

*A Brief History
of the*

*Association for Women in Psychology
(AWP)*

1969-1991

Leonore Tiefer

A Brief History of the Association for Women in
Psychology (AWP): 1969 - 1991¹
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Abstract

The Association for Women in Psychology (AWP) was founded in 1969 by American Psychological Association (APA) members frustrated with sexism in psychology, in APA, and at the APA convention itself. The activism of the 1960s together with the new women's liberation movement gave the founders tools and justification for a new organization. This article, the first published AWP history, describes the founding circumstances, early skirmishes around structure and operations, evolution of major activities such as the annual conference, importance of lesbians, growing attention to multiculturalism, and ongoing tensions between centralization and "feminist process."

Introduction

The Association for Women in Psychology (AWP) was founded in 1969 and is still going strong. As of February, 1991, the membership directory lists 1663 members in 47 states and 9 foreign countries. AWP has 27 regional groups, an annual conference which in March, 1991, attracted over 900 attendees, many projects, a continuous newsletter since 1971, and a healthy organizational treasury. AWP's success is remarkable, especially given the demise of many other feminist organizations born out of the same historic issues and times (Echols, 1989).

This article, the first published history of the organization, begins by reviewing some of the background and context of AWP's founding in the late

Note to the reader and user of this essay

This essay is a longer version of an essay appearing in the Psychology of Women Quarterly, vol 15, December, 1991. It is available for use and citation by members and friends of AWP. Singer or multiple copies are available for a donation of \$2.00 or multiples of \$2.00 from Maureen McHugh, Women's Studies Program, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705. Please include a self-addressed mailing label with your order. For more information about AWP and its activities, contact Maureen McHugh.

AWP would like to express its appreciation to Ria Hermann, Julie Jones, Jane Little, Maria Santana, Nancy Felipe Russo, and the Women's Studies Program of Arizona State University for their assistance in producing this brochure.

¹The author has been active in the women's movement since 1972, and a member of AWP since 1978. I served AWP as Chair of the Implementation Collective from 1986-1989. Materials for this paper include all of AWP's newsletter (since 1971), archival materials such as early by-laws and lists of prize-winners and committee chairs, and early handouts loaned by Joan Saks Berman, an AWP founder. Thanks to Joan for her feedback on an earlier draft of this essay.

60's, and identifies some specific precipitating events. AWP's early years will be described in some detail, focusing particularly on the struggles over structure and purpose. The decline of activism as AWP's early demands were either met or abandoned, the emergence of the annual conference as AWP's focus of effort, the rise of multicultural issues, and the centralization of organizational operation bring the story to the present.

Background

Several different kinds of events in the 1960s combined to make women in psychology dissatisfied with their status, aware of a growing women's liberation movement, alert to psychology's role in fostering the stereotyping and oppression of women, and willing to form a new organization to advocate for women within psychology. They include media and governmental identification of social injustices against women, and women activists' experiences within the civil rights and anti-Vietnam-war movements.

Second wave feminism in the public eye

At the behest of Esther Peterson, the Labor Department Women's Bureau director, President John Kennedy convened a Commission on the Status of Women in 1961. Its report in 1963, American Women, named and described sex discrimination in the working world (Freeman, 1973). State commissions which formed in followup to the report brought politically active and knowledgeable women together to work specifically on women's issues. Their investigations revealed evidence of pervasive legal and economic inequities, and "created a climate of expectations that something would be done" (Freeman, 1973, p. 798).

Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique was also published in 1963, illuminating the dissatisfactions of nonemployed women. It became a bestseller and more women began to question the status quo. Historians of the period also cite as a crucial event an afterthought addition to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of sex in hiring, firing, compensation, or conditions of employment, or to limit or segregate or classify employees or applicants for employment. (Sapiro, 1986). This marked the beginning of the end of Male and Female help wanted ads. Legislation was not the same as implementation, however. In 1966, at the Third National Conference of Commissions on the Status of Women, the frustrated efforts of women to have the Civil Rights Act appropriately enforced led them to create a new organization, the National

Organization for Women (NOW), as an independent civil rights organization, a "sort of NAACP for women" (Freeman, 1973, p. 798).

During this same period, women who had participated in the civil rights and antiwar movements throughout the '60s began raising issues of sexual inequality at radical movement conferences. They found that their issues and demands (abortion, childcare, shared housework, responsible assignments in movement activities) were deprecated and pushed aside (Echols, 1989). These women were skilled at organizing, and knew the roles of underground press, teach-ins, and demonstrations. Psychologist Naomi Weisstein, for example, a movement activist, had already begun teaching a course on women at the University of Chicago in 1966. Gradually, after 1967, small consciousness-raising, discussion, and activist groups were formed in urban centers and on college campuses. Women psychologists joined these groups through academic contacts, and also became informed by the media's coverage of the new "women's liberation movement."

Women's activism in the pre-AWP APA (American Psychological Association)

Few psychologists knew the misogynist history of APA, or recalled previous efforts women psychologists had made to organize (O'Connell & Russo, 1983, 1988; Rossiter, 1982). Begun in 1941, the National Council of Women Psychologists (NCWP) had focused its efforts on opportunities for women psychologists during World War II, but had met with limited success (Capshaw & Laszlo, 1986; Walsh, 1985).² Deliberately nonfeminist (feminist was known as "militant - suffragist" at the time) in goals and self-identification, NCWP was turned down as a division of APA in 1948, turned down again after it added men in 1958, and turned down again after it changed its name in 1959! It now survives only as the first chapter in the history of the still-active International Council of Psychologists.

