

Feminist Leisure Research in the Contemporary Era

Introduction to the Special Issue

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Feminist research within leisure studies is at a critical juncture. As the formative scholars of feminist leisure research retire, we recognize the need to reflect upon their significant conceptual and empirical contributions. At the same time we look forward to celebrate the vast array of feminist leisure scholarship that continues to chart new directions in an ever-changing field. The purpose of this special issue is to harness the energy of current feminist leisure research, highlighting its breadth, depth, and diversity. Our aim is for this special issue to serve as a galvanizing force by drawing together new and established feminist leisure scholars to focus on key issues in the contemporary era. In this sense, we also envisage a feminist community of scholars who can network, strategize, and take action together through both research synergies, and other more tangible ways (such as resurrecting the gender and leisure group in *World Leisure*). Connecting with contemporary feminist debates around third wave feminism, this special issue explores the intersections, transformations, and innovations in feminist ways of thinking and conducting research. Moreover, through the special issue, we highlight and discuss the complexities and contradictions that exist within third wave feminisms. We hope this special issue creates a space for reflection and reinvigoration of feminist debates and directions related to diverse methodologies, conceptual traditions, and ways of writing through gendered leisure. We begin with the challenges we faced writing about the interconnections and influence of feminist research over time.

Linear Waves or Interconnected Ripples? The Perspectives and Paradoxes of Feminist Research

Feminism, regardless of its moment in time, is “fundamentally about transforming patriarchal culture and society” (Snyder-Hall, 2010, p. 256). Such transformations are often summarized using a wave metaphor: first, second, and most recently, third.

The first wave of feminism is “understood to encompass and be primarily defined by the suffragist movement, which culminated in the passage of suffrage in 1920” (Shugart, 2001, p. 131). After this time, the feminist movement was largely dormant until the 1960s when feminists such as Betty

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Friedan and Gloria Steinem galvanized women around issues of abortion, sexuality, and equality (Shugart, 2001). Their actions generated a splash of social momentum for significant public visibility and recognition of a second 'wave' of feminist issues. At this point, both the first and second wave were identified and labeled.

Second wave feminism highlighted inequities around paid employment, unpaid household labor, childbearing and rearing, sexuality, and abortion, yet it was also perceived as mostly for White, middle class, heterosexual women. Indeed, the second wave has been critiqued for excluding ethnic minority women, young women, women who do not identify as heterosexual, women of various socioeconomic brackets, and men (Dean, 2009). As a result, the second wave was perceived by some as ideologically rigid, judgmental, and divisive (Snyder, 2008; 2010; Braithwaite, 2002). It bears remembering, however, that second wave feminism represents "the era of feminism rooted in and shaped by the 1960-1980s political climate" (Kinser, 2004, p. 131). Nonetheless, some feminists felt dissatisfied and wanted more from the social movement. Kinser explained she found herself "looking for more: more sense, more liberation, more room to stretch what feminism means. [She was] able to find some of that 'more' through third-wave feminist thinking and its emphasis on feminist evolution" (Kinser, 2004, p. 124).

While there is some debate as to who ushered in the third wave of feminism, many credit Rebecca Walker (1995) who declared in 1992, "I am the third wave." Building upon the principles of second wave feminism (Dean, 2009), the third wave is rooted in, and shaped by, the political climate of the mid 1980s onward (Kinser, 2004). It originated "at a time when poststructuralist and postmodernist critiques of hegemonic feminist conceptions of womanhood and subjectivity were becoming increasingly prevalent. These theoretical developments also coincided, and to a large extent overlapped, with critiques from Black, 'third world' and postcolonial feminist perspectives of the parochialism of dominant conceptions of feminist politics and subjectivity" (Dean, 2009, p. 336). This theoretical and ideological background set the stage for a multiplicity of feminist ideologies and praxes (Kinser, 2004). The pluralism embraced by third wave feminism has resulted in some confusion around its meaning and commitments, but the "uses of the term do nonetheless cluster together in such a way as to identify several dominant tendencies within the 'third wave' lexicon" (Dean, 2009, p. 335). In our view, those tendencies include (1) plurality and inclusivity, (2) personal narrative, (3) self-determination, (4) gender equality and sexual freedom, and (5) popular culture. Individually and collectively these dominant tendencies of third wave feminism reflect a deep commitment to addressing the complex relationship between patriarchal social relations, structures, and cultural representations (Kinser, 2004).

