

WOMEN'S CAUCUS (WC) <http://naeawc.net>

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Understanding Feminism

Typically, students' understanding of feminism will be from what is learned from patriarchal media, although patriarchy is unmarked. Feminism is misconstrued from how it is marked in patriarchal media. Patriarchy with its ubiquitous invisibility, like the air we breathe, is a powerful influence on our behaviors and beliefs. With a Google search of "Indonesian women," the search will yield, first and foremost, many sites selling women's bodies assumed for male consumption. The same results will be achieved with searching any nationality, race, or ethnic term in front of the terms "women" or "girls." A search with a similar term adjacent to "men" or "boys" does not produce the same assumption of consumption. Beyond critique, transformative identity politics need alternative visions to stereotypes of gender. We are socialized to have anxiety over masculinity, femininity, and

about our body as a gendered, raced, and (dis)abled construction.

NAEA WC member Amber Scheetz (2010) created *Purple Lips* (see image below), a book intended to empower survivors of violence. Her arts-based research for this book involved interviewing three women in her family who overcame domestic violence. The 1976 International Tribunal on Crimes against Women held in Brussels called attention to the full range of crimes, both violently brutal and subtly discriminatory, committed against women of all cultures. In the United States, 28 states have statutes that include crimes motivated by actual or perceived gender in the Federal Hate Crime Law. According to Jacquelyn Campbell's research, lethal gender-based hate crimes (i.e., femicide) in the US increased from 54% to 72% between 1976 and 1996. Yet the only gender-based hate murder charged by the US Justice Department was in 2002, according to the research conducted by the Women's Media Center. "It's clear that other strategies are needed to combat femicides in this country" (Diana E. H. Russell, 2011, <http://womensmedia-center.com>).

Visual culture gender constructions impact everybody. Leanne Levy's (2008) film, created with high school girls and embedded as part of her article, *The Skinny on This Is My Body: Filmmaking as Empowerment Intervention and Activism*, presents girls'

despair and anxiety about their bodies to the point of self-mutilation to ease emotional pain by attention to physical pain. Intervention in the socialization processes of self-hatred can occur by gradually changing one's relationship with one's own body. This can happen through internalizing alternative ways of being beautiful, valued, and respected rather than those portrayed in the dominant visual cultural narratives that encase the body. This is everybody's issue and responsibility—to make gender and privilege visible, and alternative perspectives possible.

Call for Nominations

The NAEA WC seeks nominations for leadership positions of president-elect, treasurer, exhibition coordinator, membership chair, conference program coordinator, website coordinator, outreach coordinators, research coordinator, and delegate's assembly representative. Please refer to the bylaws at <http://naeawc.net/bylaws.html> for more information about each position, and nominate yourself or another by sending an email to kk-b@psu.edu.

Annual Breakfast Speaker Howardena Pindell

A call for nominations for an artist to serve as juror and convention speaker at our annual breakfast was sent to WC members in June 2011, and 50 of 136 members voted from the 7 nominations received. We are thrilled that Howardena Pindell will be the speaker at the WC BYOB (bring your own breakfast) on March 3. Howardena Pindell has a lifetime of achievement as an artist, educator, and writer. Her work is noted for its political and social content based on her experiences as an emerging African American artist during the Civil Rights Movement. She has remained an activist in

the art community with her focus on exposing issues of race, censorship, and violence. Pindell also served as juror for the 2012 WC Exhibition. Accepted artworks are included in an exhibition catalog to be disseminated at the 2012 NAEA Convention WC sessions to members.

Gatherings

On October 29, 2011 WC members Caryl Church, Juli Dorff, Linda Hoeptner Poling, and Heather Fountain hosted a day-long event in Ohio titled, "Walking the Path: A Workshop for Art Educators." This event provided an opportunity for participants to reconnect with their teaching paths through meaningful reflective strategies, including yoga, meditation, labyrinth walking, and art engagement. As a WC member, consider hosting an event in your area.

At the 2011 WC Lobby session in Seattle, the 37 participants responded to the prompt: "A Time When ..." A transcription of the 2011 session is at <http://naeawc.net/activism.html> with permissions granted by the participants to make this text public.

Lobby 2012: What do you believe is critical to lobby for in 2012? Post your response on WC Facebook or e-mail me at kk-b@psu.edu. All are welcome to participate in the next Lobby Session in NYC on March 1, 2012, 6-7 p.m. ■

Reference

Levy, L. (2008). *The skinny on this is my body: Filmmaking as empowerment intervention and activism.* *Visual Culture & Gender*, 3, 7-29.

