

**History of the Center for the Study of Women in Society
at the University of Oregon**

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PROJECT: History of the creation of the Center for the Study of Women in Society --Add to and correct the 'history' of CSWS and investigate the role that Clark played in its creation.

SOURCES: Office of the President Papers in University of Oregon Archives, documents from archives at Center for the Study of Women in Society (Hendricks Hall), Interviews with key persons in creation of center

QUESTIONS: How did this happen? It was the biggest donation ever given to the University from a donor who had ^{no} actual connection to the UO. Who were the big players in convincing Harris to make the donation? What was the environment for women at the University at that time? How did it influence the development of women's position at the University?

Summary of Findings: The Creation of the Center for the Study of Women in Society

The history of the Center for the Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon is closely connected to the history of major social and political movements that took place throughout the United States and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s. Like all great products of a movement, the founding and development of the Center was a collective act involving many different persons, from University of Oregon faculty and staff, to students, administrators, and allies of feminism from within the Eugene community and from across the nation.

In 1970, Professor Joan Acker (Sociology) was teaching the first course ever at the University of Oregon on women in society. At this time, Professor Acker came to realize that there was a severe lack of research on women in almost every discipline. Motivated to help remedy this problem, she and other female faculty at the University formed a research group. This group, which consisted of Acker, Professor Joyce Mitchell, and several university graduate students, applied for a grant from Graduate School, and then performed a study on the status of women at the University of Oregon. With the help of an administrative assistant in the Political Science Department, Acker and the other women in the 'research group' were able to get a room in PLC, which they used to informally start a women's research 'center.'

In these early days, the Center focused most of its energy on problems at the University of Oregon. For example, using the data from its study, the Center pushed the University to adopt Affirmative Action policies and fought for changes to the institutional structure of the University so that women students would be better encouraged and accommodated.¹

In 1972 the University of Oregon underwent a funding crisis as a result of statewide budget cuts in education funding. This crisis had wide-ranging impacts on the University, as it was forced to eliminate programs and positions. Ironically, at that same time, the development of the 'New Social Movement' was resulting in an increase in the call for the creation of new programs. Throughout the decade of the 1970s, this tension between the development of whole new

¹ Joan Acker; Interview by Alletta Brenner. Eugene, Oregon. 8 August 2006.

academic fields, and the lack of resources to fund such pursuits would be a frequent theme on campus. As a result, many new programs, including the Center for the Sociological Study of Women (which later became the Center for the Study of Women in Society), were forced to function in their early days on shoestring budgets and volunteer labor.

Likewise, in 1972 the university dedicated itself to the support of affirmative action and the end of discrimination. As a part of this, it set goals for the increased recruitment and retention of women graduate students and faculty. However, there was some difficulty articulating a concrete policy for how to achieve this.²

Throughout the time the University was making its first big budget cuts, the issue of the status of women was a major point of contention. In 1972 a Committee on the Status of Faculty Women was formed (along with other groups aimed at institutional equity, etc.) to help determine how the University should change its policies with regard to women faculty and staff. Many of those who were involved with the establishment of the Center were also involved in this Committee, including Joan Acker. Sadly, just when many on campus were struggling to improve the status of women, they ended up being some of the hardest hit, due to the historic practice of devaluing fields dominated by women, and hiring female faculty and staff on a part-time, non tenure-track basis.

Though women were more frequently affected adversely by budget cuts, the Hearing Panel on University Priorities was initially created with no female members. Later Joan Acker and one other woman were added to the panel. However, the tendency of women faculty and staff to be the first to go when positions were cut remained. For example Professor Jan Newton (who would later be involved in the formation of the Center), the only female economics professor at the university was slated for termination, the reason stated being that she received her graduate degree from the University of Oregon, and that the University did not retain faculty that received their degrees here (!). Jeanette Silveira (psychology), who helped write up the original proposal for the Center, was also slated for termination because she had only been hired on a temporary basis. University President Robert Clark supported the Committee in calling for women to not be disproportionately affected by funding cuts, and apparently was successful in getting at least some women faculty and staff retained.³ However, following these budget cuts the number of women faculty at the University still plunged to its lowest in thirty years.