One particular aspect of the third wave has been interpreted in terms of the embodied politics of a generation of women in their twenties or thirties who other feminists claim are informal, grassroots oriented, individualistic, aggressive, radical, and diverse (Shugart, 2001). For example, Kinser (2004) argued third wave feminists share the following characteristics:

They came into young adulthood as feminists; (2) They practice feminism in a schizophrenic cultural milieu which on one side grants that they have a right to improved opportunities, resources, and legislative support, and on the other side resists their politics which enable them to lay claim to, embody, and hold onto the same; (3) They embrace pluralistic thinking within feminism and work to undermine narrow visions of feminism and their consequent confinements, through in large part the significantly more prominent voice of women of color and global feminism; (4) They live feminism in constant tension with postfeminism, though such tension often goes unnoticed as such (p. 132).

Irrespective of whether one agrees with this generational construction of third wave feminism, many would agree that the task of negotiating a space between second wave feminism and postfeminist rhetoric is crucial (Kinser, 2004).

Postfeminism has been used in popular and academic discourse to signify the end of feminism, indicating a total rejection of its relevance and necessity (Braithwaite, 2002). Although the term is sometimes conflated with third wave feminism, most agree the two are distinct positions that should not be confused (Gillis & Munford, 2004). The postfeminism rhetoric constructs feminism, and feminists, as undesirable, restricting, controlling, and dogmatic (Kinser, 2004). According to Braithwaite (2002) "postfeminism refers both chronologically and semantically to that which comes 'after' feminism as a current, largely negative, sometimes even hostile reaction against earlier feminism" (p. 337). Kinser (2004) has argued that one of the key projects for third wave feminists has been "articulating a resounding voice that distinguishes itself from postfeminism" (p. 141). In addition, there have also been significant theoretical debates, along with confusion and division relating to the meaning of, and relationship between, "post" and "feminism," related to the emergence of postmodern and poststructural critique. These debates have been explored elsewhere in great detail (MacCormack 2009; Gillis & Munford, 2004) and they have often generated misunderstanding about feminist perspectives on gender difference, questions of power relating to agency/subjectivity and structure/discourse, as well as epistemological assumptions about theory itself (explanatory or analytic).

Above and beyond postfeminist critiques, third wave feminism has attracted much criticism. For example, some argue third wavers focus too much on the personal essay at the expense of elaborating a political program and establishing a solid academic grounding (Braithwaite, 2002; Gillis & Munford, 2004). Others contest the focus on popular culture as a site of resistance to the patriarchy and see the movement in general as ahistorical and too self-absorbed to be politically effective (Gillis & Munford, 2004; Fixmer & Wood, 2005). Dean (2009) noted that the third wave is a feminism advanced by economically and racially privileged women, which has caused unnecessary generational divisiveness. Perhaps the biggest critique of third wave feminism, however, is its lack of commitment to collective social action. Snyder-Hall (2010) explained:

given its basic assumptions, third-wave feminism will probably never produce the kind of collective social movement that existed in the second wave. Because it strives to be inclusive of all, collective action constitutes one of its biggest challenges. Third-wave feminism has no illusions about reconstituting "women" as the subject of feminism or creating some kind of uniform platform. Instead it asks women to work together in coalitions to address issues of shared concern. Third-wave feminism focuses attention on equality and freedom for women in an array of discursive locations. Far from viewing feminist conversations as over, it imagines them as never-ending (p, 260).

