Committee on the Status of Women

2020–2021 Membership

Kathryn Norlock, chair (2022)
  Nancy Bauer (2021)
  Nicole Hassoun (2021)
  Janet Kourany (2021)
  Luciana Garbayo (2022)
  Katie Kirkland (2022)
  Naomi Scheman (2022)
  Clair Morrissey (2023)
  Carlotta Pavese (2023)
  Christina J. Van Dyke (2023)

Jill Gordon, site visit program director, *ex officio* (2022)

Lauren Freeman, newsletter editor

Julinna C. Oxley, blog series editor, *ex officio*
Changes to committee membership of 2020-2021

Appreciating the instruction given this year not to include a list of members, I start with brief news of changes. As of July 1, 2021, the Committee on the Status of Women’s newly appointed Associate Chair is Lori Gruen, who will rise to Chair of the committee on July 1, 2022.

Our continuing Newsletter Editor is Lauren Freeman; she and I invited two co-editors to step into the position of Newsletter Editors in the coming year and they have accepted the nomination to start near the end of this current fiscal year, in 2022: Barrett Emerick (St. Mary’s College of Maryland) and Ami Harbin (Oakland University).

The continuing Editor of the APA Blog Series, “Women in Philosophy,” is Adriel M. Trott and in light of the welcome addition (in fiscal year 2019-2020) of Associate Editor Julinna Oxley, Adriel Trott has chosen to renew her term as Editor.

The Site Visit Program Director for this fiscal year was Jill Gordon, and she left that position at the start of this fiscal year (in July 2021). During the pandemic, program operations were suspended, and the leadership of the APA CSW Site Visit Program report that they are taking this time to gather information that will help them to better assess what the program has accomplished, determine if there are changes or additions that we should make to the program to help it better meet its goals, and consider the future of the program, before acting on a replacement Director.

What were the major projects/activities accomplished by the committee in the most recent fiscal year (July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021)? Are any of these projects ongoing?

The major projects included:
(1) planning of and contributions to APA annual division meeting programs,
(2) the Women in Philosophy blog series edited by Adriel Trott and Julinna Oxley for the Blog of the APA, and
(3) the publication of three total issues of the *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* edited by Lauren Freeman, including the two regularly scheduled issues and a special issue on the pandemic as it affected women’s lives.

How did the projects/activities of the most recent fiscal year compare to the plans laid out in the committee’s last annual report to the board? Please explain anything that changed or went differently from what was planned.

All major activities were affected by the pandemic.

(1) Although the committee did the usual work in 2021 of discussing and planning sessions for all three upcoming 2022 Divisional meetings, the pandemic-caused necessity of moving the Eastern 2022 meeting from Montreal to Baltimore so shortly before the deadline for program information necessitated the cancellation of the session we had
planned for the Eastern meeting in Montreal, and foreshortened the efforts of committee members to hurriedly plan a substitute. We will therefore be unable to offer a session at the upcoming Eastern APA 2022.

(2) Editor Adriel Trott reports that the experience of editing the APA blog series this past year met with more challenges, including more cancellations or postponements in addition to difficulty recruiting in the last fiscal year. She and Associate Editor Julinna Oxley are working to develop posts to have as back-ups to be ready to deal with cancellations in the future. As in previous years, the two of them posted 26 contributions this fiscal year, but the obstacles to doing so were many.

(3) The effects of the pandemic on the Newsletter have been more publication in the short run, and a coming disruption in publication in the near future. Editor Lauren Freeman ran a special third issue this past year of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy: Vol.20, no.1 was entirely devoted to the theme, “Feminist Responses to COVID-19 and Pandemics.” However, the regularly scheduled Fall 2021 issue could not be assembled in time due to the challenges for many women (including contributors and the editor) during the pandemic. The next issue of the APA Newsletter on Feminism will therefore be Spring 2022.

• How did the committee go about accomplishing the planned projects/activities?

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 and the members who propose sessions usually issuing and tracking replies to invitations to participate in the sessions we devise; committee members have also chaired sessions and participated in the online division-meetings this past year. This year we also issued a general call for participation in division meetings, which netted a proposal for an author-meets-critics session at the Central APA that we have now arranged.

The blog series is coordinated by Adriel Trott and Julinna Oxley; they consult with each other and do all of the work of approaching contributors and editing their work (with input from the committee only when they solicit 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 only 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 the committee’s projects/activities?

