

The Society: Minutes of the Women's Caucus Meeting

4 November 2005

(Notes taken by Elizabeth Green Musselman, co-chair)

Pam Henson, co-chair of the Women's Caucus, opened the meeting at 7:30 a.m. Thirty-nine people attended the meeting, including Joan Cadden, representing the HSS Executive Committee. Those present introduced themselves.

Jay Malone (HSS Executive Director) and Mike Sokal (HSS President) addressed several issues regarding the Women's Caucus relationship with HSS :

Jay apologized that the three sessions sponsored by the Women's Caucus were not listed as such in the original program. This was corrected on the program errata sheet.

Jay noted that HSS policy is unclear about how many sessions an interest group may sponsor in one meeting. [The following morning, the Committee on Meetings and Programs voted that an interest group may sponsor only one session per meeting.]

Jay reported that availability of affordable child care will now be a criterion when selecting meeting sites for HSS, from the 2008 site forward.

Pam thanked Jay for linking the Women's Caucus site to the HSS site, for putting up the information about childcare availability that the Caucus and Executive Office organized, and for organizing the first Caucus report to the Executive Council (which Pam had made the previous day).

Mike noted that in 1972 he co-founded the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession with Carolyn Merchant (who was also in attendance), and was gratified to see what had become of it since.

Elizabeth Green Musselman nominated Lynn Nyhart to become the next co-chair of the Women's Caucus. The Caucus approved this by acclamation.

Elizabeth then reported on childcare at the 2005 meeting. In early August, Jay Malone sent Elizabeth a list of five potential childcare providers in downtown Minneapolis. Elizabeth then pared this list down to two providers that combined affordability and convenient distance from the hotel. In mid-August, Elizabeth sent the HSS Executive Office information for HSS members about childcare to post to the meeting website. She noted that as of two days before the meeting began, no HSS members had contracted with either the YWCA or Nanny Professionals for childcare. Pam suggested that the numbers who use these services would perhaps increase as members became aware that affordable childcare was available. [Appendix A contains the childcare information that was linked to the HSS 2005 meeting site.]

Joan Cadden reported on the Executive Committee meeting that had occurred the previous afternoon.

She invited Women's Caucus members to participate in the HSS committee structure, noting that the EC has been especially welcoming to new members. To volunteer to serve, members need to email Jay Malone to indicate their interest. She said that regular attendance at HSS meetings was an important criterion when selecting new committee members.

She reported that the Schumann Prize has been renamed the Reingold Prize, and the prize is now endowed in his name. She encouraged graduate students to submit their work for this prize.

Pam Mack asked that Caucus members contribute to the Rossiter Prize endowment, which still needs further funding.

Pam Mack also encouraged new Women's Caucus members to subscribe to the Women's Caucus listserv, which she administers. The listserv has low traffic (about one message a month).

Pam Henson reported that Cornelia Lambert, who has been running the HSS Employment Survey, was studying for her generals and could not attend the meeting. Pam thanked Cornelia for agreeing to continue conducting the survey.

Rima Apple reported on the Women's Caucus archives project :

Jay Malone pulled out a history of the Women's Caucus from HSS newsletters.

Rima noted the need for a genealogy of the Caucus.

The Caucus discussed ways to collect historical information about the Caucus: e.g., sending out a notice over the listserv, or setting up a wiki site.

Andrea Rusnock volunteered to continue the work that Rima began. Nancy Hall volunteered to take over from Andrea the following year.

Judy Johns Schloegel reported on the Women's Caucus online directory :

She noted that HSS had now created a link from its page to the Women's Caucus page and the online directory.

The Caucus agreed that the directory had proven useful. Judy noted that several scholars have added themselves recently to the directory.

Judy also pointed out that the directory had one flaw, namely that directory information was difficult to update, since the Caucus directory's information is obtained directly from University of Chicago Press. The Executive Office is working with University of Chicago to get directory information updated in a more timely way.

The Caucus then discussed session sponsorship for 2005 and 2006:

Pam lauded the especially rich 2005 program, including the Death of Nature retrospective that Judy Johns Schloegel organized and the two sessions that Marsha Richmond organized titled "Beyond Larry Summers & Co.: How Women Fared in Science."

- i. Marsha noted that since Rusty Shteir had not been able to attend the meeting because of illness, the second of the "Beyond Larry Summers" sessions would in place of her commentary invite a half-hour discussion among session attendees.
- ii. Judy remarked that her session had come together through true collaborative effort, and reminded Caucus members that the July 2005 HSS Newsletter had included an article about Carolyn Merchant.

Pnina Abir-Am remarked that for the first time in 20 years there had been no advance planning for travel grants to the 2005 International Congress of the History of Science in Beijing .

Mike Sokal replied that the National Science Foundation makes this grant money available to HSS. Mike's understanding was that the relevant NSF program received its October budget in June, so that HSS did not learn it had any funds available until June. As a result, for the 2009 international congress in Budapest, HSS plans to submit its funding proposal early (in 2006).

