

Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST
TASK FORCE

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Editors: Kay Jones
Leslie Kahn

REPORT FROM LOS ANGELES

The women in the American Library Association had many opportunities to attend group meetings specifically geared to them at ALA-LA. Some of us expressed regret that several of these meetings overlapped and we could not attend them all. The network of women in librarianship working together is strengthened by these contacts. Women in Libraries will report on as many of the meetings of special interest to women as possible.

The business meetings of the Feminist Task Force were on Monday and Tuesday, June 27 and 28. At the Monday meeting, Michele Leber passed on the editorship of WIL to the two members who had volunteered for the job, Leslie Kahn of the Newark Public Library and Kay Jones of the University of New Mexico Library. Thanks go to Mike for two years of superior service. Stephanie Kreps reported that she is working on the questionnaire for the Sexual Harassment Task Force. Ellen Broidy brought up the question of the Men's Issues Task Force, chaired by Carl Hayes, sponsored by SRRT. Does this group meet the SRRT guidelines and bylaws? Broidy will chair a subcommittee to look into the matter. The group will analyze the contents of the newsletter, programs, and statement of purpose. Pat Lucas, North Suburban Public Library, announced that the women's committee for the World's Fair in 1992 wants to work for a permanent museum and library. Joan Ariel reminded the membership of the first meeting of the ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group (for a report of this meeting, see page 4.)

At the Tuesday meeting, the following women were elected to the Steering Committee: Jody Bush, Julia Koehler, Lorene Ludy, Karen Thornburn, Gail Warner, and Sarah Watstein. Program ideas for Dallas included a political program with a woman politician as speaker, women supporting women (how does our feminism inform our work?), the feminist press (co-sponsor with Alternatives in Print?). Cinder Johanson was elected to represent FTF on the Equality Award Committee, authorized by Council Document 50. The Steering Committee elected the following officers: Coordinator, Ellen Broidy; Recorder, Lorene Ludy; SRRT Representative, Karen Thornburn; Program, Julia Koehler and Maureen Endres; Elections, Sarah Watstein; Coalitions, Jody Bush; Sexism Awareness Task Force, Suzan Connell; and Sexual Harassment in Libraries Task Force, Stephanie Kreps. The co-editors of WIL are also ex-officio members of the Steering Committee.

GUNS OR BUTTER: SOCIETY'S SHARE OF THE PIE

In a program sponsored jointly by FTF, COSWL, and the SRRT Peace Information Exchange, Author Sheila Tobias provided a beginner's guide to military budgets and weaponry and their impact on social programs. Speaking of this "last bastion of male domination in the U.S.," Tobias noted that she "came to the subject of guns and butter very self-consciously as an outsider." Among what she learned:

- * The process of budgeting for the military is particularly confusing because only about 12% of the initial cost of weapons is voted by Congress; the rest is "mortgaged" and extremely hard to get back.
- * Figures in the military budget are inconsistent, since some items are budgeted elsewhere (e.g., nuclear warheads under the Department of Energy).
- * Considering the military budget as a proportion of the total budget, 29 cents of every dollar goes to the military, but the military gets closer to 50% of the disposable Congressional budget.
- * Between 1977 and 1983, the military budget doubled.
- * The percentage of the military budget spend on new weapons increased from 32% to 43% from 1980 to 1983, and during this same time, social programs were cut by 19%; "weapons are the very jargon, the very vocabulary, of the issue."

The public must become informed about the military budget, demand tradeoffs for social programs, and learn the cost in military hardware of the programs they care about, Tobias said. (She named what she considers the five most vulnerable weapons systems of the year, with her favorite the Army's over-designed M1 tank, which needs an accompanying gasoline truck - it takes four gallons to go one mile - and another vehicle to dig it in.)

Tobias also warned that new weapons are very destabilizing, in terms of increasing the risk of nuclear war, and that research and development spent in this area isn't good for the economy.

The military budget, particularly for weapons, is sacrosanct; the military's attachment to new weapons is "adolescent and emotional" and its style of decision-making "overly masculine" - and the amount of resources available to lobby for the military budget is incalculable. Our best hope for change, according to Tobias, is Congress - "the Pentagon, the Executive, is completely beyond our control" - and to be informed and aware (try reading Aviation Week & Space Technology) of the costs of guns and butter.

Reporter: Michele Leber

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One new addition to the list of women's meetings was the Women's Night Out conducted at the Flamingo on Sunset Boulevard. It is to be hoped that this exercise in informal network building will be repeated.

COSWL ACTIVITIES AT ALA-LA

Major items of discussion and concern for the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL) at the Annual Conference were:

- * A political action committee for librarians. The suggestion to form a PAC had been discussed with the ALA Washington office staff, but any work on it would have to be cut loose from ALA and COSWL so as not to endanger the organization's tax status. The COSWL legislative sub-committee will concentrate instead on preparing fact sheets on ALA policy on such issues as ERA, abortion, child care, and pay equity.
- * Potential dangers of VDTs. Bruce Miller, author of an article on this subject in the June 1983 Information Technology and Libraries, outlined his concern and the need for attention to such areas as radiation, design of work stations and VDTs, illumination, glare, visual testing, and ion depletion. 9to5, National Association of Working Women, has established a VDT hotline: 800-521-VDTS (in Ohio, 800-522-VDTS). COSWL will collect and disseminate information about this issue through state chapter newsletters and an issue of Library Technology Reports. (See Women in Libraries, June 1983, p. 6, for more on this subject.)
- * Research on women in libraries. Rosemary Du Mont, University of Oklahoma School of Library Science, spoke of her current work to determine whether female librarians seek administrative positions to the same extent as males by surveying library school students and beginning librarians. Du Mont indicated that the situation is worse now than it was in the 1950s when women with PhDs almost reached parity with men with an MLS and women were encouraged not to get PhDs but to get second master's or 6-year degrees, neither of which helped advancement in academic libraries. Preliminary results of this research will be published in the April 1984 Library Quarterly.