In addition to the Committee on the Status of Faculty Women, the university also supported a 'women's congress' called "Women on the Move" held at the University from June 19-30, 1972.

² "Memo: Affirmative Action Achievements April 13, 1972," Committee, Status of Faculty Women (folder 1 of 1), Series III, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. Acker reports that the Committee on the Status of Faculty Women also conducted its own research on women at the University of Oregon; however she feels that this Committee was ultimately very ineffective. See Acker, August 8, 2006.

³ Committee, Status of Faculty Women (folder 1 of 1), Series III, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. And "Memo: Status of Jeanette Silveira and Jan Newton," in Status of Women (folder 2 of 2), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

The purpose of the congress, which was organized by Oregon faculty and students, was to encourage "communication and sharing of experiences between all women on campus, identification of the specific needs and problems of all women on campus, and the development of plans for dealing with these problems."⁴ Officially sponsored by the newly created Wallace School of Community Service and Public Affairs (which had been funded by a grant from Readers Digest co-founder Lila Acheson Wallace), the Congress included a variety of feminist workshops and talks with the goal of providing an opportunity for "West coast women to come together to share common feelings and ideas and to constructively direct their resources and energies toward societal change." Guest speakers were brought from major feminist movements around the country, and the Congress ended with a program on creating strategies for change, both locally and nationally.⁵ No doubt this Congress not only raised awareness of feminist issues on campus, but also helped energize feminists of all kinds at the University to push for greater change in the decade to come.

In October 1972 President Clark was given a proposal for the creation of an interdisciplinary women's studies center at the University of Oregon. This center would be an expansion on a very small existing program: the Women's Research and Study Center, which was housed in one room in PLC, and funded through a grant from the Office of Scholarly Research in the Graduate School.⁶ The idea for this expansion was conceived and then written up by Joan Acker (Sociology), Jan Newton (Economics) and Jeanette Silveira (Psychology). The proposed center would have several functions:

1. To support course development and teaching to supplement women's studies efforts already existing
2. To provide special academic advising for women students
3. To coordinate Center and departmental offerings in women's studies
4. To aid with proposal writing and research activity in women's studies
5. To provide information and research findings to local, state and federal agencies.

The justification for the creation of this center rested primarily on the argument that while the need for (and interest in) research on women in society was growing, there was a great lack at the university level nationwide of faculty and resources to support this work. At the University of Oregon, like other schools around the country, the number of female professors was still very low, though the desire of students to take on projects in the women's studies field was high. In order to increase the number of faculty in this field, the proposal's authors argued, the University

⁴ "Memo: Committee on the Status of Faculty Women April 11, 1972," Committee, Status of Faculty Women (folder 1 of 1), Series III, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. And "Women on the Move: A Feminist Perspective—CSPA Workshop July 5-15 1972," (in the same folder).

⁵ "Feminism Workshop Begins" *Oregon Daily Emerald*, June 19, 1972 ("Summer Orientation Issue"), Section 2, page 14.

⁶ This Research Center had been in existence since 1970. Its primary activities, besides the maintenance of a lounge in PLC were the support of several studies on women's roles and experiences both locally and nationally. See *Projects of the CSWS 1970-1975*. In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

needed to both create greater institutional support for existing faculty and to draw in fresh graduate students who were engaged in women's studies. They argued that the creation of this new center would do just that.⁷

Later, in November of that year, one hundred women interested in Women's Studies met and formed a Women's Studies Steering Committee. From this meeting, they developed a 'position paper' on Women's Studies that affirmed the need for a 'Women's Studies Center' to provide: meeting space, library and research materials, and other resources to support women scholars and students." This Committee met with President Clark and other University administrators throughout the next three years to establish a number of new programs and to create institutional change for the benefit of women, such as the establishment of a Women's Studies Program, and the achievement of greater equality between male and female faculty and staff. The eventual creation of the Center for the Sociological Study of Women would be one of their biggest successes.⁸

