

Welcome to Column 19 of Hey Jane! This is a project of the SWS Career Development Committee. Questions and answers are generated by the committee and SWS members. Answers are compiled from several anonymous sources. All columns are archived on our committee's page on the SWS website <http://www.socwomen.org/page.php?ss=26>

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HEY JANE!

“I want to cite my friend’s work in my new book, but I don’t know if it is appropriate to do because of our relationship. I don’t want to recreate the ‘Old Boys Network’ of which I’ve always been critical.”

I say, if the work is relevant to cite, of course you should cite it! You should also let your colleague know that you have cited her. It is particularly important for young scholars to know when and where they have been cited for tenure and promotion consideration. And citations in books are often harder to track than citations in articles. I would also add that if your friend’s work is good, you might consider assigning it in your classes, recommending it to other colleagues, and nominating it for an award.

While the exclusivity of the so-called “Old Boys Network” can be very frustrating, we could all learn a thing or two about self-promotion, networking, and supporting our colleagues. In fact the mission of organizations like SWS is, in part, to do these things in a more inclusive way than the “Old Boys” model. Unfortunately, after 10 years in the discipline, I am just learning some of these things, but many SWS members do them very well. Hopefully the lists of ideas below will spur the listserv to generate more ideas for all of us.

*Suggestions for supporting and promoting our colleagues:

- Publicize the accomplishments of your colleagues. You can do this at many levels – your department, your college, your university, professional organizations, etc. Listservs are a great place to publicize accomplishments (and the SWS listserv members are great at doing this!). Other arenas include professional organization newsletters such as Network News and Footnotes, as well as the newsletters of sections within professional organizations – such as the Health and Health Policy Section of the Society for the Study of Social Problems.
- Invite your colleagues to guest lecture at your institution. This is a great way to promote the work of a colleague. Others are introduced to her work and she gets to include an invited lecture on her CV. A bonus for your institution is that colleagues who are not yet “famous” will not cost as much as those who are, but may still generate very lively and interesting discussions.
- Refer your colleagues to editors and others. If you have been asked to write a chapter and you are just too busy, suggest a colleague. This helps out the editor/publisher and promotes the work of your colleague at the same time.
- Recommend or nominate people for key committee assignments and elected positions. While we want to help protect each other from being overloaded with committee responsibilities, we also want to help each other find our way on to important and influential committees on our campuses, in our professional organizations and in our communities.

-Nominate each other for awards. Don't be afraid to nominate your colleagues for awards. Award committees are often desperate for nominees. If your friend/colleague is still "unknown" in your sub-field and if her work is deserving of an award or recognition, it's up to you to make the nomination. I've even gone so far as to make up new awards. On my campus, the director of the umbrella organization that houses all the progressive student groups is an amazing woman. Her dedication to the students goes far above and beyond the call of duty. So, this year I convinced our women's studies program to create a mentoring award. There was virtually no red tape, we just created the award and presented it to a deserving recipient.

*Suggestions for self-promotion and networking:

-Send copies of your work to key people. When this idea was first proposed to me I thought it sounded very pretentious, but I did send a few copies to people who had offered support to the project in some way or another. Everyone sent lovely e-mails thanking me for sending a copy of my article. Now, I send copies to a wider and more strategic array of people. I send to people who might be able to cite me in their own work and also to people who are editors of anthologies where my work might be considered for future editions. I might even include a note: "I used your book in my women's health class. The students loved it, but wished there had been an article on midwives. I'm sending along a copy of a recent article in case you'd like to include something on midwives in your next edition. If this piece doesn't fit with your plan for the book, a couple other articles you might consider are . . ." This way I combine self promotion with supporting and promoting my colleagues.

-Send announcements about your accomplishments to professional listservs and newsletters. Not only is it fun for friends and colleagues to learn what you've been doing, but it's also a way to get your name (and your work) "out there" in front of a wider audience. I often look at newsletters' "members' bookshelf" sections for ideas of books to use in courses, to order for my library, or to read for research purposes.

-Ask to be invited to give a guest lecture. If you're uncomfortable with a bold proposition, you could let people know that you'd be willing to give a talk to their class or on their campus. If you are still getting your feet wet with these kinds of presentations, you could offer to do this for only the cost of travel, room and board. But don't sell yourself short, after you have a few of these kinds of presentations under your belt, find out what the going rate for someone in your position is and ask for it!

-Self nominate for positions within professional organizations. It is perfectly okay to nominate yourself for positions. If you are uncomfortable nominating yourself, ask someone to nominate you. You might let them know why you want the position and what your qualifications are.

-Introduce yourself whenever you get the chance – you never know what these connections might bring. I recently completed a developmental review for an edited collection. One of the essays was written by a woman who lives in a country I happen to be traveling to this summer. I asked the publisher for this woman's contact information and we now have plans to meet when I am visiting her city. This may turn out to just be lunch and interesting conversation. But, it could also lead to mutual invitations for guest speaking engagements, facilitation of student study abroad opportunities at our respective universities, writing collaborations, and who knows what else.

Self-promotion has never been easy for me (and I imagine I'm not the only one). I'm much more comfortable supporting and promoting friends and colleagues. However, as I've taken

baby steps toward self-promotion, I've found that the results can be very rewarding and can go far beyond simply advancing an individual career. Relationships can be formed that end up benefiting far more people than just the individual who started out promoting her own work.

See Hey Jane! volume 4 for more ideas about networking and self promotion
<http://www.socwomen.org/page.php?ss=26>

CAVEAT to all professional advice: Always check with your departmental colleagues, chair, dean, etc. to find out what the norms and expectations are in your institution. And consult with your professional mentors to determine what is most appropriate in your specific situation.

I hope this helps! Stay tuned for the next column's question on negotiating journal lag times.

-- Jane

Do you have a question for Jane?

Do you have experience or "expertise" about an upcoming question?

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