meeting broke into table groups to brainstorm on possible issues generating these suggestions:

Redefining the poverty line in US

Fight for living wage

Raise awareness about lack of health care for hidden populations.

Create social mvt on college campuses to get daycare

Integrate sociology curriculum to introduce gender in high school

Services for owmen in military, undocumented women and children, support motherhood manifesto.

Representation of women in politics.

Carework, compensating for carework, paid family leave, extend social security credit for those doing unpaid carework, wage protection for paid careworkers.

Universal literacy for women domestically (prisons) and abroad

Women's work (living wage, immigration, childcare, globalization)

Environmental sustainability

Affordable housing

Equal access to education

Antiwar peace work

Addressing corporate power (media literacy)

Public daycare, preschool

Reproductive rights

Reproductive health services

Access to anti-viral drugs for HIV women

Increase awareness of infant mortality

Sex trafficking of women and children

Family reunification as part of immigration policy

Comprehensive sex education

Women and violence

Socialization of young women to be responsible adults

Economic equity for women.

Services in prisons

Building civic engagement

Repealing gag rule

Education to work (in context of welfare)

Rebuilding women's lives post disaster.

Empower girls

A straw poll followed with members indicating the three issues that seemed most worthy of considering at first blush.

V. Representative from ASA

Margaret Vitullo, Director of Academic and Professional Affairs for ASA, recognized the work of SWS and the affinity and overlapping membership between ASA and SWS. She is interested in how ASA can use its resources and structure to help SWS.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15

SWS Executive Council Meeting

Sunday, February 10, 2008, 9:00 am

Presider: Joey Sprague

Respectfully submitted by Mimi Schippers, Secretary

Present: Joey Sprague, Manisha Dasai, Jessica Sherwood, Tracy Steele, Cindy Anderson, Wendy Christensen.

Links on SWS website

Discussion of links to information about women and women's organizations on the website and how to include national and international women's organizations and how to oversee this part of the website. All agreed we don't want a volunteer. Joey suggested asking the mainstreaming task force to address this issue. Cindy Anderson offered to do it for this year.

We will decide on a more permanent solution at the next business meeting. We will start with the information about international statistics on women.

Tracey Steele suggested sending a memo to the membership to ask for expertise. Wendy Christensen, speaking as a member for the committee on Academic Justice, suggested linking with similar organizations in other disciplines. Wendy suggested we might consider setting up a news information blog or a similar interface in order to interlink with other websites (e.g. journalists, bloggers, Facebook etc.).

Followup: Joey will request that the mainstreaming task force take a look at this suggestion.

Membership Make up

There are several reasons to be concerned about the relative shortage of senior members who are active in the organization. This creates problems in providing adequate mentors for younger members and also in recruiting candidates for organizational leadership. We decided to survey senior members to ask why they are involved to the extent that they are (or are not). Jessica suggested emailing all those who declined the invitation to run for office and ask what can the organization do to make running for office more appealing. Tracy Steele suggested that we ask senior members what can we do for them as senior faculty.

Followup: Cindy Anderson reported that the Membership Committee is ready to get busy on this question. Cindy will spearhead the membership question.

Cindy also reported that Membership will be sending out the ASA candidate survey soon.

Committees and Budgets

EOB had requests from Social Action Committee for \$750 each (Total \$3000) for fact sheets and mistakenly assumed these were for new proposals when in fact these funds had been encumbered two years ago and the denial thus put the Social Action Committee in a difficult situation. We conclude that we need to work on the transparency of the budget process and improve the predictability of committee budgets.

Followup: Tracy and Jessica will develop and distribute to all committee chairs a document that outlines the budget process and clearly delineates the distinction between annual base budget and special requests. They will ask every committee chair to propose an itemized, base budget. These budgets will be included in the new officers' folders.

Report back on Oversight of Factsheets

As reported in earlier meetings, the consensus of EOB is that the fact sheets, as organizational publications, need a system of oversight. Tracy Steele reported that the Publications committee has been working on this issue and that the two committees have worked out a communication process.

Committees and Communication

We discussed ways to make committee policies and procedures transparent to the organization. Manisha suggested that each new officer's folder should include a document on committee policy procedures. Tracy pointed to a problematic lack of a system for committees to be in communication with one another. Joey suggested we hold a meeting of committee chairs during the summer meetings and that we ask chairs to read other committees' reports to look for points of overlap or potential collaboration.

Followup: Jessica will post this suggestion on committee chairs listserv. Joey will email chairs to see how they would feel about having a meeting for committee chairs. Manisha suggested we post policy procedures for each committee on the committee page of the website and call it "Practices and Policies"

Website

Wendy Christensen suggested we need a "members only" section that is separate from the public page on the website in order to make the public page more accessible.

Followup: Jessica will ask the IT taskforce to reconvene to address this issue.

Elected members for International Committee

Manisha suggested we have elected members for the International Committee. After discussion of the merits, Executive Council will recommend for bylaw change to two elected members for international committee. To set up eventual staggered terms, in the first election, one member will be elected for a two year and one for one year term.

We will also add an item for interest in international on the SWS membership form and suggest that Marina look at membership forms to identify who might be interested in running for election for the International Committee.

Marina and Jessica will develop a database on those interested in feminist social change to identify who might be interested in participating and perhaps run for election to international committee in the future.

Procedure for choosing issue at the Business Meeting

Joey expressed concern that there was not a clear mandate established at the business meeting—the votes on the top three issues were very close. She would like to set up discussion boards on a webpage for each issue so that over a period of two months, we can have enough information on the issues to have webpage election. It was the sense of the meeting that this was a good way to proceed.

Travel reimbursements

Tracey Steele reported that Dana Britton has requested that SWS offer the same amount of travel funds to the Network News Editor as Sage offers the Editor and Book Review Editor of Gender & Society, currently \$2,000. In addition, the publications committee forwarded a similar request asking that monies initially allocated to pay for editorial board member travel (\$2,000 per meeting) be repurposed to pay for the publications co-chair travel.

We discussed concerns about equity with reimbursements to committee chairs and officers. Although the newsletter editor receives a \$3000 stipend, the thinking is that we want to support our leaders and don't want working for the organization to create a financial burden for our leaders. We decided to raise the maximum for every committee chair and co-chair to \$500 for winter and summer for hotel and airfare and add the Network News editor to those with the \$500 maximum. Consistent with this new policy, a request from a committee chair for travel reimbursement equivalent to the value of a flight voucher (average flight costs were estimated at \$400) was approved.

Wendy expressed concern about the financial burden for students because accommodations are not covered. Jessica will post a discussion on the officers' listserv to find out the history of why accommodations were not included.

Jessica raised a question about whether or not there should be a co-pay for the summer and winter meetings for officers. We will initiate a discussion on the officers' and chairs' listserv on this topic. In the mean time, we will keep the co-pay for officers and chairs for the summer 2008 meeting and Jessica will look into the financial implications for removing it and adding accommodations to reimbursement for all members.

We need an analysis on the amount of money going to each category. Jessica will provide this data so we can revisit the financial impact of this policy during the next winter meeting.

- B. Discussion about whether SWS will reimburse the new Network News Editor for the March meetings to make transition easier. Proposal to pay to fly the current Editor to the office of the new Editor. Will discuss on email listserv.

We discussed a proposal from the task force on mainstreaming feminist scholarship for \$3000 for someone to conduct training workshops on media during each of the next 3 meetings, beginning in Boston in August.

Unanimously approved.

Jessica suggested we hire a "communications czar" to offer expertise for organization.

Auction

Auction generated \$2166 for The Women's Development Center. We will request that someone from the Center write something for Network News about how they will use the funds.

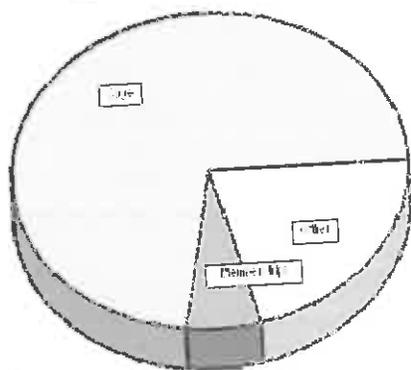
Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am

J. Treasurer's Report Winter Meeting 2008 Kathleen Slobin, Treasurer

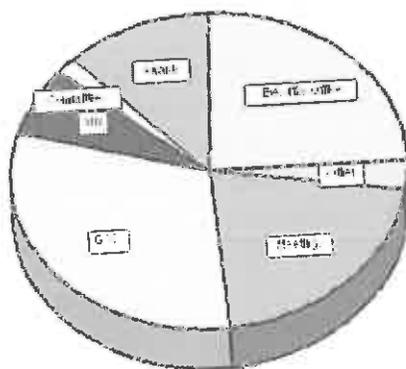
SWS finances for 2007 are in a strong position. Our total assets continue to grow even as our Fidelity investment accounts have been subjected to the recent volatility in the market. Our three Citizens Bank accounts, as of the first of February, total \$878,258 which reflects a growth of about 3% over last year. While each of our Fidelity investment accounts dipped at the end of 2007, from a total of \$261,028 to a total of \$251,228, the interest earned by our primary Citizen's Bank money market account, together with the increases in our annual revenue stream, have contributed to the overall growth of our assets. As of the February 1, our total assets were \$1,129,487.

SWS's overall financial position remains very strong, with revenues exceeding expenses by a generous amount. The pie charts show the 2007 proportion of our assets, revenues and expenses and our revenue and expenditure categories. A summary of 2007/2008 SWS assets, revenues, and expenses is provided in the table below.

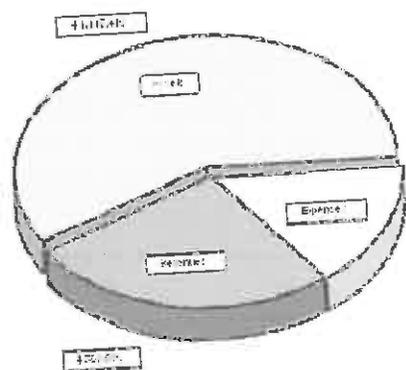
2007 Revenues @ \$299,691



2007 Expenses @ \$225,452



2007 SWS Treasurer's Summary
Assets, Revenues & Expenses



The budgeted revenue for 2008 is expected to equal \$549,021 which will exceed our budgeted expenses, at \$299,691 by \$249,329. In 2007, our revenues exceeded our expenses by \$217,603; in 2006, our revenues exceeded our expenses by \$166,651. This healthy trend in our revenue stream, from 2006 through 2007 and into 2008, will assure our capacity to fund our Women of Colour Scholarship, our joint SWS/ASA MFP Scholar, our Beth Hess Award, and other awards into the foreseeable future.

The SWS Executive Office and Budget Committee (EOB) has been considering contracting with a financial management firm to help us oversee and sustain our assets. We have talked with several consultants over the last several months and continue to weigh alternatives that would enable us to invest our increasing assets in socially responsible funds. This in turn will enable us to sustain and more aggressively develop activities that improve women's lives and create feminist social change. The Committee's deliberations are on-going.

socially responsible funds. This in turn will enable us to sustain and more aggressively develop activities to improve women's lives and create feminist social change. The Committee's deliberations are on-going.

Finally, I want to end by acknowledging and thanking Jessica Sherwood, our Executive Officer for her conscientious and careful management of SWS accounts and expenditures. I also want to welcome Tracy Steele as our new SWS Treasurer. While I am please to hand the Treasurer's duties to my deputy, I would like to thank SWS members for entrusting me with the fiduciary responsibility for our organization's finances. If you have any questions about the budget, please contact me at kathleen.slobin@ndsu.edu.

Kathleen Slobin,
Professor Emerita
North Dakota State University
820 Elizabeth St.
San Francisco, CA 94114
415-821-9857

II. Winter 2008 Executive Office Report

Jessica Holden Sherwood

AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kristen Baxter is doing an excellent job in her new position as Administrative Assistant. She's taking care of our records, corresponding with members, and working with others on our website functionality and our 2007 bookkeeping Review. Mari Neris is our workstudy student assistant. She too is doing excellent work, and I am pleased that both Kristen and Mari are here in Las Vegas.

ON THE INTERNET

In Fall 2007, we conducted elections, meeting registration, and membership renewal online. We've had some rough patches with online renewal and with the Gift Membership page; we hope to have both resolved before the end of this month. Look at all the good things that await on the Members' Homepage:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Member Functions</u>
* Online <i>Gender & Society</i> Access	* Change Password
* Upcoming Meetings/Register for Meeting	* Update Contact Info and Member Options
* Listserv Signup and Subscription Management	* Make a Donation
	* Give the gift of membership

Many thanks to the (dissolving) IT Taskforce for its work on our website overhaul – especially its chairs, Laura Fingerson and then Beth Duckles.

Thanks also to Marita McComiskey, who served so well as the manager of our listserv. The listserv has moved, so be sure to post to the "uri" one rather than the "uconn" one. Thanks to Erica Reichert, who has stepped in smoothly as the new listserv manager.

Overall, online memberships are coming in nicely. Thank you for working with us on the new functions. When the Gift Membership page is ready, I will announce it on the listserv. It includes the option of participating in our exciting new "three year, free year" promotion.

Please remember that our Winter travel reimbursement program is for members who attend the Business meeting here. All memberships are on the calendar year: if you haven't renewed for 2008, please do so here and now! MasterCard, Visa, and checks are accepted on-site. Our on-site desk also has pages of SWS stickers. If you're planning on attending a regional meeting, take a page for nametag enrichment.

