

A Brief History of AWP, the Association for Women in Psychology:
Part II (1991-2008)ⁱ

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Energy...Safety...Acceptance...Stimulation...Brilliance...
Celebration... Balm after months on the academic
treadmill...Challenge...Affirmation...Examine taken-for-
granted models...Sharing...Equal chance to participate...
Inclusive program...Friendliness...Understanding
audience...Feedback and support...A Gift from AWP to
me...

Comments on the Hartford 1991 conference,
Spring 1991 newsletter

Each aspect of the conference was positive and startling...it
was an amazing opportunity to be in the presence of over
1000 intellectual women pursuing their careers in
psychology...I want every student to have this opportunity..it
has been life transforming.

Annie Kohlman, Sophomore, Connecticut College,
Following 1998 conference in Baltimore,
Summer 1998 newsletter

There's no mysterious machine behind it all. It's us - AWP
members who decided to volunteer some of our time...former
lurkers, students, some new to AWP, and all with busy, crazy
lives, but who decided to step up and take on a role for a little
while to keep the organization running.

Heather Macalister, incoming newsletter editor
Fall 2002 newsletter

I. INTRODUCTION

We are all postmodernists now, so there can never be just one history (or herstory, as many feminists prefer) of AWP. While that's a relief, it's still daunting to put down on paper a summary of the activities and philosophy of a vital organization that is such an important part of my life and that of many friends and colleagues. Because we live in the age of electronic magic, however, once this history is printed and then posted online I hope others will be inspired to produce their versions, or at least to offer comments, additions and corrections to this one.

AWP is such a non-authoritarian and decentralized organization that although I was "authorized" to write this history (i.e., when I volunteered, the Impsⁱⁱ said "OK"), I

have received no further instructions or directions. Thus I take responsibility for all errors, omissions, slights, misinterpretations, and failures of perspective. I have limited the mention of individual women's names in this history because there is no way to do justice through equal inclusion, so I am simply opting for justice through equal exclusion. I hope this was the right choice. Please don't be mad.

Reviewing the past 20 and 40 years of AWP is a sobering experience, let me say, in terms of the enormous social changes that have occurred. Sexism was real and daunting and much has changed, though much remains. Let it be noted, however, that I am writing this during the month that Barack Obama is inaugurated President of the US, so social change continues!

This Part II (1991-2008) of AWP's history will begin with a reprise of Part I (1969-1991) to set the stage. Then I will go on briefly to describe a bit of the social context of AWP's second 20 years, including some of the political, professional psychology and feminist highlights. Then I will describe some of the themes of AWP in our second 20 years and some special AWP events which occurred during this time and conclude with a few hesitant predictions about AWP's future.

II. REPRISING AWP'S HISTORY, PART I: 1969-1991

A. The founding of AWP (see Tiefer, 1991a, 1991b, for extensive description, documentation and analysis of these events; all quotes from that report)ⁱⁱⁱ

Advocating for civil rights was in the air in the 1960s. Many women and African-American members of the American Psychological Association (APA) ended the decade of the 1960s with years of experience organizing and demonstrating against injustice and stereotyping, and a new-found sense of entitlement to equal opportunity. In the past, a now forgotten World War II-era organization, the National Council of Women Psychologists, had applied repeatedly for APA divisional membership, but been turned down. However, new energy for women's rights built in the late 1960s through new "women's studies" college courses and "consciousness-raising" discussion groups.

At the September, 1969 APA convention, held in Chicago (and Chicago, 1968, should ring a few historical bells), women psychologists became involved in an escalating series of meetings and events. A workshop on woman-themed academic courses led to a rap session on sexism at the APA convention that in turn led to an informal advice booth near the APA Job Placement Center and a decision to prepare petitions calling for an end to discrimination against women and policies such as childcare at future conventions.

In the midst of all this meeting and scheming and writing, "on the evening of the third day of the Chicago convention," about three dozen activist APA attenders created a new organization (AWP). Drawing attention to the importance of democratic processes, its first press release said 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." **Bold!**

Within six months of the Chicago events the nascent AWP had elected officers, written by-laws, and decided on dues, subcommittees and a mission statement:

AWP is a non-profit scientific and educational organization of psychologists and others concerned with sex roles in our changing society...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.

Our new organization created a space from which to challenge both the sexist intellectual content of psychology and the sexist organizational features of the APA. It allowed feminist psychologists to meet and work together on their common project of reform and transformation.

B. The first 20 years of AWP

The main achievements of AWP's first twenty years were:

- Generating and maintaining a feminist structure that would be neither leaderless nor hierarchical (tricky!), including:
 - Eliminating the initial electoral processes and rewriting the bylaws - several times!
 - Designing a non-elected, *volunteer* leadership team with 3-year terms named the "Implementation Collective" to coordinate the organization's activities
 - Chair (CoCo); AWP/APA Suite Coordinator; Annual Conferences Coordinator; Membership Coordinator; Newsletter Editor; Recorder/correspondent; Spokesperson; Treasurer; Staffer/Regions Coordinator; Women of Color Coordinator
 - Producing quarterly newsletters, a treasury, a fiscal policy, dues and banking activities
 - Starting some special interest caucuses and regional groups
- Supporting a financially profitable annual conference (first one 1973; average attendance 400-800) that combined professional psychology, academic psychology, women's craft and music culture, feminist activism, and supportive sisterhood;
 - The conferences, too, were run entirely on volunteer power
- Helping to establish APA's Committee on Women in Psychology, Office of Women's Programs, and Division on Women while resisting being folded into them;^{iv,v}
- Welcoming academic and nonacademic women, therapists and nonclinicians, lesbian and nonlesbian women, students and seniors;
- Maintaining international awareness and involvement through "consultative status" at the UN and presenting a panel at the 1985 World Women's Conference in Nairobi, Kenya (part of the United Nations'

