Committee on the Status of Women

2019-2020 Membership

Kathryn J. Norlock, chair (2022)
Rachel V. McKinnon (2020)
Julinna C. Oxley (2020)
Katie Stockdale (2020)
Nancy Bauer (2021)
Nicole J. Hassoun (2021)
Janet A. Kourany (2021)
Luciana Garbayo (2022)
Katie Kirkland (2022)
Naomi Scheman (2022)

Jill Gordon, Site Visit Program Director, ex officio (2022)

Lauren Freeman, newsletter editor
Adriel M. Trott, APA Blog Series Editor

Our Newsletter Editor is Lauren Freeman. The outgoing Site Visit Program Director was Peggy DesAutels and the new Director is Jill Gordon. The outgoing APA Blog Series Editor is Adriel M. Trott and as of April 2020, the new Associate Editor is Julinna Oxley.

What were the major projects/activities accomplished by your committee in the 2019–2020 membership year (July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020)?

The major projects included:
(1) contributions to APA annual division meeting programs,
(2) the continuing Site Visit Program under the new leadership of Jill Gordon,
(3) the Women in Philosophy blog series edited by Adriel Trott for the Blog of the APA, and
(4) the publication of two issues of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy edited by Lauren Freeman.

How did you go about getting them done?
APA meeting sessions are organized by the membership of the committee and usually by invitation only, brainstormed by the group via email, with the chair usually issuing and tracking replies to invitations to participate in sessions we devise. The Site Visit program is directed by Jill Gordon in close consultation with Associate Directors and Site Visitors. The blog series is coordinated by Adriel Trott, who does all of the work of approaching contributors and editing their work (with input from the committee when she solicits input). The newsletter is edited by Lauren Freeman, who does all of the work of approaching contributors and editing their work (again with input from the committee when she solicits it). Issues since Freeman has taken up editing are arranged according to a timely theme with contributions netted from a combination of open calls and invitations to appropriate scholars.

What were the relevant results for your projects?
(1) The Committee on the Status of Women organized a total of four sessions to contribute to the programs of APA annual division meetings in the past year, and although the Pacific Division meeting was cancelled, I’m happy to say that the sessions at Eastern and Central APA were successful and well-attended. The sessions organized were as follows:

Eastern APA 2020 in Philadelphia: Author Meets Critics: Eva Feder Kittay, Learning from My Daughter, with committee member Nancy Bauer chairing and a panel of critics including Christine Wieseler (Skidmore College), Kevin Timpe (Calvin College), Lisa Tessman (Binghampton University), and Elizabeth Barnes (University of Virginia)
**Central APA 2020 in Chicago**: The first session was on “Improving Diversity and Inclusion in Publishing,” chaired by Kathryn J. Norlock and offering a panelist of speakers including Christopher P. Long (Michigan State University and HuMetricsHSS), Julianne Chung (University of Louisville and Associate Editor, Oxford Studies in Epistemology), and Jeanine Weekes Schroer (University of Minnesota–Duluth), with commentators Kyle Wagner (University of Chicago Press), Karen Merikangas Darling (University of Chicago Press), and Andrew Beck (Taylor & Francis).

Our second session was “Women and Online Philosophy,” chaired by Julinna Oxley with presenters including Regina Rini (York University), Adriel M. Trott (Wabash College), Helen De Cruz (Saint Louis University), Saba Fatima (Southern Illinois University–Edwardsville), and Kathryn J. Norlock (Trent University).

**Pacific APA 2020**: We had one session on the program and we are considering carrying forward our plans for it to 2020. It took some effort to assemble and we would like to see those efforts bear fruit. The committee organized a roundtable, called “The More Things Change: Reflections by Senior Women on/in Philosophy,” to involve Kathryn Sophia Belle (Pennsylvania State University), Talia Mae Bettcher (California State University, Los Angeles), Ann Garry (California State University, Los Angeles), and Audrey Yap (University of Victoria).

