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## Sudden funding increase advances women's studies

By Joan Herman  
Of the Emerald

There was a time when research on women meant home economic studies on the latest cooking, cleaning and child care methods.

Times are changing, but even today research on women is only beginning to uncover women's contributions to all facets of society, including politics, science and the arts, says Joan Acker, director of the University's Center for the Study of Women in Society.

A \$3.5 million grant to the center will help advance studies on women in traditionally male-oriented research fields, says Acker, who became the University's first woman faculty member in the sociology department in 1967.

A celebration of the gift on Sunday will feature a presentation by Jessie Bernard, the nation's leading scholar on the sociology of women, she says.

The donation by the late William Harris, a Connecticut and New York businessman and husband of feminist writer Jane Grant, will make the center one of the nation's two or three best-funded centers for research on women, Acker says.

"We also intend to make the center one of the finest in quality," she says.

A 48-fold budget increase for the center — from \$5,000 in 1982 to \$240,000 in 1983 — comes at a time when federal money for research on women is drying up, Acker says.

Although the center did not begin to receive grant money until June, Acker has known of the gift since 1975 when Harris was contacted by Edward Kemp of the University library.

Before her death, Grant and Harris had discussed establishing a center for women's studies. After deciding against giving funds to other universities, Harris met with

University officials in Eugene and chose to bequeath his estate to the University, with the agreement that funds be used solely for research and teaching in the study of women.

Ultimately, such research "may radically alter our ideas about history," not to mention traditional yet inaccurate assumptions about masculinity and femininity, Acker says.

"Most scholarship that is about people is about men. Men have been assumed to be human beings and to represent all of humanity. That's symbolized in our use of the word 'man.' Man and environment. The history of man. That history really has been the history of men," she says.

"Our whole mode of thinking is based on the assumption that the general human being is male, and that what applies to males applies to females. We now know in all kinds of ways that that is not true," she says.

Not only attitudes about men and women need changing, Acker says, but the social and economic reality of women's lives, as well. One of the most familiar examples is that of wage inequality between the sexes, she says, citing popular studies that show women still earn only 59 cents for every dollar men earn.

In fact, the campaign to establish equal pay for work of comparable worth did not gain recognition until research documenting wage inequalities had been done, Acker says.

The bulk of the center's funds will go toward research in three areas: symbolic representations of gender and sexuality, women and social structure and gender differentiation in developmental and life span perspectives, Acker says.

Although research can contribute to change, it cannot replace direct action for social policy changes, Acker says. Yet if

such research is fed back into the curriculum, students will begin to question "the taken-for-granted nature of what masculinity and femininity are and the nature of what men and women should do."

Ultimately, stereotypical attitudes contribute to many of the world's serious problems, such as the threat of nuclear war, Acker says.

In all cultures, Acker says, women are responsible for the caring and nurturing of human beings. Men are not, yet they should be, she says.

"I'm convinced that the male world of economics and occupations is a world in which humane values are very secondary to the values of gain, dominance and power. People are expendable.

"I think (these attitudes) ultimately relate to the problem of war and the nuclear insanity, the insanity of Reagan's foreign policy."

Changing popular stereotypes takes time, Acker says, but she doesn't view her effort as futile.

"There's no question changes have occurred. It's just that it's going to be a long and difficult process, and there's no guarantee that it will continue."

