

# OUR BODIES OURSELVES

TRANSFORMING WOMEN'S LIVES AROUND THE WORLD

## ◆ *Our Bodies, Ourselves* Turns 40 Next Year!

In October 2011, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* will release the ninth edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* information to women and girls that need it most.

This important milestone will be accompanied by another. In 2011, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* and four decades of partnerships with women around the world bringing health information to their own communities/countries.

“...We never considered writing a book...” Jane Pincus, Co-Founder and Co-Author.

Our journey started in Boston in 1969. Twelve women came together to talk about their experiences with the medical profession and share knowledge about their bodies, sexuality and relationships. They went on to publish their discussions as a stapled newsprint booklet called *Women and Their Bodies* that sold for 75 cents. In the midst of the Civil Rights Movement and protests against the Vietnam War, this booklet – renamed *Our Bodies, Ourselves* in 1971 – suddenly placed women’s health and sexuality in a radically new political and social context. It was an instant success. There was no looking back.

*Our Bodies, Ourselves* has influenced three generations of Americans. And now, our other books on menopause and pregnancy and birth – as well as our immensely popular website and blog – bring even more trust trustworthy

Our dynamic Public Voice and Action Program brings a consumer and feminist perspective to issues and policies that affect the health of women and girls, so that they are better able to advocate for themselves. Our Latina Health Initiative has developed information resources, training materials and networks for Latina women and girls. The *Our Bodies, Ourselves* Global Initiative collaborates with women’s organizations inspired by *Our Bodies, Ourselves* to create health resources that speak to their unique cultural needs.

Our partnerships with women around the world have resulted in health information in over 25 languages and different print, digital and social interactive formats. Aside from print books, this includes booklets in Nepal and India, interactive websites and community workshops in Israel and Turkey, text messages using mobile phones in China, peer education and posters on local canoe transport systems in Nigeria, and an e-book in Russia.

These resources draw on local expertise and experiences. They increase individual and collective health knowledge and encourage lasting self-care practices. In many instances, they help our partners build grassroots and institutional alliances to advocate and secure responsible public policy.



**Celebrating 40 years of Activism and Continuing to Advance the Health, Sexuality and Rights of Women and Girls through Global Partnerships for Change**

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## *Our Bodies, Ourselves* Turns 40 Next Year!

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It is hard to overstate their courage, often in places where sexual expression is heavily regulated and any related dialogue or intervention frowned upon. Our partners rely on local allies – and each other – to succeed. They also receive dedicated technical assistance and support from us and have constant access to our products, networks and expertise.

This is the Our Bodies Ourselves Global Network. It exemplifies the power of voices raised in action. It embodies movement building in the 21st century.

Along with our supporters, the staff, board and founders, are proud of the organization's history and ongoing commitment to building women's collective strength and knowledge; and with more than 22 partners, we are honored to support the tenacious and visionary women and men behind these transformative projects. As we gather to commemorate 40 years of activism, it is the perfect time to recognize our collective contribution and significance in the global movement for health equality and justice.

**On October 1, 2011, we will be holding a symposium and reception at the Tsai Performance Center in Boston, a space graciously donated by Boston University.** The symposium will be an opportunity to meet our partners and listen to their extraordinary journeys of claiming *Our Bodies, Ourselves* for their own communities. We hope you will join us in 2011 – to celebrate a legacy, applaud the Our Bodies Ourselves Global Network, and blaze a trail for decades to come.

## Women's Health Hero Awards

We're pleased to report the second year of the Our Bodies Ourselves 2010 Women's Health Hero Awards was a smashing success. After inviting nominations, we received nearly 100 submissions from around the world.

The nominees included exceptional women and men who are doing amazing work to improve and protect women's health and reproductive rights. Among them: a civil rights activist; an abortion provider; a public health advocate; a public health nurse; a college campus peer educator; doulas, midwives and women who have founded organizations advocating for better births; founders of websites on women's health issues, and many, many others.

It was incredibly inspiring to read the dozens of stories (and watch several videos) describing these heroes in such heartfelt ways. More than 1,000 readers submitted comments supporting their favorites.

Check out the 2010 heroes at [www.ourbodiesourblog.org/womens-health-heroes-2010](http://www.ourbodiesourblog.org/womens-health-heroes-2010).