During the 1960s, however, APA was affected by the militancy of other groups, notably civil rights, black power, and anti-Vietnam-war activists. Associations for Black Psychologists and for Black Student Psychologists were founded in 1968, and petitioned APA for programs (Miller, 1986; McKeachie, 1969). Psychologists for Social Responsibility, a social justice and anti-war organization, reacted to the police brutality at the 1968 Chicago Democratic National Convention by successfully coordinating a

²A history of NCWP was also given in the April/May, 1979, AWP newsletter, introducing members of AWP to this chapter of women psychologists' history.

vast mailing to get APA to relocate the 1969 convention from Chicago to Washington, D.C. (McKeachie, 1969). The success of this member-initiated activity encouraged other APA members' militancy.

The Founding of AWP

At the 1969 APA convention in Washington, D.C., women psychologists became involved in an escalating series of meetings and events which culminated in the founding of the Association for Women Psychologists³ by "approximately thirty-five founding mothers and fathers" (AWP newsletter, 1970, p. 3).⁴ A workshop on "Woman as Subject" sponsored by the Women's Consortium of Chicago Psychologists for Social Action developed into a "rap session" among women from Psychologists for Social Action, New University Conference, National Organization for Women, the informal consciousness-raising groups, and women previously uninvolved in women's liberation. They discussed sexist practices at the convention itself, discrimination in the academic and professional worlds of psychology, and began to examine the contribution of psychological theory to women's oppression.

One result was immediate action: a booth was set up near the Job Placement Center offering information and advice on sexism in interviewing and hiring. The Executive Officer of the APA agreed to close the booths of employers with sex-discriminatory advertisements, but would not close those of employers accused of sexism during interviews.

³ This original name was changed in 1970, see below.

⁴ This rendering of the events surrounding AWP's founding is taken from the Summer, 1970 Newsletter of the Association for Women Psychologists, written largely by the first President of the organization, Dr. Jo-Ann Evans Gardner. Gardner was a part-time academically employed experimental psychologist who wrote a moving essay describing her bitter experiences with employment discrimination she encountered after receiving her Ph.D. in 1964 (Gardner, 1971).

Another result was the preparation of several⁵ petitions to the APA. They illustrate the sorts of issues, big and small, which so mobilized the women and men about to found AWP. The first called on the Education and Training Board of the APA to require psychology departments seeking accreditation to have "anti-female discrimination" policies. This petition was denied at the next (October, 1969) meeting of the APA Council of Representatives on the grounds that it dealt with a political issue irrelevant to the assessment of professional excellence. A second petition urged APA to work for repeal of criminal statutes against abortion.⁶ It argued "termination of unwanted pregnancies is clearly a mental health and child welfare issue and a legitimate concern of APA." The abortion resolution was passed by the APA Council (McKeachie, 1970).

A third AWP petition asked APA to examine itself for "latent and overt sexist practices" and "demanded that child care facilities be provided at future Conventions, that APA conventions not be scheduled to meet during the first week of elementary school, that Convention registration forms be revised to read 'spouse' rather than 'wife/dependent'...that the APA Employment Bulletin policy be amended to prohibit job advertisements which were discriminatory...[and] that during interviews female applicants should not be asked about marital arrangements, status of husband's career, responsibility for care of children, etc., unless the same questions are asked of every male applicant" (McKeachie, 1969, P. 31).

Finally, women demanded that an open meeting be scheduled at the 1970 convention to discuss the report of an APA study group on sexism in APA. No study group was appointed, but the 1970 convention did plan an open "Town Hall" session:

Program time will be used for presentation of problems and issues by Association members to each other and to the Board of Directors. Groups or individuals wishing to place on the Agenda should present a brief (no more than 100 words) statement of their topic ... no later than 12 noon [on the day of the Town meeting.] A limit of 15 minutes will

⁵ The Summer, 1970, AWP Newsletter discusses three petitions. The Minutes of the APA Council of Representatives describes four! The issues are not precisely the same (i.e., the Council minutes do not have the newsletter's three plus one additional one). All issues mentioned in either place are included in this paper.

⁶ Recall that abortion was still illegal in all 50 states in 1969.

be imposed for each presentation (APA Annual Convention Program, 1970, P. 35).

The annual Town meeting, with its deadlines and word limits, became a major focus for AWP energies in years to come, a stormy opportunity for the public airing of women's grievances with the APA and the profession of psychology. Meanwhile, back in 1969, "On the evening of the third day of the Chicago convention," the Summer, 1970, newsletter recounts, "AWP was founded." The informal discussions had reached the boiling point. A press conference the following morning announced temporary officers: Spokeswoman: JoAnn Gardner, Corresponding Secretary: Richard Roistacher, and Newsletter Editor: Eleanor Kaplan.

The First Year

From September, 1969, to February, 1970, the new organization had only its temporary officers. Small AWP groups were begun at some universities. Then, 26 women and one man met in Chicago to create a formal organizational structure: by-laws were written, dues were set, sub-committees organized. In light of the later, recurring struggles over organizational structure, it is interesting to look at the first set of AWP by-laws. The Chicago by-laws began with the name of the organization, "Association for Women Psychologists," and its purpose:

AWP is a non-profit scientific and educational organization of psychologists and others concerned with sex roles in our changing society from an educational, professional and research viewpoint. AWP is dedicated to maximizing the effectiveness of, and professional opportunities for, women psychologists; and to exploring the contributions which psychology can, does and should make to the definition, investigation, and modification of current sex role stereotypes.

The by-laws continued,

To implement its statement of purpose, AWP is committed to taking action:

- a) against the roles which psychology and other behavioral sciences have had in perpetuating the unscientific and unquestioned assumptions about the nature of women and men;
- b) to stimulate necessary experimentation and implementation of alternative sex-role models;
- c) to investigate and review psychological research on sex differences in order to establish facts and explode myths;

d) to educate and sensitize the psychology profession and the public to the psychological, social, political, and economic problems of women;

e) to insure equality of opportunity for women and men within the profession of psychology. (AWP By-Laws, 1970, p.1).