III. Student Concerns Committee meeting report: Wendy Christensen

With over 30 student members attend the SCC meeting in Las Vegas, we had a great discussion that carried over into happy hour. I'm sure this must be a record turn out for SCC! With so many new members in attendance, we spent some time talking about the history of SWS meetings and SWS mentoring, and some SCC members offered advice for getting the most out of the meetings. One concern in the group was how to make SWS meetings more accessible for graduate students in terms of meeting and networking with faculty members. There was strong interest in providing students more time during the SWS meetings for both formal and informal networking. Some of the ideas discussed to improve SWS as a resource for graduate students included:

(1) Change the SWS graduate student Yahoo listserv to a non-moderated list to encourage student discussions. (*completed*)

If you would like to join the list please go to: <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/SWS-Grad/>

Thank you to Laura Bunyan and Jenny Korn for all their work moderating the SWS Grad list!

(2) Update the advice for graduate students on the website—creating a “student guide” to SWS that would also be available as a flyer at meetings (*in progress*).

(3) Encourage faculty attendance at the winter meeting roundtables (which tend to be attended mostly by students). The group discussed the value of the roundtables as a way to share research in progress with a wider audience, and to meet those with similar interests.

(4) Revive the student “buddy program” for new meeting attendees at the next meeting. We also discussed making an orientation for first time winter meeting attendees a regular part of the winter meetings.

SCC plans for the SWS summer meeting in Boston:

This year students of the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS) and SWS will co-sponsor the 4th Annual ABS-SWS student roundtables. The general topics for this roundtable are race, gender, class, and sexuality, and submissions should deal with one or more of these issues. This roundtable is open to both graduate and undergraduate students. Furthermore, we hope to have faculty and advanced students as discussants to facilitate the roundtables and provide advice to presenters. The Call for Papers and the Call for Discussants will go out to members soon and will also be available on the SWS SCC website. We hope to have many faculty members as well as students participating in the event to make it a success once again. Thank you to Dalhia Mani for volunteering to help organize the roundtables this year! SCC will also sponsor a graduate-focused workshop/panel at the summer meeting. The topic has yet to be determined, but the ideas discussed include; funding (finding and applying for sources of research funding and conference funding), relationship with your advisor/mentor. In closing: I want to thank the outgoing Student Representative, Minjeong Kim, for all of her hard work over the last year and making my transition to Student Representative much easier. Please contact me (wchriste@ssc.wisc.edu) with any ideas or questions, and if you would like to volunteer to help with any of these initiatives.

IV. Career Development Committee Minutes Tamara L. Smith, CDC Chair

The Career Development Committee met on February 9, 2008 in Las Vegas. Members in attendance included Tamara Smith, chair; Erin Anderson; Susan Farrell; and Marcia Hernandez.

The following agenda items were discussed:

- 1) We would like to thank Lara Foley, our past committee member who just ‘retired’ from writing the Hey Jane! column. You can access past Hey Jane! columns through the SWS website.
- 2) Ideas for sponsored sessions for the upcoming summer meeting in Boston were discussed. The executive council has given us money to hire a consultant with expertise in tax law, and we are planning to use this money to sponsor a session on “What you Can Deduct as an Academic”. We

would prefer this to take place during the winter meetings (during tax season), and will discuss this with the incoming President. Another session that we would like to offer this summer comes from conversation brought up during the winter meeting's "Disrupting the Culture of Silence". This session will be "Senior Graduate Students to Junior Faculty: How do you shift from student to faculty member?" A last session that we are proposing for the summer meeting is "Mentorship: Tips and Tools" to be held with the Student Concerns Committee. We would like to address how to navigate this complex relationship, including how to avoid unwanted mentorship throughout one's career.

- 3) Erin Anderson reported on the Professional-needs Mentoring Program. She had approximately 8 matches this year for mentors. We plan to advertise the program in an upcoming issue of *Network news*. If you are in need of a Professional-needs Mentor, please contact Erin at eanderson3@washcoll.edu.
- 4) Susan Farrell has been elected to serve on the Career Development Committee, and will act as the senior point person for Hey Jane! writers to solicit volunteers and advice. We decided to reduce the frequency of the column from monthly to bimonthly to make the task of coordinating the column more manageable. In addition, rather than having one person write every column, we are going to be rotating the column between our committee members. If this is an interest of yours, it is not too late to join the CDC Committee! We brainstormed ideas for questions for upcoming columns and possible persons to tap for expert help in answering those career questions.

V. International Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes taken & submitted by Trina Smith, outgoing international committee chair

Members Present:

Trina Smith smit1603@umn.edu
Aditi Mitra amitra@uccs.edu
Uma Sarneestah uma0105@ksu.edu
Nahide Konak mahide.konak@unlv.edu
Pat Ould pould@salemstate.edu
Susan Lee susanlee@bu.edu
Josephine Beoku-Belts Beokubet@fau.edu
Shobha Hamal Gurung hamal-gurung@suu.edu
Alora Lee AGLARPC8@hotmail.com
Helen Raisz raisz@hatford.edu
Shweta Majundar shweta.majundar@uconn.edu
Rnita Ray ranitaray1@yahoo.co.in
Esther Cohw echow@american.edu

Issues Discussed

Marina K is the new international committee chair, who could not be present at the meetings. She kindly sent a summary of discussion points for her new tenure as chair for the committee. Trina S, outgoing international committee chair, agreed to chair the meeting.

Marina's written communication highlighted a few important issues, which were discussed at the meeting. UN Representatives: We have the capability to have 7 reps (2 DPI, 5 ECOSOC). Currently we have three openings per 3 resignations over the last year. Things the committee needs to work on with this are: 1) the process to elect and/or appoint new representatives; 2) working on a procedure for deciding how to handle when representatives resign and appointing new ones; 3) If we are going to abide by the 3 year time limits for representatives; and 4) the exact procedure for nominating and electing new representatives in general.

Suggestions at this meeting about UN representatives and UN issues are the following.

Helen R. suggested a DPI person be someone located in the NYC area. Furthermore, in trying not to limit who can be a rep by geography, suggestions were made that the international committee get funding from SWS to have one person on ECOSOC be able to attend the CSW meetings for one week (thus spending all of their

time in NYC attending this). A suggestion was also made that this person who receives funding work on getting a NGO side event sponsored by SWS where we could highlight our expertise in an area (also discussed in other international committees). Another suggestion was that a retired sociologist living in the NYC area could also fulfill some of these roles.

Trina S also discussed how the UN responsibilities took a lot of time for the international committee chair and wondered what possibilities there would be to delegate some of these responsibilities.

International Work Beyond the UN

Many members at the meeting discussed how they were involved with other international organizations that SWS & members might benefit from participation and involvement in. Some suggested were the International Sociological Association, RC-32, and the World Social Forum.

International Collaborations

As this has been something the international committee has been trying to develop for awhile with some hurdles, we have now have more clarity on what this should entail from a discussion of this at the 2007 SWS summer meeting. Trina introduced the idea that a subcommittee would be established to work on a letter to be sent to the membership for the nomination of organizations and then picking organizations (centers/orgs should be feminist research centers and should be picked geographically across the world). Some members of the winter meeting stated that they had organizations picked and approved in the past and then the partnership never evolved. Trina offered an apology for this stating the international collaborations had some issues (not being able to obtain a prior list and then having to retract another call and get SWS member approval at the 2007 summer meetings), and hoped the center could be re-nominated.

Other issues: Attendees at the international committee asked that the mission, goals, and involvement of the international committee be discussed more. Longer term members provided some historical basis for the committee. Trina noted she would pass these concerns/suggestions to Marina as the new international committee chair.

Members attending this meeting shared their email addresses to network on future issues. Trina encouraged new members to contact Marina with their ideas and suggestions.

VI. Membership Committee Report 2008 Winter Meeting - Las Vegas Cindy Anderson

Committee Members Present: Cindy Anderson, Jennifer Caputo, Wendy Christenson, Denise Copelton, Shannon Davis, Julia McQuillan, Miriam Sessions, Ana Prokos, Sunshine Rote, Mimi Schippers, Jessica Holden Sherwood

Members Absent: Tina Fetner, Mingeong Kim, Erica Reichert, Kristen Schilt, Elisabeth Sheff,

Thank you to all the committee members for the great work they have done since the summer! Special thank to outgoing members Ana Prokos, who kept track of regional/local chapters and Minjeon Kim, Student Representative. We welcome new elected members Julia McQuillan, Kristen Schilt, Mimi Schippers and Wendy Christenson to the committee. We are excited to also welcome new members Jennifer Caputo, Erica Reichert, Sunshine Rote, and Miriam Sessions.

Our complete budget allocation for 2008 is \$1300 (\$100 for regional/local chapters and \$300 for miscellaneous committee expenses.

Assignments were made:

- Hand Program coordinators: Miriam Sessions & Kristen Schilt

- Minority Fellowship Program: Denise Copelton
- Chapter Updates: Shannon Davis & Jennifer Caputo

Topics of Conversations:

Gift Membership: The “have three / give one” campaign is underway. There is a box on membership forms that allow those of us who have been members for three consecutive years to give a gift membership to someone else.

Shannon Davis reported a decreased number of participants in the Hand Program this year, as well as concerns about the effectiveness of matches. We will re-articulate the purpose of the program, distinguishing the Hand Program from the Professional Needs Mentoring Program. We will also suggest that Hand Matches meet at the SWS Reception.

Densise Copelton, MFP coordinator, will continue to provide on-going mentorship with SWS MFP Scholars; it was acknowledged that recipients of these awards are very busy, especially during the ASA/SWS summer meetings.

Cindy Anderson will talk with Gender & Society Editors and Publication Chair about non-SWSers serving on the Gender & Society Editorial Board. We will encourage members of the editorial board to join SWS if they are not currently members.

The committee is revisiting SWS lifetime membership costs. Annual dues are lower than they have been in the past; should we reduce lifetime memberships?

The committee asks that a line for paying 2-3 years dues be added to the membership form.

Questions of membership: how to “count” members depending of time of measurement. Our membership fluctuates from 400-1000 over the course of any given year. Have we had attrition? What are the membership patterns for different levels (e.g., graduate students, professors by rank, etc.). To answer some of these questions, Julia McQuillan (with assistance from Jessica Sherwood) will do a demographic analysis of our membership database.

VII. PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

2008 Winter Meeting – Las Vegas

Toni Calasanti and Kerry Ann Rockquemore, Co-Chairs

At this meeting, we welcomed new Publication Committee members Jan Thomas and Linda Grant. The multiple responsibilities of the Publications Committee continue to be shared by Co-chairs Toni Calasanti and Kerry Ann Rockquemore. The committee continues to work on written descriptions and agreements with those performing editorial jobs for SWS, and now has a signed agreement with Martha McCaughey, the Book Review Editor for *Gender & Society*. We will work out our final written agreement with the editor for *Networknews*, who will be chosen this fall. We continue to deal with issues related to SWS publications as they arise.

Gender & Society

Dana Britton reported that *Gender & Society* continues to thrive. Submissions have gone up sharply in the year 2007, and visibility is also growing. With this huge increase in submissions have also come a large number of papers that are not sent out for external review. It is important to note that all papers are reviewed internally, by either Dana or one of the deputy editors; those not sent out for external review are judged to not fit the mission of the journal. Those papers sent out for external review have an acceptance rate of about 35%. More data on acceptance rates and the like are contained in the editor’s report. The transition to a new Book Review Editor has been smooth, and the two offices are working well together. The committee approved

increased travel monies for editors and deputy editors, and increased stipends for editors. Dana will submit a separate budget report that gives greater detail. The special issue on "Gendered Borderlands" is progressing well and is scheduled to come out in October, 2008. The first guest-edited symposium, edited by Jessie Daniels, and composed of several papers responding to Maggie Anderson's 2005 feminist lecture and Maggie's rejoinder, just appeared in the Feb. 2008 issue. Ideas for another invited symposium are presently under discussion. Publications committee reviewed and approved a special issue proposal by Associate Editor Beth Schneider and Jane Ward. A call for papers will be forthcoming in *Networknews*.

The process by which people can become reviewers was again clarified, and members are strongly encouraged to sign up on the journal's on-line site, Manuscript Central. New signees should also email Dana to let her know of your interest in reviewing, and your areas of expertise. Similarly, email Martha McCaughey if you are interested in doing a book review, letting her know of your availability and areas of interest. Finally, Publications discussed dropping the distinction between articles and research reports in *Gender & Society*.

Member Benefit Update

In addition to free access to the full Sage sociology collection, SWS members are entitled to a 40% discount on all Sage books and journals. Access to the full Sage collection should be available soon through the new SWS website. To receive the 40% discount on books and journals, members will need to call customer service at Sage and give them a discount code: S06SWS. Please note that the second digit is a number (zero) and not a letter.

Fact Sheets

The Social Action Committee continues to produce as many as four fact sheets per year, with the final number depending on response to the call for proposals. Two Fact Sheets were produced in 2007: Intersex, by Marjorie Kelly, University of Connecticut (March 2007); and Women in Science, Technology and Math (STEM), by Kristine De Welde, Florida Gulf Coast University, and Sandra Laursen and Heather Thiry, University of Colorado at Boulder (December 2007). Four fact sheets are in production for 2008, and include the following: Women and Size/Fat Studies, By Samantha Kwan and Jennifer Fackler, University of Houston; Gender, Sex Work, and Social Justice, by Yasmina Katsulis, Arizona State University; International Adoption, by Amy Traver, SUNY Stony Brook; and Single Women, by Bella DePaulo, UC Santa Barbara and Kay Trimberg, Sonoma State University.

The committee has produced two documents—a protocol for producing fact sheets (an internal document), and a FAQ for this process, which is available on the SWS website—that clarify the process by which topics for Fact Sheets are chosen, how the committee chooses people to write these, and how fact sheets are reviewed and approved. The latter document will be quite helpful in addressing any questions the membership may have concerning this process. The committee continues to address how to produce these fact sheets in the most efficient and useful ways possible. Additionally, SAC is working on developing a way in which to review existing fact sheets, and will discuss options with Publications during Summer meeting.

