

Minutes for the Women's Caucus Breakfast Meeting
Annual History of Science Society Meeting
Friday, 26 July 2019 in Utrecht, the Netherlands

Co-chairs: Alix Cooper (alix.cooper@stonybrook.edu, 2019-2021) and Jenna Tonn (jenna.tonn@bc.edu, 2018-2020)

Alix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for showing up, especially given the heatwave in Utrecht! She explained that Jenna was unable to attend the meeting.

Announcements and Updates

- The Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering, and Technology, and in particular Ben Gross, Vice President for Research and Scholarship, were thanked for their generous co-sponsorship of the breakfast meeting again this year. (See <http://www.lindahall.org/>)
- It was noted that donations to this year's Women's Caucus Breakfast were also made by several generous members. Thank you!
- Women's Caucus members were encouraged to apply for dependent care grants for the next HSS Annual Meeting. This year HSS awarded \$1412 in dependent care grants. More funds were available than were actually used, suggesting that there is plenty of room for HSS members and conference attendees to be making more use of these funds...
- It was reported that the Annual Graduate and Early Careers Caucus Women's Mentorship Event, cosponsored by the Women's Caucus, was held on Thursday 25 July, with a light lunch provided. For information on this event, contact gecc.mentorship@gmail.com.
- The Women's Caucus sponsored a session at HSS this year, "Gendering Development", organized by Barbara Pohl. Members were urged to reach out to the co-chairs for next year if interested in having the Women's Caucus sponsor their session.
- The hours of the HSS Nursing Mother's Room were announced. Jay Malone, Executive Director of HSS, noted that last year nobody used the Nursing Mother's Room, and inquired whether the room had been used this year. Multiple meeting participants noted that an important aspect of accessibility for HSS is that accommodations like the Nursing Mother's Room always be available, even if they are not used every day/year, so as to convey the message that HSS will be accessible without exception.
- About the Women's Caucus Breakfast Endowment, it was reported that we will be drawing on the endowment for the 2020 meeting and will start soliciting donations to the permanent endowment after Utrecht. Members will be able to choose either to donate to offset the costs of the breakfast for a particular year, or to contribute to the permanent endowment.
- About the recently-created Diversity and Inclusion Committee, co-chaired by Myrna Perez Sheldon and Don Opitz, Don reported that for the coming year, the committee is focused on diversity and inclusion at the society's annual meeting, in publications, and practices in the profession. He welcomes those interested in learning more to contact Myrna & himself at sheldonm@ohio.edu and don.opitz@depaul.edu.

Women's Caucus Activities

- Oral history project: Megan Shields Formato interviewed Carolyn Merchant at the Seattle meeting in 2018, and Tina Gianquitto will interview Sally Gregory Kohlstedt in Utrecht in 2019. We will let HSS/Women's Caucus members know when these interviews will be available.
- Conference access: the issue was raised of the Women's Caucus's continuing efforts to make the conference as accessible as possible to a wide range of members, including those with disabilities and those with financial constraints or other situations making in-person attendance

difficult. Jai Virdi noted that she had prepared a report for HSS on improving accessibility and would be happy to share it. Elly Truitt thanked Jay for giving this year's session moderators in Utrecht instructions which included guidelines for inclusiveness and accessibility. Jay noted that Jai had provided these guidelines, and he said he was happy to get more feedback. Jai offered to share the guidelines with anyone else asking for them and a consensus was reached that the guidelines should eventually be put on the HSS page or elsewhere to make them more widely available. Ida Stamhuis noted the need for HSS to take into account environmental considerations like climate change, and proposed greater attention to technological or other means of virtual participation to decrease the need for air travel.

Introductions (all present introduced themselves)

Other Announcements/New Business

- Sally Gregory Kohlstedt reported that she is the current ombudsperson for HSS so that anyone can contact her about inappropriate behavior or discrimination at ombudsperson@hssonline.org, while Jay reported that HSS has created a Respectful Behavior Committee which is in the process of creating policies to address sexual harassment and similar problems at HSS. Sarah Qidwai of the Graduate and Early Career Caucus (GECC) reported that a member of her caucus had come to her after being harassed by another attendee at this year's HSS, and didn't want to go through official channels (e.g. contact the ombudsperson) because they were afraid to file an official complaint. Sally, as ombudsperson, responded that anyone contacting her would be ensured confidentiality; her role is to help the person understand what their options are. She raised the issue, though, of whether this person's reluctance might mean that HSS should consider appointing more than one ombudsperson. Another meeting attendee mentioned that helpful options might include suggesting delayed action (e.g. action to be taken only after the conference is over), or to just report without taking action. Susan Jones noted that we all bear responsibility, not just to a person being harassed, but to each other as a community; we need to observe community norms and if any of us sees someone being harassed, we need to speak up, so that the burden does not get placed entirely on the person who is experiencing harassment. Another meeting attendee suggested that it would be extremely useful for HSS to include in meeting attendees' packets a flyer discussing respectful behavior and outlining steps meeting attendees can take if confronted with inappropriate behavior.
- Jay Malone, as HSS Executive Director, mentioned that for various reasons, including making more rooms available for sessions, the Executive Committee was considering moving the Women's Caucus breakfast meeting (and possibly all caucus meetings) from Friday morning to Saturday morning. Elly Truitt pointed out that this plan would result in observant Jews no longer being able to attend. Jay pointed out that one reason this might be necessary is that due to the food and cleanup issues involved, the breakfast takes a room out of rotation for regular academic sessions (with the result that one less panel can be accepted). As a result, he proposed that we have the breakfast immediately followed by the session sponsored by the Women's Caucus for that year (this was apparently done in 2007 but not continued). This might impact attendance at the Breakfast, though (e.g. attendance might be lowered if people felt embarrassed about showing up and then wanting to leave to go to another session, rather than staying for the official Women's Caucus sponsored session).

Election of Incoming Co-Chair

- The caucus voted to nominate and approve Jai Virdi as incoming co-chair by show of hands.