Anyone in agreement with these purposes was eligible for membership, could vote, and was eligible for office. The whole organizational design looks perfectly familiar, hierarchical, and conventional. Officers with "duties and powers" (president, vice-president and treasurer-recorder) would serve for two years. Six standing committees were established (professional affairs, social issues and programs, communication and public relations, support and development, finance and membership, and education and research). Standing committee chairs were to be elected by the organizational membership, and AWP's steering committee would be composed of the three officers plus the chairs of standing committees. The frequency of steering committee and membership meetings, the need for adequate notice of meetings, the fiscal year, and the procedures for elections of officers were all defined. With the media awareness typical of the times, a press release was prepared immediately following this organizing conference announcing the new organization and its purposes (AWP press release, 1970).

Early activists for women's liberation were aware that traditional organizational processes needed feminist reform, and the press release indicated that AWP would "be open about discussing and resolving internal dissension, and [would] reject the model of competitiveness and elitism that characterizes society in general as well as many social change movements" (AWP press release, 1970, p. 2). However, the Chicago by-laws themselves described no new kind of organization.

The need to plan for the September, Miami, APA as well as to advertise AWP brought members to the April, 1970, Eastern Psychological Association convention. The Chicago by-laws were discussed and significant revisions proposed. AWPers decided to rent hotel space at APA to house AWP members inexpensively and provide a planning headquarters.⁷ In the Summer, 1970, newsletter, AWP President Gardner announced that she was bringing to the APA both her electric typewriter and mimeograph machine to prepare announcements and handouts as well as the all-important resolutions for the Town Hall sessions. Members were encouraged to bring women's

⁷ Having a suite at APA as well as hospitality space at regional psychology conventions are AWP activities which still continue.

liberation literature, papers, syllabi, and anything on the psychology of women to sell and swap.

The 1970 APA Convention and its aftermath

AWP hit the ground running in Miami, and its activities were covered by The New York Times (Reinhold, 1970). A long background handout described how the resurgence of the feminist movement had led women to realize the "gross inequities" of their economic status, their "political oppression" embodied in all sorts of federal and state legislation, and how "psychological oppression" that taught women to be "servile and submissive" accompanied these injustices (AWP, September, 1970a). It detailed the economic sex discrimination within psychology from the limited published data, and called for further studies. It accused the APA of many forms of sex discrimination, such as holding conventions in hotels which barred unaccompanied women from their restaurants and cocktail lounges. It challenged APA to live up to its stated purpose, "to advance psychology as a means of promoting human welfare."

AWP prepared 32 resolutions and 18 motions to present to APA which survive in an 11 page, single-spaced document and, more than twenty years later, are still forward-looking:

BE IT RESOLVED that APA endorse the principle that part-time appointments count toward tenure and promotion;

BE IT RESOLVED that APA endorse the principle of parenthood leave and family sick leave for all employees, faculty, and students;

BE IT RESOLVED that APA support and encourage the establishment of child care centers at all campuses and other institutions and firms employing psychologists;

WE MOVE THAT the APA assign women in the proportion to which they exist in its membership to supervisory and decision-making capacities in its central staff;

WE MOVE THAT APA have its male staff and convention workers share a proportional amount of the less rewarding tasks (AWP, September, 1970b).

Motions asked APA for \$40,000 and office space to support AWP activities, and \$50,000 for research on the psychology of women! AWP adopted the typical accusatory and demanding tone of social change movements challenging the dominant value scheme, and APA dragged its heels against change (Turner & Killian, 1957). The New York Times reported that "at a stormy Town Hall meeting...AWP demanded \$1-million in 'reparations' from the APA," charging "that modern psychology has

perpetuated male supremacy and contributed to mental illness among women" (Reinhold, 1970, p. 28). Phyllis Chesler, speaking for the Association for Women Psychologists, said "the reparations would be used to release women from mental hospitals and psychotherapy" but the demand "was not taken entirely seriously by the 2,000 or so APA members gathered in the main ballroom of the [Miami] hotel (*ibid*)."

Meanwhile, the initial structure of the organization was being overhauled at Miami. Proposed revisions changed the name of the organization to "the Association for Women in Psychology." Years later, Kathy Grady (1978/79) wrote:

The name Association for Women in Psychology was chosen carefully. The use of the word "for" rather than "of" reflected the decision that the membership would not be restricted to women... Women "in" psychology was chosen rather than "women psychologists" because the organization was to work for the betterment of all women in psychology, including students and consumers... (p.1).

In a move towards greater representation, the Miami structural revisions proposed eliminating the officers and steering committee, and substituting a "Policy Council" composed of two representatives from each standing committee. A new creation, the Implementation Board, would be elected from and by the Policy Council. These revisions, ratified at the December 27-29, 1970, business meeting of AWP held in Chapel Hill, NC, gave the organization a somewhat broader governing structure. The work and policies of AWP would be generated in six committees from which would come a 12-member policy council from which would come a 5-member Implementation Board. It was rather like APA's large Council of Representatives and small Board of Directors.

In the mailing sent to the membership after the December, 1970 meeting, the standing committees were described and 47 nominees for committee chairs and policy council provided statements about themselves (an interesting resource for how psychology's feminist activists described themselves in 1970). A most interesting two-page "media policy" discussed members' behavior and goals regarding media contacts (AWP Media Policy, n.d.). It indicated again how important "proper" media relations were to feminists at the time. The policy statement advised against being "baited" by reporters (i.e., being asked about bra-burning) and advised members to be interviewed "in pairs or in larger groups" to "avoid elitism and the creation of 'stars' by forces outside our organization." It emphasized that part of the AWP mission would be to promote "the value of collective action and cooperation," to communicate "that being professionals does not make us

better than other women," and that, by becoming "woman-identified," AWP would be supporting lesbian and working-class sisters (*ibid*).

