Dear Feminist Issues TIG Members:

Welcome to the second issue of the AEA Feminist Issues TIG newsletter!

As Spring approaches, so does the March 16 deadline for AEA’s call for proposals for the 2007 annual conference. In this issue of the newsletter, Sharon Brisolara suggests a number of thought-provoking ideas for proposals you can submit for sponsorship by the Feminist Issues TIG – don’t delay! Sharon also outlines TIG plans for the year, and provides an overview of the Handbook of Feminist Research. You will also find an invitation to participate in a feminist research project being conducted by one of our members, Cassandra Golding; and last, but by no means least, the first version of an exciting new TIG project: a history of the Feminist Issues TIG, the brainchild of Bessa Whitmore. This history is a work in progress: a project of this kind depends heavily on the collective memory of the organization’s members. This is where you, our readers, come in! What gaps can you fill in this “collective puzzle”? What should be added, or changed? Please send your contributions, including relevant material (such as papers from previous years etc.) to Bessa at ewhitmore@connect.carleton.ca.

Finally, we would be delighted to include your contributions in future issues, whether they concern work you are doing, projects you would like the TIG to undertake, feminist issues you would like to discuss, information on upcoming events or recent publications, requests for professional collaboration, feedback on the newsletter or suggestions for future issues. Please send your contributions to co-editors Elizabeth Bamberger: ejbamberger@aol.com, and Sheri Hudachek-Lantz: sherihuadchek@wmich.edu.

Call for Proposals  

Sharon Brisolara, TIG Chair

As most of you are aware, AEA has issued its Call for Proposals for this year’s conference to be held in Baltimore on November 7th through the 10th. The theme of the conference, chosen by President Hallie Preskill, is "Evaluation and Learning." Proposals must be received by March 16th. You can submit on-line through AEA’s website: www.eval.org. We would be very interested in sponsoring papers related to Feminist Issues and, given the number of papers we typically receive, your proposal would receive more attention, be subject to less competition than it would if submitted to larger TIGs.

We would really like our TIG to have a stronger presence (and thereby, influence) in this year’s conference. One of the best ways that we can do this is by offering more presentations. AEA allows for a number of different formats; the most common are panels/multi-papers, individual papers, roundtables, posters, Think Tanks, skill building workshops.
Please consider presenting alone or with someone. Listed below are a few examples of topics related to the conference theme, just waiting for a presenter:

**Panel/Paper**
a. Consider **retrospectively reviewing** an evaluation you led or participated in: how might you have designed it differently had it been a Feminist Evaluation? What issues might have been addressed or avoided by using a Feminist Evaluation approach?

b. Present on a Feminist Evaluation or an evaluation heavily influenced by feminist issues. How did Feminist Evaluation guidelines influence your work? What benefits came as the result of taking a feminist approach to evaluation? If there were barriers to implementing a feminist approach, what were these barriers and how did you overcome them?

c. Mutual learning (yours, organization’s) that emerged through a Feminist Evaluation or feminist approach to evaluation. Or share with us work that you are currently engaged in and how it has been shaped by a feminist lens/approach.

**Roundtable or Paper**
d. Discussion of failed attempts to implement a Feminist Evaluation or feminist approach to evaluation. What contributed to lack of success?

e. Discussion of successful approaches to proposing a feminist approach to evaluation.

**Skill Building Workshops**
f. Demonstration of emerging, revised, new feminist approaches, data collection methods, or needs assessments (for example).

These are just a few examples— we hope to hear soon from you about many more. If you have never presented before and would like to co-present, let me, Sharon Brisolara, (evaluationsolutions@hughes.net) know and I will see who might be interested in co-presenting with you. Remember, you do not have to be a member of AEA to present or co-present. Feel free to invite colleagues to join you.

We’re looking forward to seeing your proposals!

**TIG Plans for the Year**

We have set several goals for this year:

1. To increase communication and to network by **establishing a newsletter**. Again, many thanks and probably fair trade chocolate are owed to Elizabeth and Sheri for taking on this task. (Editor’s note: the chocolate may be the best idea we’ve had yet!)
2. To gain greater visibility in the organization and have greater influence, primarily through **sponsoring 10 or more presentations** at the next conference. (Many thanks and perhaps fair trade chocolate will be owed to you, we hope, for submitting proposals.)

3. To increase communication and outreach by **creating a website**. (This is still in progress.)

In addition, we would like to see a **larger contingent of members present at our TIG meeting**. As we approach the date of the conference, we’ll be asking you to respond to a multiple choice question or two about your preferred time and date and plans to attend a Feminist TIG business meeting or event.

**With greater participation** in the next business meeting, or greater interaction via a newsletter or website, **we can explore other goals**. Some activities that other TIGs engage in include fundraising for small scholarships or awards, printing of informative newsletters (in color) for distribution, and other awareness raising activities at the AEA conference.

Send us your ideas and input for the future of our TIG.

