

Chicago Area Women's and Gender Studies Network Feb. 20, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Attending: Betsy Hemmingway LUC, Laurie Fuller NEIU, Ann Russo DePaul, Elizabeth Toohey Principia college, Elsa IL, Jaclyn Friedman from the Women's Action Media Conference, Veronica Arreola from UIC, Katy Weseman NU, Ann Brigham RU, Margaret Hefner Northpark

Women's Action Media Conference (Arreola and Friedman reporting) brings together a host of different people and has outgrown its place and it is moving to Chicago in 2010 at UIC forum the first week in April. Since Jaclyn is in town for her book reading (*Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape*) and she discussed the plans for the upcoming conference. They are hoping for about 800 people to attend. It is an idea for bringing together people with a commitment to gender justice and media ([www.womenactionmedia.org](http://www.womenactionmedia.org)). Please email Jaclyn if you have questions or comments [jaclyn@centerfornewwords.org](mailto:jaclyn@centerfornewwords.org)

Given this conference (WAM) we might want to rethink our 2010 student conference since this media conference could conflict (Let's talk about this at our April 3 meeting).

Ann B. finished and submitted the proposal of our difficult dialogs for the NWSA National Conference about CAWGS that focuses on how we are mirroring the national theme at the local level in our development event. Given her experience writing the proposal she suggests that we come up with some difficult dialogs for our April 3 event (where we will practice) and the April 24<sup>th</sup> workshop.

DePaul is hosting a conference with Cricket Keating, Aimee Carrillo Rowe, Sheena Malhotra and others to discuss alliance and solidarity across differences. We decided to collaborate with this conference and do our event on Friday April 24 from 4-6pm at DePaul.

The workshop will consist of groups of people working through the three steps (in the Keating Article) and for the third step brainstorming multiple possibilities for coalitional risk taking. This process takes time and probably it will be difficult to do multiple issues for 8 people in each group. Maybe we can ask people to do some writing and then we can have a reflection period at the end. So maybe a free write then do each step or a free write in between each step and then at the end maybe we could put the possibilities for coalitional action. Also our reflections ( and others who would like to contribute theirs) would be good for our NWSA panel. We discussed trying to attain diversity within the groups, so maybe we could encourage people to go into groups with people that they don't know, but when groups form that do have a lot of people who know each other then that can be the discussion within the group about the conversation and the invisibilities. Maybe we could just discuss how it would be different if you are in a group with people you know and with people that you do not know.

Need to get together a description of our event so that we can publish it. We need to rsvp and people can rsvp to Katy at NU. Katy will write the invitation and email it to Laurie who will send out email invitation

Topics (generated at meeting and need to be more fully explained. If your name is in parenthesis after the topic please try to clarify your idea of the difficult dialog. I know more people volunteered to explain these so please let us know!)

1. Women's and Gender Studies Program and creating it as a safe space and community (Ann B.)
2. Politics of being a spokesperson for feminism on campus (Betsy)
3. Zero sum this cancels out that who's issues are who's compartmentalization of issues and how in classes there is an all or nothing mentality like gender is the only thing the oppression Olympics mentality what issues have consensus status
4. How does the fact that enrollment of young men is dropping impact wgs
5. Seasonality of months and issues
6. White women's understanding of women's studies is the norm/consensus
7. White student's desire for resolution and for all just getting along
8. What is the future of WGS, name change issue, the role of masculinity studies, transgender issues the role of lgbtqqi studies
9. The idea of unity and the unified movement and the myth of the movement

If you have syllabi you feel comfortable sharing please email them to Katy and she will put them on our CAWGS website.

Our next meeting will be April 3 and we will practice having a difficult dialog and then plan our event on April 24<sup>th</sup>

Ann R. will talk with Cricket about helping us and then Veronica will moderate, and Marion will take minutes

Would people be interested in having an informal writing group? Let's form one, Ann B. will organize it for us.