While there is enthusiasm for distinguishing contemporary feminism as third wave, there are also a number of problems associated with the wave metaphor as it frames a particular feminist story about change over time (Cauldwell, 2011; Hemming, 2005). Feminists often use the wave metaphor to convey a strong, collective, continuous movement for change. Dean (2009) argues the wave metaphor is an "effective way of capturing the fluid and unpredictable character of feminist history, given that waves are complex phenomena implying disturbance and sudden movement" (Dean, 2009, p. 344). Yet, the wave metaphor has been critiqued for implying distinct, separate feminist movements and over generalizing about generational differences

(Hogeland, 2001). Thinking in terms of distinct waves can lead to an overly nostalgic view of the “collective” politics of the past and a somewhat pessimistic view of the “individualistic” present. The history and contributions of different feminisms is also constructed in a rather linear fashion that can reify generational differences and under play the sociopolitical context of change (Caudwell, 2011).

As we embarked on the introduction to this special issue, we wanted to be careful about the story we told about feminist leisure research. Initially, we framed the contributions of feminist leisure research along timelines and identified contributions according to the decades. Although this was an effective manner to convey the vast importance and numerous contributions of feminist research, we found the theoretical debates within the Australian and UK literature did not fit neatly with the North American time periods. We also found ourselves uncomfortable about the wave metaphor being deployed to create a grand feminist narrative of leisure studies (or interpreted by others as making this argument). We were concerned about reproducing a “generational division” that implied current work is superior to early work. In addition, we acknowledged that the contributing authors did not necessarily frame their work within a narrative of third wave feminism. Indeed, we thought a few of the papers continued the focus on certain persistent aspects of gender inequality that reflected the tenets of second wave feminism. Had we written our introduction at the start of this process as a means of framing feminist debate within the third wave we may have generated a different response from authors (perhaps more polarized?). In writing this introduction retrospectively we faced the challenge of identifying both the continuity of feminist thinking and importantly the divergences that open up new ways forward.

Our aim is thus to emphasize continuity and difference over time, within and between “waves” as they have been described, in relation to the feminist leisure research. To avoid the problematic aspects of waves, we agreed upon a ripple metaphor for two main reasons: (1) a big splash (feminist research) causes ripples in many directions, and (2) feminist ideas ripple through and interconnect over time, rather than move in a linear wave like formation.

Engaging with the Complexities, Continuities, and Contradictions within Feminism

This special issue opens up a space to be reflexive about the kind of feminist knowledge that is produced “by” feminists, “about” gendered social life and specifically “through” women’s and men’s experiences of leisure. While feminist scholars seek to examine the gendered context that shapes both women’s and men’s experience, relations, and identities, we have witnessed significant changes in the political, social, and theoretical terrain that shapes leisure in thought and practice. The question of the continuity of ideas in feminist thinking leads us to consider the important focus in early work on the “gaps and gains” relating to gender inequality and opportunity for leisure. Early feminist scholars made it clear *why* it was necessary to study women: (1) the material and ideological influences in women’s lives warranted attention; (2) demographic and social changes impacted upon on women’s lives and required better understanding; (3) women encountered unique struggles that needed to be addressed; (4) changes in family life, education, and gender roles/expectations impacted upon the study of women; (5) despite positive changes to the status of women, there had also been a backlash towards women’s progress that deserved attention (Henderson et al., 1989). Similarly, early scholars educated the field regarding the meaning of feminism in the context of (leisure) research. They introduced feminism as both a social movement and a theoretical orientation/philosophy that profoundly influenced the way leisure was conceptualized. Feminist leisure research made women’s lives visible, identified pow-

er imbalances within social structures and cultural spheres, and emphasized dignity and choice for women in all spheres of their lives, including leisure (Bunch, 1985, Wimbush & Talbot, 1988, Henderson, et al., 1989, Henderson et al., 1996).