Sincerely,

Sharon

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**The Handbook of Feminist Research**    **Overview by Sharon Brisolara**

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, professor of Sociology at Boston College, has edited or co-edited numerous volumes on feminist and qualitative research and has written on the cult of thinness. Her latest volume is one of particular interest to us- the *Handbook of Feminist Research, Theory and Praxis* (Sage, 2007).

The introduction, by Hesse-Biber, lays out the framework for the work: exploring the interconnections of epistemology, methodology, and method. Indeed, the handbook is divided into four parts: Feminist Perspectives on Knowledge Building, Feminist Research Praxis, Feminist Perspectives on the Research Process (Issues and Insights), and Commentaries on Future Directions in Feminist Theory, Research, and Pedagogy. The introduction to the handbook and introductions to each section draw connections across themes and authors.

Included in the volume are a number of authors who have made critical contributions to the development of feminist research. Dorothy E. Smith, Maria Mies, Mary Hawkesworth, Shulamit Reinharz, Sandra Harding, Liz Stanley and Sue Wise are all here with new contributions. There are also various contributors who draw from different fields and perspectives, among them yours truly and Denise Seigart. The reader will find historical perspectives, particular feminist approaches, philosophical questions, and
methodological issues are addressed with a level of depth and detail that is instructive and, frankly, encouraging for those who don’t regularly interact with other evaluators engaged in feminist approaches. And even if you do, there is much to learn and ponder within this volume. I hope to raise some of the issues that interest me in subsequent volumes of our newsletter. Take a look yourself at www.sagepub.com, and tell us what struck you.

Invitation to participate in a Feminist Research study Cassandra Golding

You are invited to participate in a University of Rhode Island research study currently being conducted by Cassandra Golding to explore the effects of closeness in relationships between women romantically involved with other women. The information gained through this research will be used to better understand how women relate in romantic relationships and how they define, view and experience closeness in their relationships. I am conducting this research as a lesbian Doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology Department at the University of Rhode Island.

In order to participate, you must be: at least 18 years old, English speaking, a woman (in terms of gender or biological sex), and have been in a monogamous, romantic relationship with another woman for at least the past year. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, confidential and anonymous. Please complete the survey by March 5, 2007.

This study is not concerned with the way you may identify in terms of your sexual orientation. Therefore, you may identify as lesbian, gay, straight, bisexual, or any other term you choose.

Just click on the link below, and you'll be directed right to the survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=964993146878

Thank you in advance for your help; and please forward this invitation to others who may either meet the criteria or know people who do. If you have any questions, or would like more information about this study, please feel free to contact Cassandra Golding at: c_h_ride@hotmail.com, or 401 277 5165. Thank you!

A Draft History of the Feminist Issues TIG Bessa Whitmore

Please note: highlights indicate areas where “puzzle pieces” are missing, but we welcome additions or corrections in other areas also.
1992? Seattle I recall a meeting of a group of women (including Sharon Brisolara, and Denise Seigart?) in someone’s hotel room after a session hosted by all the past presidents of AEA. They were all (white) men!
I think we drafted a letter (to the AEA president-who?) at the time. Anyone have a copy of that letter?
Did we discuss the possibility of forming a TIG at that time?

1993?

1994, Boston – Karen Kirkhart was president of AEA.
Was this the year we were part of the Presidential Strand (which I think was brand new at the time). I recall that Joanne Farley and Donna were part of that presentation, and that we divided up the audience (which was small, if I recall) into small discussion groups. Anyone remember the title? or content?

1995, Vancouver B.C. – accepted by AEA as a ‘provisional’ TIG
Bessa was a participant in a panel organized by Tom Schwandt. Her talk was entitled: Women and feminism in evaluation: Is the autonomy of the profession at stake? (drawing on House’s observation that women were now a majority in the profession, and given that women’s work is less valued, lower paid, etc., he asked the question: Is the autonomy of the profession at stake?)

1996?

1997 Formally approved by AEA as a TIG
Co-Chairs: Donna Mertens and Joanne Farley

Note: As of 1998, the programs are online (AEA website, so the information is easier to retrieve).

1998 Co-Chairs: Joanne Farley and Donna Mertens
Program Chair: Louise Lapine

The TIG sponsored four(?) sessions:

1. Issues in Evaluating From a Feminist Perspective: Designing, Conducting, and Drawing Conclusions. Chaired by George Green. Panelists were Courtney Brown, George J. Greene and Sharon Stout. Discussant was Elizabeth Whitmore.

2. Stakeholders’ perceptions: Whose views count and how do we take these into account? Chaired by Katherine Ryan. Panelists were Jennifer Greene, Ernie House and Ken Howe, and Jean King. Discussants were Katherine Ryan and Tom Schwandt.

3. Transforming evaluation and society through feminist evaluation.
Chaired by Joanne Farley. Presenters were Anna Rockhill and Mindy Holliday (Child Welfare Partnership) Taking feminist research out of the closet and into the field; and Kristin Ward (Cornell Univ.) Exploring feminist perspectives in social program evaluation: The need for and meaning of placing women at the center of analysis. Discussant was Louise Lapine.