(1) Planning of and contributions to APA Division Meeting programs: The past fiscal year included the gratifying sessions of the Eastern APA and Central APA that the committee planned in the previous year, one at Eastern APA and two at Central APA. The reasons for the sessions were the sad losses of great philosophers, but the sessions were rich and rewarding.

APA Eastern Division program information, 2021
Memorial session in honor of Maria Lugones
Chair: Kathryn J. Norlock (Trent University)
Presenters:
Session 1 of 2: Memorial session in honor of Karen Warren
Chair: Clair Morrissey, Occidental College
Christine J. Cuomo, University of Georgia
Lori Gruen, Wesleyan University
Chaone Mallory, Lewis & Clark College
Greta Gaard, University of Wisconsin, River Falls

Session 2 of 2: Memorial session in honor of Maria Lugones
Chair: Nancy Bauer, Tufts University
Taylor Rogers, Northwestern University
Emma D. Velez, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Cricket Keating, University of Washington

(2) Planning and publication of the Women in Philosophy series of the Blog of the APA maintained its target publication rate of 26 posts in the fiscal year, despite the aforementioned challenges. The series included published pieces on a wide range of topics including medical ethics, early modern philosophy, skepticism, anti-vaxxers, oppression, and the intersection of gender, race, class, and dis/ability. Ann Garry wrote a contribution to the “Ask a Senior Woman Philosopher” mini-series, on the topic of midcareer challenges in writing for anonymous review while referring to one’s past work. Tributes to Karen Warren and Bat-Ami Bar-On on the occasion of their death were also part of the series.

(3) Three issues of the APA Newsletter of Feminism and Philosophy were published and well received.

The special issue of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy on the topic of “Feminist Responses to COVID-19 and Pandemics” appeared as Vol.20, no.1 in September 2020, with the editor’s special thanks to Erin Shepherd, the managing editor of all APA Newsletters, who tirelessly works behind the scenes to bring all of the newsletters to reality, and who went above and beyond what she’s required to do by adding this extra newsletter to her endless list of jobs. The articles that Lauren Freeman brought to publication are remarkable:

Carol Hay, “How Privilege Structures Pandemic Narratives”
Helen De Cruz, “Thoughts on the Loss of Ethical Goods: Perplexity and the Pandemic”
Ami Harbin and Alice MacLachlan, “Pandemic Parenting”
Jennifer Szende, “Planning in the Void: Autonomy amid Pandemic Constraints”
Anna Gotlib, “‘Surviving and Getting Your Life Back Are Two Different Things’: COVID-19, ICU Psychosis, and the Coming Mental Health Crisis”
Riana Betzler, “What Does It Mean to Be an Empathetic Leader? Lessons from COVID-19”
Ian James Kidd, “Pandemic, Pessimism, and Misanthropy”
Nanuma Subba, “Ordinary Women in Extraordinary Times”

The Fall 2020 issue, Vol. 20, no.2, was dedicated to a critical engagement with Mari Mikkola’s 2016 book, Pornography: A Philosophical Introduction (Oxford University Press). It began with a précis of the book, followed by critical responses by Esa Díaz-León, A. W. Eaton, Hans Maes, and Katharine Jenkins, with a response by Mari Mikkola. Additionally, there were five book reviews in this issue:


The theme of the latest issue, Vol.20, no.3 for Spring 2021, is “Outsiders Within: Reflections on Being a First-Generation and/or Low-Income Philosopher,” and guest editors Arianna Falbo and Heather Stewart shepherded contributions by Jennifer Morton, John D. Proios, Elvira Basevich, Ian James Kidd, Lucia Munguia, Ashley Lamarre and Zinhle ka’Nobuhlaluse, Kayla Aceves, Brady Heiner and Bailie Peterson; editor-in-chief Lauren Freeman supported the efforts of guest-editors and added front matter and four book reviews to this impressive collection: Margaret McLaren’s Women’s Activism, Feminism, and Social Justice (reviewed by Nancy J. Hirschmann), Éléonore Lépinard’s Feminist Trouble: Intersectional Politics in Post-Secular Times (reviewed by Joan Eleanor O’Bryan), Kate Manne’s Entitled: How Male Privilege Hurts Women (reviewed by Vanessa Wills), and Laura Roberts’s Irigaray and Politics A Critical Introduction (reviewed by Fulden İbrahimhakkıoğlu).

• What went well? What could have gone better?