A feminist organization is born

Reviewing AWP's first year reminds us that activism was at the center of the organization's founding. It also reminds us how profession-oriented, even how academia-oriented, AWP was at the beginning. A personal experience of discrimination based on gender is often central to feminism, and such experiences were widespread at the time of AWP's founding (Rowland, 1985). "At the 1969 APA convention, all of the women who participated in the women's caucus reported experiencing sex discrimination at least once during their professional careers" (Fidell, 1970, p.1094, emphasis added). "All" is a lot, and is probably no exaggeration. Fidell, herself, was a founder of AWP and exemplified how members took personal responsibility to research and expose sexism in psychology. In the context of the rhetoric and rising expectations of the 60s, women in psychology recognized their restriction, relative deprivation, and even exclusion, and easily became activists (Perry & Pugh, 1978). Over the next decade, scores of studies documenting continuing sexism in psychology maintained their anger (Unger, 1982).

The early years: 1971-1975

Struggles over organizational structure.

A newsletter was begun in 1971, and its issues reveal how full AWP's early years were of dramatic struggles to develop and define "feminist process." If we're not going to operate by "old boys' rules," then how shall we operate? A radical step came when the December, 1972 midwinter business meeting (New York City) decided to abandon the two-year-old Policy Council structure. The Chicago (1970) structure had seemed too centralized. But, the Miami/Chapel Hill (1970) layered structure was too cumbersome. Lacking APA's extensive financial support, AWP's full Policy Council had never even met, and organizational decisions were dreadfully slow. The media persisted in going to elected leaders to speak for the organization which bothered the anti-elitist feminists greatly.

The third (NYC, 1972) structural design was severely decentralized, with elected officers completely eliminated, and responsibilities divided among an expanded number (18) of committees, e.g., public relations, discrimination, conventions, feminist therapy, feminist research, speakers' bureau, newsletter, etc. These committees would be entirely voluntary (non-

elected), with their activities reviewed at the twice-yearly general membership meetings (APA and midwinter). Years later, Kathy Grady (1977) wrote that "at the time of the 1972 decision to do away with the traditional organizational offices such as President, some members walked out" (p.1). Here are some excerpts from the NYC (third) set of bylaws:

All basic decisions of the organization are made by the membership...Decisions made at the national meetings will be recorded and published in the next Newsletter for ratification by the membership. Since there is no central authority, no president and no officers, the purposes of AWP shall be implemented by Committees specializing in particular tasks...Every member of AWP may join as many Committees as interest and time permit. Once a committee is formed, it will make its own internal rules and policies, plan its own actions, recruit new members and generally function as an active problem-solving body...It may request funds from the Finance committee or raise funds directly (AWP Newsletter, 1973, March/April, p. 3-4).

In her recent analysis of feminist organizations, Martin (1990) claims that "the most frequently discussed structural issue in the feminist organizations literature is collectivist versus bureaucratic organization, or participatory-democratic versus hierarchical authority and control (p. 195)." Since access to power was the essential demand of the women's movement, and understanding the ways women were deprived of power the essential task, anything having to do with power, such as organizational structure, became a highly charged issue. Efforts to share power, to em-power, were at the heart of the consciousness-raising discussion groups and the growing feminist literature on power and organizational structure, such as Jo Freeman's (1972-73) much-reprinted essay, "The tyranny of structurelessness." Freeman, a Chicago feminist experienced in feminist organizational struggles, advocated rotating tasks, delegating authority, distributing authority, accountability from those with power, and diffusion of information, but warned that the denial of structure altogether just paved the way for "takeovers."

In retrospect, it is amazing that AWP continued to function and accomplish its goals for many years after 1973 with such a loose and leaderless structure, relying on self-initiative and personal commitment. The

fear of elitism continued so strongly that feminist psychology prizes, awards, and keynote speakers at conventions were avoided for years.⁸

The annual conferences

Beginning with the first bylaws meeting in February, 1970, AWP established the tradition of an annual midwinter get together. From 1970-1973, these meetings focused on organizational maintenance, planning for national and regional APA meetings, and exchanging new bibliographies, reading lists, and curricula.

By 1973, however, AWPers were looking for more opportunities to share ideas in feminist psychological research and theory. They realized they knew each other only as activists. A conference with papers and panels might even permit some academic members to obtain institutional travel reimbursement! 1973 was also the year when APA approved a formal psychology of women division (Division 35), the final outgrowth of a task force on women appointed in 1970 (Mednick, 1978). Considerable discussion went into the question of whether AWP ought to fold up its tents now that there was a women's organization within APA, but ultimately it was decided that an independent voice could be useful to pressure APA and to deal with subjects that would probably never interest APA.

Just as Division 35 was approved, then, the first AWP conference on research and theory was held (October, 1973, Fort Wayne, IN). Coordinated by Cathryn Adamsky, it included a lengthy business meeting as well as workshops on sexism, sexuality, women's anger, teaching women psychology, androgyny, concerns of feminist therapists, funding of feminist research, assertion training, etc. The emphasis was on feminist research, assertion training, etc. The emphasis was on feminist research - how to do it, research instruments, were to publish it, how to network, etc. The business meeting intentionally worked to develop feminist process, avoiding traditional Parliamentary Rules of Order in favor of a more inclusive and consensus-oriented style. This still persists in the "Feminist Forum" sessions held at each annual conference.

The second conference occurred in January, 1975, in Carbondale, IL, with many workshops on feminist therapy (technique, ethics, supervision) as well as feminist research and teaching psychology of women. 160 participants registered, with the conference planning done chiefly by graduate students at Southern Illinois University (Laura Brown, Nechama Liss-

⁸ AWP's Distinguished Publication Awards were first given in 1977; after a negative experience in 1978, the next conference keynoter was in 1985.