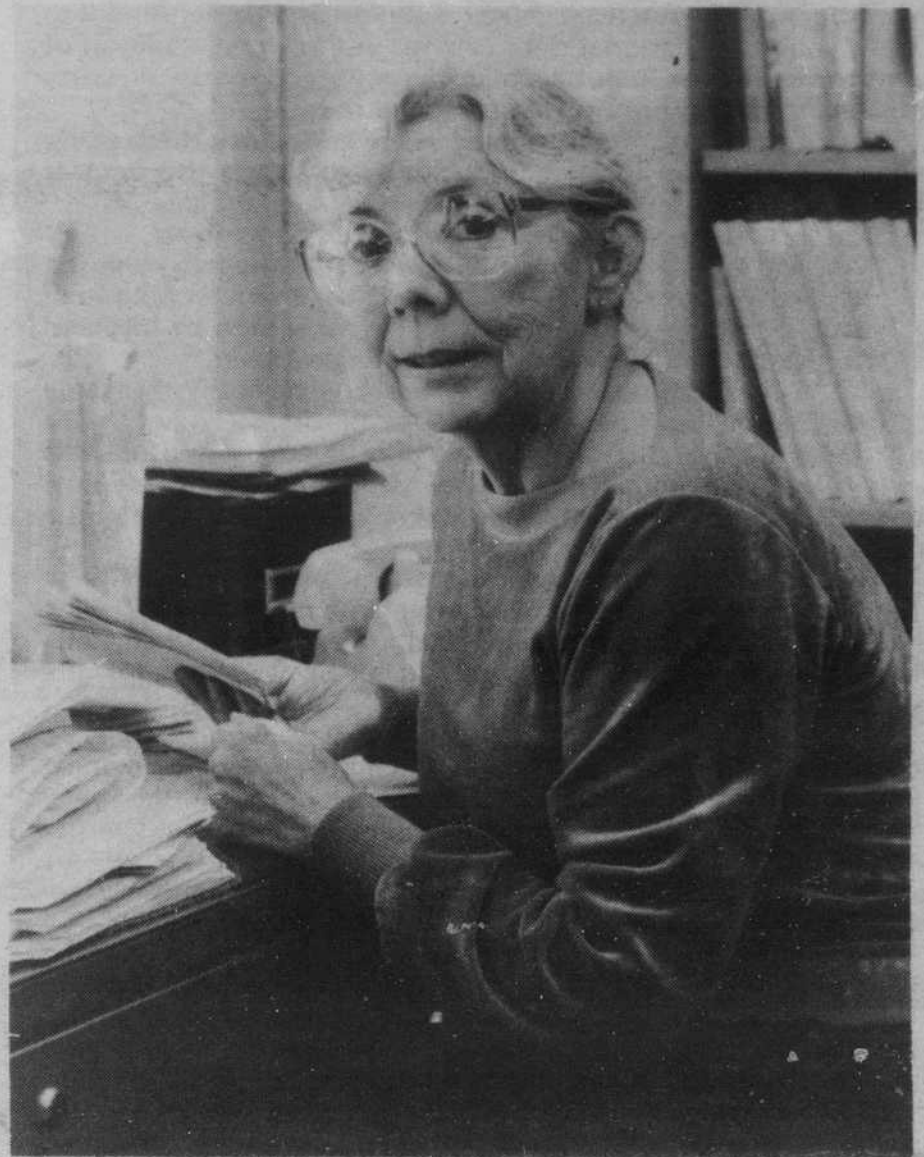


Photo by Ken Kromer

Intensified research on women "may radically alter our ideas about history," says Joan Acker, director of the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

## Symposium celebrates research gift

Jessie Bernard, the leading scholar on the sociology of women, will speak Sunday, when the University Center for the Study of Women in Society celebrates the recent gift of \$3.5 million from the late William Harris.

The celebration will begin at 1 p.m. in Room 167 EMU with a symposium titled "Research on Women: New Knowledge, New Directions."

University researchers in sociology, psychology, anthropology, literature and history will look at the new knowledge about women that has been developed in the last 15 years and at directions for future work.

At 3:30 p.m., Bernard will offer "A Salute to Jane Grant and the Center for the Study of Women in Society." Bernard will be a visiting pro-

fessor at the University during the following week and other events are planned, including an art show of works by University women faculty and students and a concert featuring women musicians performing music written by women.

Bernard, professor emerita of sociology at Pennsylvania State University, is the author of more than 15 books and the recipient of six honorary degrees. Her books include "The Sex Game," "The Future of Marriage," "The Future of Motherhood" and "The Female World."

She is past vice president of the American Sociological Association, which has established a prize given in her name.

For more information on the celebration or the center, contact Joan Acker at the Center for the Study of Women in Society, 686-5015.

## University student appointed to OECC seat



Photo by Brian Erb

University student Gary Okazaki was named as the student representative to the Oregon State System of Higher Education student member of the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission Advisory Committee.

University student Gary Okazaki, a senior finance major, has been appointed to serve as the Oregon State System of Higher Education student member of the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission Advisory Committee.

"I was extremely surprised but happy," Okazaki said. "I didn't think I had a chance."

Okazaki, the ASUO Coordinator of University Affairs, was chosen by the Oregon Student Lobby from applicants throughout the state.

Despite his surprise, Okazaki says he is looking forward to serving on the committee.

"I think I'm there (on the committee) to represent all the students. If I can get my opinions across, I think we'll (students) all benefit," says Okazaki, who is also a member of the Associated

Students President's Advisory Council.

The OECC is the state agency responsible for planning and coordinating all education — kindergarten through graduate school — for the state of Oregon. The advisory committee is required by statute to advise and give input to the OECC.

The committee consists of 13 members, including administrators, faculty, two students and parents/citizens. Okazaki is the only student representative of the state system. The other student member represents independent colleges, he says.

Other members include Higher Education Chancellor William Davis, Public School Superintendent Verne Duncan and Don Fouts, Executive Director of the Oregon Independent Colleges Association as ex-officio members.