What went well: Considering the exigencies of the pandemic, I would say that the three main activities of the committee all went surprisingly well. APA sessions held in the 2021 online-only Eastern and Central Division Meetings were powerful experiences, and offered philosophical conversations of high quality. Planning for the 2022 programs was concerted and only the last-minute alteration of the location of Eastern 2022 prevented the committee from mounting a session at every Division Meeting; plans for the Central and Pacific APA remain intact (pandemic-permitting!) and the sessions promise to be very interesting. The blog achieved its target rate of publications against the odds, given the situation for working women during the pandemic, and the newsletter provided even more content than usual, including the editor’s conception and timely publication of a COVID-related issue, and the fruitful involvement of co-guest-editors for the current issue.
What could have gone better:

(1) Although the change of location for the Eastern 2022 meeting could not be helped, it did mean the committee had to cancel an author-meets-critics session that relied upon the proximity of participants to the previous host city; the loss of the time spent in its planning might have been helpfully offset by some centralized effort on the part of the APA to get committee chairs together to share information about what sessions were still on and which ones could change, to boost each other’s calls for last-minute applications and to pool information as to possible new sessions to replace those that were unfortunately scrapped. Although I was kindly contacted by one other committee chair who took the initiative in reaching out, I could not help thinking that each committee was operating too isolatedly when a collective response to the situation may have rescued chunks of the program more efficiently.

(2) As I reported last year, site-visit program concerns are ongoing with respect to a sustainable membership with institutional wisdom and sufficient numbers of participants to share the work; program leadership is currently reviewing how to continue and improve program practices.

(3) And of course, a complete answer to the questions as to what could have gone better in this past year, of all years, has to include the situation for working women in a pandemic, especially those with child- and dependent-care responsibilities, alas. But only time and vaccinations can correct that.

• What are the committee's plans for the coming fiscal year?

(1) Members of the committee are laying plans to meet up at each divisional meeting that we (severally, separately) attend (again, pandemic permitting!). Email is always our primary means of the work of the committee, but that is the sort of communication that one squeezes in around one’s job duties and does not permit the sorts of energetic and blue-sky thinking that meeting and eating in a dedicated place and time allow.

(2) The committee has also arranged one session at the Central APA 2022 and one session at the Pacific APA 2022, and retains hopes of a post-pandemic future in which we return to the traditional practice of offering two sessions at every conference, not just one:

Central APA 2022 session planned:
Author Meets Critics: Carolyn McLeod, Conscience in Reproductive Health Care: Prioritizing Patient Interests
Chair: Heather Stewart (Oklahoma State University)
Critics: Javiera Perez Gomez (Marquette University), Alison Reiheld (Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville), Jennifer Parks (Loyola University, Chicago)
Response: Carolyn McLeod (Western University)
Emails:
Javiera Perez Gomez perezgomezjm@gmail.com
Carolyn McLeod cmcleod2@uwo.ca
Heather Stewart hstewa27@uwo.ca
Alison Reiheld alison.reiheld@gmail.com
Parks, Jennifer JPARKS1@luc.edu
Pacific APA 2022 session planned:
Panel: Who's Managing Pandemic Burnout?
Chair: Kathryn J. Norlock (Trent University)
Panelists: Catherine Clune-Taylor (Princeton University)
Suze Berkhout (Temerty Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, University Health Network, and Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, University of Toronto)
Maryam Golafshani (University of Toronto, Temerty Faculty of Medicine)
Martina Orlandi (Penn State University - Rock Ethics Institute)

(3) In June of the coming year, our new co-editors of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy, Barrett Emerick and Ami Harbin, will be attending APA orientation workshops and contacting committee members about plans for subsequent issues of the Newsletter. We are sorry to see Lauren Freeman ‘retire’ but we look forward to the co-editorship of the new team.

• Any other comments, recommendations, or suggestions?

As I said last year, given the site visit program director’s expressed concerns about continuity and sustainability of programming, any 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).

My recommendation for easing the occasionally hectic burdens of mounting three divisional meetings a year is to embrace the suggestions made online this past year to pursue a “one plus one” model of one in-person conference a year and one online conference a year. This really would reduce our environmental impact, reduce the scheduling and recruitment difficulties of the endless eventing-cycle, and concentrate participation into two conferences instead of spreading them over three. With only one in-person conference a year, perhaps then we could finally afford to emulate other societies and hold our annual meeting in venues in months other than January and February.

Having said that last, I tender my deep thanks to all those who continue to work to offer three divisional meetings a year, and who made the online conferences of the pandemic quite rewarding, and on the whole a smooth-enough and interesting experience. It was not the same, but it was also absolutely lovely to be able to have the gatherings that we did.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Cc: Lori Gruen, Associate Chair and rising Chair