President Robert Clark responded favorably to the proposal for a women's studies center stating: "I believe that a strong case exists to justify a formal interdisciplinary approach to women's studies. I expect that student interest would be substantial." However, Clark had some concerns as to the ability of the University to fund this new project. Initially, he passed their proposal along to the University Provost with the request that he help them establish an appropriate course of action. This was important, because at the time the proposal was made there was no funding for new programs without taking funding away from existing ones.⁹

The creation and eventual approval of the proposal for a women's studies center went hand in hand with other developments for women on campus. In May 1973, Clark created an Ad Hoc Committee on women's education and appointed members from the University faculty and the area community. Its purpose was: "to identify and analyze women's educational needs, to

⁷ Joan Acker, et al. *Proposal for the Establishment of an Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Center at the University of Oregon*. October 10, 1972. In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403. A copy of this Proposal is also available in the University of Oregon Archives: "Proposal for the establishment of an interdisciplinary women's studies center at the University of Oregon," Women's Studies Center (folder 4 of 4), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

⁸ "Press Release: Women's Studies Meeting," Women's Studies Center (folder 2 of 4), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. Also see, "Position Paper on Women's Studies," (in the same folder); Acker, 8 August 2006; and "Clark talks to women about center," Clark, Robert D. Official Business (folder 1 of 1), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

⁹ "Memo: Proposal for the Establishment of an Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Center from Robert D. Clark November 15, 1972," Ad hoc Committee, Women's Education (folder 1 of 1), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. And "Draft File memorandum: Discussion with RDC regarding petition the Women Center," Women's Studies Center (folder 4 of 4), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

determine the needs that should be met within the university, to identify the way in which the institution is presently meeting those needs, and to make, from their deliberations and study general recommendations for additions or alterations to the university's curriculum." Ms. Barbara Bateman of the Special Education Department was the Committee Chair.¹⁰

One consequence of the Ad Hoc Committee (as well as the work of other coordinating groups on campus, such as the University Feminists, and Women's Studies Steering Committee) was the creation of a 'women's studies council' whose purpose was to coordinate existing women's studies courses being taught in different departments around campus, and to create an introduction to women's studies course. This of course, would be the beginning of what would become a full-fledged women's studies department in 1975.¹¹ Initially, the creators of the Women's Studies Program (which included many of the same persons who were involved with the research center) had hoped for this program to be closely related to the proposed research center. However, due to controversy over the need to separate research from teaching, the two ended up being developed as independent from one another, with one focused on teaching, and the other on research funding and support.¹²

Besides the Women's Studies Program, the creation of a women's studies center was one of the more successful results of many different attempts on the part of women students, faculty and staff to make substantial changes to the structure and environment of the University of Oregon. However despite the strong support of President Clark, the center was met with some opposition. Aaron Novick, the Dean of the Graduate School was not supportive of the center, and in 1973 he insisted that if the new center were to be an interdisciplinary program under the Graduate School it would have to be approved by each of the departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. Unfortunately, when the proposal was circulated around the campus, only Sociology, then headed by Professor Richard Hill, responded favorably. At first, even Hill was somewhat skeptical, however after some discussion with Acker and others he became a strong supporter of

¹⁰ "Women's Education Committee Named," Clark, Robert D. Official Business (folder 1 of 1), Series IV, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

¹¹ By 1973 a regular 'women's studies' curriculum had been established at the University of Oregon. Its development into a department two years later was a result of a Faculty vote, urged by the Ad Hoc Committee on Women's Education and its supporters on campus, including President Clark. Ironically, throughout this process, a degree of tension developed between the Ad Hoc Committee and Clark because many of the women on the Committee felt that the University was not doing enough, quickly enough to follow through with the Committee's suggestions, etc. This culminated in an 'open letter' delivered to the President in July of 1973, which called for the University to "get off its ass!" and accused it of the "benign neglect" of the University's women. In reality, it seems that while President Clark was very supportive of the feminist project, he insisted upon following the established protocol for resource allocation, curricular change, etc. As a result, real change was often slow and circumvented by bureaucratic mechanism. For this reason, the eventual success of the Center and along with that of Women's Studies in general at the University, should be closely associated with the Harris/Grant bequest, which allowed these programs to gain necessary resources from outside the University. For more see Women's Studies (folder 2 of 2), Series V, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299; and Ad hoc Committee, Women's Education (folder 1 of 1), Series IV of the same collection.