Networknews

Leslie Hossfeld continues to produce *Networknews* with a smoothness that belies the hard work she puts into editing the newsletter. In 2007, Leslie produced four issues of Volume 24, averaging 33 pages per issue. Issues have a circulation of more than 1100 per issue. Leslie will submit a separate *Network news* annual budget. Of special interest to some members, Leslie reported that problems of synchronizing mailing with the Executive Office and UNCW have been worked out, and there should no longer be problems with receiving copies of *NN*.

As a result of our decision at the 2007 winter meetings, *Networknews* editors now serve terms that run on fiscal year budgets. Thus, Leslie's term will end January 1, 2009. In preparation for the transition to a new editor, Publications has approved a job description (based on Leslie's experiences) that will be incorporated into a letter of agreement for the incoming *Networknews* Editor. We also have an advertisement that we

run on the listserv and in *Networknews*. Applications will be due on July 15, and we will encourage applicants to meet with us at the summer meetings.

***Gender & Society* Editor's Report**
February 2008
Editorial Staff

Laura Logan and Cindy Whitney are still the office staff. Deputy Editors Bandana Purkayastha and Sharon Bird assist in the editorial decision process by providing initial reviews of manuscripts, choosing reviewers, and providing assessments of reviewed manuscripts. Each handles approximately 25 percent of the total number of papers we receive. From Jan – December 2007 Dana handled 249 manuscripts and each deputy editor approximately 75.

Cover Art

Julie Reid, a University of Texas graduate student in sociology and newly minted assistant professor, worked closely with Sage to design the most recent cover. I am pleased to say Julie will continue to design the cover for the journal.

Sage Track

The online submission and review process became operational in October 2006 and we continue to learn about its advantages and quirks. Author and reviewer feedback has been positive, for the most part.

Volume 21 Report

In volume 21 of the journal (2007) we published 39 book reviews and 33 articles. Including the table of contents and index we used 927 pages (97%) of our 960 page budget.

Statistics

From January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007, *Gender & Society* received 405 submissions; 350 new and 55 revised manuscripts. This is up from 271 total manuscripts in 2006. Overall submission trends are sharply up – we suspect this is due to the transition to the online system.

We sent 552 review packets out to reviewers, 461 were returned. The average reviewer response time was 30 days. Through December 31, 2007, I made 410 editorial decisions. This includes 33 accepts, 25 conditional accepts, 46 revise and resubmits, and 306 rejects (215 without external review). Our acceptance rate on the year is eight percent. In January we received 23 new manuscripts and 6 revised manuscripts, sent out 44 review packets, and made 34 editorial decisions. The average time from submission to editorial decision is 32 days. The average time from submission to editorial decision for externally reviewed manuscripts is 65 days. The range of decision was 0 days (min.) to 93 days (max.). Our acceptance rate (calculated as the number of accepted manuscripts divided by the number of new + revised manuscripts) is currently running at eight percent. Because this number includes manuscripts rejected without review, it is somewhat misleading. As of the end of 2007, the chance that a given externally reviewed manuscript will receive a decision of “revise and resubmit” is 35 percent; the chance that a revised manuscript will receive a decision of “conditional accept” is 45 percent.

Special Issues

The Borderlands Special Issue is progressing as planned. The journal received 32 submissions, 21 of which we sent for external review. We rejected eight of those after review. Ultimately, we asked 13 authors to submit revised manuscripts by March 1, 2008. We expect this Special Issue to be ready for publication in the October Issue. Beth Schneider and Jane Ward have a proposal for an issue on “Heteronormativity and Sexualities.” The call for papers is already on the *Gender & Society* website (<http://gas.sagepub.com/>).

Symposia

The invited symposium on Maggie Andersen's 2005 Feminist Lecture was published in the February 2008 issue of the journal. Initial feedback has been very positive. There are plans in the works for an invited symposium on West and Zimmerman's “Doing Gender,” which is the most cited article in the journal's history. More details as they are available.

At a Glance Statistics 2006 - 2007

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Difference</u>
New MS	198	350	+152
Revised MS	74	55	-19
Total MS	272	405	+133
Review Packets Sent	556	552	-4
Reviews Completed	535	461	-74
Average Reviewer Days	33	30	-3
Average Decision Days	46	32	-14

Editor's Report

Network News

SWS Winter Meetings

February 2008 Las Vegas

Leslie Hossfeld

Four issues were produced over the 2007 year: Volume XXIV, Numbers 1-4. All issues are available on the SWS web site www.socwomen.org as pdf files. The 4 issues averaged 33 pages, with a circulation of over 1100 per issue. Production and distribution is running smoothly. A student assistant was used for Fall and Winter issues to work with Executive Office to synchronize mailing lists to meet bulk mailing requirements of the UNCW postal services. This will be the last year for this Editor with term ending January 2009.

VIII. SWS Social Action Committee

February 2008, Las Vegas Winter Meeting

Members Present: Jodie Lawston, Uma Sarmistha, Jessica Sprague-Jones, Amanda Gengler, Danielle Currie, Kate Linnenberg, Stephanie Nawyn, Vicki Hunter, Rachel Schneider, Gayle Sulik, Molly Noble, Charity Schmidt, Jennifer Glass, Tracy Ore, Esther Chow, Helen Raisz, and Marybeth Stalp. Our committee meetings had a total of 17 members present, with 10 new members.

We envision ourselves (SAC) within SWS as having a unique role. We are a "potpourri" committee in that issues relevant to the membership (that are ever changing) are brought up to the committee about which to take action. For example, breast feeding and child care, are certainly membership issues, at both SWS and ASA meetings. SAC has been involved with SWS to secure services, which we have done, and is now part of the organization, perhaps not noticeably credited to SAC. Additionally, many of the tasks that SAC take on have to do with taking suggestions from the membership and making them part of the mainstream of the organization, (e.g., fact sheets, the undergraduate activism award, and the feminist activism award were all initially developed in SAC).

I. Fact Sheets

A. Fact Sheet Schedule for 2008

We are currently in the process of producing four fact sheets for 2008, the call for papers went out in Spring 2007, and four were selected in Fall 2007—we work one year in advance on fact sheets every year, so as we are producing 4 fact sheets one year, we are receiving submissions and making selection decisions for the next calendar year. The four fact sheets are listed in the order that they will appear in the 2008 issues of *Network News*. We include author/s, affiliation/s, and SAC point person who is working with the SAC chair for review and editing processes. We have revised and extended our review and editing process, giving more time for author and reviewers, always mindful of the *Network News* deadlines.

Fact Sheet #1-Women and Size/Fat Studies NN Publication Date: April 15

Author: Samantha Kwan (Assistant Professor, University of Houston), Jennifer Fackler, (M.A. Candidate, University of Houston)

SAC Point Person: Chris Bobel

Fact Sheet #2—Gender, Sex Work, and Social Justice NN Publication date: June 15

Author: Yasmina Katsulis (Assistant Professor of Women's Studies, Arizona State University)

SAC point person: Andrea Boyle

Fact Sheet #3—International Adoption NN Publication date: October 15

Author: Amy Traver (Ph.D. Candidate Sociology, SUNY Stony Brook)

SAC point person: Rachel Kutz-Flamenbaum

Fact Sheet #4—Single Women NN Publication date: December 15

Authors: Bella DePaulo (Professor of Psychology, UC Santa Barbara) and Kay Trimberger (Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, Sonoma State University)

SAC point person: Gayle Sulik

B. Are Fact Sheets Effective?

Regarding questions posed to SAC during the SWS Business Meeting of Summer 2007 in NYC, we have made the following updates on the SWS website:

- all 17 completed fact sheets from 2002-2007 are now available on the website (<http://www.socwomen.org/page.php?ss=25>)
- there is an updated description of SAC on the committees website (http://www.socwomen.org/social_action_com.pdf)
- this updated description of SAC discusses the responsibilities of our committee, including, but not limited to, fact sheets

Future changes still to be made on the SWS website:

- we are working to make the fact sheet proposal process more transparent to membership
- this transparency will include a thorough description of our process, and an example of a quality proposal that was selected and eventually published as a fact sheet
- we are looking into more sophisticated "page counters" to measure the use of fact sheets from the internet website

SAC were asked to meet with the Publications Committee (PC) in Las Vegas on Saturday afternoon regarding the production process of fact sheets. The PC chair, Toni Calisanti, and SAC chair, Marybeth Stalp, had been working for a few months discussing comments, concerns, and questions regarding fact sheets. SAC provided a "FAQ of fact sheets" handout to PC in preparation for the meeting—it was this collective document that was discussed initially, and which encouraged additional conversation. This meeting between SAC and PC allowed and will allow SAC to be in better contact with PC. SAC can be more transparent about our process regarding topic development, calls for proposals, selection of proposals, and general reviewing and editing concerns with PC. We are happy to report that SAC and PC had an informational meeting, and are planning to meet again in summer 2008 to discuss a protocol for systematically updating older fact sheets, which was a concern discussed during our joint meeting.

During our own SAC committee meeting later on Saturday afternoon, we discussed different ways in which we could measure if/how the fact sheets are effective, as "word of mouth" reports are anecdotal at best.

- Put in place a more aggressive "counter" on the SWS website, to assist us in determining use of fact sheets.
- Include a comments section (e.g., blog) on this web page to allow visitors to comment on how they are using the fact sheets.
- Link fact sheets to search engine to be more findable on the internet (e.g., Google, Yahoo).

Uma Sarmistha and Marybeth Stalp will be working on this issue, and contacting the SWS website regarding this to see if these are possibilities. Tracy Ore reported that ASA has expressed interest in how SWS assembles their fact sheets. Tracy Ore will pursue the possibility of a future workshop with/at ASA about producing fact sheets in the future. In collectively reviewing our topic development process, we found that the open category option was successful (initiated in 2007 CFP for 2008 calendar year), and that we will indeed pursue this line of action again. Thus, our topics for fact sheets for calendar year 2009 are: Violence Against Women, Global Literacy,

Open Category. We hope to select four fact sheets for the 2009 calendar year, and will again appoint "point persons" for each fact sheet once the proposals are selected. We will soon put out a call for proposals, and publicizing the CFP widely, including but not limited to the SWS listserv and website. The deadline for proposals is June 1, 2008. We hope to make decisions by August 2008, to be able to announce the selected 2009 fact sheets and authors at the Summer 2008 meetings.

C. Updates about SAC on SWS Website

SAC discussed that there is a basic lack of information and at times misinformation regarding our committee and its role in SWS. For example, many of our projects have become successfully housed within the institution of SWS, including Child Care and Breast Feeding at meetings, Undergraduate Activism Award, Feminist Activism Award, Local Arrangements focus on securing union hotels when possible, fair trade coffee, and reducing waste produced at meetings (e.g., paper). Thus, we feel that we need to do a better job of publicizing our committee. Some of this can be easily done through materials posted about SAC on the SWS website.

II. Support of International Scholars and Activist Work

This year we ran into budgetary issues concerning some most of our committee requests, which was initially unfortunate, but this did allow us to review critically some of SAC's projects. In re-evaluating the 5 years of financial support of Nasrine Gross's work in Afghanistan, we decided to continue our efforts in supporting the activist work of international scholars, but to do so in a way that would be more transparent. Thus, we are beginning conversations with the International Committee, to build synergy on this issue. We hope to have a proposal for SWS to consider at Summer 2008 meetings. Stephanie Nawyn will be working on this issue with the International Committee.

III. Undergraduate Social Activism Award Committee

This successful award is now housed in the Awards Committee. Two of our members will work with the Awards Committee. There will be a Subcommittee comprised of SAC members Kate Linnenberg and Amanda Gengler, and Awards Committee Chair Tracy Ore.

IV. Rapid Action Allies

We were approached in Fall 2007 by SWS President Joey Sprague to monitor the listservs of 4 organizations at least one of which is likely to be mobilizing when that is called for by breaking news on issues we care a lot about. If we learned of actions we can participate in, SAC would let SWS listserv know asap what we can do to work with these organizations. The organizations we have been monitoring were suggested by our members:

Incite <http://www.incite-national.org/> <<http://www.incite-national.org/>>

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force <http://www.thetaskforce.org/>

National Network of Immigrant and Refugee Rights http://www.nnirr.org/projects/projects_overview.html

Feminist Majority <http://www.feminist.org/>

After trying this and completing assessment of each website, SAC feel that it is not the best use of our time, that we cannot predict the next event for which we (SWS) might want to have a response. We also question our ability to be rapid responders to events, as we are an academic organization, and basically relying upon volunteers to monitor, assess and take action. Compared to a non-profit organization, we are not as skilled in this as other organizations might be. Thus, as the membership already contributes to the listserv in these ways of making the members aware of important issues, we as a committee have decided to discontinue our efforts regarding Rapid Action Allies.

V. Health Care & Union Presence for Graduate Students

In building connections with other SWS committees, we propose to examine graduate schools for their support for graduate students. We propose a synergy with Student Concerns Committee regarding attention to graduate schools/programs and their offering of health care and/or union membership for graduate students. Much in line with the report by Sharon Hays and Barbara Risman on Gender/Feminist Friendly Graduate Programs (<http://www.socwomen.org/Haysrismanreport.pdf>), we plan to investigate graduate programs in

similar ways regarding graduate student support. Molly Noble and Charity Schmidt will be working with the Student Concerns Committee on this issue.

VI. Social Activism Support of Public Sociology

Inspired by the meeting theme of Las Vegas, SAC is investigating the possibility of setting up funds for junior scholars to use who are trying to begin community activism and/or engage in public sociology. The panel in particular demonstrated that having access to financial support was imperative especially for those at balanced and teaching schools. We will first research how other academic organizations fund such efforts, and come up with a proposal to discuss with the larger membership. We already have the SWS Activism Award, which is typically given to an advanced or senior scholar, who can demonstrate a career of activism. This rather will focus on assistance to get started on a career of activism.

