

Internet resources for women's studies

By Mary Glazier

An introductory guide to electronic resources

As an interdisciplinary field, women's studies necessarily crosses into a wide number of overlapping subject areas. Though these distinctions were not always easy to make, I have undertaken the compilation of an introductory guide as a way of presenting sources that deal with the general relationship of women to various disciplines or that present women's perspectives on specific cultural institutions.

The following list of electronic resources for women's studies was created through the use of gophers, Archie, Veronica, and OPACs. Resources are divided into discussion groups (listservs precede Usenet groups), electronic journals, OPACs, electronic texts, fee-based services, gopher sites, and other resources indispensable for identifying listservs in any given subject area. It is my hope that, with the following resources as a starting point, women will be able to pursue their own interests and identify sources of information specific to their needs and that this guide will highlight areas where resources are needed (such as electronic journals) so that complete access to women's studies resources can become a reality.

Electronic mail discussion groups (listservs)

The following is a selective list of listservs on general topics relevant to women's studies. Generally, to subscribe, one should send the message "Subscribe firstname lastname" to the address indicated after "*Subscribe.*"

- EDUCOM-W is a moderated list to facilitate discussion of issues in technology and education that are of interest to women. *Subscribe:* LISTSERV@BITNIC.EDUCOM.EDU.

- FEMAIL is a moderated list which provides a shared communication channel for feminists around the world. Women and men are welcome to join. *Subscribe:* FEMAIL-REQUEST@LUCERNE.ENG.SUN.COM.

- FEMECON-L is a listserv for feminist economists. A source of information and answers to questions on economics with feminist perspectives. *Subscribe:* LISTSERV@BUCKNELL.EDU.

- FEMINISM-DIGEST. Issues of feminist organization, experience, and philosophy are discussed. This is a collation of the articles that appear on Usenet's SOC.FEMINISM list, sent out about once a week. *Subscribe:* Feminism-Digest@NCAR.UCAR.EDU.

- FEMINIST, owned by the Feminist Task Force of ALA, offers discussions of issues such as sexism, racism, and ethnic diversity in librarianship and pornography, censorship, and intellectual freedom in libraries. *Subscribe:* LISTSERV@MITVMA.MIT.EDU

- FEMISA is a discussion of feminism, gender, women's international relations, world politics, the international political economy, and global politics. One of the purposes of the list is the exchange of documents (course outlines, articles, etc.) related to its topics. *Subscribe:* LISTSERV@CSF.COLORADO.EDU.

- FEMREL-L is a list providing a great deal of conversation about women, religion, and feminist theology. *Subscribe:* LISTSERV@UMCVMB.BITNET.

- FIST (feminism in science and technology) is an unmoderated list for discussion of

feminism and science and technology. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@DAWN.HAMPSHIRE.EDU.

- GENDER is a moderated list devoted especially to discussion of issues pertaining to the study of communication and gender. *Subscribe*: COMSERVE@RPITSVM.

- H-WOMEN is an international forum for scholars and teachers of women's history. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@UICVM.BITNET.

- KOL-ISHA is a moderated list for questions and issues concerning women's roles in Judaism. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@ISRAEL.NYSERNET.ORG.

- MEDFEM-L is a list for feminist medievalists. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@UWAVM.U. WASHINGTON.EDU.

- SWIP-L is an information and discussion list for Society for Women in Philosophy members and others interested in feminist philosophy. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@CFRVM.CFR.USF.EDU.

- SYSTERS provides a forum for female computer scientists for the exchange of research and career information. Contact Anita Borg at SYSTERS-REQUEST@DECWRL.DEC.COM.

- WIM-L (Women's Issues in Music Librarianship). Contact Laura Gayle Green at LGREEN@IUBVM.BITNET.

- WIPHYS is a moderated list for issues of concern to women in physics. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@NYSERNET.ORG.

- WISENET is a list for women in science, mathematics, and engineering. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@UICVM.UIC.EDU.

- WMN-HLTH (women's health electronic news-line) was started by the Center for Women's Health Research. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@UMDD.UMD.EDU.

- WMST-L serves academic and professional needs of people involved in women's studies teaching, research, libraries, and programs. *Subscribe*: LISTSERV@UMDD.UMD.EDU.

- WOMEN is a general purpose list for all women's groups and areas of interest for women and their friends. *Subscribe*: WOMEN-REQUEST@ATHENA.MIT.EDU.

Usenet newsgroups

Methods of accessing Usenet newsgroups vary from system to system; the best approach is to ask your system administrator.

- ALT.FEMINISM is often a venue for confrontational debates about feminism.

