

## The Society: Minutes of the 2006 Women's Caucus Meeting

Hyatt Regency, Vancouver, BC

November 3, 2006, 7:30-8:45 am

(Submitted by Suzanne M. Fischer, University of Minnesota, and Elizabeth Green Musselman, Southwestern University)

1. Opening remarks and introductions
  - a. Co-chair Elizabeth Green Musselman called the meeting to order. About 50 people were in attendance.
  - b. Co-chair Lynn Nyhart sent regrets that she could not attend HSS and the WC meeting this year.
  - c. Thanks to Suzanne Fischer for taking minutes.
  - d. Introduction of caucus and how it works.
  - e. Philosophy of Science Association has an inaugural meeting this year for its Women's Caucus.
    - i. organized by Miriam Solomon
    - ii. meeting Saturday 7:30-8:45 am in Balmoral
    - iii. EGM thanked Sally Gregory Kohlstedt for representing HSS WC there
  - f. Those attending the meeting introduced themselves briefly.
2. In memoriam
  - a. We lost two colleagues this year.
  - b. Sylvia McGrath: Karen Rader has made a memory book for her family. It was passed around. Folks can also e-mail her to add entries. Julie Newell will circulate the book at the Forum for the History of Science in America, and EGM will take it to the Lone Star Historians of Science.
  - c. Audrey Davis: Deborah Warner read a statement written by Mike Sokal about Audrey.
  - d. Suggestions:
    - i. Margaret Rossiter (via prior e-mail to EGM): Isis needs to catch up with and revive eulogies. Sally Gregory Kohlstedt wrote to Bernie Lightman (editor of Isis) and he said that both Davis and McGrath will get eulogies in Isis.
    - ii. Monica Green suggested that the WC have a standing committee on membership to keep track of this so folks don't fall to the wayside. Concern expressed that such a committee might not work because the WC has irregular meetings. Monica said could work via e-mail. [MG said in a prior e-mail to EGM: "In my other society, we've in fact established a 'foremothers' society which schedules honorary sessions at our annual meeting. I'm not sure that would be possible in the context of HSS, but I do think we should start thinking about formal ways to have these people's accomplishments inscribed in the cultural memory of the institution. The essays on Carolyn Merchant's book in the most recent Isis is one kind of 'monument.' Perhaps we could think of others?"]

- iii. Nancy Slack suggested we do oral histories of women historians of science who had been around a while. EGM: we could also gather materials for memorials. Pam Henson talked about an AAM centennial oral history project, which resulted in mentoring relationships. This might be a good idea for HSS. Consensus on this. EGM will send out an e-mail to find interviewers/interviewees.

### 3. Childcare

- a. EGM will attend Committee on Meetings and Programs. At last year's meeting, they agreed that from 2008 on, availability of childcare will be considered for site selection.
- b. Marsha Richmond said that she and Anita Guerrini are program chairs for next year and can give WC a heads up on childcare arrangements.
- c. The question of how much childcare arrangements have been used was raised. People may not use it since it's not clear how available it is and might not submit papers. Must be consistently available for several years before we can judge its effectiveness.
- d. Should make it more than a women's issue, i.e., involve men who have small children?
- e. EGM: set up network of parents to share childcare; set up kids' party/reception. Joanne (?): folks will bring kids if they think they'll meet other kids. Joan Cadden: encourage local arrangements chairs to find kids' excursions. Gwen Kay: put on Web site, like roommate service.
- f. Ruthanna Dyer: advocate in own universities/funding agencies to cover childcare and get reimbursed. Andrea Rusnock: contact work-life committees in universities

### 4. Report from Executive Committee: Joan Cadden

- a. Marc Rothenberg/HSS development committee suggests WC could raise money for childcare. Let's have a conversation regarding the 10 year plan.
- b. WC breakfast becoming expensive for HSS, and WC may need to find a way to contribute to costs. Discussion ensued of various possibilities:
  - i. sliding-scale fee for those attending WC breakfast (i.e., grad students and independent scholars pay nothing; full-time, tenured faculty pay ca. \$10-15);
  - ii. HSS should continue to pay for the WC breakfast, as recognition of WC's worth to the society, including WC's success as a fundraising organization; WC shouldn't have to beg every year
  - iii. add check-box to HSS registration, adding voluntary contribution to breakfast onto reg fee – concerns raised similar to above + might take away voluntary contributions from other worthy projects
  - iv. get publishers to underwrite it?
  - v. put out donation box at breakfast – pay what you want

### 5. Nominate new co-chair

- a. Lynn Nyhart (in absentia) nominated Gwen Kay (SUNY-Oswego) as next co-chair. Kay's nomination approved. (This makes Lynn Nyhart co-chair at 2006 & 2007 meetings; Kay co-chair at 2007 & 2008 meetings.)