Decade on Women) on “An International Feminist Mental Health Agenda for the year 2000”

By the time of the 1991 AWP conference (the 16th, held that year in Hartford, CT) the organization seemed as secure as a completely volunteer operation could be. The absence of any central office or structure meant that each new treasurer, secretary, membership chair and newsletter editor had to create her own system. There were, predictably, numerous glitches in this process, as when a new role-occupant was not up to the job or lost focus partway through her term. Despite this, throughout the ‘70s and ‘80s AWP had a dues-paying membership of somewhere between 400 and 1200 (no one seems to have the numbers) that was able to produce annual memorable midwinter conferences (once or twice exceeding 1000 attendees), organize an annual program and shared hospitality suite with Division 35 during the gigantic APA conference each year, and encourage a few regional chapters (many came and went over the years). Many women found sanctuary and support in the AWP friendship network over these years as feminist psychology struggled to make its place in the worlds of activism, academia, and clinical service.

III. THE LARGER SOCIAL, PSYCHOL AND FEMINIST CONTEXT OF AWP’S SECOND 20 YEARS: (1989-2009)

Social. If the politics of the 1970s and 1980s were dominated by populist revolutions and conservative reactions (cf. student and other rights and counterculture movements followed by culture wars, rightwing triumphs and Reaganomics), the 1990s and early 2000s have been dominated by the dissolution of the Soviet Union (“end of the Cold War”), growing religious fundamentalisms, rapid economic globalization and privatization of public services, global warming, and specific events such as the reunification of Germany, the end of racial apartheid in South Africa, ethnic wars, the feminization of AIDS, worldwide refugees, the 9/11 attack on New York and Washington, the return of leftist governments in Latin America, and the economic collapse of 2008. These kinds of events directly and indirectly affected AWP members in their international feminist work, personal economic status, campus events, and clinical work (e.g., changes in health care funding, cutbacks in academia, welfare reform, and escalating migration).

Technology. On the technocultural level, these two decades saw dramatic personal, organizational and occupational transformations resulting from the new internet (e.g., websites, e-mail, blogging, online professional education), communication (e.g., cellphone, texting, powerpoint, electronic publishing), reproductive and entertainment (e.g., VHS, DVD, iPod) technologies. AWP’s Implementation Collective members, along with everyone else, more or less enthusiastically embraced the technologies to facilitate communication, produce a newsletter and liven up conference presentations. We have yet to use our AWPpsych.org website, tho, in a full or fully interactive way. Clearly that is in our near future. Feminist psychologists have benefited greatly already, however, from internet listservs specializing in psychology, women’s studies, reproductive rights, etc.

One downside of all of this technomagic is that much of AWP’s history over these 20 years is contained in email exchanges and document revisions which were not preserved and will never be archived. The loss of our historical record has certainly

made this history-writing task more difficult. I had to deal with a lot of old musty paper (and microfiche!) in 1991 while writing the first part of our history, but at least it was there to find! By contrast, in 2009 I googled as I wrote and searched back issues of journals online, able to research differently because of the internet.

Psychology. Over the past twenty years, psychology grappled with cognitive and neuroscience explosions as well as the growth of LGBT and multicultural studies, contended with the expansion of psychopharmaceuticals and new mental health diagnoses (especially for children and teens), and confronted the increasing focus on evidence-based science/practice.

This period saw the “feminization of psychology” as women became the majority of academic psychology majors and graduate students. Women clearly made inroads into professional leadership and academic employment, although “the higher the rank the fewer the women” remained the rule. The larger numbers of women in psychology did not necessarily mean more feminism in psychology, however, a topic AWPers repeatedly addressed.

This twenty year period saw the mainstreaming within psychology of many topics first introduced by feminist psychologists such as eating disorders, body image, rape and child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and qualitative and constructivist research methodologies. However, AWPers often asked whether these topics lost their feminist focus, i.e., dual interest in political action and social determinants, during this process. Focusing on the “victimized” individual in conventional research and clinical treatments probably helped many individual women (as clients and in careers), but may have often rendered larger social context aspects less visible.

Feminism. Over this twenty year period, there were many political advances for women along with many continuing women’s rights and culture wars issues around the world. Women achieved leadership in many sectors, from business ownership to politics (three US Secretaries of State and one Speaker of the US House of Representatives) to journal editors and academic department chairs. Ironically, career advancements have sapped the time of many talented and committed feminists for volunteer organizational activities, a problem for AWP that several women I interviewed mentioned.

In women’s studies, this period showed the deconstruction of the essential “woman” category and an increasing interest in “intersectionality,” or the idea that gender does not exist in isolation from other identity aspects such as race and social class. The use of gender as an isolated independent variable persisted in mainstream psychology, however.

Within psychotherapies, this period marked the emergence of important texts from AWP members, Feminist Therapy Institute (FTI) members, and Division 35 members. New, inclusive, reformed approaches that integrated feminist elements into traditional behavior, analytic and family approaches became mainstream (Enns, 2004).