VII. Budget

Item 1: Fact Sheets for 2009

4 per calendar year, author stipend \$750.00

$\$750.00 \times 4 = \3000.0

Rationale: Our mission is generally to integrate activism into the academy, and bring the academy into social activism. In support of activist scholars, early members of SAC have created the fact sheets which have been refined and expanded upon, in accordance with our mission. The fact sheets support our mission in multiple ways. First, fact sheets provide research support for activism. Distribution of fact sheets in *Network News* and on the SWS website allows people from multiple places to access these researched works. A tick count established on the SWS fact sheet website reveals that from Feb 2007 to August 2007 results in approximately 170 pulls of fact sheets from the website (we are working to find a more elaborate and sophisticated way to measure use of fact sheets). Second, fact sheets assist faculty in their classrooms. Faculty members use them as part of their teaching materials, design related assignments for their classes, and as models of activism/public sociology. Additionally, in the fact sheet production process we have worked with activists out in the field to review and edit fact sheets, and we are very interested in expanding the fact sheet distribution to a wider audience. Fact sheets exemplify feminist scholarship and public sociology, and both SAC and SWS are invested in these ideas. The fact sheets in particular help to support feminist mentoring, activist organizations and SWS members who are activists outside and inside the classroom.

We believe that paying authors for their time is critical in valuing women's work, and is attractive in particular to young scholars.

Total Request: \$3000.00

Social Action Committee

IX. Nominations Committee –February 2008 Report

Christine E. Bose, Chair

I want to thank the 2007 Nominations Committee members, Diane K. Everett, Tina Fetner (Secretary), Kecia Johnson, Miliann Kang, Sarah Sobieraj, and Minjeong Kim (SCC Liaison) for their work in finding excellent candidates to run for various SWS offices in our November-December 2007 elections; and I want to thank all the candidates who graciously agreed to serve.

I am happy to report the elections results as follows: President Elect, Shirley Hill; Secretary, Mimi Schippers; Deputy Treasurer, Laura Kramer; Student Representative, Wendy Christensen; Awards Committee Chair, Rebecca Bach; Awards Committee Member, Jeanne Flavin; Discrimination Committee Chair, Beverlyn Lundy Allen; International Committee Chair, Marina Karides; Career Development Committee Member, Susan Farrell; Membership Committee members, Kristen Schilt and Julia McQuillan; Nominations Committee members, Mangala Subramaniam and Cathy Zimmer; and Publications Committee Members, Linda Grant and Jan Thomas. Congratulations to all!

X. Scholarship and Human Rights Committee—February 2008 Report

Christine E. Bose, Chair

I am happy to report on two successful campaigns that SWS was part of. At the urging of Scholars at Risk (SAR), and in my role as SWS's Chair of the Scholarship and Human Rights Committee, I wrote the letters below on behalf of Ms. Mehrnoushe Solouki and on behalf of Dr. Haleh Esfandiari. Afterwards, SAR Program Officer, Claire Robinson emailed to say that our participation helped free Ms. Solouki and Dr. Esfandiari. There are good examples of cases that we can have an impact on. And, SAR pre-screens the cases to be sure such letters would be helpful. [The news about Ms. Solouki can be found at: http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5gYtOpvWcFoCP9x9nD-10p9_aXRmAD8U87B780]. In addition to the letters, we supported Sociologists Without Borders "Resolution on Imperiled Sociologists" to the ASA in August 2007.

Letter # 1: December 24, 2007

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic
His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei The Office of the Supreme
Leader Shoahada Street Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

Dear Supreme Leader' Ali Khamenei:

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) writes to express our organization's concern over the trial and travel restrictions facing Ms. Mehrnoushe Solouki, a graduate student and joint French and Iranian citizen who has been kept from leaving Iran. We call for the authorities to publicly explain the reasons for Ms. Solouki's trial and travel restrictions and to lift these restrictions.

We understand that Ms. Solouki, a filmmaker and graduate student at the Université de Québec in Montréal, entered Iran with permission in December 2006 in order to film her third documentary on the subject of the burial rites of religious minorities. The Iranian Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance granted Solouki a research license and officials were told in advance of locations where she would film. Solouki allegedly stumbled upon a site that was reportedly a mass grave of people executed in 1988. We understand that following this incident, in February 2007, Solouki was arrested and placed in Evin prison. She was released when her parents posted bail in March 2007, but her French passport has been confiscated, preventing her from leaving Iran. In breach of Iranian law limiting travel bans to six months, Solouki has not been allowed to return to France. In the meantime, a trial has been postponed and she has neither edited nor broadcast any film taken during her current stay.

SWS joins with many national and international academic associations in respectfully calling for the full acquittal of Mehrnoushe Solouki in accordance with Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran is a signatory; urges authorities to allow her to return home safely without further delay; requests assurances of Ms. Solouki's physical well-being while she is in custody pending any proceedings; and respectfully notes that the free exchange of ideas across national boundaries is a core value of academic freedom and higher education generally.

Sincerely,
Christine E. Bose, Past President and Chair, Scholarship and Human Rights Committee
Sociologists for Women in Society

Cc: Jessica Sherwood; H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadijad; H. E. Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi;
Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeite, Minister of Intelligence; H.E. Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Ambassador of
Iran to the United Nations; U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice;
Scholars at Risk; and Jonathan Travis, Network for Education and Academic Rights

Letter # 2: July 22, 2007

His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
President, Islamic Republic of Iran
Pasteur Avenue
Tehran 13168-43311
Islamic Republic of Iran

Dear President Ahmadinejad:

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) is concerned about the May 2007 arrest and detention in Evin Prison of Dr. Haleh Esfandiari, prominent international scholar and director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. We call for the authorities to publicly explain the reasons for Dr. Esfandiari's arrest and detention and to urge her immediate release.

Dr. Esfandiari's arrest raises serious concerns about her well-being. In addition the confiscation of her travel documents and the lack of any clear basis for her detention raise concerns about the ability of internationally recognized scholars and intellectuals to safely visit Iran. The facts also suggest a wider attempt to intimidate intellectuals and limit academic freedom in Iran.

SWS joins with many national and international academic associations in imploring the Iranian government of examine the circumstances of Dr. Esfandiari's arrest and detention, to ensure that she has immediate access to legal counsel, to family and to any necessary medical treatment, and to work for her immediate release.

Sincerely,
Christine E. Bose, Past President and
Chair, Scholarship and Human Rights Committee
Sociologists for Women in Society

Cc: H.E. Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif; U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Director Lee H. Hamilton, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; Scholars at Risk; John Akker, Network for Education and Academic Rights; and Jessica Sherwood, SWS.

Recommendation to Create a new SWS Standing Committee named *Committee on Academic Justice*

Revised 1/31/08

Mission:

This Committee will collect data on the issues facing women in higher education, coordinate and communicate with other organizations addressing these issues, and organize information on best practices for creating a just academy in formats that will be useful for our members and for the organization as a whole as we work with others to transform the structure and culture of the academy to make it one of justice for all.

Agenda:

1. We will collect and share information on academic policies and practices regarding recognized gender issues in the academy, such as university policies on sexual harassment, domestic partnership, parental leave, the tenure clock, part-time tenure tracks, and hostile work environments.
2. We will work to uncover other issues important to members, initiate or promote research on the problems and potential solutions, and report on findings.
3. We will do liaison work with other organizations addressing gender and women in higher education (including American Association of University Professors' Committee on the Status of Women; American Association of Colleges and Universities' on Campus with Women project; Women in Higher Education; and the National Women's Studies Association).

4. We will coordinate our activity as appropriate with other SWS committees, including Social Action, Career Development, Discrimination, and Publications.

Structure:

The Chair of the Committee will be elected and the remaining members will be volunteers.

Mission and Charge of the Taskforce on the Transformation of the Academy:

1. Create a pamphlet that provides information on how demographic characteristics of the teacher and subject matter may affect student evaluations.
2. Create a ranking system for feminist-friendly graduate departments and update/publish rankings on a regular basis.
3. Create a pamphlet to provide information for junior faculty who find themselves in hostile environments.
4. Advice/guidelines for Faculty Seeking a Gender- and Family-Friendly Academic Environment at a University, begun by Beth Rushing and Kathy Feltey.

Proposed Additions to Original Mission

5. Identify other issues women face in the academy, collect information about best practices for addressing these, and share this information with our members.
6. Cooperate with other organizations working to create a more just academy.

Call for Papers:

SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Award

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) has established an award for graduate students and recent Ph.D.s working in the area of women and paid work – employment and self-employment, informal market work, illegal work. The award is supported by a bequest from the family of the late Cheryl Allyn Miller, a sociologist and feminist who studied women and paid work.

The purpose of the award is to recognize a sociology graduate student or a recent doctorate whose research or activism constitutes an outstanding contribution to the field of women and work. This contribution may take the form of scholarly or policy research or activism. It may be completed work or work in progress, but should not be a proposal for future work, and should be sufficiently close to completion that the applicant can concisely describe and contextualize the contribution to the field.

The award is \$500, and will be presented at the Banquet at the August SWS meeting (held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the ASA). The winner may present her or his work at the meeting. In addition to the \$500 award, air travel to the meeting and a ticket to the banquet will be paid by SWS.

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION: Applicants must be graduate students or have received their Ph.D. in 2007 or 2008. Applicants must belong to SWS, and may

join at the same time they apply for the award. For information on joining, please consult the SWS Web site: <http://www.soc-women.org/>.

Submissions must include a 2-3 page curriculum vitae, a cover page with the author's name, affiliation, and contact information, an abstract and paper of article length (no more than 30 double-spaced pages, including bibliography) in a style suitable for submission to a scholarly journal.

The abstract/cover page should include applicant's name, address, telephone number, email address, and, for applicants with their Ph.D., the date the Ph.D. was completed. Applicants must submit materials on their own behalf.

Do not include any nominating letters.

Applications must be postmarked by June 15, 2008. Send three (3) copies of all application materials. (If possible, please print on both sides to save paper and mailing costs.)

Mail to:

Ivy Ken
Department of Sociology
801 22nd St., NW, Suite 409
Washington DC 20052

Please address any questions via email: ivyken@gwu.edu

*The purpose of
the award is to
recognize a sociology
graduate student or
a recent doctorate
whose research or
activism constitute
an outstanding
contribution to
the field of women
and work.*



Film Review:

Orgasmic Birth a film by Debra Pascali-Bonaro

Review By: Christine H. Morton
PhD

Sensitive and unflinchingly honest, this brave documentary film shows what labor and childbirth can be like in a context where a woman's sexuality is acknowledged and honored, with supportive helpers placing her comfort and pleasure at the center of the birth experience. With no authoritative voice-over narration or didactic statistics, this film weaves a story of birth as pleasurable, indeed, at times, orgasmic. We witness the stories of a number of couples, younger, older, white, black, geeks and artists. These couples share their deeply felt convictions that their birthing experience should reflect the actions, words and feelings of their sexuality. In a culture where the normative childbirth experience is typically in a hospital, with drug and surgical interventions, (like the vacuum extraction in the film), these sensual births are a jarring contrast because we see them, we hear them, we feel close to them. We watch as women give birth to their babies in an atmosphere of everyday life while experiencing one of the most liminal and female of human activities—giving birth to a new social being. The implications of how a society generally organizes the birthing of new members are provided by the numerous experts interviewed in the film, including holistic physician Christiane Northrup, midwife Ina May Gaskin, childbirth educator and author Penny Simkin, OB author Marsden Wagner, and anthropologist Robbie Davis-Floyd.

The most poignant and sobering part of the film is when it straightforwardly looks at the impact of sexual abuse on women's feelings about their bodies, their sexuality, their pregnancies and births. Penny Simkin, a world renowned childbirth educator, has long had her professional lens tuned to this phenomenon, one that mainstream social work and women's studies ignore. Some data suggest that nearly a quarter of American women have experienced sexual abuse, and Helen looks us in the eye when she tells us she was raped at the age of 6, and again by her 'boyfriend'

at 19. Her journey to sexual healing was accomplished in large part by her birth experience, which empowered her and brought her back to a central and core pleasure in her body. Midwifery knowledge and care may have therapeutic outcomes for women with sexual abuse histories.

Orgasmic Birth shows nude birth scenes, and while these are beautiful and artfully photographed, this is not childbirth soft porn. The film tells a compelling story, and makes what is sure to be a controversial claim: women have the right to have a pleasurable birth. The candid documentation of a typical hospital birth, along with the couples' sense-making of their experience, is honest and respectful. Women accept experiences that are not optimal, perhaps because they do not know about alternatives or do not feel these are possible or desirable. The film asks, however, why our society does not accept this as a valid choice for more women.

At its core, Orgasmic Birth is about women's right to give birth with sexual freedom and respect in an environment with supportive and trained attendants (could or could not be a hospital setting). It posits the radical idea (in this day of fetal medicine) that what is good for the woman is *better* for the baby—[Despite one medical care giver's admission she felt nervous at how long the babies born in the film 'stayed blue', she acknowledged her discomfort came from seeing how something different than she was taught in the medical system could still be safe for mothers and babies]. When mothers are ecstatic, babies are loved and cherished by all in attendance. The film asks a challenging question: "Why wouldn't we want that for our culture's birthright?" as opposed to the 'right' to schedule major abdominal surgery instead?