Levinson, Sandy Webster, Kathy Grady, and Michele Cusatis), some of whom had attended Fort Wayne. Topics were clearly geared to an academic audience of researchers, teachers, therapists, and graduate students. By the third conference, held in Knoxville, TN in January 1976 (attendance about 350; coordinator Sharon Lord), a conference design was beginning to be established: academic setting, heavy use of women's studies student labor, lengthy business meetings, child care, many concurrent workshops and panels on practical and theoretical issues in psychology on women, and lots of socializing.

The conference began to take on some elements of the growing "women's culture" when the fourth conference, in 1977 (St. Louis; attendance about 700), scheduled an evening concert of women's music (Margie Adam)⁹, and the fifth, in 1978 (Pittsburgh; attendance about 1000), scheduled a dance with live music provided by Cassie Culver and the Belle Starr Band. Exhibit rooms of books, crafts, and message buttons also began to appear. In the first years of the conferences, the sight of hundreds of women dancing together was startling to many conference attenders, not to mention hotel employees. Many notables from the new women's music movement (e.g., Holly Near, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Meg Christian) have performed at AWP concerts, and different kinds of bands and deejays performed at the dances (Scovill, 1981). Once AWP decided "stars" were not anathema, feminists outside psychology such as Flo Kennedy, Billye Avery, Pat Schroeder, and Molly Yard were invited to speak. These elements have given the AWP conference a distinctive atmosphere of celebration for feminist psychology's achievements.

Although many presentations could just as easily be given at APA (and some doubtless were!), others clearly would be "too personal," too "outside" acceptable methodologies, "not psychological," or too political. Unger (1982) noted, "At one of the recent AWP midwinter conferences, three of the invited addresses were given by women who were encountering difficulty in obtaining tenure at prestigious institutions. All these women ultimately received negative decisions (p. 9)." The sense of feminist sanctuary, of vacation from reality, has continued to define the AWP

⁹ Adam gave an interview in 1977 in which she discussed "woman-identified" music theory in terms of special rhythm, relationship of melody of chord, tonality, etc. (quotations in Scovill, 1981). Institutions (e.g., publishing houses, film making, feminist therapy, health care, banking) created by and for women constituted "the women's culture" in the early 70s (Kimball, 1981; Echols, 1989).

conference for many attenders.¹⁰ The solidarity and sense of psychic autonomy that come from such experiences help to build the feminist "culture of resistance" back in the "real world" (Freedman, 1979; DuBois, 1980).

Lesbians in AWP

Much of the tone of the conferences and much of the work of the organization has come from the significant lesbian membership. After an initial phase in the women's movement when the label of "lesbian" was used to smear all feminists, and many feminists reflexively and thoughtlessly denied the label, some superficial harmony occurred around the construction "that lesbianism was not simply a bedroom issue...[that] lesbianism was primarily a political choice" (Echols, 1989, P. 216; Dixon, 1988).

In 1973, during a then-typical "marathon" (9:30 AM - 10:30 PM) AWP business meeting chaired by Barbara Wallston at the APA convention in Montreal, an additional purpose for AWP was proposed for the bylaws:

Helping women create individual sexual identities through which they may freely and responsibly express themselves (provided such expression does not oppress other individuals) (AWP Newsletter, 1973, Sept/Oct, p.1).

It was approved at the meeting and by a subsequent mail vote of 91-12 with little debate or controversy. In 1975, a long position paper on women's sexuality appeared in the AWP newsletter:

We believe that the form the sexual identity takes is completely up to the individual woman, so long as...she...does not oppress any other human being(s)...we know that choice of sexual expression may change as the woman and her circumstances change...The self-affirmative woman is a woman who functions as an active member in a partnership of equals...The celibate woman...The lesbian woman...The heterosexual woman...The bisexual woman...we underline our contention that there are no

¹⁰ The most recent example of this occurred at the 16th AWP conference (March, 1991). The conference Coordinator, Joan Chrisler, arranged to have the names of the Hartford hotel's meeting rooms (e.g., Mark Twain Room, Bret Harte Room) temporarily replaced by Connecticut women's names (e.g., Ella Grasso Room, Harriet Beecher Stowe Room, Alice Paul Room, etc.) It is a sign of the times that many of the younger attenders never realized these were not the "real" names of the rooms, while many older attenders realized immediately that AWP had transformed the Sheraton Hartford!

individual solutions; the personal is always the political. All women must be free to create their own sexual choice based on their own bodies and experiences. (Childs, Sachnoff & Stocker, 1975, p. 1, 4, 5).

This compromise recognized the oppressive social constructions of sexuality (which must be opposed as a group), and the acceptability of diverse individual paths (which must be accepted by the group). In avoiding the political language popular at the time (e.g., were lesbians the most woman-identified feminists?), AWP's statement avoided creating a politically correct sexuality which would have fragmented and polarized the group.

The Fall 1975 newsletter announced the formation of a lesbian caucus in AWP as a joint effort of AWP and AGP (the Association of Gay Psychologists). Its first discussion focussed on decreasing sexism in AGP, and on lesbian issues in psychotherapy. The caucus waxed and waned over the years. In 1981 it proposed a long resolution, approved by the membership, advocating greater awareness and visibility for lesbian issues at the annual conference. However, some intense dissent was expressed (some dissenters identified as lesbians), that the caucus was endorsing too much separatism and the organization as a whole would suffer. By 1984 "the productive collaboration of lesbian and straight women" was being cited as "one of the strengths of AWP as an organization" (Horst, 1984). An annual prize for outstanding lesbian publications began in 1989. Every survey of AWP membership indicates approximately equal numbers of lesbian and heterosexual women, and conscious effort is expended to keep the governing group ratio approximately that as well.