*Care, Education &  
Activism Worldwide*

## Protecting Our Future

During July, OBOS staff members Judy Norsigian and Sally Whelan participated in an invitational meeting in Tarrytown, New York, where 100 committed civil society leaders, academics, advocates and others came together to help ensure that “new human biotechnologies and related emerging technologies support, rather than undermine, prospects for a human future that is grounded in values of social justice, human rights, ecological integrity and the common good.”

Convened by the California-based Center for Genetics and Society, the three-day meeting generated lively discussion and ongoing working groups that would explore further actions and outreach in areas ranging from reproductive tourism to gene patents to synthetic biology.

Our own Judy Norsigian also serves on the 10-person Steering Committee for these “Tarrytown Meetings,” slated to reconvene in 2011 and 2012. For more information, contact Marcy Darnovsky ([mdarnovsky@geneticsandsociety.org](mailto:mdarnovsky@geneticsandsociety.org)) at the Center for Genetics and Society.



Sally Whelan and Marsha Darling in Tarrytown, NY.

## Exciting Changes at OBOS

OBOS is pleased to welcome two new program staff members: June Tsang and Nekose Wills.

Tsang, a graduate of Brandeis University, worked on midwifery advocacy during her earlier internship with OBOS and is currently part of the OBOS book team now completing the manuscript for the 2011 revision of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*.

In addition to women's health issues, Tsang has a passion for early childhood education. She works with Brandeis' Lemberg Children's Center in their Adults and Children Together (ACT) Against Violence Program in raising violence awareness in communities with preschool age children.

Wills has a wealth of experience advocating for the health and well-being of women. Prior to joining the OBOS team she was the health information manager at the National Women's Health Network and the navigation program administrator at Smith Farm Center for Healing and the Arts in Washington, DC. She has served as deputy director of Free the Slaves, a non-profit organization



June Tsang

committed to the eradication of modern-day slavery, and has worked in various capacities for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the National Abortion Federation, Maryland NARAL and INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence.

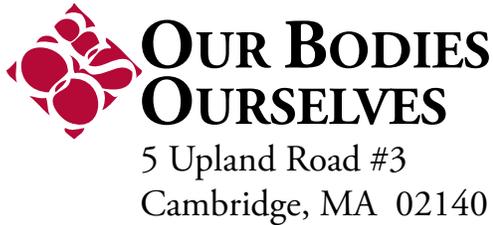


Nekose Wills

Wills holds bachelors degrees in Women's Studies and Media Studies from Penn State University and is currently enrolled in the Master of Arts in Women's Health program at Suffolk University. During her first year at OBOS, she will focus on public policy and advocacy initiatives.

Both Tsang and Wills will also occasionally write entries for our popular blog and assume core functions for the 40th anniversary symposium scheduled for October 1, 2011. Welcome, June and Nekose!

In addition, Anne Miller Sweeney, formerly OBOS' office coordinator, has assumed the role of operations manager at OBOS, overseeing and streamlining many of the central financial functions. Congratulations, Anne!



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#### **OBOS Staff, Consultants and Volunteers**

Zobeida Bonilla - Latina Health Initiative Coordinator  
Christine Cupaiuolo - Lead Blogger & 2011 OBOS Managing Editor  
Ayesha Chatterjee - Assistant Program Manager  
*Our Bodies Ourselves Global Initiative*  
Judy Norsigian - Executive Director  
Anne Miller Sweeney - Operations Manager  
June Tsang - Program Associate  
Rachel Walden - Blogger  
Sally Whelan - Program Manager  
Nekose Wills - Program Associate  
Kiki Zeldes - Web Manager & 2011 OBOS Senior Editor  
Diane Carasik Dion - Volunteer Newsletter Editor  
Vince Lombardi - IT Volunteer  
Kasey Clavelle - Intern

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## **Celebrate 40 Years, and Become a Part of History**

You can help mark *Our Bodies, Ourselves*' 40th anniversary by telling us how the book made a difference in your life, or in the lives of your family or friends. Do you remember which edition you read? And when? Your stories strengthen our resolve to keep the women's health movement alive, so please share your story today! Let us know at [www.ourbodiesourselves.org/40thanniversary.asp](http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/40thanniversary.asp).

You can also be part of history by donating to the Word by Word Campaign. Through this campaign, you can have your name printed as a supporter in the 40th anniversary edition of the book, slated for publication Fall 2011.

With your continued support, we're changing the world—body by body, woman by woman—through Word by Word.



**Find out how you can get involved. Visit [www.ourbodiesourselves.org/40thanniversary.asp](http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/40thanniversary.asp).**