The emergence of different trajectories of feminist thought enriched the field of leisure studies in terms of the plurality of perspectives and the identification of paradoxes. There was a shift in thinking that recognized diversity *among* groups of women and the growing influence of diverse feminist standpoints and postmodern ideas that raised questions about the continued categorization of gender through binary relations as “women” and “men.” Feminist leisure research “focused on understanding leisure in the context of everyday life along with its social structures” for women of various groups (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1999, p. 172). The gendered nature of leisure constraints and ideologies were explored (Henderson, 1991; Shaw, 1994). Consequently, diverse perspectives on women’s leisure experiences were produced in relation to lesbian women (Bialeschki, Pearce, & Elloit, 1994; Kivel, 1994), mothers (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Wearing, 1990), farm women (Henderson, 1990), married women (Horna, 1993), working women (Henderson, 1992; Frisby, 1992), young girls (Henderson, 1993), adolescent girls (Wearing, 1992); older women (Freysinger 1990), Black women (Riddick & Stewart, 1994), immigrant women (Tirone & Shaw, 1995), and women with disabilities (Henderson, Bedini, & Hecht, 1994). The complexity of family leisure (including holidays and social occasions) for women was identified in relation to a gendered ethic of care and the hidden labor of servicing of others leisure (Bella, 1992; Shaw, 1992; 1996).

Feminist work on leisure has very much been an interdisciplinary project and influenced by broader feminist perspectives across the spectrum from radical, liberal, Marxist, socialist, and poststructural/postmodern. Harding’s (1991) influential book *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* revolutionized feminist ways of understanding knowledge itself. These questions also shifted the philosophical terrain within leisure studies (Fox, 1992; Samdahl, 1999). More specifically, feminist leisure scholars expanded the research paradigms within leisure scholarship introducing ideas such as reflexivity and social change (both at the individual and policy level) (Aitchison, 2003; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1999). Taken together, the shift to exploring differences among women, the broadening of research foci, and the methodological contributions enabled feminism to pave “the way for asking more encompassing questions about leisure” (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1999, p. 168). In the UK, Sheila Scraton (1994) also raised doubts about the popular rise of the postfeminist agenda and critically questioned “whether the world of leisure for women reflects major social and cultural change. Can we identify changes in the lives of women that are having an impact on their leisure in the 1990s?” (p.249). Betsy Wearing (1998) and Cara Aitchison (2003) opened up different directions for the analysis of gendered power relations, rather than seeking closure around the problem of definition (what is leisure?) or a set of definitive issues related to gendered leisure. In this way, both authors offered new problematizations (resistant leisure practices and the social-cultural nexus) around women’s experience of gendered leisure and the masculine context through which power and freedom were negotiated. Susan Shaw (2001) also contributed to a gendered understanding of leisure in the micropolitics of family life and extended her insights by exploring women’s resistance as an exercise of agency through leisure practices.

As ideas are taken up and reworked in relation to emerging feminist politics the tensions and paradoxes in leisure studies become more visible. One such tension is around notions of “empowerment” that often draw upon individualistic assumptions about choice and freedom that some argue exist in an uneasy relationship with ideas about patriarchal structures and the

oppression of marginalized identities (Gillis & Munford, 2004). The question of marginalization and how women are positioned (structurally and discursively) in terms of the politics of identity (race/ethnicity, religion, sexuality, class, disability), freedom and choice, has been approached from different perspectives in feminist leisure research. Tess Kay's (2006) research mapped out the inequities of gendered leisure in family life and these insights were extended in her analysis of the relational context of Muslim women's opportunities for sport. Beccy Watson and Sheila Scraton (2001) extended the focus on marginalized women (South Asian women in the United Kingdom) to a critique of "whiteness" in leisure experience and analysis. Ten years on, they (Watson and Scraton, 2012) continue to develop the complexity of feminist thinking through the multiple axes of power and identity through work on intersectionality and leisure. Dana Kivel et al. (2009) argued for the need to retheorise experience to situate individual leisure within the ideological and discursive contexts of racial and gender inequality. While we do not have space to discuss all contributions to the body of feminist literature, there has been a clear focus on social change and justice, along with recognition of the nuanced changes in leisure experiences, cultural identities, and global capitalism that continues today.