¹² Acker, 8 August 2006.

the center, offering resources and support from his department.¹³ As a result of these developments, it was decided that the best bet would be to create the research center under the auspices of the Sociology Department. Acker submitted a second proposal for the creation of an Institute for the Sociological Study of Women to President Clark in 1973.¹⁴ This second proposal was approved that year by President Clark, as well as by the Chancellor and the Board of the University.¹⁵

In the fall of 1973 the Center for the Sociological Study of Women was founded within the Sociology Department at the University of Oregon. It was one of the first centers of its kind in the United States.¹⁶ It was first approved for only a three year-period, until the end of the 1975-1976 academic year. Upon its creation it was given an additional annual budget of \$5,244 (added to funds provided by the Department of Sociology).¹⁷

Despite President Clark's support of these efforts, the Center was woefully under-funded throughout its first decade of existence. It received only barely enough funding to exist, and relied on volunteer labor to a large extent. There were likely many reasons for this, a major one being that the university was undergoing serious budgetary shortfalls at the time. However, the fact that only one department on the whole campus was in support of the Center also likely played a role in this lack of financial support.¹⁸

However, though the degree of funding was low, the Center continued to receive some support throughout the seventies. In 1976, the Center for the Sociological Study of Women received a renewal of its initial funding allocation from the University and continued to function as a part of the Department of Sociology.¹⁹

¹³ Acker, 8 August 2006; and "Letter to President Robert Clark from Richard Hill on the Center for the Sociological Study of Women. September 13, 1973." In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

¹⁴ "Memo to Joan Acker from Aaron Novick on the Institute for Sociological Study of Women. August 16, 1973." In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

¹⁵ "Letter to Sandra Morgen;" And "Memo Dean Aaron Novick from Aaron Alpert on the Center for the Sociological Study of Women October 1, 1973." In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

¹⁶ Elizabeth Archers ed. *Center for the Study of Women in Society: Ten years 1983-1993 University of Oregon*. Eugene, OR: UO Printing Services, 1993, 2.

¹⁷ "Memo to Dean Aaron Novick from Aaron Alpert on the Center for the Sociological Study of Women October 1, 1973." In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403; "Memo to Dean John E. Baldwin from Harry Alpert on the Center for the Sociological Study of Women. October 28, 1975," (in the same folder); and "Letter to President Robert Clark from Richard Hill on the Center for the Sociological Study of Women. September 13, 1973," (in the same folder).

¹⁸ Acker, 8 August 2006.

¹⁹ "Letter to John Baldwin from Joan Acker on Funding for the Center for the Sociological Study of Women. April 19, 1976;" and "Letter to John Baldwin from Donald Van Houten. April 19, 1976." In CSWS Planning Policy

In 1983, with the Grant-Harris endowment providing the funds, the Sociological Center was greatly expanded and finally become its own entity apart from the Sociology Department. Renamed the Center for the Study of Women in Society, this new center was finally able to realize the original vision of Acker and the others for a truly interdisciplinary resource. In its new form, the Center was able to enlarge its activities to organizing and sponsoring lectures, seminars and courses, and providing research grants and fellowships for the development of work in a variety of fields involving the study of women.²⁰

Summary Findings on the History of the Jane Grant/William Harris Endowment:

In the late 1960s, Martin Schmidt and Edward Kemp (of the Special Collections Division at the library) decided to begin collecting materials about the role of women in society-- women leaders, writers, artists, etc. They began soliciting nationwide for manuscripts of women leaders. One strategy was to read the obituary columns in the NY Times. In 1972 Kemp came across the name of Jane Grant in the New York Times obituaries. With her first husband Harold Ross, Grant had founded the New Yorker magazine. She had also been a famous reporter at the New York Times, and was instrumental in the work of the Lucy Stone League. Grant fitted perfectly the type of woman the library was seeking. Upon her death, she had been married to William B. Harris, an associate editor of Fortune magazine.²¹