(2) Jill Gordon provides the following summary: The Site Visit program conducted one site visit in the Fall of 2019 at a small liberal arts college; site visits were cancelled for the Spring 2020 season due to the pandemic. It became clear during the late fall that some colleges' and universities' legal teams had issues with the contract agreement, specifically regarding the indemnification sections. After consulting with counsel, with the Associate Directors, and with the past Director, Jill Gordon revised the language of the current contract agreement, aimed merely at further clarity but without substantive changes. The Director and Associate Directors of the program held a meeting by Zoom in January 2020 to discuss these contract issues, the Associate Directors agreed to the final version, and further agreed that not to accept further changes to the language of the contract in this regard. The meetings also included discussion of future training, changes in Title IX, and other matters pertaining to the Program as it moves forward under the new leadership of Jill Gordon. Training for site visitors has not been held for several years, and given the large lead time to get on the APA schedule, site visitors talked about having a training during 2021; a potential option for training in association with a conference being run by one of the Associate Directors was rendered impossible by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of right now there are still no trainings planned. An overall issue of concern discussed was that, so far, the Program has thrived due to the work of a few highly energetic, knowledgeable people, but looking to the longer term health of the Program, the Director is concerned about sustaining the knowledge and skills necessary to run it in perpetuity.

(3) Adriel Trott provides the following summary: The Women in Philosophy blog series for the Blog of the APA included 60 posts edited by Adriel Trott, published since the series’ inception through June 2020, publishing every other week since March 2018. As of April 2020, committee member Julinna Oxley has agreed to be an Associate Editor for the series. The series includes published pieces on the relation between identity politics and class struggle, the role Black women have been made to play in mothering the nation, underappreciated women in the history of
philosophy, analyses of masculinity in online dating, the relation between fashion and feminism, feminist responses to contemporary legislation including the rule change to Title IX, coverage of feminist philosophy conferences, feminist approaches to thinking “home” in the context of foster care, and the intersections of race and reproduction, among other topics. Jill Gordon and Ann Cudd wrote in the Ask a Senior Woman Philosopher mini-series on dealing with sexual harassment and workplace bullying, and Quill Kukla contributed a post on using social media.

(4) The two issues this past year of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy edited by Lauren Freeman includes the latest issue, Volume 19, number 2 (spring 2020); invited scholars contributed to an issue on the theme, “Parenting and Philosophy.” The Fall 2019 issue was a themed issue on #MeToo, and both issues also provided valuable book reviews and articles that the newsletter always offers.

Are any 2019–2020 projects ongoing? Yes, all four of the above-mentioned endeavors are ongoing, namely, (1) contributions to APA annual division meeting programs, (2) the continuing Site Visit Program under the new leadership of Jill Gordon, (3) the Women in Philosophy blog series for the Blog of the APA, and (4) the publication of two issues of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy annually.

What worked well?
Trusting the editors of the blog and the newsletter with minimal interference but robust input when input was requested has resulted in energetic work on their parts in their creations. Dividing up the work of organizing the divisional conference sessions so that those who work on the Eastern and Central are not also organizing the Pacific resulted in a better distribution of labor.

What could have worked better?
Committee members regularly seem surprised to be asked to do the work of organizing sessions of the APA divisional meetings; better, clearer, more emphatic information when they are nominated may help to give them a clearer sense that committee membership entails contributing to APA conference programming.

Site visit program concerns are ongoing with respect to a sustainable membership with institutional wisdom; the previous director was the program founder and the new director has been presented with carrying forward the creations of predecessors that are not equally transparent in their processes and origins.

Any other comments, recommendations, or suggestions?
Given site visit program director and associate directors’ concerns, the new director would likely benefit from connection with site visit coordinators in other professional organizations, which might be best facilitated by other APA officers who regularly connect with counterparts in other professional organizations (such as the ombud and the executive director).

Regarding the CSW, much divisional conference program-organizing was done by the past chair and, this year, the current chair and ex officio members; I suggest that the APA should consider formalizing a Program Committee within committees. Telling nominees that they’re nominated for the CSW Program Committee, in order to make it clear that’s most of what they’re needed for, could be effective. Asking
nominees if they are willing to contribute, and interested in contributing, to the formation of APA conference programs might make it clearer to members what accepting the position involves. However, this is only a suggestion, following it might discourage the nominees found, and perhaps other committees don’t experience reluctance on the part of their members to organize sessions.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Norlock, chair, Committee on the Status of Women