Over time, feminist leisure research has continued to question the gendered context of women and men's experiences. The engagement with broader feminist theories has in turn generated multiple theoretical trajectories through which to rethink the sociopolitical and conceptual parameters of leisure. Next, we examine the possibilities that have arisen from questions that embrace multiplicity and relationality as they inform an embodied politics of leisure.

The Embodied Politics of Feminism and Leisure

Fixmer and Wood (2005) emphasize the embodied politics of contemporary feminism, "which is personal and often physical, bodily action that aims to provoke change by exercising and resisting power in everyday life" (p. 237-238). Leisure is a significant site of embodiment through which women's, and other marginalized identities, are shaped by power relations that regulate freedom and possibilities for change. Feminist debates have opened up how we think about gendered leisure practices and spaces in the contemporary era—moving us to critically question the utility of the concept of leisure as the early feminists did when they critiqued the work-leisure dualism that ignored the complexity of women's embodied lives. Leisure is an everyday and academic concept that feminists have long considered problematic as it is used uncritically to universalize masculine experience as the norm, trivialize and categorize meaning in ways that deny the fluidity and nuances of women's everyday lives. In addition, feminists have sought to problematize leisure as a site through which hegemonic masculinities are negotiated and alternatives are explored (see Pringle, Kay & Jenkins, 2011; Kivel & Johnson, 2009). Gendered leisure is also being reworked beyond masculine/feminine, heterosexual/homosexual binaries by researchers who explore queer and transgender practices of identity and community formation (Browne & Bakshi, 2011; Cauldwell & Browne, 2011; Lewis & Johnson, 2011). The papers in this issue continue to question and explore how gender identities are performed and embodied through multiple leisure sites and practices that reveal the micropolitics of gendered lives—playing sport, performing in bars, creating gardens, planning holidays, and sharing the couch to watch television. Leisure is also understood "relationally," as shaped by gendered norms about caring for others (in families and friendships), caring about one's embodied self and care expressed through connections with nonhuman otherness (plants, animals, places). Leisure is also conceptualized as a site through which the politics of gender identity is negotiated in relation to constructions of "difference" and "normality" via markers of race, sexuality, disability, age, etc. As a collection, the papers cover a broad range of intellectual, methodological, and political

perspectives. They examine the inclusive, beneficial, and often little valued dimensions of leisure experiences in the context of social justice and change, as well as the exclusive, oppressive, and complex aspects of gendered leisure that require ongoing analytic attention.

The collection of papers also speak to the growing interest within the feminist leisure literature in thinking about gender identities, experiences, diversity, and interconnections. This approach moves us further away from “one-size-fits-all” thinking, and instead focuses on relationality and interconnections. Moving beyond the concept of intersectionality, interconnections “connotes more movement and fluidity than lies in the metaphor of intersection, as well as offering a way of thinking about how not only race and gender, but also nation, sexuality, and wealth all interconnect, configure, and reshape each other” (Bhavnani & Talcott, 2012, p. 137). Interconnectivity demonstrates how the leisure literature can bring a “feminist consciousness that opens up intellectual and emotional spaces for all women to articulate their relations to one another and the wider society—spaces where the personal transforms into the political” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p. 2). For example, Wood and Tirone problematize women’s caregiving roles to continue the analysis of how women are positioned in conventional ways that invisibilize their emotion work and challenge the value afforded to an ethic of care for others. Berdychevsky, Gibson, and Bell write about girlfriend getaways to explore the question of well-being and how women create shared leisure spaces with each other as a form of “authenticity” where they temporarily step out of the gendered expectations through travel. Kim Lyons invites the reader into her garden to examine the gendered experience of care in the context of human-nature, human-human, and life-death relations wherein leisure spaces open up questions about the spiritual as a source of meaning and critique of instrumental rationalism. Taken together, these papers highlight the contributions of feminist research to the ways that interconnectivity plays out in and through leisure.