Edward Kemp had read about the work of Professor Acker and others on campus and contacted them for advice regarding how to approach Jane Grant's husband. They met with Kemp and helped him prepare for his correspondence with Harris.²²

In 1973 Kemp wrote to Harris inquiring about the possibility of depositing some of Jane Grants papers in the University's manuscripts collection. Harris responded, impressed in part because Kemp referred to Ms. Grant by her 'maiden' name and not as 'Mrs. Harris.' In his letter response to Kemp's inquiry, Harris described his interest in establishing an endowment in Grant's name. He had been working with Grant before she died to establish a Women's Studies Chair at several universities, but so far had been unsuccessful. After Grant died, Harris was insistent upon carrying out Grant's wishes to support women's studies, and responded favorably to the interest expressed by the University of Oregon.²³

Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403

²⁰ Archers, 2.

²¹ "Letter to Sandra Morgen;" and "Jane Grant Dead," Obituary, *The New York Times*, March 17, 1972. Section L p. 44. For more on Jane Grant's life see Beverly Merrick, "Jane Grant, *The New Yorker*, and Ross: A Lucy Stoner Practices Her Own Style of Journalism," *The Serials Librarian* 37 no. 2 (1999): 59-88.

²² Acker, 8 August 2006. (*substantiate with info from Kemp*)

²³ James Fox, Director of University Special Collections and Archives; Interview by Alletta Brenner. Eugene, Oregon. 4 August 2006. Also see "Letter to Edward Kemp from W. B. Harris November 28, 1973," Harris, William

In 1974 Kemp met Harris in New York to talk about Grant's papers, Kemp and Harris met several more times in the next few months, wherein Kemp told Harris that the University had established a Center in the Sociology Department for the sociological study of women, and that the University was working on creating a Women's Studies Program. Harris agreed to meet with University President Clark next time he was in New York. Joan Acker and others at the Center soon learned of this and offered to help Clark in whatever way possible to help pursue this possibility. Clark responded favorably and accepted their aid in preparation. For example, they provided articles on women's studies issues (written by University of Oregon faculty) for Clark to read.²⁴ In addition, they prepared 'fact sheets' on women's studies at the University of Oregon for Clark to take with him to New York.²⁵ Later, once in New York, Clark met up with Joan Acker, who was on sabbatical there, for further preparation.²⁶

In December of 1974 and again early spring of 1975, Clark met Harris in New York. Harris expressed to Clark that he was frustrated by his previous attempts dating back to the 1960s (before Grant had died) to help establish some women's studies project with their money. They had been working with Harvard University, but after some disagreement over fundraising, Harvard had called the project off. Other universities he had contacted had been interested, but wanted to use the money for purposes other than women's studies.

Throughout their meetings, Clark and Harris talked extensively about the status of women in American society, and developed a strong rapport on the issue of women's rights. Clark reported

(Possible Donor) (folder 3 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William D. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

²⁴ It should be noted that both of the studies that Clark read, (which were written by Marilyn Farwell, Miriam Johnson, Jean Stockard, Joan Acker and Claudeen Naffziger) were supported and in part funded by the Center for the Sociological Study of Women. It is clear that a major goal of this was to prepare Clark to make the case that the University of Oregon was already engaged in meaningful research in the area of women's studies, and therefore that a gift by Harris would be well utilized. For copies of the studies see Committee, Women's Studies (folder 2 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. Or, Committee, Women's Studies Council (folder 1 of 1), Series VII, Office of the President Record, Robert D. Clark and William D. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

²⁵ See "Letter to President Robert Clark from Joan Acker December 2, 1974," Committee, Women's Studies (folder 2 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. Also see "Minutes of the Women's Studies Council November 25, 1974" and "Letter to Ms. Marilyn Farwell from Christine Leonard (secretary to the President) December 26, 1974" in the same folder. For a copy of the 'Fact Sheet', which also gives an excellent overview of the Center's activities at that time see "Women's Studies at Oregon," Committee, Women's Studies Council (folder 1 of 1), Series VII, Office of the President Record, Robert D. Clark and William D. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299. Dean Albrecht and Muriel Jackson were also instrumental in organizing the University's approach to building a relationship with Mr. Harris, and spearheading the development of a funding proposal to give him. See "Memorandum: William B. Harris File, November 20, 1974," Harris, William (Possible Donor) (Folder 3 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Record, Robert D. Clark and William D. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