IV. NINE THEMES OF AWP’S SECOND 20 YEARS

A. Antiracism and Multiculturalism

Probably the single most sustained theme throughout AWP’s past 20 years has been the prominent emphasis on antiracism and multiculturalism. Although there had been a small active group of ethnic minority members at AWP conferences in the first

twenty years, AWP was undeniably a white women's organization. In 1989, during the conference held in Newport, RI, a Women of Color Caucus (WCC) came together that soon planned a menu of activities designed to make it clear that AWP was more than merely "open" to all women, that AWP *actively* reached out to Women of Color (WOC) and looked forward to thereby *sharing and enlarging* its vision of feminist psychology. To that end the AWP conference soon supported a special hotel suite for WCC socializing as well as a daylong pre-conference WCC Institute that focused on ethnic minority issues and experiences. There were special WCC prizes beginning in 1991. The Coordinator of the WCC became a regular member of the Imps and, beginning in 1990, challenged and encouraged the Imps to participate in anti-racism workshops for their own growth and to influence the organization. These occurred throughout the 1990s, and although they were costly in terms of time and funds, the Imps persisted with their commitment. Numerous WOC panels were organized for AWP conferences, and eminent academic, political, and arts-world WOC often gave introductory remarks or keynote addresses. There was even for a while a special WCC liaison to the AWP newsletter. As a consequence of this multi-focal effort, the number of WOC and subjects that include WOC increased over the years to the point where now AWP is regarded as a welcoming home by many long-standing WCC members.

In 1989, a Jewish Women's Caucus (JWC) was also created, not so much to increase the number of Jewish feminist women at AWP as to address issues of anti-semitism within feminism and to explore psychological topics relevant to Jewish feminists, therapists and academics. Several anti-semitism workshops was held for the Imps, and reactions of the Imps that appeared in the Spring/Summer 1990 newsletter illuminated the value such a workshop can have. A successful stand-alone conference on "Judaism, Feminism and Psychology" was held in Seattle in 1992 with AWP's financial help. The JWC requested a Feminist Shabbat be scheduled on the Friday evening of each AWP conference. This event would have shocked and troubled AWP in earlier years, and it was not welcomed by the Imps in the early 1990s, either. A JWC representative was appointed to serve with the Imps for one year, and gradually, more acceptance and harmony was created. The Shabbat ceremony became an annual conference event attended by numerous Jewish and non-Jewish women and has expanded to include diverse feminist ritual elements. Several edited books and prizes emerged from the JWC, and I would venture that any and all publications over these years with "Jewish feminist psychology" somewhere in the title or subtitle have been written by AWP members or conference attenders.

I like to think all this effort has in large part fulfilled the hope Oliva Espin expressed in a Fall, 1990 newsletter essay on feminist psychology's myopias. "Having said all that has *not* been done so far, I would like to say that I believe AWP is in a unique position to be at the forefront of an inclusive feminist theory. The new WOC and JWC, the new Imp WOC Coordinator ... provide a unique opportunity for these developments to take place."

There have been less successful efforts to expand the antiracism and multiculturalism work to AWP regional conferences. A sprinkling of such workshops occurred and attenders were flattering (e.g., Minneapolis, 1992), but the irregularity of regional efforts made it impossible to sustain this effort. NY started a local WCC in 1992

by calling every NY and NJ woman listed in the *Directory of Ethnic Minority Professionals in Psychology* but it only lasted 2 years.

B. Persistent Organizational Crises

A less visible, but no less persistent, theme over these years has been the stream of organizational crises. If it wasn't a lengthy membership renewal delay, it was an absence of treasurers' recordkeeping. If it wasn't a lost membership database, it was unpaid bills to creditors. If it wasn't lost banking records it was Imps owed hundreds of dollars for expenses. If it wasn't the unexpected withdrawal of a promised conference location, it was the need for the Imps themselves to organize the conference. If it wasn't the huge delay or even absence of a post-conference report, it was the shortage of volunteers for upcoming Imp roles. There were all sorts of conflicts over the costs of the annual hospitality suite shared with Division 35 at APA. Once a newsletter issue had to be cut. Another time regional chapters kicked in to the national organization with much-needed funds. With every bylaws revision, the newsletter would have a ballot, but very few would take the time to vote and mail their ballot. Get the picture? There always seemed to be something, and usually more than one thing at a time.

With each member of the Imps, including the Chairperson (called "Coco" for "Collective Coordinator") leaving every three years, it was hard to preserve institutional memory and continuity. "Fiscal policy" guidelines specifying what the AWP treasury would and wouldn't pay for were sometimes lost, sometimes found, and often rewritten. Fundamental decisions were repeatedly discussed and tabled, and eventually either abandoned or resolved: Should we hire a professional conference organizer? Should we pay for a database manager? Should we pay the costs to have conference registrations handled online? Should we have a journal, and how would it work? Should we put the newsletter online? Who would take charge of the archives? Who should be responsible for the website?

Some of the problems are common to every professional organization and just have to be expected. Some occurred because of changing (ever-ever-ever-changing) electronic technologies. Others, however, highlight the special challenges of all-volunteer organizations without a central office where there is little training, skills vary widely, and there is no performance review. A couple of AWPers I interviewed suggested, moreover, that a culture of friendship dominates in AWP, and being supportive and nonjudgmental may be promoted at the expense of competence and accountability. Others suggested that there has been too much revolving door activity among the Imps, with previous Imps buttonholed for new roles, rather than extensive searching for fresh talent each time a position opened (although that might have helped with institutional continuity). Others attributed the recurring shortage of able volunteers to new elements in the social context, such as escalating pressures on new PhDs to publish a lot and do things on their campuses, and the limited time and resources of non-academic psychologists.