- SOC.WOMEN offers an unrestricted range of topics, mostly nonacademic, of relevance to women's lives.

- SOC.GENDER-ISSUES is a discussion of gender issues of interest to women.

- SOC.FEMINISM is a moderated list where issues of feminist organization, experience, and philosophy are discussed. (Also available through the Internet as FEMINISM-DIGEST@NCAR.UCAR.EDU.)

Electronic journals

- AMAZONS INTERNATIONAL is an electronic journal for and about "physically and psychologically strong, assertive women who are not afraid to break free from traditional ideas about gender roles and femininity." Gopher to gopher.cic.net. Select "Electronic Serials." Select "General Subject Headings" then "Culture."

OPACs (online library catalogs)

The following OPACs offer access to library collections which are known for having strong women's studies collections. Most gopher systems provide access to library catalogs, however, telnet addresses are listed below for those who wish to connect directly to these catalogs. (*Note*: some systems are not entirely compatible with telnet access; for some systems you may need to type TN3270 or TNVT100 instead of "telnet." If you are doubt, check with the system administrator at your school to determine which command you should use.)

- BROWN. Telnet to BROWNV.M.BROWN.EDU. At the BROWN logon screen: TAB to command field. Enter DIAL JOSIAH. TAB to the JOSIAH choice on the screen.

- NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY. Telnet to LIBRARY.UCC.NWU.EDU. At the Database Selection Menu, enter NCAT.

- TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY. Telnet to VENUS.TWU.EDU. At the Username: prompt, type IRIS. Press RETURN several times when prompted.

- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT IRVINE (MELVYL). Telnet to MELVYL.UCOP.EDU. When asked for terminal type, enter VT100. Press RETURN when prompted. Type START LOOK for easy-to-use library system.

- UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO. Telnet to STEFFI.UNCG.EDU. When prompted for Username, type JACLIN.

- UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND. Telnet to VICTOR.UMD.EDU. Select PAC from the Available Services Menu. Select 5 for VT100. Press RETURN twice.

Electronic texts

The Women Writers Project provides texts of some 200 literary works produced by women writers from pre-1830 England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. It also includes works from other colonies. The listserv (WWP-L) offers a forum for discussion of these works (*subscribe: LISTSERV@BROWNV.M.BROWN.EDU*).

Fee-based services

- WON, the Women's Online Network, was founded by Carmela M. Federico and Stacy M. Horn in January 1992 and is concerned with developing strategies to improve the position of women in our society. The network distributes prominent and essential information regarding concerns to women, and aids in the coordination of useful political action. Annual membership is \$20, which is negotiable if necessary. To join, contact the cofounders at (212) 255-3839 or (212) 989-8411 or e-mail to carmela@echo.panix.com or horne@echo.panix.com.

- WIRE, Women's Information Resource and Exchange, due to begin operation in 1994, will be an international interactive computer network providing women with a centralized source of women-oriented information and conversation. For information contact WIRE at (415) 615-8989 or e-mail to info@uivc.net.

Gopher sites

- INFOGOPHER.YORK.AC.UK includes Internet guides as well as bibliographies on women's studies and feminism. Select "Library," then "Subjects," then "Women's Studies." The following guides are recommended and are available at this site under "Internet Guides:"

Balka, Ellen. *Women's Access to On-line Discussions about Feminism*.

Hunt, Laura. *Guide to Women's Studies/Feminist Information on the Internet*. 2nd ed.

Turek, Kathleen, and Judith Hudson. *Electronic Access to Research on Women: A Short Guide*.

- INFO.UMD.EDU. The University of Maryland's gopher, InForM, houses the Women's Studies Online Database. Divided by subject, it includes calls for papers, employment opportunities, feminist film reviews, women's health information, poetry, fiction, political information, and more. Select "Educational Resources," then "Women's Studies."

- HAFNHAF.MICRO.UMN.EDU The University of Minnesota Women's Center's gopher site offers access to information about counseling, education, family relations, health, finances, housing, research, violence, current events, scholarships, grants, financial support, and

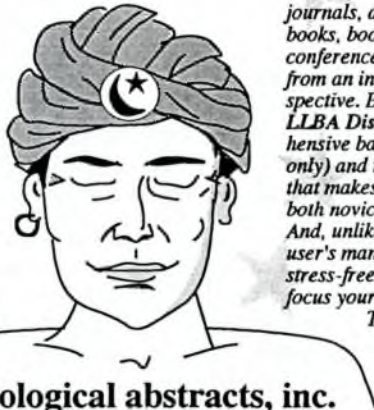
(*Internet cont. on page 143*)