Thus, we get to the politics of the film. The US national cesarean rate is over 30%, and mainstream media has been heavily weighted in favor of celebrity cesarean choices and ACOG news bulletins denouncing home birth as a fad and a 'cause celebre'. Spokespersons for 'orgasmic birth' or even 'humanistic' births, such

as filmmaker Ricki Lake (*The Business of Being Born*) are dismissed, discounted and denigrated by medical doctors who claim hospitals provide safer outcomes. Yet by most measures the US is not doing so well—prematurity rates are going up, maternal deaths have increased, and the US ranks 41st in infant mortality of all developed countries. Midwives, doulas, childbirth educators and advocates of 'normal' birth have science on their side, yet obstetricians still carry more authority and certainly have more financial resources to present their point of view.

However, new technologies make it possible to disseminate one's story further for small grass-roots change agents. The story told by Debra Pascali-Bonaro and her team is thought-provoking and opens an admittedly minority practice to public view. While not preachy, the film nevertheless presents a case for orgasmic birth that makes sense scientifically, culturally and economically. This film will open discussion among all who see it. Finally, for those of us who did not have anything close to an 'orgasmic' birth, the film raises the delicate issue of women not sharing their stories of pleasure with women who have a story of pain, disappointment or anger. Sometimes these negative emotions are allowed to carry the conversation, because as Davis-Floyd points out, 'those of us who had transformative or empowering births have not wanted to make other women feel bad about their births.' In some ways, this has allowed the high rates of intervention to continue unabated. However, like the medical care system in general, obstetrics care is at a crisis point. Orgasmic Birth provides a visceral experience for views of what humanistic, *maternity* care would be like as we begin to consider alternatives.

Recommended for classes in medical anthropology/sociology; women's studies and sexuality courses, as well as nursing and medical school courses in women's health. The accompanying website: www.orgasmicbirth.com, contains more information about the experts, and about midwifery care and activism opportunities in the U.S.



Members' Bookshelf

Doing Business with Beauty: Black Women, Hair Salons, and the Racial Enclave Economy

By Adia Harvey Wingfield

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008

The book argues that studies of entrepreneurship generalize from the experiences of immigrant men and thus overlook the ways racism and sexism are systemic, intersecting processes that create different entrepreneurial experiences for racial minority women. Given this, Harvey Wingfield argues that Black women's entrepreneurial ventures can best be described as "racial enclave economies" that are fundamentally shaped by the systemic gendered racism these women encounter in numerous settings. Focusing on Black women hair salon owners, *Doing Business with Beauty* considers how systemic gendered racism influences Black women's motivations for becoming entrepreneurs, business decisions, and interactions with customers and stylists.

Global Families

By Meg Wilkes Karraker

Allyn and Bacon, 2008

The globalization of politics, economics, culture, and other social systems are creating challenges and opportunities for families throughout the world.

Yet, sociologists and other scholars who study families are often unfamiliar with the theories and research on globalization. *Global Families* provides family scholars with a methodical introduction to the interdisciplinary field of globalization. *Global Families* then examines the ways in which globalization impinges on families throughout the world in four major areas: demographic transitions, transnational employment, international violence, and world-wide culture. The book concludes with a discussion of supranational policies and other efforts to position families in this global landscape.

Hidden Children of the Holocaust: Belgian Nuns and their Daring Rescue of Young Jews from the Nazis

By Suzanne Vromen

Oxford University Press, 2008

In the terrifying summer of 1942 in Belgium, when the Nazis began the brutal roundup of Jewish families, parents searched desperately for safe haven for their children. As Suzanne Vromen reveals in *Hidden Children of the Holocaust*, these children found sanctuary with other families and schools—but especially in Roman Catholic convents and orphanages. Vromen has interviewed not only those who were hidden as children, but also the Christian women who rescued them, and the nuns who gave the children shelter, all of whose voices are heard in this powerfully moving book. Indeed, here are numerous first-hand memoirs of life in a wartime convent—the secrecy, the humor, the admiration, the anger, the deprivation, the cruelty, and the kindness—all with the backdrop of the terror of the Nazi occupation. We read the stories of the women of the Resistance who risked their lives in placing Jewish children in the care of the Church, and of the Mothers Superior and nuns who sheltered these children and hid their identity from the authorities. Perhaps most riveting are the stories told by the children themselves—abruptly separated from distraught parents and given new names, the children were brought to the convents with a sense of urgency, sometimes under the cover of darkness. They were plunged into a new life, different from anything they had ever known, and expected to adapt seamlessly. Vromen shows that some adapted so well that they converted to Catholicism, at times to fit in amid the daily prayers and rituals, but often because the Church appealed to them. Vromen also examines their lives after the war, how they faced the devastating loss of parents to the Holocaust, struggled to regain their identities and sought to memorialize those who saved them. This remarkable book offers an inspiring chronicle of the brave

individuals who risked everything to protect innocent young strangers, as well as a riveting account of the "hidden children" who lived to tell their stories.

How the Religious Right Shapes Lesbian and Gay Activism

By Tina Fetner

University of Minnesota Press, 2008

While gay rights are on the national agenda now, activists have spent decades fighting for their platform. At the same time, the religious right has continued and effectively opposed the efforts of lesbian and gay activists, working to repeal many of the laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and progress a constitutional amendment "protecting" marriage. In this accessible and grounded work, Tina Fetner uncovers a surprisingly complex relationship between the two movements—one that transcends political rivalry. Fetner shows how gay activists and the religious right have established in effect a symbiotic relationship in which each side significantly affects the evolution of its counterpart. As lesbian and gay activists demand an end to prejudice, inclusion in marriage, the right to serve in the military, and citizenship regardless of sexual orientation, the religious right has responded with anti-gay planks in Republican platforms and the blocking of social and political change efforts. Fetner examines how the lesbian and gay movement responds to opposition by changing the rhetoric, tone, and tactics and reveals how that connection has influenced—and made more effective—the evolution of gay activism in the United States. Fetner addresses debates that lie at the center of the culture wars and, ultimately, demonstrates how the contentious relationship between gay and lesbian rights activists and the religious right—a dynamic that is surprisingly necessary to both—challenges assumptions about how social movements are significantly shaped by their rivals.

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The Matrix Reader: Examining the Dynamics of Oppression and Privilege

By Abby L. Ferber, Christina Jimenez, Andrea O'Reilly Herrera and Dean Samuels
McGraw Hill, 2008

Written by four authors from different disciplinary backgrounds, this reader promotes a commitment to an intersectional approach to teaching race, class, gender and sexuality. Unlike most books of its kind, it highlights the duality of privilege and oppression and the effects that race, gender, and sexuality have on our lives. This reader includes poems, reflective literary prose, historical events and documents, images drawn from the media, contemporary statistics of inequalities, visual images, and tools that empower students to become agents for social change. Features include an intersectional approach to race,

class, gender, sexuality and disability; an overview of both historical and contemporary institutional inequality; historical documents; concrete strategies to combating resistance and enacting social change, dealing with resistance and becoming an ally; and an accompanying online teaching guide: "Teaching Race, Gender, Class, and Sexuality" focusing on strategies for teaching diversity issues as well as how to manage emotions and resistance in the classroom.

Security Disarmed: Critical Perspectives on Gender, Race, and Militarization

Edited By Barbara Sutton, Sandra Morgen, and Julie Novkov
Rutgers University Press, Forthcoming
Fall 2008

From the history of state terrorism in Latin America, to state- and group-perpetrated plunder and genocide in Africa, to war and armed conflicts in the Middle

East, militarization--the heightened role of organized aggression in society--continues to painfully shape the lives of millions of people around the world. In *Security Disarmed*, scholars, policy planners, and activists come together to think critically about the human cost of violence and viable alternatives to armed conflict. Arranged in four parts--alternative paradigms of security, cross-national militarization, militarism in the United States, and pedagogical and cultural concerns--the book critically challenges militarization and voices an alternative encompassing vision of human security by analyzing the relationship between gender, race, and militarization. This collection of essays evaluates and resists the worldwide crisis of militarization--including but going beyond American military engagements in the twenty-first century.

News:

Local Chapters

Akron-Kent Chapter

By: *Jodi Ross*

The "feisty feminists" from the sister chapters of Akron-Kent SWS have been busy planning our Spring action events. We began the month of March by posting Women in Herstory posters across campus.

This was our fun and creative contribution to supporting Women's Herstory Month. We will follow this effort with participating in the Dress for Success S.O.S. ("Send One Suit") week at the end of March. Dress for Success is a national organization which helps prepare women for success in careers. Our chapters have organized local drives to support this very practical event which collects new or gently used business suits for women preparing for the job market. We have also committed to participating in the local "Walk a Mile in her Shoes" event to raise awareness of sexual assault. We will raise money to sponsor one team from The University of Akron and one from Kent State University to "compete" in this event. This will allow us to help support the local Rape Crisis Center. Finally, we have decided to organize a book drive to supply books to women in Ohio's prisons. This event will round out our year of successful activism. We are very proud of our

accomplishments as we have joined forces to create this powerful, united feminist front.

Midwest Chapter

By: *Sharon L. Bouma*

The Midwest SWS (MSWS) chapter will gather at the Midwest Sociological Society meetings in St. Louis at the end of March. We look forward to attending a wide variety of sessions and workshops co-sponsored with the MSS, as well as spending time together in the hospitality suite which this year will offer wellness workshops on relaxation, belly dancing, reiki, guided visualization, and a "stitch and bitch" hour!

We will also hold our annual business and program planning meeting, followed by a catered social hour, on our last evening in St. Louis. Interested in joining MSWS for the low fee of \$10 (\$5 students)? Contact our treasurer Susan L. Wortmann (swortmann2@unlnotes.unl.edu).

Minnesota Chapter

By *Trina Smith*

The MN-SWS chapter is up and running. We had our first meeting in November. We held a potluck discussing our goals and potential activities for the group. During this semester, we will hold our 2nd meeting

at the Midwest Sociological Society meetings, so members from across Minnesota at MSS will be able to attend. Furthermore, we will celebrate International Women's Day by attending a film at the Walker Art Center's Women's Film Festival. Furthermore, graduate student members are planning a session to present their research on gender at the annual Sociological Research Institute at the University of Minnesota. Lastly, but importantly, we have a list-serve and a website/blog for the group <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/halt0033/sws/> Those wishing to join the group or list-serve should contact Kristin Haltinner (halt0033@umn.edu).

Tallahassee Chapter

By: *Janice McCabe*

The Tallahassee SWS chapter will meet twice this spring for lively discussion and feminist socializing. At our first meeting, we discussed how an instructor's perceived identity impacts teaching and students' perceptions and had Liz Grauerholz, the current editor of *Teaching Sociology*, as our guest. At our April meeting, we will play and analyze our favorite feminist songs and celebrate the end of the semester. Find out more about us at our new website: <http://www.sociology.fsu.edu/sws>.

CFP for a Special Issue of *Gender & Society*:

HETERONORMATIVITY AND SEXUALITIES

Beth E. Schneider and Jane Ward, Co-Editors

In her groundbreaking 1984 essay "Thinking Sex," Gayle Rubin illustrated that ideas about what constitutes natural and ethical sexuality are used to discipline all people, including subjects occupying multiple axes of privilege. Yet Rubin also argued that sexual norms weigh down most harshly upon groups already marginalized along gender, race, and socioeconomic lines. Far from being reducible to matters of individual orientation, the force of sexual normalcy intersects with other systems of oppression and frequently takes center stage in moral, political, legal, and cultural formations in the U.S. and globally. Though feminist and queer sociologists have been critical of the limited incorporation of queer theoretical insights into the sociology of gender, a growing body of social science research has indeed begun to investigate sexual norms—and heteronormativity in particular—as a central organizing principle in social life, one with consequences well beyond discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

This special issue of *Gender & Society* seeks articles that investigate the operation and effects of heteronormativity (defined broadly as the beliefs and practices that naturalize heterosexuality and place it at the center of social organization) and resistance across a variety of gendered, racialized, and classed contexts. We welcome papers providing sociologically-grounded, data-rich empirical scholarship that demonstrates how heteronormativity works in everyday lives, production of culture, and the practice of social institutions. More, we welcome papers focused on the following analytic categories, especially those that engage the concept of heteronormativity as it applies to each:

- Gendered bodies, sex acts, and sexual pleasure
- Sexual and racialized desires
- Sex-related consumption and marketing
- Sexual and gender subcultures
- Sexual regulation and violence
- Sexual socialization and identification
- Sexuality and institutions
- Sexuality and aging
- Global sexualities
- Sexual communities and movements
- Sexuality and ability
- New theorizations of sexuality, gender, race, and socioeconomic class

Completed manuscripts should be submitted online to <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/gendoc> and should specify in the cover letter that the paper is to be considered for the special issue. Manuscripts are due **October 1, 2008**.

For additional information, please contact either co-editor:

Professor Beth Schneider
Department of Sociology
University of California, Santa Barbara
schneider@soc.ucsb.edu

Professor Jane Ward
Department of Women's Studies
University of California, Riverside
janew@ucr.edu

Call for Nominations:

The Feminist Activism Award

The Feminist Activism Award is presented annually to an SWS member who has notably and consistently used sociology to improve conditions for women in society. The award honors outstanding feminist advocacy efforts that embody the goal of service to women and that have identifiably improved women's lives. Recipients are recognized for their activist contributions rather than occupational and academic achievements. SWS awards the recipient

a one-time honorarium of \$1,000 and a travel budget of \$1,500 for presentations (lectures, workshops, or training sessions) related to their field of activism at two selected campus sites.

Please take a few moments to send us your recommendation so that we can recognize those who help us fulfill our mission as sociologists for women in society.

Nominations will be accepted through April 30, 2008.