Interconnectivity in leisure and beyond demonstrates how, “multiple feminist lenses wake us up to layers of sexist, racist, homophobic, and colonialist points of view” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p. 5). The multiplicity of perspectives reflects an “agency that challenges dominant discourses of knowledge building, urging women to live and invite in differences, to embrace the creativity and knowledge building that lies within the tensions of difference” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p. 4). Such agency is visible in the paper by Mowatt, French, and Malebranche that augments feminist leisure scholarship with contributions from Black studies to challenge the invisibility of women who have been marginalised within white cultures and leisure theories. Proposing a Black feminist framework, this paper embraces multiplicity and conflict to demonstrate how “to build a new kind of solidarity that recognizes and brings together blurred, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory facets of women’s identities” (Fixmer & Wood, 2005, p. 237). The feminist embrace of the personal is political plays out through different conceptualisations of power as structuring, constraining and regulating, as well as productive, affective, resistant, and relational.

Within the leisure literature there are a range of feminist methodologies emerging (autoethnography, duoethnography, personal narratives) that privilege gendered leisure experiences as serious objects/subjects of inquiry, but also problematize and analyse the sociopolitical context that shapes possibilities for women, men, and transgender subjects. To embody the multivocality of feminism, the use of personal narrative has been privileged through different ways of writing, exploring, and representing women’s lived experiences. The politics of everyday life has remained a central feminist concern (Fixmer & Wood, 2005), thereby reaffirming the personal is political in research and activist contexts. Indeed, sharing one’s story through personal narrative has inspired a depth and breadth of exploration into feminist ways of living (Kinser, 2004) with

respect to the messiness of everyday life (Braithwaite, 2002, p. 335). For many, the personal narrative serves as a form of consciousness raising (Synder, 2008) and represents a move from a “focus on the politics of representation to an emphasis on the politics of self-representation” (Gillis & Munford, 2004, p. 173). Adele Pavlidis clearly demonstrates the value of adopting a personal narrative in her paper on roller derby in which she privileges the vulnerability of the feminist researcher in order to explore the complex power relations between women in a sport that has been reinvented by women and for women. In so doing, Adele argues for a conceptualization of ‘writing’ that moves beyond the representational and instead engages with the embodied and affective aspects of leisure experience as they play out through complex power relationships that connect and separate different women.

In a very different context, Joshua Barnett and Corey Johnson create a narrative that brings to life the gendered performances of a drag king and queen to examine the interconnections between gender identities and sexuality. They draw upon creative analytic practice to script a research encounter that evokes aspects of the participants’ and their own experiences. In their article, “Two women, a bottle of wine, and *The Bachelor*,” Callie Spencer and Karen Paisley explore their own experiences of engaging in the most ubiquitous form of leisure: a television program produced for women consumers and about the “heteronormative” woman’s romantic desires. In this instance, they also introduce the reader to duoethnography as a method that enables shared insights to be written through personal narratives that reveal the complexities of femininity. Spencer and Paisley focus on the gendered politics of popular culture in their examination of *The Bachelor* as an example that illustrates the significance of “mediated” leisure spaces and interpretative practices. Their paper takes up Snyder-Hall’s (2010) call for continued work: “to expand the possibilities for women to imagine themselves outside the boxes of patriarchy—whether girl gone wild, submissive wife, or selfless mom—by offering images of alternative relationships, genders, and sexualities” (Snyder-Hall, 2010, p. 260).

