



**October 5, 2009:** Guest Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, author of “Female World of Love and Ritual,” “Black Gothic: Race, Gender, and the Construction of the American Middle Class, and *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, gave a talk on the intellectual trajectory her interests have taken. Called “From ‘Love and Ritual’ to ‘Violent Empire,’” it focused on the role slavery, race and gender have played in the construction of a U. S. national identity, as citizens of a republic. Carla L. Peterson moderated.

**November 2, 2009:** A how-to session, “Chapter by Chapter: Finding a Form,” featured seminar members Abigail Santamaria, Diane Jacobs, and Dona Munker speaking about their in-progress biographies (on, respectively, Joy Davidman, Abigail Adams and her sisters, and Sara Bard Field). Kathy Chamberlain moderated.

**December 7, 2009:** Suzanne Wasserman screened the penultimate version of her new film *Sweatshop Cinderella* on the life and work of the writer Anzia Yezierska. An evaluation followed. Nancy Rubin Stuart organized the session and Lise Vogel moderated.

**January 4, 2010:** Sydney Ladensohn Stern moderated our first session of 2010. Guest presenter Keyvne Baar, project archivist at the Tamiment Library, New York University, gave a talk illustrated with slides on “Dumb Blondes and Southern Belles: Women in Entertainment and the Un-American Activities Committee.” Seminar member Amy Swerdlow, co-founder of Women Strike for Peace and emerita professor of history at Sarah Lawrence, commented.

**February 1, 2010:** Guest Alice Kessler-Harris, R. Gordon Hoxie Professor of History at Columbia University, discussed problems in the biography she is writing: “Sex, Lies, and History: A Life of Lillian Hellman.” Dorothy O. Helly moderated the exciting discussion that followed.

**March 1, 2010:** Dona Munker moderated a helpful “how-to”: “Narrative Roadblocks and How to Remove Them.” Sallie Bingham sent an email note, and many participated in the discussion. Two works-in-progress seminar members talked about at some length were Annette Blaugrund’s book on Harriet Hubbard Ayer, and Blanche Wiesen Cook’s Eleanor Roosevelt, volume three.

**April 5, 2010:** Patricia Laurence moderated a panel discussion called “Making It Up: Biography, History, and the Modernist Novel.” Members Pat Laurence and Rachel Brownstein participated, along with guest Joanna Scutts, PhD candidate in the department of English at Columbia University. Pat Laurence also read a paper by guest Juliette Atkinson, who was unable to attend because of an airlines problem. Juliette is author of *Victorian Biography Reconsidered: A Study of Nineteenth-Century ‘Hidden’ Lives*.

**May 3, 2010:** The festive **Women Writing Women's Lives Twentieth Anniversary Celebration: 1990-2010** was held at the Tamiment Library, New York University, which houses the seminar's organizational papers. There was a food and drinks reception. Books and articles by seminar members were on display that evening and for two weeks following the celebration.

Jill Norgren moderated the program. Introductory remarks were made by Michael Nash, Director of the Tamiment; Claire Morris Stern, Chair of the WWWL Archives Committee; Dorothy O. Helly, instrumental in arranging for oral history interviews from ten WWWL founders; and Kathy Chamberlain, Chair of the Steering Committee. Featured speakers shared their reflections on being a seminar member: Nancy Rubin Stuart, Alix Kates Shulman, and Blanche Wiesen Cook.

Co-Chairs of the event were Trudy Balch, Claire Morris Stern, and Suzanne Wasserman, assisted by committee members: Dorothy O. Helly, Diane Jacobs, Marjorie G. Jones, Patricia Laurence, Victoria Olsen, Dee Shapiro, Patricia Valenti, and Donez Xiques.

Two past chairs of WWWL were present: Deirdre Bair and Norah Chase. Also present, from CUNY's Joseph S. Murphy Institute, which provides the seminar with a meeting space: Director Gregory Mantsios and WWWL liaison June Cumberbatch.

We were moved by a note Deirdre Bair, a seminar founder and the first chair, sent after the event: ***"I was deeply touched to see that what started out so casually and yes, so unthinkingly (unthought out?), has become what I truly believe is one of the most important gatherings of women in our time."***