Please send a letter of nomination and any supporting materials to:

Rebecca Bach
Department of Sociology
Box 90088
Duke University
Durham, NC 27708-0088
Email: rbach@soc.duke.edu
Fax: 919 660-5623

Call for Applications:

Professional-Needs Mentor Program

Thinking about changing jobs? Trying to get a paper published but you don't know how to proceed? Need some help with the tenure and promotion processes? Considering a job outside of academia? If you answered yes to at least one of these questions, then the SWS Professional-Needs Mentor Program

may be for you. If you are interested in being matched with a mentor and have a specific project, complete the Professional-Needs Mentor Program Application Form (found on the SWS website) and mail it, along with your CV and a brief description of the project you would like help with, to:

Erin K. Anderson
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Washington College
300 Washington Avenue
Chestertown, MD 21620
For more information, contact Erin K. Anderson at eanderson3@washcoll.edu.

Mini Conference on Race, Labor and Empire

August 1-2 2008 - Northeastern University O' Bryant African-American Institute - 40 Leon St., Boston

Organized by: The Labor and Labor Movements Section of the ASA and the Association of Black Sociologists
Co-sponsored by: Department of Sociology and Anthropology of Northeastern University, and ASA Sections

Race has a long history of being a basis of division among workers in the United States. The history of the U.S. labor movement provides many examples of racial exclusion. Yet despite this exclusion, people of color have been, and continue to be, among the staunchest supporters of unions and other labor organizations. While the history of racism in the U.S. labor movement has been well documented, there has been little analysis about the more recent role of people of color in the labor movement. In fact, most of the official labor movement has shied away from discussing "race" at all, fearing that it is a divisive topic. But racism (including its "color-blind" version) continues to be a problem in many unions. Divisions have occurred not only between whites and people of color, but between various groups of color. Moreover, unions often want to work with communities of color but fail to create true and equal partnerships with them. The time has come to explore these and similar issues openly and honestly. The "race question" is part of a larger context of imperialism and colonialism. Scant attention has been given to the role of imperialism, especially U.S. imperialism, both past and present, in defining and intervening in the lives of all working class people. A central goal of this mini-conference is to bring together academics and activists who are interested in the intersection of race, labor, and empire. **OPENING PLENARY:** General Baker, a leading shop-floor activist, theoretician, co-founder of Black Vanguard, and member of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers; Bill Fletcher, long time activist in the labor and African American movements and co-author of forthcoming book, *Solidarity Divided*. **SESSIONS:** *Dividing Lines: How Capital, States, and We Ourselves, Divide Us*; *Theorizing Race and Capitalism/Imperialism*; *Comparative Racial Capitalisms: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on How Race Matters for Global Capital*; *Beyond Union Organizing: Mobilizing around Race and Labor Racializing Capitalism: Gender, Sexuality and the Politics of Labor*; *Building an Inclusive and Just Labor Movement*;

GROWING PAINS

Sister -2- Sister Task Force New Feature

In this new feature, Network News and the Sister-to-Sister Taskforce offer an opportunity for members to raise issues of language, behavior, expectations, etc. that they experience as in some way is discordant to them. We plan not to identify the authors of these personal observations, since we want our members to focus on the general issue being raised rather than the characteristics of the individual. Old and new members, women of all colors, ages and sexualities are invited to bring up the specific things they found painful, not to place blame, but for all of us to grow from the sharing. Send your brief observations to the **Sister-to-Sister Taskforce** c/o mferree@ssc.wisc.edu for them to be edited anonymously by this group and presented here.

Our first contributor notes that her “ears hurt” when we sat at the “How to Think Like an Organizer Workshop” and the term “give” power was utilized time and time again. Many of us used the notion of “giving power” during the workshop, in the handout, in the formal presentation, and at the roundtable discussions. She notes that as feminist scholars, we have all struggled to change the manner in which language is used to establish hierarchies, grant power and privilege to some, and to negate the agency of others. When examined from the bottom of these hierarchies, the language of “giving” power denies how those with privilege fail to acknowledge the power and agency of those who are struggling to exert it. Her argument is that we may acknowledge the power of others, and be aware of the power we exercise over others, but we cannot “give” someone power! So why do we talk as if power were a gift that we could give?

Was she the only one to make this observation? Probably not! As we take note of instances in which we wince because “our ears hurt,” we can acknowledge that being a feminist does not provide any of us with “perfect pitch” and that we will do a better job at building harmony in SWS if we can participate in trying to avoid causing pain to anyone’s ears. Sensitivities differ, of course, based on class, race/ethnicity, sexuality, work experiences, family circumstances and age and physical abilities -- to name just a few dimensions. Rather than deciding whose ears we need to avoid hurting, we encourage anyone with painful moments to participate by sharing comments that will help us as an organization to learn from the diversity that SWS offers and allow our diversity to grow more comfortable for all!

Sister-to-Sister Co-Chairs
Marlese Durr & Patricia Warren



Call for Applications:

Campus Visits of 2008 Feminist Lecturer Cecilia Ridgeway

By: Lisa D. Brush
Committee Chair

2008 Distinguished Feminist Lecturer Cecilia Ridgeway is available to visit two U. S. college/university campuses during the 2008-2009 academic year. Dr. Ridgeway will deliver her lecture on two U. S. campuses that are isolated, rural, located away from major metropolitan areas, bereft of the resources needed to invite guest speakers, and/or characterized

by hostility to feminist scholarship. A key goal of the Feminist Lecturer program is to provide a feminist voice on campuses where such a perspective is unusual and/or unwelcome. (Please see the Fall 2002 Network News issue & column by Patricia Martin on the award, criteria, and past awardees.) Professor Ridgeway's lectures can be scheduled anytime between August 2008 and June 2009. SWS will pay at least a portion of the expenses for the two site visits; institutions should not let resource

scarcity prevent them from applying. Applications (consisting of a letter that gives a rationale and specifies tentative dates) from institutions interested in hosting Professor Ridgeway are due by June 1, 2008, to Lisa D. Brush, Department of Sociology, 2425 WWPB, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15260; phone 412-648-7595; email: lbrush@pitt.edu. Electronic applications are preferred. Inquiries welcome.

CALL FOR THE SWS MEETING REGISTRATION SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

Sociologists for Women in Society, with the recommendation of Sister-to-Sister committee, offers five registration scholarships to be competitively awarded to graduate students of color who attend the SWS meeting. The scholarships are intended to offer support to students from underrepresented groups who study gender, and to increase the participation of students of color in SWS. The award will be selected on the basis of excellence and significance of the paper to gender scholarship.

Eligibility

- 1) Student must be from a racial/ethnic group facing racial discrimination in the United States. Domestic and international students are eligible to apply.
- 2) Student must be first-time attendee of SWS meetings.
- 3) Paper must address gender issues and be presented in a SWS-sponsored or co-sponsored panel or student roundtable at the 2008 ABS/SWS/ASA meeting.

Award

The scholarship includes free registration for both summer 2008 and winter 2009 SWS meetings, and SWS membership for one year with the journal subscription of *Gender & Society* and up to \$300 travel reimbursement for participation in the winter meeting.

Application Process

Please send a 1-page-cover letter with your name, full contact information such as phone and email, current affiliation, year in program, and a short statement about how you qualify for the award. Abstracts should be submitted by May 31, 2008, and copy of the paper via e-mail by June 25, 2008 to each of the committee members. Papers must be single authored and no more than 8,000 words, excluding references.

Bandana Purkayastha, Sociology and Asian American Studies, University of Connecticut.
bandana.purkayastha@uconn.edu

Hae Yeon Choo, Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, hychoo@ssc.wisc.edu

Olivia Salcido, School of Justice and Social Inquiry, Arizona State University, osalcido@yahoo.com

Marlese Durr and Patricia Warren, Co-Chairs
Sister-2-Sister Committee

Call for Nominations:

SWS 2009 Distinguished Feminist Lecturer—Silver Anniversary

By: Lisa D. Brush
Committee Chair

In 2009, we celebrate the Silver Anniversary of the SWS Distinguished Feminist Lectureship. The program was founded in 1985 as a way of (a) recognizing our members whose scholarship employs a feminist perspective and (b) making this feminist scholar available to campuses that are isolated, rural, bereft of the resources needed to invite guest speakers, or characterized by hostility to feminist scholarship. A key goal of the program is to provide a feminist voice on campuses where such a perspective is unusual or unwelcome. The 2009 lecturer, our twenty-fifth, will receive an honorarium from SWS of \$1000 and will commit to presenting her/his lecture at the Summer 2009 SWS meeting and on two U. S. campuses that meet the above-noted criteria between August 2009 and June 2010. [Please see SWS webpage, www.socwomen.org/ for a history of the award and list of awardees; the 2008 honoree is Dr. Cecilia Ridgeway, and a call for proposals for campus visits accompanies this call for nominations.] An article-length version of the lecture will be published in *Gender & Society*.

Nominations (in the form of six—6—copies of a nominating letter and six—6—copies of the nominee's CV) for the 2009 Feminist Lecturer are due by June 1, 2008, to Lisa D. Brush, Department of Sociology, 2425 WWPB, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Submit electronic nominations (one digital copy of nominating letter plus the nominee's CV) to lbrush@pitt.edu. Additional letters are welcomed but not necessary. Lisa will gladly assist you or answer questions if you contact her.

List of Cheryl Miller/Feminist Lecturers, 1985-2008

- 1985 Janet Chafetz, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1986 Barrie Thorne, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1987 Barbara Reskin, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1988 Barbara Katz Rothman, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1989 Maxine Baca Zinn, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1990 Arlene Kaplan Daniels, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1991 Francesca Cancian, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1992 Judith Lorber, SWS Cheryl Miller Allyn Distinguished Lecturer
- 1993 Myra Marx Ferree, SWS Cheryl Allyn Miller Distinguished Lecturer
- 1994 Mady Segal, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer in honor of Helen McGill Hughes
- 1995 Rose Brewer, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer in honor of Ruth Shonle Cavan
- 1996 Ronnie Steinberg, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 1997 Verta Taylor, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 1998 Kathleen Gerson, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 1999 Michael Kimmel, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2000 Mary Frank Fox, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2001 Patricia Yancey Martin, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2002 Barbara Risman, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2003 Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2004 Margaret Anderson, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2005 Joan Acker, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2006 Michael Messner, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2007 Evelyn Nakano Glenn, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2008 Cecilia Ridgeway, SWS Distinguished Feminist Lecturer
- 2009 Silver Anniversary – nominate a feminist whose work you want to honor!

SOCIOLOGISTS FOR WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Women of Color Dissertation Scholarship

We invite applications for the 2008 Women of Color Dissertation Scholarship. All applications are due no later than May 15, 2008. Applicants will be notified by mail/email no later than July 15, 2008. Any questions pertaining to this scholarship/application should be directed to the chair of the scholarship committee, Patricia Warren, at pwarren@fsu.edu

Scholarship Purpose

Sociologists for Women in Society has worked hard to build a coalition of women scholars who share concerns about the status of women both domestically and internationally. The scholarship will offer support to female scholars who are from underrepresented groups and are studying concerns that women of color face domestically and/or internationally.

Selection Criteria

- 1) Student must be a woman from a racial/ethnic group facing racial discrimination in the United States.
- 2) Dissertation must be sociologically relevant scholarship that addresses the concerns of Women of Color, domestically and/or internationally.
- 3) Student must be in the early stages of writing a dissertation.
- 4) Student must be 'All But Dissertation' (ABD) by the time the term of the award begins. (Must be certified by the student's advisor or Graduate Director)
- 5) Applicant must demonstrate a financial need for the award.
- 6) Domestic and international students are eligible to apply.

Funding

The winner will receive a \$15,000 scholarship, a plaque and SWS membership for one year. In addition the recipient will receive free registration for both the summer and winter meetings, travel reimbursement for the summer meeting and a \$500 stipend for attendance at the winter meeting.

Student Application Process

Complete application packets should be sent to the SWS Executive Office at the address below. Each packet must include:

- 1) A personal statement which details short and long term career and research goals. The letter must also state which racial/ethnic group(s) the applicant represents.
- 2) A resume or Curriculum Vitae
- 3) Two letters of recommendation addressing the content and quality of the student's work and progress in the program. One of these letters must be from the Graduate Director or Advisor, who should address the financial need of the applicant as well as certify the date on which the applicant became or will become ABD. Each letter should be placed in a sealed envelope with author's signature over the seal. **LETTERS SENT UNDER SEPARATE COVER WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- 4) Proposal (not to exceed 5 double-spaced pages) for the dissertation research which outlines:
 - Purpose of research
 - Work to be accomplished through scholarship sponsorship
 - Time line for completing dissertation

Responsibilities of Recipient

- Attend the summer and winter meetings.
- Submit a brief report (3 pages maximum) on the work completed during the scholarship year, no later than 1 month after the end of the award period. This report should be mailed to the SWS executive office to the attention of the 'Women of Color Scholarship Committee.'

SWS Executive Office
URI Sociology
10 Chafee Road
Kingston, RI 02881
Email contact: pwarren@fsu.edu

Women and Size
Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS)
Fact Sheet

Prepared by Samantha Kwan, Ph.D. and
Jennifer Fackler, M.A. Candidate
Department of Sociology
University of Houston
April 2008

INTRODUCTION: BODY IDEALS

A Socially Constructed Myth: A thin body ideal for women is prevalent in modern Western societies. Cultural images emphasize a thin and firm body (Bordo 2003). Feminists have labeled this ideal, found ubiquitously in fashion magazines, on television, and in other forms of mass media, a "tyranny of slenderness" (Chernin 1994) and an unrealistic and unattainable "beauty myth" (Wolf 1991). For most women, the ideal is beyond reach. Research shows an intensification of the ideal over time (Wiseman et al. 1992) and that the probability of attaining Barbie-like proportions is less than 1 in 100,000 (Norton et al. 1996). Gender scholars also point out that this beauty ideal is a socially constructed fiction. Thinness is not necessarily inherently beautiful. Rather, at any given time and place, social norms and institutions dictate what is thought to be attractive. Among others, consumers and mass media promulgate and reinforce this thin ideal. Yet precisely because it is a mutable social construction, it can be challenged, however difficult this task may be because of the embedded structure.

