

**Minutes for HSS Women's Caucus breakfast at Annual Meeting, Montreal
Friday, Nov. 5 2010**

1. Introductions

Co-Chairs Susan Rensing (2009-10, outgoing) called the meeting to order. Karen Rader (2010-11) agreed to act as secretary.

50 members attended the breakfast, and, according to tradition, all made brief introductions.

2. Announcements

Fred Kronz (NSF's STS Program) introduced himself and encouraged members to make NSF grant proposals for research on themes of gender and race, "as well as more traditional subjects."

Rensing announce the HSS 2010 Session: "Women as Subjects of Science" -- Saturday, Nov. 6, 9 am-11:45 am, Jeanne-Mance (Level 6)

Pnina Abir-Am (ICHST, Committee on Women in HSTM) announced the ICHST summer 2011 (June) meeting in Paris, for which there are some travel funds for junior scholars. She has the ICHST report and would be willing to share it with our members. Rader will get a copy and circulate via the listserv.

Rader took a quick poll of members who utilized Facebook (more than half of attendees raised hands) and proposed developing a Facebook page for the HSS WC as a new model of communication (in addition to the email listserv).

3. Employment Survey Report (Jacqueline Wernimont)

This year's employment survey report is attached. This year, the employment survey faced the same perennial issues as past surveys. The survey yielded a 30% response rate; questions remain about timing (what is best time to issue request for information: in fall, when jobs are typically announced, or in spring, after jobs are typically filled?). The survey was sent early and a supplemental survey was sent later by WC (this one, targeted department chairs) but it was ineffective at capturing additional data.

The survey still captures data about gender, but its scale is so much bigger than it used to be (e.g. LGBT, persons with disabilities, etc.) that Wernimont issued a call to action: the survey needs to be overhauled and tended to by the entire HSS community (not just Women's Caucus or Graduate and Early Career Caucus). To insure that we have useful data re: HSTM fields, the intellectual and practical problems are getting more complex and therefore need broader attention. Interdisciplinary fields like environmental history have lots of diversity and there are scholarly connections not captured by the current categories of the survey, but relevant to those seeking HSTM jobs.

Discussion ensued about re-situating the employment survey within CoRP. There have been issues in the past about WC giving up the survey, but there is also a tension between the WC's 'housekeeping' vs. watchdog role; currently there lots of hours put in by whoever takes on the survey, and not much return for the WC. There is an important issue of 'tradition' – what are the

key questions we should continue to ask, continuous with past practices (to have meaningful longitudinal data) -- but that is in tension with transforming the survey so that it tends to modern GECC issues (e.g. number of contingent vs. tenure track positions). Wernimont noted the problem of obtaining robust and comparative data: individuals are nervous about responding and lots of one-on-one contact was required to get any response about what is essentially institutional information.

Motion: To take the charge of the survey to CoRP, for possible collaboration; Motion seconded. Vote affirming this motion was unanimous.

Motion: To ask Jay Malone to follow up with other organizations (e.g. AHA,): how do they collect data and can we piggy-back HSS survey on their efforts? What would be the benefits and costs of such an approach? Motion: seconded.
Vote affirming this motion was unanimous

4. Status of Women in the Profession—Open discussion (led by Rensing)

Rensing noted that the issue of women doing excessive service work is not new (e.g. the book *OVER ONE MILLION SERVED*) but this issue takes on new dimensions in light of current job market issues e.g. widespread underemployment, short term employment. Rensing cited several reports including Clayman Institute; UC system (which showed that women are falling out of the pipeline for many reasons, including excessive service), and the Penn meeting on unconscious bias (which showed more demands being placed on female job candidates than male job candidates from the start of the employment process).

Rensing suggested posting a short piece on Facebook about what data exists (i.e. exchanging the information we already know. Pam Henson suggested adding an NSF study about the glass ceiling in the sciences (including the barriers to just getting into jobs). Rensing noted for the record the data she was able to collect (e.g. from a rough count for this year's HSS meeting, equal male/female presenters and chairs/commentators, which is not surprising because balance is part of HSS's CFP).

Discussion ensued about the tension between service work as burdensome and service work as a path to institutional power. Different kinds of service were noted – chairing committees vs. minutes-taking – and an additional study was noted (from UK Natural History Museums), that proposed an alternate metaphor to 'the pipeline,' because the existing metaphor doesn't allow for moving in and out of service as women often do.

Motion: To form a subcommittee, which will address these issues through developing a strategic plan for the HSS WC; organizers will make a call for data on the WC listserv and the WC Facebook page and produce a report by next HSS annual meeting; Motion seconded. Vote affirming this motion was unanimous.

Rader offered to chair the strategic planning subcommittee and solicited volunteers. Volunteers included Dawn Digrius, Gina Rumore, Jay Malone, Marsha Richmond, and Margot Iverson.

5. Status of Childcare Report (Gina Rumore)

This year not many meeting attendees brought their children; they did not get in touch with Rumore ahead of the meeting (despite the mention of childcare arrangements in the CFP and on the registration form), and they did not respond to direct email inquiry. WC leaders will consult with AHA (which just conducted a survey on this issue): perhaps we could use survey to determine 'what we need.'

6. Women's Caucus budget report (Susan Rensing & Karen Rader)

Jay Malone noted that 56 people signed up for the breakfast during conference registration which generated \$840 plus \$226 donations (from last year). HSS contributed the standard \$300 from HSS, to cover any remaining costs.

7. Election of new co-chair (Erika Milam nominated)

Motion: To nominate Erika Milam (University of Maryland College Park); motion seconded. No further nominations were made; Milam was elected unanimously.