- b. EGM reminds attendees that they can get involved in WC by e-mailing either co-chair.
6. WC-sponsored sessions
- a. this year's WC sessions
    - i. Friday, 7:30-9:30 pm: "Teaching Women, Gender & Sci: Extending the Limits"
      - 1. Monica Green, Mara Mills, Susan Rensing, Grace Sirju-Charran; chaired by Sally Gregory Kohlstedt
    - ii. Saturday, 9-11:45 am: "Women & People of Color in the Profession: Problems & Prospects"
      - 1. Jane Camerini, Sharrona Pearl, Londa Schiebinger, EGM; chaired by Marsha Richmond
    - iii. both will involve 10-min presentations by panel, then opened up to discussion w/audience
    - iv. hope is that 1st session will generate both practical & theoretical discussion, sharing of syllabi, texts, assignments, etc.
    - v. & that 2nd session will generate concrete list of recommendations to HSS (& profession as whole) about what we can do to improve diversity of our field's practitioners & students – Marsha Richmond & EGM will write these up for HSS newsletter
  - b. EGM: problem this year with our two workshop sessions (one on women, gender & science pedagogy, the other on women and people of color in the profession) originally getting ghettoized to Friday evening – both originally scheduled in the same slot. After some negotiation with program chairs, rectified somewhat so that one session rescheduled for Saturday morning.
  - c. Sally Gregory Kohlstedt: workshops could be part of regular sessions, maybe around lunchtime
  - d. Sarah Miles: could we start annual meeting on Thursday to accommodate MWF teaching schedules?
  - e. Marsha Richmond (one of program chairs for 2007 meeting): less concurrent session next year due to hotel size (10 rather than 13); program committee is thinking about starting earlier for this reason.
  - f. Let people be part of 2 events? So can do workshops
  - g. Joan Cadden: is standard session format useful? But folks get sponsored to meetings if participated in 'legitimate' sessions
  - h. EGM: American Historical Association recently changed to offering different types of session formats [see appendix A below]
  - i. Josephine Winnicott: was on Committee on Meetings and Programs when allowing folks to present only once per meeting was proposed; this was to bring diversity so folks don't just have their friends on panels. We don't want to go from ghettoized to overprivileged.
7. Employment survey

- a. Cornelia Lambert reported on the survey. She's done it for three years, and we might have to change what we expect from the survey due to increased privacy issues around gender and minority status of hires.
  - b. She passes the duty on to Mary Anne Andrei.
  - c. Andrea Rusnock: Thanks to Cornelia.
  - d. EGM: Past employment surveys now available on HSS website.
8. Women's Caucus archives
- a. Andrea Rusnock: will work on WC archives, then pass it on to Nancy Hall
  - b. Joan Cadden: We should archive the list of those present at the meeting
9. Announcements
- a. Ida Stamhuis: IUHPS, DHS, Commission on Women and Science, is having a conference on networking in Greece. A notice was circulated and info will be sent via email.
10. Generate ideas for WC sessions at 2007 meeting
- a. Sarah Scharf: disability – effects on research, teaching, history of disability. Many expressed support for this idea.
  - b. Sharrona Pearl: likes having workshops, gender issues affect men and women
  - c. Joan Cadden: we're meeting at the heart of the US government, maybe we should have a session on that—women, science, government
  - d. Colleague from Simon Fraser: K-12 education?
  - e. Deborah Warner: perhaps WC could sponsor session about women/gender in a particular field, e.g., on the history of astronomy
  - f. Cat Nisbet: for instance, could sponsor a session on the history of physics, a speciality in which women have been underrepresented.
11. Wrap-up
- a. Joan Cadden: Thanks to Elizabeth for chairing the meeting.

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## Appendix A: American Historical Association annual meeting session formats

### From the "AHA Annual Meeting Guidelines"

Session types: Proposals should be designated in one of the following session types. In order to encourage discussion and exchange at the meeting, the Program Committee will give priority to sessions that foster discussion and discourages the practice of reading papers. To assure substantial time for interaction between speakers and audience, all panels are limited to a maximum of five participants serving as speakers or commentators.

A. Discussions/Roundtables: The roundtable or the discussion format—which can be used for the presentation of original research, work-in-progress, or discussion of professional concerns—offers short 10-minute presentations, a fluid organization (not limited to the chair/presenter/commentator structure), and ample time for discussion with the audience. Roundtables differ from discussions in that

the former take place in a non-podium setting (with the audience gathered around the panel) to facilitate a more congenial exchange between audience and discussants.

B. Experimental sessions: This format is intended to allow members to organize a panel using novel forms of presentation (in terms of organization or content), which are not covered by the other session types. Members who would like to organize such panels are welcome to do so, provided they clearly explain the form and content of their panels, their ability to engage and connect with an audience of their peers, and the potential costs involved.

C. Formal sessions: The formal session is organized around a chair and a commentator, with two or three presenters speaking for 15 minutes. While this has been the standard form, the Association encourages the informal presentation of research, instead of the rote reading of papers.

D. Poster sessions: Poster sessions allow historians to present their data and discuss their research with colleagues in a less formal setting, using illustrative materials placed on a board. Poster sessions allow for the presentation of professional issues, original research, or work in progress through posted visual materials—such as pictures, photographs, and text—displayed on bulletin boards. Posters are the only exception to the bar on submission of solo presentations.

E. Precirculated presentations: Sessions using this format are organized around presentations (papers or other online presentations, such as PowerPoint presentations) made available in advance, to allow for minimal presentations and more time for active and engaged discussion of the findings. Organizers need to submit precirculated presentations for web posting by December 1st prior to the meeting.

F. Practicum session: A practicum is a session in which members can learn or develop practical skills. A practicum is ideal for demonstrating the use of new or innovative tools for the classroom or for research.

G. Workshop: Workshops consist of multiple sessions on a common theme, possibly using a variety of the session types described above. Ideally, this should provide the opportunity for a more focused discussion in which participants bring a common level of knowledge or skill to bear on a subject, typically toward some practical end (e.g., developing a work-in-progress or new professional skills). These sessions require pre-approval by the Program Committee. Preliminary proposals, summarizing the broad topic and outlining sessions and session types, are due by December 15. The deadline for specific information on participants and session topics will be the same as the other sessions.