KVINNSAM AND GENA – A Presentation of two Databases from the Women’s History Collections

Berith Backlund, Göteborg University Library, Sweden

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

The Women’s History Collections,
http://www.ub.gu.se/samlingar/kvinn/index_eng.html

The Women’s History Collections (WHC) at Göteborg University Library are a special library for women’s, men’s and gender studies. The Collections are open to anyone with a research interest - or general interest - in women's conditions, past or present. The Collections were founded in 1958 as a private initiative and have since 1971 been a part of Göteborg University Library. In 1997 the Women's History Collections were appointed the Swedish National Resource Library for Women's, Men's and Gender Studies. The principal goals of the Women's History Collections are compiling bibliographies, collecting manuscripts and other material concerning the women's movement in Sweden.

The database KVINNSAM,
http://www.ub.gu.se/samlingar/kvinn/kvinnsam/index_eng.html

KVINNSAM is an interdisciplinary database with references from the Göteborg University Library collections. The references consist of books, journals, articles, chapters, pamphlets, researchreports etc. English is the predominant language: about 63 % of the references in the KVINNSAM database are in English, about 25% in Swedish and the rest in the other Nordic languages, in German, French, Italian etc.

The database has been on the web since 1998, free of charge. It is the most extensive information resource on women’s studies and gender research in the Nordic countries. At the moment it includes more than 100 000 records, from 1970 onwards and is growing continuously.

The target groups of the WHC are students, researchers and everybody else with an interest in women’s and gender studies. The database contains a wide range of references – from doctoral theses to articles from popular books and periodicals.

The references are indexed with words from a list of controlled subject words. The gender aspect is implicit throughout, “woman/women” are not used as subject words, since all records are supposed to refer to women’s conditions. References about men are indexed with the word ”men”. In this database women are the norm and men the exception.

The database GENA,
http://www.ub.gu.se/samlingar/kvinn/gena/text.html?id=2

GENA is a database of PhD-theses in Women’s studies, Men’s Studies and Gender Research in Sweden. It was developed by the Women’s History Collections in cooperation with the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research and was launched in 2001.
It includes about 700 references, from 1960 onwards and is continuously updated. The references are indexed with the same subject words as the ones used in KVINNSAM.

In addition to the usual search fields, such as author and title, it is also possible to search for theses published at a special university, within a special discipline, within a special period of time, etc. This was a request from the National Secretariat who wanted these tools for statistical reasons.

You can also search for theses in a special language. Most of the theses, naturally, are in Swedish but approximately one third of them is published in English. There are also theses written in Danish, Norwegian, German, French and Spanish.

From most records there is a link to an abstract. If the author is represented in KVINNSAM there is a link to hers/his publications in that database as well.

Author:
Berith Backlund, Librarian
Göteborg University Library, Women’s History Collections,
Box 222, SE-405 30 Göteborg, Sweden,
Berith.Backlund@ub.gu.se