Symbolically, as this history is written, we are preparing to return to Newport, RI, for the 2009 conference. Ten years ago, in 1999, we were in Providence, RI at a conference organized by the *same* conference coordinator, and twenty years ago, 1989, we were in Newport *again* with the *same* conference coordinator, Kat Quina, one of AWP's stalwart academic members (and not incidentally, the founding moderator of the Psychology of Women Online Listserv, POWR-L, in 1995). As Kat's generation (and

mine!), the group that joined AWP in the 1970s and made it their professional home, retires, AWP will need new reservoirs of talent, availability and commitment. Meanwhile, loyalty carries the day and long-time members step up to the plate.

C. Caucuses and Regional Chapters

The AWP Bylaws^{vi} provide for a small number of structures, including Regional Chapters and Caucuses (special interest groups). Over our last 20 years, there have been several very active caucuses (founding year in parentheses): WOC (1989), Jewish Women (1989), Bisexuality and Sexual Diversity (1993), Older Women (now somewhat dormant) (1992), Student (1993), Experimental (1994) (now renamed Researcher), Mothering (2005), and Size Acceptance (2008).

Members of these caucuses added programming to the annual AWP conferences by organizing symposia, round-table discussions, pre-conference sessions, social events, and awards. They fulfill an AWP feminist goal by supplying a grassroots element to the organization. The impetus for a caucus initially arises from a felt need -- general sociological marginality or AWP programmatic absence. Sometimes a single energetic and charismatic person will initiate a caucus (tho such energy and focus can be accompanied by headstrong and prickly behaviors!). Sometimes a presentation at the conference will, unexpectedly, be so well attended that the need for some enduring attention will be obvious (this seems to have happened in 1992 with a bisexuality session and in 2005 after a motherhood session). Friendships and professional connections are made during the organizing and for several years there will be lots of activity. Eventually, people move on, either to other roles in AWP (e.g., non-caucus roles on the Imps, conference organizing), or out of AWP. But even if caucus activity dwindles, its focus will often have become more visibly incorporated into feminist psychology. This is the case with the now-dormant Older Women's Caucus which generated a number of books, research initiatives, and excellent conference contributions.

Regional chapters of AWP have also been created in several ways. Perhaps most common is that a group that has worked together for months to put on an annual AWP conference will decide to transform their working group into an ongoing support group or an educational and professional networking group for local feminist psychologists. This has happened all over the US, with these groups tending to last for at least a year or two.

There have been quite a few small conferences put on by regional groups. Los Angeles chapter had an antiracism training in 1990. AWP offers \$500 to any region that organizes an anti-racism training. Western MA and VT chapters put on conferences in 1991. AZ chapter sponsored trainings for women interested in becoming witnesses in domestic violence legal cases. A Southern Regional chapter encompassing the 11 states below the Mason-Dixon line had conferences in '94, '95, '96, and '97. There was a CT/RI/NH conference in '94. The Bay Area put on small conferences in 1991 and 1997. RI chapter seems to have had many annual clambakes! A group in UT meets regularly as does a group in Philadelphia.

Currently, the AWP website lists fifteen regional groups.^{vii} There have been larger numbers listed in previous years (26 in 1990, 29 in 1991, 32 in 1992, 22 in 2005), but not all of them have been active.

D. Activism

AWP is explicitly “a scientific and educational organization”, but our mission statement includes 11 itemized “purposes” (see bylaws on awpsych.org) that can easily turn into action. We have pursued many issues, but our activism has been a bit scattershot. Incoming CoCos and other Imps often have professional or political issues about which they feel strongly and want to generate activism. Here are a few from the past 20 years: managed care, more women on journal editorial boards, identifying women in international political documents, challenging prescription privileges for psychologists, community education for rape resistance, domestic violence awareness, increasing research on the psychological needs of poor women, decrying sanctioned gang rapes in Pakistan, analyzing gender bias in diagnosis, supporting Afghan women, affirming diversity, ending the war in Iraq, challenging the medicalization of sexuality, etc. A real potpourri.

In 1992 (Long Beach), we left the conference site to march with Cal State and independent feminist groups to show support for a sexual assault response team in the local police department. When there was upcoming anti-GLBT-rights legislation in Portland, OR, a group headed by Maryka Biaggio offered to host the annual conference in 1996 so that if the discriminatory legislation passed, the conference would support a street demonstration. Fortunately, the legislation did not pass, but we had a great conference in Portland anyway! Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, as reproductive rights were under siege in the US, AWPers actively participated in local and Washington, DC demonstrations, occasionally writing up their experiences in the newsletter (e.g., Spring/Summer, 2004, following the gigantic “March for Women’s Lives”).

Sometime a coordinated activism plan will be announced, as when CoCo Maureen McHugh announced in 2002 that new “Action Groups” would take on specific issues and generate training materials while the Spokesperson would work with the groups to develop press releases and the Regions Coordinator would distribute the materials through new and existing regional chapters. Ambitious! Maureen said (in the Fall 2002 newsletter) that the model had been used successfully by the American Association of University Women (an organization founded in 1881, currently with more than 100,000 members and 1,000 branches!)^{viii}, but even with that imprimatur it proved difficult to generate and sustain activism among people not already involved in the specific issues. Maureen also recommended (Fall, 2003 newsletter) more marches at conferences, pre-conference activism trainings, and using the Feminist Forum to make announcements about actions and campaigns.