A \$40 billion-a-year diet industry perpetuates the beauty myth that is part of what Bartky (1990) refers to as a "fashion beauty complex." The myth enables the diet industry to profit from the continuous and constant suffering of fat individuals (Fraser 1998; Oliver 2006). The myth also lines the pockets of other related industries including healthcare providers, insurance companies, and pharmaceutical companies (see Thomas and Wilkerson 2005). It flourishes with industries' encouragement, but is successful in part because of reinforcement from dominant cultural, social, moral, and health discourses.

A Contemporary Western Ideal: The thin ideal is a contemporary phenomenon limited to affluent Western nations (Rothblum 1990). In the 17th century, the female beauty ideal represented in Ruben's and Renoir's paintings was fleshy, voluptuous, and full-bodied. An emphasis on a slender ideal emerged in the late 19th century/early 20th century, partly as a result of the development of mass-marketing in the fashion industry, a middle-class aesthetic, and a

distinct youth culture (Seid 1989; Walden 1985; on history of fat and dieting, also refer to Stearns 19 Schwartz 1986).

In some non-Western cultures, individuals see fat as a sign of wealth and health and eschew thinness because of its association with poverty and malnutrition (Rothblum 1990). For example, in the Andes mountains fat symbolizes strength and wealth (Weismantel 2005) and Nigerian Arabs view fat as sexy (Popenoe 2005) (on the anthropology of fat, see Kulick and Meneley 2005). In short, the thin ideal is a construction specific to both time and place.

Body Dissatisfaction and Body Work: While rates of body dissatisfaction among men are increasing, a phenomenon some scholars describe as the "rise of the Adonis Complex," (Pope, Phillips, and Olivares 2000), there remains a large gender gap in body dissatisfaction. A review of over 200 body image studies indicates increasing gender differences in body image and increasing dissatisfaction among women (Feingold and Mazzella 1998). While media effects on psychological processes are complex, studies show that higher levels of exposure to media images correlates with girls' and women's body dissatisfaction (refer to Grogan 2008: 108-135). Weight concerns are so prominent among women that some scholars refer to it as a "normative discontent" for women (Rodi, Silberstein, and Striegel-Moore 1985).

National surveys indicate that about half of U.S. women currently engage in weight-loss behavior (Neumark-Sztainer et al. 2000; Serdula et al. 1999). To attain the thin ideal, women resort to many forms of "body work," body or appearance work that manages or modifies one's looks, including dieting, exercising, and cosmetic surgery (Gimlin 2002, 2007). Dieting approaches vary and include techniques such as reduced calorie consumption, smoking, vomiting, laxative use, diet pills, and fad diets (Ogden 1992). Women also report that they exercise to manage their weight or appearance, notably more so than for reasons related to health/fitness, stress/mood, or social interaction (Cash, Novy, and Grant 1994). In addition, there are an estimated 100,000 weight-loss surgeries performed each year, primarily on female patients (Santry, Gillen, and Lauderdale 2005; on women and cosmetic surgery in general, see Davis 1995).

While body dissatisfaction among women is widespread, there are notable differences by class, race, and sexual orientation (for a discussion of multiple body image correlates, see Cash and Pruzinsky 2002). The thin body is a marker of social class (Bordo 2003) and there is some evidence that, for both women and men, weight consciousness correlates

positively with socio-economic status (Wardle and Griffith 2001). Empirical research on African-American women generally points to higher levels of body satisfaction and more flexible conceptions of beauty (see Lovejoy 2001; Milkie 1999; Parker et al. 1995). However, one recent meta-analysis reports only small differences in body dissatisfaction between white and non-white women, specifically Asian American, Black, and Hispanic women (Grabe and Hyde 2006). The few studies that examine lesbian body image report mixed findings (see Rothblum 2002). In sum, body and weight dissatisfaction operates differently depending on each woman's unique configuration of intersecting status characteristics.

Harmful Psychological and Physical Effects: The pursuit of the thin body ideal can lead to negative psychological and physical consequences (see Saltzberg and Chrisler 2000; Sprague-Zones 1997). Studies find that depression, social anxiety, and sexual difficulties correlate with body weight preoccupation (see Cash and Roy 1999) and that being overweight correlates with a loss of self-esteem for women, but not men (Tiggemann 1994). Constant dieting can be akin to self-inflicted semi-starvation that results in the compromising of women's individuality, self-esteem, and ability to exert social and political power (Wolf 1991).

Pursuit of the thin ideal can lead to various harmful physical effects. Among individuals who report weight-control behaviors, nearly one quarter of adult women report they rely on unhealthy practices such as taking diet pills, skipping meals, fasting, or induced vomiting (Neumark-Sztainer 2000). Use of non-prescription weight-loss products is especially common among young "obese" women (Blanck, Khan, and Serdula 2001). Additionally, weight-loss surgery can result in complications such as food clogging, scarring leading to blockage of the digestive tract, and even death (see Fraser 1998: 202-208). In fact, one study estimates a 4.6% death rate in the year following surgery (Flum et al. 2005). There are also many well-known health risks linked to diet pills and appetite suppressants. For example, popular diet drugs of the 1990s such as Redux and fen-phen were later linked to brain damage, primary pulmonary hypertension, and death (see Fraser 1998: 195-202). Furthermore, many young girls report that they smoke to curb their appetites (Sorensen and Pechacek 1987). Preoccupation with body weight can also manifest itself in potentially deadly eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. It is noteworthy that some feminist scholars caution that

eating disorders are not individual pathology, but rather a logical response to social, racial, gender, and other injustices (Orbach 1978; Thompson 1994). Estimates indicate that about 85-95% of all eating disorders occur among girls and women (NIMH 2007) and that anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa afflict 280 per 100,000 and 1,000 per 100,000 young females, respectively (Hoek 2002).

Choice, Free Will, and Morality: Despite being a culturally constructed myth, individuals assume that the myth of thinness is both real and attainable. A Western ideology of individualism, choice, and free-will suggests that the body is malleable and that all women can attain the ideal with motivation and self-discipline (Brownell 1991). A blame-the-victim mentality exists such that fat individuals who are unable to lose weight are thought to be personally inadequate, lacking in will, and moral failures (Bordo 2003). Blaming the victim is especially prominent in the U.S. given the pervasiveness of an American ideology of individualism (Crandall and Martinez 1996). The body is seen as a symbol or reflection of one's emotional, moral, and/or spiritual state (Bordo 2003; Edgley and Brissett 1990).

Sizism and Discrimination: In affluent Western cultures, the thin body brings social status and enables escape from size-based discrimination, also referred to as sizism. (For a thorough discussion of weight-based discrimination refer to Solovay 2000.) Beauty, including coveted thinness, often accompanies privilege, status, and multiple social benefits. For instance, individuals assume that beautiful (including thin) people are more successful in both their professional and personal lives and that they have more desirable personality traits, i.e., are good, intelligent, and well-natured (Dion, Berscheid, and Walster 1972; Landy and Sigall 1974; Webster and Driskell 1983). In other words, the beautiful exude a "halo effect" (Katz 2001; see also Hatfield and Sprecher 1986). Moreover, while both large women and men experience discrimination in all realms of social life, this is especially the case for large women. Large women encounter stigma and discrimination in employment and wages; medical and health settings; and educational settings (see Puhl and Brownell 2001). Importantly, the stigma of women's weight correlates with downward economic and social mobility (Rothblum 1992).

**CHALLENGING SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS:
SCHOLARS, ACTIVISTS, AND MOVEMENTS**

Fat Studies and Fat Acceptance Activism: Fat studies is an emerging interdisciplinary field that explores the politics of fat. Fat studies scholars and fat acceptance activists attempt to understand fat and the fat body from the perspective of fat individuals and to expose the harmful and oppressive effects of narrowly defined social norms. Their emphasis on body diversity and the celebration of the fat body encourages a "body positive" perspective and increased body esteem and satisfaction for women of all sizes. For these reasons, they do not shy from the term "fat." Instead fat acceptance scholars and activists actively attempt to reclaim the term while consciously rejecting derogatory and demeaning medical terms such as "obese" (Wann 1988). These scholars and activists often align themselves with the tenets of one or more groups or social movements. Together they attempt to debunk several social and health myths (see below), encourage size diversity and body acceptance, and promote the psychological and physical health of all individuals.

The National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA): Founded in 1969, NAAFA is a non-profit human rights organization dedicated to improving fat people's quality of life. Members pay fees to join the organization and there is an annual convention. The organization also distributes a quarterly newsletter and has local chapters and special interest groups. NAAFA has five primary goals: (1) to provide equal opportunities for fat people; (2) to disseminate information about various aspects of being fat; (3) to advocate and sponsor responsible research on various aspects of being fat; (4) to empower fat people to accept themselves, live more fulfilling lives and promote fat acceptance within society; and (5) to serve as a forum where issues affecting fat people can be discussed in an unbiased way. To accomplish these goals, NAAFA uses strategies including advocacy, education, and support.

The Council for Size and Weight Discrimination (CSWD): The CSWD is a non-profit group working to change society's attitudes about weight. Formed in 1990, the CSWD believes that: (1) people of all sizes deserve competent and respectful treatment by health care professionals; (2) prejudice based on size is no different from prejudice based on skin color, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation; (3) the media's portrayal of fat people is often inappropriately negative and promotes society's fear of fat and obsession with thinness; (4) size diversity is a positive goal; (5) happy, attractive, capable people come in all shapes and sizes; (6) each individual has the

responsibility to stand up for themselves and the people around them who may suffer from size discrimination; and (7) sizism and weight bigotry will end only when people of all sizes refuse to allow it to continue. The group's primary goal is to end weight discrimination in health care, media, education, employment, social interactions, and other areas of life. Attempting to make the world better for people of all sizes, the CSWD: educates the public; forms coalition links with other activist groups; works with researchers to assure unbiased protocols; testifies and works with regulatory agencies; and provides technical assistance to educators and workshop presenters, resources to students and writers, and personal help to individuals who have experienced size discrimination.

Health at Every Size (HAES) Movement: In the 1990s, anti-dieting campaigns began to encourage the public to move beyond an obsession with weight and dieting towards a focus on holistic health. A groundbreaking book by HAES advocates originally titled *Tenets of the Nondiet Approach* (1996) fueled a new way of looking at the body. This book, along with other HAES scholars and activists, espoused a new way of thinking that contrasted prevailing sentiments on weight loss. HAES philosophy includes: (1) a focus on overall health and well-being instead of the achievement of an "ideal weight"; (2) accepting oneself and respecting the diversity and variety of bodies; (3) embracing the pleasure of eating well by listening to internal cues of hunger and satiety; and (4) engaging in the joy of movement and physical activity (Kratina, King, and Hayes 1996). According to HAES advocates, individuals who follow these guidelines will ultimately move toward their own personal ideal weights that may differ from those described by standard medical guidelines. Additionally, they will ultimately be happier and healthier than those who are obsessed with regimented dieting and weight loss (Robison 2005).

SCHOLARS AND ACTIVISTS: DEBUNKING MYTHS

Scholars and activists work to expose several health and beauty myths. While discussed below separately, these myths are interconnected and together create a cultural climate that perpetuates narrow definitions of beauty and health. Debunking these myths is important as these myths place undue pressure on women to lose weight and can contribute to a decline in women's mental and physical health.

Myth 1 – Fat is Always Unhealthy: Media and medical sources bombard the public with the message that being “overweight” or “obese” is unhealthy. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that two-thirds of Americans are “overweight,” a third “obese,” and that these conditions contribute to about 400,000 deaths per year (Mokdad et al. 2004; USDHHS 2001). The CDC urges a large segment of the population to lose weight to avoid health risks such as cardiovascular disease, Type II diabetes, hypertension, and some forms of cancer. Special concern for childhood obesity has even led to discussion about childhood obesity as a form of abuse or neglect (Jeffreys 2007). On a global level, the World Health Organization (WHO) echoes these concerns (WHO 2003). Indeed public vigilance is rampant and there is a “war on obesity” at the local, state, national, and global levels.

Notably, CDC and medical community claims rely on the Body Mass Index (BMI), a measure based on an individual’s height and weight that was originally developed by insurance companies. Critics argue that the BMI is an unreliable and indirect measure of fat and that the BMI cut-off points are unrealistic and arbitrary (see Gaesser 2002: 37-42; Grogan 2007: 12-16; Prentice and Jebb 2001).

Scholars and activists are now exposing the government’s claim that obesity is a health “epidemic” as an overstated media construction better described as a “postmodern epidemic” (Boero 2007) or a “moral panic” (Campos et al. 2006; also see Oliver 2006; Rich and Evans 2005; Saguy and Almeling 2008). Of significance, the 400,000 death toll has now been reduced to approximately 110,000 excess deaths due to “obesity” relative to the “normal” weight category (Flegal et al. 2005). This recent study also reports no association between the “overweight” category and excess mortality.

Researchers affiliated with the HAES movement challenge the causal relationship between weight and health risk, contending that this relationship relies on body size as a proxy for lifestyle. In other words, it is not necessarily high body weight or BMI per se that puts an individual at health risk, but habits such as poor food consumption patterns and a sedentary lifestyle. These researchers show that current studies articulating a robust overweight-health risk causal link are misleading because they fail to take into account other possible explanations of compromised health such as diet or activity levels and because they focus on miniscule differences in risk (Campos 2003).

With a healthy lifestyle, an individual can be both fat and fit. HAES research with female subjects shows that a non-weight centered approach to physical health

is not only superior to increasing physical exercise (which is beneficial for everyone), but that improvement in metabolic functioning occurs independent of weight change (Bacon et al. 2005; Dallow and Anderson 2003). Research also demonstrates that many weight-related health problems associated with Type II diabetes and metabolic syndrome can be improved independently of weight loss (Roberts et al. 2005).