Feminist Therapy

Feminist therapy has been important since the very founding of AWP, when sexist psychotherapy and psychotherapists were among the original targets for change. A recurring agenda item became the creation of a nationwide feminist therapist register for referral, self-referral, networking, and therapy research. First mentioned in 1972, persons self-defined as "feminist therapists" were asked to provide "a sentence or two to identify yourself within the broad range of feminist viewpoints," for a national list (AWP Newsletter, 1972, September/October, p. 6).

In 1974, the feminist therapy committee asked for bibliographies and references for a clinician's guide to psychotherapy and women. The 1975 (2nd) annual conference had several feminist therapy workshops. "Feminist Therapy: A beginning statement" appeared in the newsletter in 1975, emphasizing the importance of a therapy process which eliminated the

therapist/client hierarchy, and recommending the therapy content include discussion about women's social position and oppression (Sachnoff, 1975a). An effort to define qualifications for feminist therapists was made, while recognizing that "many competent feminist therapists are not part of the establishment credential system." The first national conference of feminist therapists was scheduled for January, 1976, sponsored by Anne Schaefer's Women's Institute of Alternative Psychotherapy.

A major statement by Elaine Sachnoff, "Toward a definition of Feminist Therapy," appeared in the Fall, 1975 newsletter asking feminist therapists 29 questions ("Should feminist therapy only be done in groups?" "Do you treat men?" "How would you describe a healthy female?" "Do you ever refuse clients?" "What is a successful treatment?"). Additional state roster coordinator, bibliographies, and feminist internships were solicited. But, criteria for inclusion on the feminist therapy roster continued to be elusive. In 1979, AWP endorsed the principles concerning the counseling and therapy of women written by an ad hoc committee in the APA Counseling division and endorsed by the divisions of Psychotherapy and the Psychology of Women as well. It was a liberal document, recommending nonsexist techniques, language and goals, and expressly prohibiting sexual contact between counselors and women clients. In the 1980s, the Feminist Therapy Institute became the organization devoted to feminist therapy issues (e.g., ethics, credentializing, training, supervision), and AWP ended its efforts at making lists. Many would say, however, that the annual AWP conference continues to be dominated by feminist therapy issues of content, theory and practice.

Continuing Challenges: 1976-1990

Organizational struggles

Every issue of the AWP newsletter in the 70s contains complaints over organizational structure and function. Recurring examples: few attend the business meetings to discuss issues of policy or organizational function; decisions must be made between business meetings, but the loose-knit committee structure seems to preclude this; decisions at business meetings are to be ratified in the newsletter, but less than 5% of the membership bothers to vote; members drop out of a particular committee or task but if no one volunteers to continue, the task may be forgotten and opportunities missed, etc.

At the 1979 APA business meeting in August, a decision was made to have a Working Conference on Problems of Growth in AWP the following

Thanksgiving weekend in New York. All members were invited. A lengthy report appeared in the June/July, 1980 AWP newsletter:

The goal of the meeting was to identify problems associated with AWP's growth...AWP is a feminist, non-hierarchic organization, and relies on active member participation, rather than on a set of "officers" to maintain the organization and get work done...[But] because we come to AWP with training and experience working in hierarchic organizations,...we have learned to expect direction and supervision...and we become impatient with the apparent cumbersomeness of...[AWP's] process of open discussion, active decision-making and taking initiative...AWP needs a decision-making structure to deal with organizational matters between meetings and beyond the scope of standing committees...A seven-person structure [is proposed] (Marlowe, Jenkins, Grady, & Bob, 1980).

Thus, the Implementation Collective, or "Imps" was born. Ten years after its founding, AWP returned to the familiarity of an ongoing central structure, with a fixed number of people in specific roles with task assignments. This structure persists until the present. The Implementation Collective has grown to 11 members who volunteer for terms of three years. Most of their Imp-related expenses are reimbursed, and there are four Collective meetings per year (one at APA, one at AWP's midwinter/national conference, and two additional Imp weekends). Needless to say, as a result of such an intense working arrangement, Imps become friends, initiate and develop projects together, and see themselves as responsible for "running" the organization. Most Imps are relative AWP newcomers, and have no recollection of a pre-Imp AWP. Their implicit support for AWP's increasing ("efficient") centralization is shown by how easily issues raised at a business meeting during the APA and AWP conference are tabled to be discussed at the next Imp meeting - which will have only Imps in attendance!

Not for many years has AWP had "marathon" business meetings where issues were hashed out line by line by a large and heterogeneous gathering. The Imps have developed various policy guidelines to make their decision-making consistent and accountable, such as fiscal guidelines which specify how individuals or groups can apply for AWP monies, liaison guidelines specifying what AWP expects of individuals who serve as liaison to other feminist or professional groups, guidelines for people interested in setting up a regional AWP, etc. Casual policy changes can overlap fundamental organizational decisions, however, as when a revised AWP

brochure includes several new objectives ("combatting the oppression of women of color," for example), which do not appear in the bylaws.

Over the last decade, AWP has clearly moved in the direction of "institutionalization," as that term is usually meant (Turner & Killian, 1957). However, since there is no paid staff or headquarters, and Imps can be located anywhere, the business of the organization is still subject to all sorts of interference and inefficiency. Newsletter editors quit abruptly, mailing labels can be at the opposite end of the country from the newsletter editor or treasurer, and the official stationery moves whenever the stationery volunteer changes! The "amateur" feel to AWP's operations has served to counterbalance or perhaps disguise some of the centralization introduced by the growing power of the Imps.

The traditional AWP attention to "feminist process" is still apparent. Imp decisions are almost always made by consensus, any member can add to the agenda, there is conscious effort to respect and affirm each woman's individual life circumstances, nonjudgmental attitudes and open communication are reinforced, inexperienced AWP members are recruited to learn leadership skills as Imps, etc. (Hawthurst & Morrow, 1984). As founding member Leigh Marlowe wrote while serving as Imp coordinator, "We've tried to put our ideology into practice in the structure and function of our organization" (Marlowe, 1981, p.1). Loraine Obler (1989), then Imp coordinator, recently described again the persistent tensions over power, inclusion and efficiency which arise from feminist dedication to process.