AWP may not generate a huge amount of sustained activism but it has been very encouraging and supportive to its activist members. Perhaps the people most active in AWP have too many tasks and can’t take on more; perhaps the most activist members are already pursuing their own issues. Perhaps our grassroots philosophy and consensus decision-making approach impedes us from choosing one issue and throwing all our resources behind it (e.g., Title IX, educational equity, peace). Nevertheless, decades of Spokespersons have written tons of letters on urgent feminist issues, and the Imps have authorized financial grants to AWPers systematically pursuing activist projects. Probably the single most helpful way AWP has been involved in activism is to offer a sisterly, politically informed audience to listen to presentations on activism as ideas are worked out and campaigns celebrated.

E. International activities

AWP has shown consistent interest in global feminisms and international feminist psychology. Following our 1985 panel at the UN sponsored “World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women” in Nairobi, Kenya, we decided to pursue consultative status for AWP as an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) at the UN. Denyse Barbet, and then Rebecca Rosenblum and Chris Sullivan, attended UN sessions for many years and wrote columns in the AWP newsletter announcing issues, publications and meetings.

Kathryn Norsworthy convened a working group at the 1995 Indianapolis meeting to plan AWP’s presence at the UN’s 1995 “Fourth World Conference on Women” to be held in Beijing. We would present a panel on “US Feminist Perspectives on the Psychology of Trauma” in the NGO Forum in Huairou, a Beijing suburb. Sharon Horne organized the trip to the Beijing conference via Moscow (to include meetings with Russian anti-violence feminists) and Irkutsk, Siberia (to include meetings and homestays with Russian environmental feminists). The group then took the trans-Siberian railroad across Mongolia to Beijing. Our panel was well received by women from every continent and Kathryn inaugurated the International Feminist Mental Health Network with participants from several different countries. This group continued for several years but ultimately tapered off after 2000.

Parallel to AWP’s history has been a history of triennial “International Congress on Women” conferences: 1981: Haifa; 1984: Groningen, Netherlands; 1987: Dublin; 1990: New York; 1993: San Jose, Costa Rica; 1996: Adelaide, Australia; 1999: Tromso, Norway; 2002: Kampala, Uganda; 2005: Seoul; 2008: Madrid. About half a dozen AWPers have attended each of these sophisticated, academic/political interdisciplinary conferences and brought back ideas and new colleagues to AWP.^{ix}

There have been many AWP conference panels featuring women from faraway places such as the UK, Canada of course, Thailand, Ireland, Iran, The Philippines, South Africa, Panama, India, and many women from Japan. At least! As a result of these encounters, international invitations ensued for some AWPers for further collaboration and cross-fertilization. Sue Wilkinson visited from the UK in the 1980s and when she became the first editor of Feminism and Psychology in 1991 she recruited many AWPers to write for her. Now the new F&P editors, Nicola Gavey and Ginny Braun from New Zealand, are also presenting their work at AWP and soliciting contributions for their journal. British women were inspired by AWP’s example to begin their own organization (see Sue Wilkinson and Jan Burns’ 1990 narrative of this history^x), and various AWPers have presented their work at the UK annual POWS conferences.

F. Collaboration with other groups

Members of AWP are often involved with other professional groups, and we have had many members volunteer to serve as liaisons. For example, the Spring 1994 newsletter lists 24 liaisons to groups including the American Educational Research Association, the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research, the National Society of Genetic Counselors, the Association of Black Psychologists, the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, the APA Committee on Lesbian and Gay concerns (also

to APA's Division 9, 35, 38), the Australia Psychology Society, the National Women's Studies Association, the International Council of Psychologists, the National Network of Women's Caucuses, the National Council for Schools of Professional Psychology, and the National Council against Sexual Assault. The list looks good, but the liaison work has usually been very casual, and sometimes existed in name only. Currently, the AWP website lists five liaisons.^{xi}

In the Fall, 2003 newsletter Joan Chrisler provided an extended report of the 2003 conference of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research, including websites and many quotes from provocative presentations. But this was unusual, and it was only our representatives to APA's Committee on Women in Psychology and Division 35 who routinely wrote reports in the AWP newsletter and alerted newsletter readers to APA feminist events, testifying to an active cross-pollination.

Our most important collaborative effort has been sharing a hotel hospitality suite with Division 35 each year at the annual APA meeting (always held in August, as contrasted with the March AWP annual conference). This has been a major annual expense but has provided a well-used opportunity for AWPers to get together amidst the tsunami of the APA meetings. The suite offered space for the semi-annual AWP business meeting and some committee meetings, interesting workshops, conversation hours and discussions, an impressive book display that introduced many visitors to current feminist psychology works, and a very successful annual party where AWP announced some of our awards. Doubtless the suite introduced some Division 35 feminists to AWP and vice-versa!

One gets the sense from AWP newsletters over the years that connections to other feminist organizations is a not a high priority for AWP, which is understandable given the Imps' focus on organizational survival, ethnic relations, fiscal solvency, conference success, activism, etc. The Imps can always reach out to appropriate allies for coordinated activity should a specific feminist politics or psychology profession issue arise. Psychologists for Social Responsibility had a booth in our exhibit area one year, for example, at which they recruited several AWPers to present work at their conference.

Our relationship with two venerable feminist psychology institutions is worth acknowledging. The Feminist Therapy Institute (FTI) was founded in 1982 as a locus for expert feminist discussions of clinical material and theoretical work in progress, and FTI continues to have small biennial conferences. Many AWP therapist members attended FTI conferences (estimated size 25) which featured intense and sometimes confrontational discussions of the politics and techniques of feminist therapy. FTI's website lists its conference locations, publications, and books, and the books' authors and contributors are often well-known AWPers.^{xii} In an early-90s effort to become more diverse, WTI suspended membership admissions of non-WOC for a couple of years, a strategy that probably produced as much resentment as benefit.