Instead of a weight-centered approach to health, HAES researchers emphasize “metabolic fitness” (Gaesser 2002). Metabolic fitness stresses the importance of “having a metabolism that maximizes vitality and minimizes the risk of disease – particularly those diseases that are influenced by lifestyle” (Gaesser 2002: 168). Thus a fat individual who maintains a healthy lifestyle through routine exercise and healthy consumption patterns can still have vigorous health. NAAFA activists expose how the stigma around fat discourages individuals from participating in beneficial recreation and physical fitness activities.

The long list of health negatives associated with thinness and long list of health benefits associated with fat, further debunks the myth that fat per se is always unhealthy. Thinness and weight loss can increase mortality rates while fat actually serves as a protector against osteoporosis and decreases incidence of certain forms of cancer (for a thorough review, see Gaesser 1999). In other words, body fat can have a variety of beneficial health outcomes. Moreover, any discussion of health risks associated with fat must consider the location/type of body fat. For example, visceral adipose tissue, i.e., fat found between internal organs, is generally more deleterious than subcutaneous adipose tissue (Goodpaster et al. 2005; You, Ryan, and Niklas 2004).

Myth 2 – Dieting Improves Health: Despite widespread dieting practices and the use of weight-loss remedies, research shows that dieting can actually have a variety of harmful effects on the body. Many chronic dieters learn first-hand that dieting does not work as they lose and gain weight many times over. Research shows that weight cycling, also known as yo-yo dieting, can ultimately cause an overall increase in weight, along with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease (Ernsberger and Koletsky 1993; Gaesser 1999; Lissner et al. 1991). Dieting can also increase the risk of bone damage and disease, decrease fertility, alter the normal functioning of the brain, produce gallstones and increase the risk of breast and kidney cancer in women (see Gaesser 2002, 2003). Specific regimens such as the popular Atkin’s diet also come with a host

of health risks such as pancreatic cancer and cardiac arrest (Stevens et al. 2003). One long term study even found that dieting actually leads to an increased risk of premature death (Sørensen et al. 2005)!

Myth 3 – Fat is Always a Matter of Personal Choice and Weight Loss is Always Possible: Perhaps one of the most common and deeply-held beliefs about weight is that fat is always a matter of personal choice. A Western emphasis on agency dictates that individuals become fat by choice and subsequently can stop being fat whenever they so choose. Three important research findings help dispel this myth. First, genes are one of the most critical determinants of a person's weight (Loos and Bouchard 2003). Second, research shows that personal choices regarding food intake vary minimally between fat and thin people (Ogden 1992). Third, research indicates that diets do not work and that the prognosis of maintaining long-term weight loss is low (Anderson et al. 2001). In fact, most dieters who successfully lose weight will regain the weight within a few years and there is ample research illustrating that diets do not work over time (Mann et al. 2007). Weight loss may be particularly difficult for women because the "normal range" of body fat for women is, on average, greater than for men (Gallagher 2000). The widespread myth that dieting works closely relates to the myth that fat is a personal choice. Bodies are simply not as malleable as cultural ideology implies.

In sum, there is strong evidence that despite consumption, exercise, and dieting habits, a woman's metabolism will adjust such that her weight will continuously gravitate towards a set weight range. Leading HAES scholars emphasize that each individual has an inherited "set-point" and this set-point is "the weight that the body attempts to maintain" over long periods of time (Gaesser 2002: 33). Evidence for set-point theory disputes the notion that body size is entirely a matter of personal choice.

Myth 4 – Fat is Inherently Unattractive/Unsexy: Modern Western societies socialize children from an early age to believe that fat is disgusting. Individuals are led to believe that fat is unattractive and could never be considered sexy. However, beauty is not a static concept and varies across both time and culture (Kulick and Meneley 2005; Seid 1989; Schwartz 1986; Stearns 1997). As the old adage says, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Additionally, the preference for a more or less fat partner varies by individual (Millman 1980). Fat in and of itself is neither disgusting, unattractive, nor unsexy.

In fact, fat sexuality is not just a possibility but reality. For example, there are a number of fat burlesque troops and a variety of adult media outlets including magazines, books, movies, and websites featuring fat women's bodies. Blank's (2000) *Big Beautiful Love* is not only a sourcebook, but a celebration of sex for large individuals. In other words, it is possible to reject essentialist approaches that dictate that fat is unattractive or unsexy. Normative claims about fat can be disrupted, subverted, and even redefined (Lebesco 2001, 2004).

Myth 5 – Being Fat is a Sign of Mental Illness: It is a commonly held belief that psychological problems or emotional issues cause individuals to overeat and gain weight (Millman 1980). Yet as fat scholars and activists point out, fatness does not necessarily have its roots in psychological problems. Rather, because of the social stigma associated with fat in Western society, coping with this stigma on a daily basis can lead to depression, anxiety, and a host of other psychological problems (see Kolata 2007). Some feminist scholars observe that certain eating disorders, e.g., bingeing, may actually be a natural response to trauma caused by oppressive conditions, social injustices, and/or sexual abuse (Orbach 1978; Thompson 1994). Fat acceptance scholars and activists fight the stigma of fat so that individuals of all sizes can live their daily lives comfortably and without shame.

MOVING TOWARDS BODY DIVERSITY: WOMEN'S BODIES, WOMEN'S HEALTH

The thin body ideal is a culturally constructed myth specific to time and place. An American ideology of individualism and choice perpetuates the belief that all women can attain this ideal so long as they try. This "beauty myth" has led to widespread body dissatisfaction. To transform their bodies, women resort to various forms of "body work" that can result in an array of harmful psychological and physical effects. This body work is not surprising in Western cultures that privilege the thin body and where there is strong evidence of sizism. Fat women encounter stigma and discrimination in many arenas of social life.

Fat scholars and fat acceptance activists attempt to expose this socially constructed beauty myth, along with other health and beauty fictions. Advocates of NAAFA, the CSWD, and/or the HAES movement convey the message that fat is not always unhealthy; that metabolic fitness is central to determining health (and not the BMI or weight per se); and that dieting

leads to numerous harmful effects. They also expose the myths that being fat is always a personal choice and that weight loss is always possible. Genetics plays a key role and individuals are born with a "set-point" weight range. Activists and scholars also debunk the myths that fat is unattractive or is a sign of a mental illness, arguing instead that beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder and that it is the stigma of fat that may lead to psychological problems. Many of these myths are supported by a multi-billion dollar-a-year diet industry that profits enormously from the suffering of fat individuals. Scholars, activists, and practitioners are now working to expose these myths so that women of all sizes can achieve optimal mental and physical health in a society that embraces body diversity.

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RESOURCES

Council for Size and Weight Discrimination (CSWD)
 Website: <http://www.cswd.org>
 Email: info@cswd.org
 Address: PO Box 305, Mt. Marion, NY 12456
 Phone: (845) 679-1209

National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA)
 Website: <http://www.naafa.org>
 Email: naafa@naafa.org
 Address: PO Box 22510, Oakland, CA 94609
 Phone: (916) 558-6880

National Eating Disorders Association
 Website: <http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>
 Email: info@NationalEatingDisorders.org
 Address: 603 Stewart St. #803, Seattle, WA 98101
 Phone: (206) 382-3587

2008 Membership Dues



(Effective Jan 1-Dec 31, 2008)

Federal Tax ID: 23-2162891

Please Print:

 Last Name First Name Middle

 School (if applicable) Department (if applicable)

 Street Address 1 (required) Address line 2 (optional)
This will be the address we list in the 2008 directory if you do not opt out of being listed (below) and where any paper mailings will go.

 City State Zip Code Country

 Home or Mobile Phone Office Phone E-mail

- I do NOT want my name included when SWS rents its membership list (usually to publishers)
- I do NOT want to be included in the members' directory
- I do NOT want to receive the Gender & Society journal (available online)
- I do NOT want to receive the Network News newsletter (available online)

MEMBERSHIP FEES -- Please Check All that Apply

- Income less than \$15,000 \$14
- Income \$15,000-\$19,999 \$21
- Income \$20,000-\$29,999 \$31
- Income \$30,000-\$39,999 \$41
- Income \$40,000-\$49,999 \$46
- Income \$50,000+ \$51
- Sustaining Member \$100
- Life Membership \$1800
- paid in equal installments over (1) (2) (3) (4) yrs
- Library Rate Only (Network News Only) \$19
- Gift Membership (please fill out information on the back) \$14

Voluntary Information
 (Used for membership recruitment efforts only)

New Members -- How did you hear about SWS?

- Professor
- Grad Student
- Undergraduate
- Website
- Professional Meeting
- Other, please specify _____

****All Members -- What is your current job position/title?**

CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITIES

- \$ _____ SWS operations
- \$ _____ Women of Color Dissertation Scholarship
- \$ _____ Feminist Lectureship
- \$ _____ Natalie Allon Fund (discrimination support)
- \$ _____ Barbara Rosenblum Fund (cancer-related dissertation)
- \$ _____ Beth Hess Scholarship

TOTAL PAID (US currency only) \$ _____

Cardholder Name: _____	Expiration Date: _____
Credit Card #: _____	_____
Billing Address: _____	Credit Card:
Signature: _____	MasterCard
CHARGE WILL SHOW AS SWS/UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND	Visa

Make checks or money orders
(in U.S. currency) payable to:
Sociologists for Women in Society
 SWS Executive Office
 University of Rhode Island
 Department of Sociology
 10 Chafee Road
 Kingston, RI 02881
 Fax: 401-874-2588
 Phone: 401-874-9510
 Email: sws@etal.uri.edu
 Website: www.socwomen.org

* * * *

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

* * * *

May be done as you renew, or separately.

1.) Check one:

This is a gift that I am paying for – payment information on reverse.

Free gift, as this is my third year in a row as a dues-paying (or life) member.

The EO will confirm your 2006, 2007, and 2008 memberships, and your one free gift membership coupon will be e-mailed to your recipient. This program was designed to bring new members to SWS.

2.) Gift Recipient's Information please print:

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

* * * *

SWS INTERESTS

* * * *

SWS works on fostering feminism in sociology and society in several ways. Which of the following two or three are most interesting to you personally?

- Publishing feminist scholarship
- Fighting discrimination against feminists in the academy
- Supporting the careers of feminist sociologists
- Helping make feminist social change
- Providing resources for feminist teachers
- Building membership
- Giving scholarships and awards to outstanding feminists

* * * *

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

* * * *

Using the guide below list 3 areas in order of importance: #1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION – Areas are consistent with ASA

Application and Practice

- A.1. Applied Sociology/Evaluation Research
- A.2. Communication and Information Technologies
- A.3. Policy Analysis
- A.4. Social Welfare/Social Work
- A.5. Sociological Practice
- A.6. Teaching and Learning in Sociology

Comparative and Historical Approaches

- B.1. Comparative Sociology/Historical Sociology
- B.2. Development

Family, Life Course, and Society

- C.1. Aging/Social Gerontology
- C.2. Animals and Society
- C.3. Children and Youth
- C.4. Family

Gender and Sexuality

- D.1. Sex and Gender
- D.2. Sexualities

Inequalities and Stratification

- E.1. Disabilities
- E.2. Education
- E.3. Race, Class and Gender
- E.4. Stratification/Mobility

Medicine and Health

- F.1. Alcohol and Drugs
- F.2. Medical Sociology
- F.3. Mental Health

Place and Environment

- G.1. Community
- G.2. Environmental Sociology
- G.3. Rural Sociology
- G.4. Urban Sociology

Politics and Social Change

- H.1. Collective Behavior/Social Movements
- H.2. Marxist Sociology
- H.3. Military Sociology
- H.4. Peace, War, World Conflict, and Conflict Resolution
- H.5. Political Economy
- H.6. Political Sociology
- H.7. Public Policy
- H.8. Social Change

Population and Ecology

- I.1. Biosociology
- I.2. Demography
- I.3. Human Ecology

Race and Ethnicity

- J.1. Asians/Asian-Americans
- J.2. Latina/o Sociology
- J.3. Migration/Immigration
- J.4. Racial and Ethnic Relations

Social Control, Law, Crime, and Deviance

- K.1. Criminal Justice
- K.2. Criminology/Delinquency
- K.3. Deviant Behavior/Social Disorganization
- K.4. Law and Society
- K.5. Penology/Corrections
- K.6. Social Control

Social Psychology and Interaction

- L.1. Emotions
- L.2. Small Groups
- L.3. Social Psychology
- L.4. Socialization

Sociology of Culture

- M.1. Art/Music
- M.2. Cultural Sociology
- M.3. Leisure/Sports/Recreation
- M.4. Mass Communication/Public Opinion
- M.5. Religion
- M.6. Visual Sociology

Theory, Knowledge, Science

- N.1. History of Sociology/Social Thought
- N.2. Knowledge
- N.3. Rational Choice
- N.4. Science and Technology
- N.5. Theory

Work, Economy and Organizations

- O.1. Economic Sociology
- O.2. Labor and Labor Movements
- O.3. Occupations/Professions
- O.4. Organizations, Formal and Complex
- O.5. Social Organization
- O.6. Work and Labor Markets

Qualitative Approaches

- P.1. Ethnography (Anthropology)
- P.2. Ethnomethodology/Conversational Analysis

P.3. Language/Social Linguistics

P.4. Qualitative Methodology

Quantitative Approaches

- Q.1. Mathematical Sociology
- Q.2. Quantitative Methodology
- Q.3. Social Networks
- Q.4. Statistics
- Q.5. Micro-computing

Local and Regional Chapters

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Next Issue...

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