

SWS Awards

Feminist Mentoring Award

By Robin Leidner, *Mentoring Award*
Committee Chair

Sara Curran, Princeton University

Each year SWS honors a sociologist who has done an outstanding job of feminist mentoring. In creating this award SWS affirmed the importance of a kind of effort that often goes unrecognized and unrewarded but that is crucial to the vitality of the field held as well as to individual success. Judging from the letters written in support of this year's nominees, "feminist mentoring" means more than making



sure that women get the encouragement and assistance that used to be reserved for "favorite sons." It can empower people to succeed in existing institutions while also changing those institutions, reshaping local cultures, and redefining roles.

We had an extraordinarily strong field of candidates for the award this year. Students and colleagues wrote appreciatively and affectionately about mentors whose dedication, conscientiousness, and thoughtfulness are inspiring—in fact, awe-inspiring. Nonetheless, the Award Committee easily reached consensus on this year's winner. She is Sara Curran, an Assistant Professor at Princeton University. Her students, former students, and peers vividly described the remarkable energy with which she approaches mentoring—creating opportunities and connections, making others feel capable even as she provides candid criticism, and

combining practical assistance with emotional support and understanding. Through what one writer called her "true generosity of spirit" she touches those she works with profoundly. We are delighted to present the 2001 Mentoring Award to Sara Curran.