Another well-known hub for feminist therapy training and theoretical work (though it seems to eschew the term "feminist") is the Stone Center (founded 1981, now the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute) at Wellesley College. Based on the 1970s and 1980s work of psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller and educational psychologist Carol Gilligan, the Stone Center evolved an approach to research, consulting and therapy that emphasizes women's strengths in and needs for relationships ("Relational-Cultural Theory"^{xiii}). This work has been presented at AWP (e.g., half-day preconference training

workshop in 2004), publications have been reviewed in the newsletter, and announcements for upcoming Stone Center events appear in our newsletter.

G. Difficult Dialogues at AWP conferences

Feminist psychology is a field full of controversies, and proponents of opposing theoretical positions have often attended AWP conferences, winning adherents for their positions. These oppositions are usually far more than mere theoretical debates, they often are deeply felt, principled positions that can be the central theme of some AWPers' life work. It is a tribute to the overarching passionate commitment to feminism acknowledged by all AWPers that we have been able to embrace proponents of such oppositions over the years. This is definitely not as true in other feminist psychology groups.

Three illustrative issues come to mind in the last twenty years: contentions over the social effects of pornography, the recovered memory/false memory debate, and the debate over whether the best feminist research and theory emphasizes gender differences ("women's ways of knowing") or similarities ("social construction of gender"). In each instance feminist psychologists have been central in producing important theory and empirical work on all sides of the issues, and for each example symposia and invited lectures at AWP conferences have addressed conflicts over terms, methods, interpretations and politics. Because Distinguished Publication Award winners are invited to present their work the year after receiving an award, big-name participants in these hot-button controversies have time and again had big audiences when they made their cases at AWP conferences. While some of these protagonists often come only to receive their award and give a talk, their students and partisans often continue as members of AWP to work and think together.

Angry conflicts have occasionally emerged, however. After the Imps' pro-choice statement was published in the newsletter, one AWP member sent her letter of resignation, complaining that our inclusivity obviously had limits.

H. Awards and Recognition

Early in second wave feminism, the idea of awards was dismissed as nonfeminist, "elitist," and a cause of competitive rather than cooperative relationships. AWP members wanted to be politically correct, so we had no keynote speakers at our conferences until 1985!

Despite this, in 1977 AWP began to give out annual "Distinguished Publication Awards" and an occasional "Distinguished Career Award." Many members had informally discussed how both their publications and their service to feminist psychology were dismissed and even disrespected in their home academic departments. If feminist psychology work didn't count towards tenure or departmental recognition, AWPers thought, it was up to us to give it recognition. It turned out that these awards were extremely meaningful to the recipients partly because of so little other recognition for achievement in feminist psychology but also because these awards came from their peers. As happens in marginalized groups, pride from these awards somewhat soothed the sting of neglect from the larger psychological community. Reviewing the list of 85 Distinguished Publication Awards^{xiv}, it is interesting to note that while eight articles were from the American Psychologist, seven were from Psychology of Women Quarterly, and

two each from Sex Roles, Journal of Social Issues and Women and Therapy. Most awards, however, were given to books.

As of 2009, the list of AWP awards has ballooned way past the distinguished publication awards to a total of 10 different ones!^{xv} Five are given by AWP caucuses or special interest groups, and five are authorized by the organization itself. Broadly, they are given for outstanding writing in feminist psychology or distinguished service to AWP or to the field of feminist psychology. One award recognizes mentoring, another is for student work, a third is for unpublished lesbian psychology work, a fourth specifically recognizes work on immigration, and so forth. Some of them represent the only known awards in a particular area (e.g., Jewish feminist psychology), while others may duplicate efforts of other organizations (e.g., the Women of Color Psychologies award).

Winners of the content (not service) awards are invited to present their work at the subsequent conferences, enriching not only the program but the informal networking opportunities. Many careers and research interests have been kindled or changed by these presentations, and some of the invitees are so taken with AWP that they become members. I think we can say that these awards have, over time, been connected far more with cooperative than competitive outcomes despite early AWPers' fears. The love in the room when the service awards are announced is palpable and as the years and the awardees mount up, their value becomes more and more evident.

I. Personal and Subjective; Embracing diverse methodologies

Over the years, there have been many experiential workshops and very personal presentations at AWP conferences that would be unlikely to appear at other professional psychology conferences and that have been very special. Not everyone is crazy about this “New Age-y” aspect of our conferences, but there’s no doubt that many who attend over a period of time are affected. Here are just a few random titles of participatory workshops: What does it feel like to research rape? (Jersey City, 2003) Helping mid-life daughters to link generations (Portland, 1996). An immersion experience in mindfulness meditation for clinicians (Tampa, 2005). Studying and doing grassroots organizing (Pittsburgh, 1997). The art of salary negotiation for women (Salt Lake City, 2000). Gender and ecopsychology (Baltimore, 1998). Experiencing breast cancer (Providence, 1999). Psychological transformation through art (Long Beach, 1992). Is the syllabus for the student or the faculty member? (Philadelphia, 2004). Ancient wisdom for high functioning women: Strategies for modern goddesses (San Francisco, 2007).

The experiential sessions are just part of AWP’s embrace of diverse methodologies of teaching, research, social change and personal growth. For twenty years the conference has had days full of documentary films, and as digital and web-related technologies have grown, the involvement of more and more media feminists has been reflected in our program. Sessions have emphasized subjects not seen in academic psychology such as how to involve research participants in post-study feedback or how to design community-based educational events as part of clinical work. And for well over ten years, Sue Morrow has offered a full-day preconference training seminar introducing participants to an ever-widening range of qualitative methods not usually welcomed in academic psychology.