Clearly, there are many synergies between the multiple strands of contemporary feminism and the feminist leisure literature that also highlight the challenges ahead. There is a seductive postfeminist message circulating in popular culture, and also in policy contexts, that feminism’s work is “done” (Douglas, 2010). We hear this discourse in our Western universities as the number of young women increases (except those occupying marginalized social positions) and we see the neoliberal agenda play out in cuts to programs in gender and women’s studies. We see little sustained action in relation to gender inequity in work, care, and leisure participation policy domains. There remain huge gender inequities on a global scale and questions about white privilege often remain unasked. Douglas (2010) argues that there remains serious work for the feminist movement: “motherhood/parenthood, pay equity, poverty, violence against women, and the acceptability, even celebration, of sexism: this is the unfinished business of the women’s movement” (p. 306). As demonstrated in this special issue, feminist leisure scholars have much to offer this agenda through a focus on leisure as a significant experience in everyday life with respect to gender equity, relations, and identities. In Roof’s (2012) words, “It becomes clear that, in its most recent incarnations, the power and authority of feminist theory and criticism reside in feminism’s ability to adjust its assumptions, preserve its ideals, and continue its battle” (p. 539).

Yet, the question remains about how as feminists we negotiate the “collective project” of addressing “gender justice” (as Cara Aitchison 2013, p. 521 has recently framed the issue) through our diverse theoretical, political, and social positions, and constructions, of leisure? In their most recent edited book that addresses a diverse range of gender issues and approaches, Freysinger, Shaw, Henderson, and Bialeshki (2013, p.547) advocate for an “expanded” vision of feminist

research to combat concerns about “dissension and fragmentation” in the field. In the same edition, Aitchison (2013, p. 533) argues for a feminist agenda that can contribute to changes in policy and practice contexts related to social and environmental justice. Interrogating the material *and* discursive formation of gendered power as a means to address injustice, Aitchison (2013, 2003) has conceptualized the “social cultural nexus” to chart a conceptual middle course that draws upon structural and poststructural perspectives.

We also recognize the value of different agendas, intellectual tensions, and political synergies that importantly shape feminisms, and ourselves as feminists, as part of the process of “becoming” that transforms leisure research. Patricia MacCormack (2009, p.92) argues for a “fleshy” feminist politics that traverses differences to create “intensities” where embodied ideas and issues come together, “The question is not which position is right or more important, and which positions are most alike and therefore most capable of effectuating change, but which becoming intensities align us with certain groups for tactical events of thought that can activate change.” The question of *how* we mobilize change has been explored by Patti Lather (1992), whose work has encouraged many feminists to deconstruct and problematize gendered truths, while opening up methodologies that value embodied knowing. The papers in this special issue map out different feminist trajectories and when read in relation to each other highlight the intensities and common problematics. In this sense, the authors contribute to a feminist politics of hope (Denzin, 2000) that seeks to *understand* how individuals negotiate their leisure experiences within a gendered world, in order to contribute to social change and justice by *challenging and transforming* gender relations, materialities and ways of knowing.

Beyond metaphors of waves or generational differences, there exist other ways of thinking about the “becoming” of feminist leisure scholarship that emphasize relationality and the movement of ideas (within and beyond the field) in creating intensities and collaborative possibilities for different voices. As the papers in this special issue demonstrate, there are enormous opportunities to traverse disciplinary boundaries and forge connections between feminist leisure scholarship and research in health, environment, technology, management, tourism, sport, the arts, and other areas. An outward-looking feminist analytic also seeks engagement with a variety of social theories that explore the specificity of gendered politics (Black feminism, disability and girl studies, queer theory, critical psychology, postcolonial and ecofeminism, etc.). The challenge remains for us to explore the possibilities for action through extending our global reach and creating opportunities for change through collaboration and exchange. One opportunity is the gender and leisure group that was recently resurrected at the World Leisure Conference that offers opportunities for research collaboration and discussion of ideas across the globe. In addition, the Women, Gender, and Leisure network has a Facebook page that acts as an online community, bringing researchers together who might not meet face to face. All told, there are many opportunities for a feminist community of scholars to network, strategize, and take action together through both research synergies and other more tangible ways. In closing, we sincerely thank all the reviewers who made a significant contribution to the special issue through their engagement with each of the papers. Your time and effort on behalf of this special issue is greatly appreciated.

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