Dear Swami Romma:

In this life, I am a research specialist working in an academic library. My shelf space is disappearing before my eyes, my budget is shrinking, and requests for services are way up. Talk about bad karma! What am I to do? Your words of wisdom will set me upon the right path.
—Uncentered in Ukiah

Dear Uncentered:

Not to worry! The Swami knows all and tells all. Call *sociological abstracts, inc.* and they will ease your worries with two CD-ROMs created especially for professionals like you. Both *sociofile* and *LLBA Disc* contain timely abstracts of theoretical and applied research in sociology and linguistics, and are priced for down-to-earth budgets like yours. Their subject specialists track more than 1,900



journals, as well as selected books, book reviews, and conference proceedings—all from an international perspective. Both *sociofile* and *LLBA Disc* offer comprehensive backfiles (this lifetime only) and retrieval software that makes searching easy for both novice and savvy souls. And, unlike life, they include a user's manual to ensure a stress-free experience. So focus your energy.

Tune in to:

sociological abstracts, inc.

p.o. box 22206 • san diego, ca 92192-0206

(619) 695-8803 • fax: (619) 695-0416 • internet: socio@cerf.net

Tactic #1: Read

Start by reading cover-to-cover a book on electronic networking, geared to your level of experience with computers and the Internet. I browsed several titles in various bookstores before buying Ed Krol's chatty but basic work, *The Whole Internet* (O'Reilly & Assoc., 1992) which I devoured over the 1992-93 New Year's week end. That plus experience led me to realize I need to know more about the Unix operating system, so I intend to purchase an elementary text on that. (Yes, I do use my own and the local public library for works on the topic, but when I sense a long-term commitment to an area, I always want to own at least one title and keep it in my office for reference.)

Read a wide assortment of articles: practical ones like those which appeared recently in this journal, describing Internet resources in particular subject areas such as Russian and East European studies; news reports about how academe, business, and government are struggling or collaborating; technical contributions that discuss how to manipulate electronic documents; and philosophical pieces that speculate about the impact on our lives of the so-called Electronic Superhighway. The best way to identify these is to use your usual multidisciplinary index, whether on paper or online. *Library Literature* now has a separate heading for the Internet, as does *Library & Information Science Abstracts* (classification 13.11). Read appropriate electronic listservs or Usenet newsgroups regularly. Although there is no such thing as a complete directory, that in the back of Krol's book and the more recent compilation by Eric Braun are helpful guides to electronic forums in all disciplines.

Tactic #2: Confer

Find a buddy or two—a colleague, friend, an electronically talented student—to answer your questions patiently and coach you step-by-step through such arcana as unzipping compressed files or modifying your computer's hidden parameters to make some procedure work more smoothly.

Tactic #3: Play

Practice as much as possible in an unpressured environment (not at the reference desk!). Try Hytelnet to browse other libraries' online catalogs. Tackle Rick Gates's monthly *Internet Hunt*, available on several library-related electronic listservs. Work through all the examples

in a text like Richard Smith and Mark Gibb's *Navigating the Internet*. Get comfortable with the many paths and destinations gophers provide. Make sure you can both send and retrieve files using ftp and that you can identify them using Archie and Veronica. Any of these efforts, systematically pursued, will help you become fluent on the Internet.

Tactic #4: Contribute

Share your ideas, comments, and experiences with others, both locally and remotely. Participate in electronic discussions, offer to be a buddy for someone even newer to technology, or teach a workshop on a topic or area you have become expert in.

Tactic #5: Ponder

Reflect on what you are learning and whether there are more efficient or thorough ways to master the Internet. Put yourself in your users' place and brainstorm with colleagues about what is reasonable and possible to expect faculty and students to do on their own and what is an appropriate part of reference service or research consultation. Draft a policy to delineate these areas and then implement it, modifying your guidelines as technology and user sophistication improve.

These are my observations as of early 1994 about the Internet and professional development. It is a very powerful tool, permitting every possible learning style, and conquering it—whether because it is an intrinsic challenge, just plain fun, or the tidal wave of the future—should be a resolution for every academic librarian. ■

(*Internet cont. from page 141*)

much more. Select "UofM Campus Information," then "University of Minnesota Women's Center."

Other Resources

- SOC.FEMINISM FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) provides "an informal compilation of potential resources for women" and includes feminist organizations, related organizations, feminist and women-oriented publications, feminist and women-oriented electronic mailing lists, and a list of catalogs/bookstores. It is available through ftp to rtfm.mit.edu as "resources" under /pub/usenet/news.answers/feminism. ■