

**University of South Carolina Women's and Gender Studies Conference**  
**March 19-21, 2009**  
**In conjunction with the Association of**  
**Feminist Epistemologies, Methodologies, Metaphysics, and Science Studies**

***FEMMSS 3: The Politics of Knowledge***

Call for abstracts for individual papers or panels

FEMMSS 3 seeks to deepen the understanding of the politics of knowledge in light of the increasing pressures of globalization, neoliberal restructuring, and militarization. Calling an array of theoretical frameworks including transnational feminism, post-colonial theory, cultural studies, epistemologies of ignorance, feminist epistemologies, and feminist science studies, this conference works to understand the ways in which knowledge is politically constituted and its material affects on people's lives. The politics of knowledge can be discerned through the allocation and the appropriation of intellectual and natural resources, through the allocation of research funding, the control and commodification of the health sciences and health care by multinational corporations, and the dominance of Western knowledge over that of the Two-Thirds world. Furthermore, the politics of knowledge can be seen in the way groups and communities actively resist troubling affects of knowledge production through grass-roots organizations such as the Third World Network, community action groups, the citizens' science movement, environmental justice groups, and the various women's health movements.

FEMMSS continues to be concerned about the importance and difficulty of translating knowledge into action and practice. Ours is a highly interdisciplinary group of feminist scholars who pursue knowledge questions at the interstices of epistemology, methodology, metaphysics, ontology, and science and technology studies. Themes for the conference include, but are not limited to:

Whose Knowledge Matters?

- How do class, gender, race and ethnicity, disability, sexuality, and other formations of difference shape what counts as expertise, what questions are considered relevant, and which outcomes emerge from clashes and negotiations between different forms of expertise?
- How have epistemologies of ignorance emerged as important conceptual and political

approaches to not only reveal patterns of active unknowing, but also to point to strategies for resistance?

- How do the material conditions of people's lives, such as access to water, food, computers, information, and health care, enable or disable their ability to live well, produce knowledge, and engage in resistance?

#### Science, Knowledge and the State

- What has been the role of science and technology in fostering militarization, or in intervening in the militarization of subjectivity?
- What is the role of science in constructing historical knowledges that underpin the nation-state and justify the subordination of indigenous and/or colonized peoples?
- What is the role of cultural production and new media in expanding democratic participation and empowerment? In constructing, controlling, and regulating populations?
- How has "certainty" been constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed in the face of technoscientific uncertainty?

#### Knowledges of Resistance

- What are some of the promising community-based research strategies that can help us to understand the effects that corporate control of health and health care is having?
- How do local and globally connected citizens' groups work to reveal and resist environmental racism, globalization, and gender injustice that are generated and perhaps obscured by the production of knowledge?
- How can Western feminists and feminists from the Two-Thirds World establish symmetrical relationships that don't replicate the patterns of colonial epistemology?
- How can we best create robust links with activists, advocates, and policy-makers?
- What are some strategies for bringing policy concerns to the work of FEMMSS and the work of FEMMSS to policy-makers?

You are invited to submit abstracts (500-word maximum) for individual presentations or panels relevant to the conference theme as well as to other issues in women's and gender studies. Please submit the abstract of your paper or panel proposal by September 15, 2008 to: <http://www.cas.sc.edu/wost/conference.html>