4. Faces of feminism: Peeling off the masks. (session 226)
Chaired by Katheryn Bowen. Panelists were Denise Seigart, Denice Cassaro, and Camille Tischler. Questioners were Kathryn Bowen and Jennifer Greene. Discussant was Sharon Stout

1999 Co-Chairs: Donna and Joanne
   Program Chair: Louise Lapine

The Feminist Issues TIG, along with the International and Cross-cultural Evaluation TIG, and the AEA Diversity Committee co-sponsored a panel entitled Gender dimensions in evaluation: Comparing experiences from the U.S. and developing countries. Joanne Farley chaired the session. Panelists included Donna, Bessa and Michael Bamberger. The Feminist TIG also sponsored, in the context of its business meeting, a panel entitled Feminist issues in evaluation. Two papers were presented, one by Sujata Desai et al. (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention), and Rebecca Hill (Univ. of Arizona). Joanne Farley was the Discussant.

2000 TIG Co-Chairs: Donna and Sue Klein
   TIG Program Chair: Denise Seigart

The TIG sponsored a discussion session entitled We have come a long way, or have we? Chaired by Denice Cassaro, and facilitated by Denise Seigart and Kathryn Bowen.

2001 Chair: Denise Seigart
   Program Chair: Denice Cassaro

The TIG sponsored two sessions:

1. Reflections on Feminist Evaluation. Presenters were Denise Seigart, Kathryn Bowen and Denice Cassaro.
2. Challenges faced by women in the role of independent consultant: Are women functioning on a level playing field? Presenter was Tristi Nichols.

This was the year we collectively wrote a letter to the AEA President (Molly Engle) expressing our concern about one session (a panel with 5 “biggies” with Jennifer Greene being the only female) in which Scriven and Fetterman squared off. We suggested that future conference guidelines include gender balance on such panels and that facilitators’ instructions include being sure that everyone had an equal voice. (I have a copy of the letter).
2002 Chair: Denise Seigart  
   Program Co-Chairs: Kathryn Bowen and Tristi Nichols

The TIG sponsored one session:

1. *Implicit program theory: Translating lived program experiences of women to policy makers.* Presenter: Patricia Rogers (Australia).


2003 Chair: Donna Podems  
   Program Co-Chairs: Kathryn Bowen and Tristi Nichols

We conducted a “survey”? (asking AEA members about feminism and its role in evaluation) and did this by buttonholing people at the conference. (anyone have a copy of the survey?)

The TIG sponsored 3 sessions:

1. *Alternative Ways of Framing Evaluation: Feminist Approaches to Evaluation, Theory and Practices* (listed as multipaper – Denise was one presenter. Others?)
2. *Evaluators’ perceptions of feminist evaluation.* Panel presented a discussion of the survey results. Panelists were Denise Seigart, Sharon Brisolara, Bessa Whitmore and Kathryn Bowen.
3. *Peace: Gender: and Inclusions: Using Feminist Evaluation to Address the Sociopolitical and Cultural Complexities in the World of Evaluation* (Listed as multipaper. Denise Seigart was one presenter. Others?)

2004 Chair: Donna Podems?  
   Program chair(s)?

(I get an error message when I click onto a title, so can’t find out details)

The TIG sponsored 4 sessions:

1. *Feminist and gender evaluation: Does the difference matter?* Is this the one we did a skit in? (Denise Seigart, Kathryn Bowen and Sharon Brisolara wrote it?), raising many issues around gender and sexism and then had a discussion?
2. A Think Tank entitled: *Integrating the fundamental issues of race, class, gender, ability and sexual orientation into evaluations*
3. *Evaluating programs for girls and young women: The Girls Inc. approach*
4. *Gender, feminist evaluation and evaluation cultures*

2005 Chair: Donna Podems  
   Program Co-Chairs: Sharon Brisolara and Denise Seigart

The TIG sponsored 3 sessions:
1. A Think Tank entitled *Feminist Issues in Evaluation: Traversing Borders and Boundaries to Create Cross-Topical Interest Group Networks Through Dialogue* to “explore the practical challenges of being inclusive in our evaluation work, and paying special attention to issues important to class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disabilities, etc”. Panelists were: Bill Trochim (Quantitative Methods TIG), James Riedel (Nonprofit and Foundation TIG), Karen Kirkhart (Use TIG), Lois Thiessen Love (Human Services TIG), Tristi Nichols (which TIG?). Discussant: Jennifer Greene


3. **Monitoring and Evaluating Environmental Management Programs with Gender Equality as a Cross-Cutting Theme.** Presenters were Chuthatip Maneepong, Shinawatra University Bangkok, and J Mark Stiles, of Stiles Associates

**2006 Chair:** Sharon Brisolara  
**Program Chair:** Denice Cassaro  
**Newsletter Co-editors:** Elizabeth Bamberger and Sheri Hudacheck.

The business meeting was well attended, and we got lots of new recruits.

The TIG co-sponsored one session with the Collaborative, Participatory & Empowerment Evaluation TIG:

1. **Feminist Evaluation: A Discussion of Emergent Methods and Feminist Evaluation Theory in Practice.** Presenter was Sharon Brisolara.

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