²⁶ Joan Acker. Personal Communication (email) to Alletta Brenner. Eugene, Oregon. 21 August 2006.

being impressed by Harris' attitudes, finding him to be one of the only other men he had ever met who shared his views on feminist principles.²⁷ Clark told Harris about the University of Oregon's Center for the Sociological Study of Women and emphasized that there was no question about the University's interest in the subject of women or its commitment to the Center. He explained about the women faculty at the University who helped design and establish the Center, as well as about the enthusiasm and support of the Department of Sociology for it. One of the key selling points was that the University was truly dedicated to the pursuit and support of Women's Studies, unlike some other schools, which often created temporary women's studies courses and seminars to meet popular demand but were not willing to create lasting programs to support the field. Clark expressed to Harris that he too was interested in furthering women's place in society well before the Second Wave gained steam. When Harris responded favorably to the meeting, Clark invited him to come to the University. He was anxious to have him come before he (Clark) retired from his position as President in June of that year.²⁸

Preceding Harris' visit to the University of Oregon in January 1975, the faculty members of the Center for the Sociological Study of Women wrote to President Clark asking that they might be involved in "making Mr. Harris feel welcome and in developing a plan to secure a major donation from him." One suggestion they put forth was to house Jane Grant's book collection in the Center's library and change its name to the "Jane Grant Reading Room."²⁹

In June of 1975, Harris came to Eugene as Clark's guest, staying in the Presidential home. Edward Kemp and Clark's assistant Muriel Jackson did a great deal of footwork for the event, frequently corresponding with Harris and arranging the details of his visit. Clark invited university scholars who were involved in the Center to dinner with Harris: Joan Acker (Sociology), Miriam Johnson (Sociology), Marilyn Farwell (English), and Richard Hill (Head of Sociology). The dinner went very well with much lively conversation, and Harris was impressed by the other guests. However, throughout the evening, they had a difficult time getting him to talk about the bequest, which he had already committed to in a letter to President Clark.

After dinner the conversation moved back to Women's Studies at the University of Oregon, and Joan Acker asked Harris how he would prefer they used the money. They emphasized the desire of the University to honor both his and Grant's intentions. At the end of the evening, Harris

²⁷ "Notes regarding visit to Mr. William Harris New York, December 10, 1974." Harris, William (Possible Donor) (Folder 2 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

²⁸ "Letter to Sandra Morgen". Both from Clark's own account and my interview with Joan Acker, it is clear that Clark was a very strong supporter of women's rights. By his own account, Clark wished to establish an academic program dedicated to women's studies during his time as Dean in the 1950s, but was unable to realize that dream until the feminist movement encouraged women like Acker to step forward and push for institutional change. See "Letter to W.B. Harris from Robert D. Clark November 21, 1974," Harris, William (Possible Donor) (Folder 2 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

²⁹ "Letter to President Robert Clark from Marion Goldman, Miriam Johnson and Jean Stockard. January 21, 1975." In CSWS Planning Policy Communications and Minutes 1973-1981. Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

stated his desire to leave a bequest to the University for the development of the Center, indicating his gift would range from five hundred thousand to one million dollars.³⁰

In addition to Harris' liking of Joan Acker and others, it seems as though Clark hit it off well with Harris, as they shared a number of similar interests, including gardening and natural history (Harris owned a flower farm). It is likely that Harris' favorable impression of Clark also had an impact on his decision to endow the University with such a large gift. Later that year, Harris had his will changed to reflect that with a few small exceptions, his entire estate was to go upon his death to the University of Oregon Foundation for the "the study of women," to be used solely for "research and teaching of that scholastic sub-discipline of sociology."³¹

In May of that same year, Kemp and Dr. William Axford, head of the University of Oregon libraries, traveled to Connecticut to visit Mr. Harris again, and finalize the preparation of Grant's books and papers for transport to the University library.³²

