

Sarah Nathan

Research Interests:

- Women
- Service associations, the scholarship and teaching and learning

Research Methodologies:

- Phenomenology
- Case study

Tentative Dissertation Title: Women's Participation in Service Associations: Values and Meanings

Primary Advisor: Dr. Robert W. White

Research Statement:

Since the earliest days of the republic, women have served their neighborhood, their community, and their country in both formal and informal ways. Indeed, civic associations dedicated to community service, often called service clubs, have been used by both men and women for community development and improvement in cities and towns across the country. Infused with the spirit of philanthropy, service clubs are a vehicle for volunteering time and giving financial resources. This phenomenological study with feminist underpinnings examines women's experiences in both traditionally-male associations and all-female associations and asks: What meanings do women give their volunteerism? What do these meanings tell us about how these women view their role in predominately male domains? What are the differences and similarities between traditionally-male verses all-female service associations? Because current quantitative measures of women's giving and volunteering do not account for contextual differences such as geography, length of membership or association size, this study will enhance our understanding of philanthropy through associational membership.

Personal Info:

Ms. Nathan began her nonprofit career working at a national cultural organization in Washington, DC. It was her involvement with the Fargo Lions Club in her hometown, however, that inspired her quest for more knowledge about giving and volunteering. Ms. Nathan holds the MA in Philanthropic Studies and is an aspiring professor in this emerging, interdisciplinary field.