There is also a tradition of ritual at AWP, more evident, I think, than at other professional conferences, that is part of AWP's appreciation of the experiential. In addition to the dance, begun in the 1970s, other ritual events appear annually at our conference: a "coming-out" ceremony wherein participants recognize the power and danger of silences; a "croning" ceremony wherein older women are recognized for their contributions; a "Feminist Forum" initially designed for social activism, but in recent years more like a conference feedback and farewell session; a "New Member Breakfast" for first-time attenders to learn more about AWP by meeting the Imps in person; a schedule of morning "Wellness" activities.

V. A FEW SPECIFIC HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SECOND 20 YEARS

A. Weather

This is not the usual topic to appear in a history, but in AWP's last 20 years there were two winter weather situations that memorably affected our conference and, then, financially, our organization. Have I mentioned that the annual conference is always held in March, on the weekend closest to International Women's Day (March 8). Well, sometimes March is coming in like a lion at just around that time and in 1993 and 2003 major snowstorms affected us.

We were in Atlanta in March, 1993, just at the time of the "Storm of the Century" (even Wikipedia calls it that). Joan Chrisler was CoCo at the time, and I quote from her report in the Fall, 1993 newsletter:

Those who were present at the meeting will be telling stories for years to come about "the storm of the century," and how ill-prepared southern cities are to handle snow and ice. The weather created innumerable problems for AWP, including hotel employees who couldn't get to work, local women who had planned to attend but couldn't drive to the hotel, airline cancellations that required those of us from the Northeast to remain in Atlanta for a day or two, etc.

My photos from that conference show empty, snow-covered Atlanta streets and AWPers sleeping in hotel hallways, and I took snow, snow everywhere pictures out the window of the plane flying home to NY. That conference (with feminist foremother Robin Morgan as keynoter) was a financial disaster and resulted in AWP cancelling a newsletter issue, requesting support from Division 35 for our shared APA suite, cancelling the directory printing, eliminating some organizational memberships, reducing scholarships at the 1994 meeting, etc. We have too often operated close to the bone and if a local conference group cannot return the \$15,000 or so seed money they receive in expectation of on-site revenues, we are in trouble. Perhaps this is why one of the few songs that can get everyone onto the dance floor at AWP is Gloria Gaynor's 1978 "I will survive"!

In March, 2003 we were in Jersey City, right across the river from Manhattan, and again there was a severe snowstorm. It didn't make the history books, but it did delay many attendees arrival and cancel sightseeing plans. Of course, that meant

more people stayed in the hotel all weekend instead of exploring New York and enjoyed the snowy Big Apple through the hotel windows.

B. The year people didn't like the keynoter!

Maureen McHugh was the conference organizer (for a 2nd time!) in 1997. One of her special interests is futurism, and so it was no surprise that the keynote speaker in 1997 in Pittsburgh was the author of the well reviewed The Futures of Women: Scenarios of the 21st century (1996), Pamela McCorduck. Well, to make a long story short, McCorduck's keynote was not well-received by many in the audience, and the AWP spokesperson, Kathryn Norsworthy at that time, was instructed to communicate our concerns about McCorduck's stereotyping, superficiality, reductionism, poor use of time, etc. etc.! Her lengthy letter and McCorduck's equally lengthy rebuttal were published in the Spring, 1997 newsletter. This exercise in feminist assertiveness sticks in my mind as something special about AWP!

C. Books

The AWP newsletter has devoted space to book reviews in every issue. That amounts to dozens and dozens of reviews over time. I am a book review editor in the world of sexology so I know that getting books, getting reviewers and then, most importantly, getting thoughtful (not puff) reviews and seeing them through to print is not as easy as it looks. The newsletter has included reviews in feminist psychology and therapy, of course, but also in feminist ethics and philosophy, gender politics, feminist anthropology and criminology, men's studies, social science of reproduction, feminist media studies, educational psychology, etc. Our Distinguished Publication Awards are our oldest awards, and it's worth noting how important ideas are to us.

AWP members have authored and edited many many memorable books over these two decades. Some of these first were special issues of feminist journals (Sex Roles, Women and Therapy, Psychology of Women Quarterly, Journal of Lesbian Studies) whose editors were AWP members (e.g., Ellen Cole, Ellyn Kaschak, Esther Rothblum, Irene Frieze) or attended AWP conferences (e.g., Sue Wilkinson, Jackie White, Nancy Russo, Judy Worell, Nicola Gavey, Janet Hyde). Others were collaborative efforts of long-time AWPers to address nuts and bolts issues such as how to teach feminist psychology or how to survive as a feminist in academia. One book (Collins, Dunlap and Chrisler, 2002) "grew out of presentations at the 1998 23rd Annual Conference of AWP in Baltimore, MD whose theme was "charting a new course" (p. x). The 16 chapters give a good sense of the kind of empirical and theoretical work presented at AWP conferences. I especially like the new feminist intellectual tool, "satirical empiricism, the application of satire to the research process" (P.9), long overdue, if you ask me!

At AWP conferences we routinely have book signing events and each time the room is filled with the cream of intellectual feminist psychology. Alas, this kind of recognition for feminist work is still in short supply out in the real world.