The conversation returned to session sponsorships at HSS when Pam Henson solicited proposals for the 2006 meeting:

Pnina Abir-Am suggested a follow-up to the 2005 Larry Summers sessions. She noted the invisibility of scholarship on women and gender in science, and recommended that Caucus members organize a volume explaining this scholarship to those outside the discipline of the history of science.

- i. Marsha Richmond wondered if another book was the answer to this problem, given the availability of accessible books on these subjects. She suggested an internet site instead.
- ii. Mike Sokal noted that the Women's Caucus is free to use its own site for this purpose, if it wishes.
- iii. Pam Henson suggested the Organization of American Historian's Magazine of History as another possible venue.
- iv. Pam Mack suggested that Caucus members make contributions to the already existing Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org).

Carolyn Merchant said she was honored to have her Death of Nature considered at the 2005 meeting, and noted that similarly influential books that were coming up on important anniversaries deserved their own celebratory sessions.

Sally Gregory Kohlstedt suggested a historiographic workshop.

Sharrona Pearl noted that the SHOT program contained workshop sessions, and suggested that HSS do something similar, e.g., by conducting a workshop on women on the job market, or publishing on women and gender in science.

Christine Keiner recommended a session on pedagogy. Lynn Nyhart pointed out how the HSS program structure ghettoizes its current pedagogy workshops by scheduling them late at night. She suggested instead following SHOT's model, in which two short workshop sessions are scheduled during a regular daytime session slot. Elizabeth Green Musselman suggested scheduling such a two-part session on history-of-science pedagogy, one focused on college-level teaching and one focused on high-school-level teaching (local high school teachers invited to the latter).

Pam Henson reported that HSS might not be able to continue paying for the Women's Caucus breakfast . The Caucus discussed several alternative funding possibilities:

Pam said one possibility was for senior faculty (but not graduate students) to pay a fee for the breakfast.

Joan Cadden suggested finding local sponsorship at each meeting for the breakfast. Sally Gregory Kohlstedt said this had worked well in the past. Heather Munro Prescott said this would be a good way to get local women scientists involved with the meeting and the Caucus.

Pam Mack suggested that the Women's Caucus not list its meeting as a "business meeting" in the HSS program, as this might signify a closed meeting to potential new members.

Pam Henson then opened the floor for announcements :

Maria Rentetzi and Dina Dalouka reported that there would be a July 2007 meeting in Greece on gender perspectives in networking in science and technology.

Lynn Nyhart noted how many women were about to enter top leadership positions in HSS: Joan Cadden as president, Jane Maienschein as vice president, Margaret Osler as secretary and Rachel Ankeny as treasurer.

Appendix A

Childcare information linked to 2005 HSS meeting website

Childcare options at the Minneapolis meeting

Childcare for the Minneapolis meeting can be arranged by members directly with the following providers. (In the case of the YWCA, the HSS Women's Caucus has agreed to co-ordinate between members and the Y.) There are other services available within the vicinity of the Hyatt, but research by the Women's Caucus determined the following two to be particularly convenient and affordable.

1. YWCA

The YWCA has a facility just next-door to the Hyatt, where the HSS meeting will be held. The Y has a fully-trained childcare staff (CPR-certified, have undergone background checks). They will pick up all children of HSS members who need their services as a group in the morning, take them to the Y, play (including some time in their pool for kids who are old enough), feed them lunch, and return them to the hotel at the end of the day. The Y can accept infants.

The Y's hours are 6 a.m.-9 p.m. on Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday, and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Sunday. The hours for childcare for HSS members will be negotiated once all those members who want the Y's services have notified the co-chair of the HSS Women's Caucus (see below).

Rates will depend on how many children of HSS members end up using the Y's services. If 10-15 children sign up, rates will be \$5/hour per child. A smaller number of children will mean higher rates. For example, if four children signed up; the Y would charge \$13/hour per child.

If you have any specific questions about the YWCA's childcare services, see their website < <http://www.ywca-minneapolis.org/children.htm> > or contact Amara (rhymes with camera) Sing, 612.215.4152.

DEADLINES FOR THE YWCA:

19 September - deadline to notify Elizabeth Green Musselman (greenmue@southwestern.edu), co-chair of the HSS Women's Caucus, that you would like to use this childcare option. The Y can accept up to 15 children, so spots will be assigned on a first-come/first-serve basis. Please include in your message how many children, ages, times you will need childcare, and any special needs. You will subsequently receive the standard release form from the YWCA.

14 October - deadline to return release form to YWCA

2. NANNY PROFESSIONALS

Nanny Professionals can send a fully certified nanny to the hotel to care for your child(ren).

Rates are \$13/hour for 1-2 children, and \$1 more per child for more than two children. You must contract for a minimum of five hours during any given day or a minimum of four hours during any given evening. Clients must also pay a \$10 flat fee per day to cover the nanny's traveling costs, and pay for her/his parking during the time that s/he is caring for your child(ren).

You can find further information about this provider on their website: nannyprofessionals.com, or by calling Becky Bergmann at 651.221.0587.

DEADLINES FOR NANNY PROFESSIONALS:

14 October - deadline to contact Nanny Professionals (651.221.0587) about your intent to use their services