International activities

One of the most important feminist events occurring during AWP's lifetime was the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985). Denyse Barbet volunteered in 1976 to serve as AWP's representative to the UN, and AWP became an official Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with observer status. Over the years Barbet, Diane Borchelt and Diane Simpson attended UN briefings for NGO representatives and kept AWP informed through the newsletter. For example, since the UN "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" was proposed in 1979, AWP has periodically, unsuccessfully, petitioned the U.S. Senate to ratify (over 100 nations, from Angola to Zambia, have already signed).

As plans were being completed for the final event of the Decade, a gigantic women's conference to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. AWP was invited to provide resource persons on women's mental health issues for a pre-conference meeting in Vienna. Susan Gore, then Imp coordinator, obtained a foundation grant (AWP's first and only) for travel to the meeting, and for a working conference in New York to brainstorm ideas for a resource

document. A California group completed the draft, and six members of AWP presented "An International Feminist Mental Health Agenda for the Year 2000" in Nairobi in July, 1985.¹¹ This document marks AWP's only contribution to feminist efforts to develop policy statements on women's psychological problems and their causes (Russo, 1985; Russo & Denmark, 1984; Walker, 1984). Few AWP members, however, have demonstrated interest in AWP's international potential, and there was even newsletter criticism about "the whole Nairobi caper" (Marlowe, 1985).

Movement issues: ERA, abortion and diagnostic nomenclature

Over the years, AWP has signed amicus briefs on several abortion cases pursued by the American Civil Liberties Union or Planned Parenthood and participated in pro-choice activities, despite newsletter complaints from anti-abortion members. AWP supported the Equal Rights constitutional Amendment (ERA) sent by Congress to the states for ratification in 1972, and participated in the National Organization for Women (NOW) march in Washington, D.C. in support of the extension of the ratification deadline. In 1980, AWP helped the newly formed National Coalition of Psychologists for the ERA (coordinated by Nancy Felipe Russo) work for the APA convention boycott of unratified states.¹²

The major political activity undertaken by AWP since APA's Town Hall meetings in the 1970's probably was the mid-1980s protest of several new diagnostic categories proposed for the third edition of the American Psychiatric Association's (ApA) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Under the leadership of Lenore Walker, a coalition of women's caucuses and groups, including the Association for Women Psychiatrists, the women's committee of the National Association of Social Workers, and the women's study group of the American Orthopsychiatric Association wrote piles of letters, and finally joined AWP in picketing the ApA 1986 convention. Following "months of vigorous opposition by

¹¹ It was given again at the 24th International Congress of Psychology in Sydney, Australia in 1988. Copies of this 24 page document are still available from Suzanna Rose, Department of Psychology, University of Missouri, St. Louis, MO 63121 for a contribution of \$5.

¹² For those with short memories, the ERA's ratification time elapsed in 1982.

feminist groups," the disputed diagnostic categories¹³ were added to the DSM, but only in the appendix (Boffey, 1986, p. A14). But, it was not easy for AWP to take these actions. The Implementation Collective worried that it lacked authority from the membership for this sort of action, and indecision limited options.

Antiracism and multiculturalism

AWP, in its newsletter, prizes, conferences and projects, has paid sporadic attention to the fact that it is overwhelmingly a white women's organization. Conference themes have often sounded multicultural, e.g. 1981: "Feminism in the 80s: Weaving new connections," 1983: "Bonding between women," 1986: "Global issues, local solutions," etc., but little effort actually went into confronting racial and ethnic issues until the late 1980s. At the 1981 Boston conference, the business meetings were lengthy and acrimonious because AWP and its convention planners were accused of various "isms," especially anti-semitism. The fact that business meetings were scheduled on the Jewish sabbath, the absence of religious services, and the absence of kosher food options were all seen as indicating disrespect for observant Jewish members and conference attendees. Although the group decided against special religious services or other conference provisions, an additional purpose was added to the bylaws:

Working to eliminate any practices and prejudices which divide women from one another, such as racism, heterosexism, ageism, classism, or conflicts arising from differing religious orientations (AWP newsletter, 1982, March/April, p.1).

No committee or other institutional structure was created, however, to attend to this purpose, and throughout the 1980s, letters to the newsletter continued to complain about various aspects of AWP's institutional racism such as scheduling conflicts and poor attendance at conference sessions on ethnic minority issues. When Oliva Espin became Membership Imp in 1987, she invited many women of color to join, but racism remained a low priority and low visibility issue.

¹³ Self-defeating personality disorder; premenstrual [or periluteal phase] dysphoric disorder; sadistic personality disorder. Paraphilic coercive disorder was eliminated altogether. AWP newsletter editors (July, 1986) suggested (tongue-in-cheek) their own new diagnoses: "adjustment disorder with politically reactionary features; simple homophobia; pseudoprofessional identity disorder"!

Finally, at the Newport, RI, conference in 1989, a breakfast meeting for women of color was scheduled, and the group which met developed an initial agenda to deal with the underrepresentation of women of color within AWP.¹⁴ Items included were a women of color caucus, a woman of color position on the Imps, an anti-racist policy within AWP, an ethnic/racial issues prize, active recruitment of women of color within regional chapters, having conference applicants indicate their paper's relevance to women of color, etc. Ruth Hall volunteered to coordinate the new caucus. Within a year, the membership had approved the additional Imp position and the Imps had revised their job descriptions to add anti-racism elements. Each Imp wrote her personal reactions to their anti-racism training workshop in the Spring 1990 newsletter, and racism training workshop in the Spring 1990 newsletter, and racism issues have been prominent in the newsletter since then. AWP may be able to make use of the experiences of other feminist professional/academic organizations such as the National Women's Studies Association in working towards antiracism and multiculturalism (Leidner, 1991).