VI. AWP CULTURE: FEMINIST PROCESS, SISTERHOOD IN ACTION

Since our founding AWP has prided itself on a deep and enduring commitment to feminist process. Not only has that meant inclusiveness and respect, but active efforts to support members' growth and benefit all women. We take feminist psychology research seriously, and that means we work to combat the many sources of stress and lowered self-esteem that seem an enduring aspect of female socialization. More than just a tone, however, we have been committed to a feminist operating process that honors consensus-building and consensus decision-making. As contrasted with Robert's Rules of Order, with its parade of motions and votes and constant procedural maneuvering, we have operated since 1969 with a non-voting process of active listening, honest communication and attention to dynamics that makes room for everyone to speak and all positions to air. Two of our most active members, Donna Hawxhurst and Sue Morrow, even wrote a book about feminist process in 1984, and we are still at it, with and despite all its complexities.

I have always loved the exhibits room at the annual AWP conference, and it's not because I am a New York shopping hound. The conference local arrangements committee works hard to get local feminist arts and crafts, feminism and psychology books from local women's bookstores, jewelry, garments, CDs, and just all sorts of local stuff. Conferees take home souvenirs, buy each other friendship gifts, and feel they are contributing to the local women's economy. It's another aspect of feminism in action.

And then there are the AWP musical events. Back in the 1970s, the sight of women dancing with each other, or alone, or in groups, was odd in hotel ballrooms. Hotel employees would gather in the doorways. Perhaps it's not as novel or defiantly assertive nowadays, but the annual AWP dance is still an empowering intergenerational event. Finances have dictated that we move from live band to deejay, but we still have a singer-songwriter or poet in the program each year. We have invited so many lesbian folk-singers to perform at our conferences that AWP surely deserves a footnote in any overview history. And in recent years there's been a drumming circle as well, often kicking off the conference with a high-octane display of feminist power.

VII. INTO THE FUTURE

Which of the following is scheduled for the 2009 conference?

- (a) Applications available for new AWP internship, "Implementation Collective Apprentice"
- (b) Student caucus speed mentoring session
- (c) Tear-out ballot in the program to choose 2011 conference location: Fargo, ND, Urbana-Champaign, IL, or Baton Rouge, LA
- (d) AWP newsletter cartoon originals to be auctioned at banquet
- (e) The Staffer will fill a new Imp position, "AWP Blogger"

Well, maybe there will be more humor, "satirical empiricism," in AWP's future. It seems time for someone to write "The AWP Follies" so we can get on youtube. The correct answer to the above question is (b), by the way.

Seriously, though, as we pay tribute to 40 years of mentoring, feminist process and a commitment to the radical transformation of psychology, we need to think about the future. Let's get our website up and running and a great resource. Let's figure out some way to preserve our archives so the next edition of this history can be more accurate. Let's make sure we are better known internationally so our conference can

benefit from global infusions. Let's find naming opportunities for people willing to make large donations. Let's establish a retirement villa for elderly feminist psychologists. Let's get control over the weather.

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ⁱ Thanks to the following who offered their time for valuable phone interviews: Mary Ballou, Joan Chrisler, Maureen McHugh, Michelle Boyer, and Maryka Biaggio. Thanks also to those who helped provide me with caucus summaries: the WOC caucus, Jewish women's caucus, Bisexuality and sexual diversity caucus, and Mothering Caucus.

ⁱⁱ "Imps" is the nickname for the all-volunteer Implementation Collective, the "decision-making structure [that] deal[s] with organizational matters between meetings and beyond the scope of standing committees" that was created in 1980, after a frustrating first decade of elected officers and a more old-fashioned leadership arrangement (quote from reorganization report, see Tiefer, 1991, p. 17)

ⁱⁱⁱ The internet was not available when I wrote Part I of the AWP history. In recently cruising "women psychology" in various search engines, I found some materials it would have been fun to include. For example, I found a January 17, 1971 article in the New York Times about the first AWP President, Jo-Ann Gardner and her husband, Gerald Gardner, featuring a photo of Jo-Ann that indeed brings her back to me. The title of the article? Predictably, for 1971, "Men who helped liberate their women." Ugh! We've come a long way.

<http://select.nytimes.com/mem/archive/pdf?res=F60715F9345F127A93C5A8178AD85F458785F9> (accessed January 13, 2009)

^{iv} In 2004 the APA Committee on Women in Psychology reissued a historic 1970 document of 52 resolutions put forth by AWP along with commentary on how much

progress has been made on each of them. It is a fascinating and important feminist document. http://www.apa.org/pi/wpo/52resolutions_motions.pdf

^v The Committee on Women also published a timeline of activities from its inception in 1973 to 1993 that gives a good sense of feminist psychology during that period <http://www.apa.org/pi/wpo/cwpdecadesofchange.pdf>

^{vi} bylaws and recent changes appear in the Fall, 2006 newsletter

^{vii} <http://www.awpsych.org/regions07.htm>

^{viii} <https://svc.aauw.org/museum/>

^{ix} <http://www.mmww08.org/> is the website for the most recent meeting, 2008: Madrid.

^x http://www.discourseunit.com/publications_pages/pdf/FPP%20PDFs/FPP%20Chapter%209.pdf

Chapter%209.pdf

^{xi} <http://www.awpsych.org/liaisons07.htm>

^{xii} <http://www.feminist-therapy-institute.org/accomplished.htm>

^{xiii} <http://www.wellesley.edu/JBMTI/pdf/developingRCT.pdf>

^{xiv} See full list on <http://www.awpsych.org/distinguishedpublicationawards.htm>

^{xv} See complete list on <http://www.awpsych.org/awards07.htm>