Beginning in 1976, Harris donated Jane Grant's papers along with photographs and other documents to the University of Oregon Special Collections division of the Library.³³ In addition, he donated Grant's personal book collection to the library, some of which was transferred to the Center (where it is still housed today), according to his wish that they be as accessible as possible.³⁴

In the years to follow, Ex-President Clark, the new University President William Boyd, Edward Kemp, Muriel Jackson³⁵ and others continued a relationship with Mr. Harris, keeping him

³⁰ "Letter to Sandra Morgen." And, Acker, 8 August 2006. For more details about Harris' visit to Oregon, see Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³¹ "Letter to Stan G. Potter, esq. From Hanno D. Mott April 28, 1975." Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³² "Letter to W. B. Harris from Sandra Davis April 5, 1975," Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³³ "A History of Acquisition," in *Jane C. Grant Papers: A Collection of the University of Oregon Library*. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon Printing Department, 1985, 6. Also see "Letter to William B. Boyd from Edward Kemp May 24, 1976," Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³⁴ See documents in Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³⁵ Muriel Jackson (Clark's assistant) seems to have played a central role in the development of Clark's relationship with Harris. In several letters she is noted as being an important person in the University of Oregon-Harris relationship. However, there is little material available detailing precisely what that role was, beyond facilitating Clark's correspondence and time with Harris. However, one thing that is clear is that once Clark ended his presidency, Jackson continued to work on the Harris project, helping to inform President Boyd and ensure continuity

informed of developments in Women's Studies at the University and meeting him in Connecticut and New York. Harris was by this time extremely enthusiastic about supporting the University and expressed an interest in working on behalf of the University to solicit additional funding from his associates in New York.³⁶ Throughout that time, Kemp encouraged President Boyd to continue the kind of friendly, informal relationship that Clark and Muriel Jackson had worked so hard to create, and likewise avoid letting persons from the Development Fund contact and thus pressure Mr. Harris.³⁷

Upon his death in 1981, Harris's estate left a three and a half million-dollar bequest in Jane Grant's name to the University of Oregon, with the express purpose of supporting teaching and research in women's studies.³⁸ At that time, it was the largest gift the University of Oregon had ever received from a single donor.³⁹ There was some controversy at the time, because Thurston Greene, one of Harris' close friends (and lawyers) in New York attempted to contest the bequest. Allegedly, Green complained that it was not right for all of his estate to go to an 'obscure' university on the West Coast.⁴⁰ In letters to the University and the Portland Lawyers representing the University, Green questioned the ability of the University to guarantee that the money would be used as Harris had wanted, and suggested that Women's Studies was not a 'real' and legitimate and therefore enduring form of scholarship.⁴¹ Likewise, once the money was dispersed, there were some at the University who wanted the money to be spread around more, and not be limited to supporting just Women's Studies. However, because the will was written so precisely and because the University's President Paul Olum, the Director of the Center, and others were so quick and effective in response, all of the intended money did eventually reach the University of Oregon Foundation to be invested for and dispersed to the Center.⁴² Through careful management, the Center has been able to preserve and benefit from the Grant-Harris Endowment for more than twenty years, and will continue to for many more.

through that transition. For more on Jackson, see Harris, William (Possible Donor), (folders 1 through 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³⁶ See Harris, William (Possible Donor), (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³⁷ "Letter to "William B. Boyd from Edward Kemp May 24, 1976," Harris, William (Possible Donor) (folder 1 of 3), Series VII, Office of the President Records, Robert D. Clark and William B. Boyd, UA 16, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403-1299.

³⁸ "A History of Acquisition," in *Jane C. Grant Papers*, 6; and "Gift to West Coast Women's Center," *The New York Times* 4 October 1983. Quoted in Merrick, 82.

³⁹ "Letter to Sandra Morgen."

⁴⁰ Acker, August 8, 2006.

⁴¹ See "Letter from Thurston Greene to Dr Edward Bassett December 20, 1996 (plus attachments)," Harris/Grant Bequest, Center for the Study of Women in Society (Archives), 430 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403. And "Letter from Thurston Greene to Mr. Crosby Kelly January 18, 1982," (in the same folder.)

⁴² Acker, August 8, 2006.