Conclusion

In memorial articles are beginning to appear in the AWP newsletter, although they more often commemorate feminist psychologists cut down in their prime than AWPers who have died at a ripe old age. Nevertheless, the membership is aging, and thoughts are turning to creating an agenda which will excite younger women. AWP lost its activist edge when it won its early professional struggles, and never created a structure to find and fight new battles. It continues as a vibrant organization making important contributions to its members' lives and to psychology through its annual conference and regional chapters. It continues to be an example of feminist process at work. As always in an historical sketch, one ends by wondering what the future holds.¹⁵

¹⁴ A Jewish Women's Caucus also came together at the Newport conference, and has successfully lobbied for program time during subsequent conferences. Changing times seem to have dictated that the Sabbath celebration ruled out of bounds in 1981 emerged, uncontested, in 1991. The Imps had an anti-Semitism workshop recently. A recent newsletter article clarified that the Jewish Women's Caucus emerged not because of anti-Semitism in AWP, but rather because of "invisibility" in the women's movement, including AWP (Weiner, 1991).

¹⁵ Thanks to Nancy Felipe Russo for excellent editing assistance.

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- Association for Women Psychologists (1970a, September). Psychology and the new woman: Statement of the Association for Women Psychologists to the American Psychological Association, 6 pg unpublished ms.
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- Obler, L. (1989, Fall). Tensions in feminist process. AWP Newsletter, p. 1, 4. Brecksville, OH.
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- Sachnoff, E. (1975b, Fall). Toward a definition of feminist therapy. AWP Newsletter, p. 4-5., Marne, MI.
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Appendix

Distinguished Publication Awards of AWP

1977

- Henley, N. (1976) Body Politics: Power, sex and nonverbal communication. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Condry, J., & Dyer S. (1976) Fear of success: Attributing cause to the victim. Journal of Social Issues, 32, 63-84.
- Tangri, S. (1976) A feminist perspective on ethical issues in population programs. Signs, 1, 895-904.

1978

- Eagly, A. (1978) Sex differences in influenceability. Psychological Bulletin, 85, 86-116.
- Frodi, A., Macaulay, J. & Thome, P. (1977) Are women always less aggressive than men? A review of the empirical literature. Psychological Bulletin, 84, 634-660.
- O'Leary, V. (1977) Toward understanding women. Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole.
- Tiefer, L. (1977) The context and consequences of contemporary sex research: A feminist analysis. In W. McGill, D., Dewsbury & B. Sachs (Eds.) Sex and Behavior: Status and prospectus. NY: Plenum Press.
- Bernard, Jessie. A Distinguished Career Award.

1979

- Hare-Mustin, R. (1978) A feminist approach to family therapy. Family Process, 17, 181-194.
- Walker, L. (1979) The battered woman. NY: Harper & Row.
- Tobach, Ethel. A Distinguished Career Award.

1980

- Gilligan, C. (1979) Woman's place in man's life cycle. Harvard Educational Review, 49.
- Sherif, C.W. (1979) Bias in psychology. In J. Sherman & E. Beck (Eds.) The prism of sex: Essays in the sociology of knowledge. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Miller, Jean Baker. A Distinguished Career Award.

1981

- Riger, S. & Galligan, P. (1980) Women in management: An exploration of competing paradigms. American Psychologist, 35, 902-910.
- Rush, F. (1980) The best-kept secret. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- O'Connell, A. & Russo, N.F. (Eds.) Fall, 1980, issue of Psychology of Women Quarterly, "Eminent women in psychology: Models of achievement." (Commendation).

1982

- Lott, B. (1981) Becoming a Woman. Springfield, IL: C.C. Thomas.
- Block, Jeanne. For her work on the Time-Life film, "The pinks and the blues." (a posthumous award).

1983 No awards

1984

- Golub, S. (Ed.) (1984) Menarche: The transition from girl to woman. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath)
- Laws, S. (1983) The sexual politics of pre-menstrual tension. Women's Studies International Forum, 6, 19-31.
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- Frieze, Irene Hansen. A Distinguished Career Award.

1985

- Major, B., McFarlin, D. & Gagnon, D. (1984) Overworked and underpaid: On the nature of sex differences in personal entitlement. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 47, 1399-1412.
- O'Leary, V., Unger, R.K., & Wallston, B.S. (1985) Women, gender and social psychology. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Vance, C. (Ed.) (1984) Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

1986

- Keller, E.F. (1986) Reflections on gender and science. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Koss, M. (1985) The hidden rape victim: Personality, attitudinal, and situational characteristics. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 9, 193-212.
- Walker, L. (ed.) (1984) Women and mental health policy. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. (Including a special mention to Deborah Belle's chapter, "Inequality and mental health: Low income and minority women.") Denmark, Florence. A Distinguished Career Award.

1987

- Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N. & Tarule, J. (1986) Women's ways of knowing. NY: Basic Books.
- Datan, N. (1986) Corpses, lepers, and menstruating women: Tradition, transition, and the sociology of knowledge. Sex Roles, 14, 693-704.
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1988

- Boston Lesbian Book Collective (Eds.) (1987) Lesbian psychologies: Explorations and challenges. Urbana: IL: University of Illinois Press.

1989

- Bronstein, P. & Quina, K. (1988) Teaching a psychology of people. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Fine, M. & Asch, A. (Eds.) (1988) Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture and politics. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
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1990

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1991

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Tallen, B. (1991) Twelve-step programs: A lesbian-feminist critique. National Women's Studies Association Journal, 2, 390-407.

Russo, Nancy Felipe. A Distinguished Career Award.