The Equality Award, proposed by COSWL, was approved by Council. This annual award to the person or group best promoting equality between men and women in librarianship will be funded by Scarecrow Press in the amount of \$500. The COSWL representative to the award committee is Katharine Phenix; Cinder Johanson will represent FTF. There will be one representative from the ALA Awards Committee and two others nominated by that committee.

Reporter: Michele Leber

POLITICAL SAVVY

The Library Administration and Management Association Women Administrators Discussion Group sponsored a panel discussion entitled, "Political Savvy in Women Administrators." Key ideas: Ann Talcott (Bell Laboratories) feels that forgiveness is easier to get than permission, so you should move ahead with your plans; Mary Ghikas (Chicago Public) advises that we not play political games; Sue Martin (Johns Hopkins) emphasized keeping everyone happy while being honest yourself and working on running your library well; and Peggy Sullivan (Northern Illinois University) advises building and maintaining women's support structures. The advice of these successful women library administrators can be used as guides by the rest of us.

ACRL WOMEN'S STUDIES DISCUSSION GROUP

Over 30 librarians met together on the last day of the ALA Conference in Los Angeles for the organizational meeting of the new ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group. Chaired by Joan Ariel, the group ratified the following statement of purpose:

- To discuss, promote and support Women's Studies collections and services in academic and research libraries;
- To investigate and develop bibliographic instruction, faculty liaison, and database searching in this cross-disciplinary field;
- To encourage cooperative collection development and access for Women's Studies materials;
- To foster cooperation among Women's Studies librarians, scholars, students, and publishers;
- To work with other ALA groups to promote library and information service to women.

The primary aim of this first meeting was to share concerns related to Women's Studies in academic and research libraries, to brainstorm about issues for future discussion or action, and to lay the groundwork for future meetings. Discussion topics included collection development, bibliographic instruction, outreach to faculty and other women's organizations (e.g. National Women's Studies Association), continuing education in Women's Studies for other librarians, and the development of new reference materials and other Women's Studies publishing. It was agreed that, while in the future the group may want to become more structured and have, for instance, task forces working on specific projects or issues, for the coming year we will emphasize open discussions focused on a particular area of interest. Two meetings will be scheduled for the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Washington, D.C.: one centering on collection development in Women's Studies and the other on bibliographic instruction. Participants will come to each meeting prepared to discuss their own activities in each of these areas and will bring any appropriate printed materials to share with others (e.g. collection development policies or bibliographic instruction guides or assignments in Women's Studies).

In a few short months, membership in the Discussion Group has grown to over sixty people. Other persons interested in the work of the group may contact Joan Ariel, Women's Studies Librarian, Main Library, University of California, Irvine, CA 92713.

Reporter: Joan Ariel

PAY EQUITY

A panel of three union women spoke on the subject, "Up Your Wages: Practical Steps Toward Pay Equity," a joint program of the SRRT Library Union Task Force and the FTF. The history of the LAPL struggle for equal pay for comparable work was outlined and the role of the ASCME was clarified. One very helpful hint for those engaged in job analysis, "be sure to get your city or state EEO-4 reports which describes both wage relationships between men and women and ethnicities." Chicagoans analyzed their EEO-4s and found that 80% of the men employed by the city earn more than \$20,000; 80% of the women earn less than \$20,000. The Chicago ASCME worked for the election of Harold Washington as mayor. He now has the analysis of city jobs and the local unions are giving him a chance to perform. Other ideas: Library directors need to learn to work with unions - it's good for morale; be aware that your actions may be helping the profession even if personal progress is slow.

FCPL PAY EQUITY EFFORT

On May 16, 1983, fifty-one librarians at Fairfax County Public Library, Virginia, filed charges with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission claiming sex-based wage discrimination by the County.

In July, the librarians learned that a special investigative unit of the Baltimore EEOC office is investigating their claim. Such an investigation was unexpected, given EEOC's limited resources under the Reagan administration, but it can only help the librarians' cause according to Attorney Jo Ann Rose; EEOC may find discrimination, or may simply issue a "right to sue" letter, as the librarians had expected it would do.

Fairfax County librarians have been working for pay equity for ten years. A strong effort was launched by the library administration in 1980 by submitting a matrix comparing various county jobs, and the effort was joined in 1981 by the Fairfax County Public Library Employees Association (FCPLEA) which helped fund a consultant's study recommending upgrading the entry-level librarian position. The Library Board of Trustees became actively involved in 1982 after a County Personnel reclassification raised only some of the higher level librarian positions. The Library Board actively lobbied the County Board of Supervisors, the local legislative body, which then voted against upgrading the other librarian positions in October, 1982. (Fairfax County does not have a good track record in this area, incidentally. The County was found guilty of discrimination in hiring and promoting women and minorities in 1982 in a class action case brought by the U.S. Department of Justice.)

Since no further avenues were available within the County, FCPLEA retained Attorneys Rose, Winn Newman (nationally known for his work in the area of pay equity), and Lisa Newell. Library administration and the Library Board continue to be supportive, although no longer directly involved; the current effort, initiated by FCPLEA, is being carried on by the individual claimants, of which this reporter is one.

This is the only current pay equity case involving librarians alone, as far as is known, and it could have implications far beyond the metropolitan Washington area. Ant it's expensive - legal fees already have come to thousands of dollars. Financial support has come from individuals in FCPL, from the Montgomery County (Md.) Public Libraries Staff Association, and from individuals at the ALA Annual Conference in Los Angeles - and FTF volunteered to hold a fund-raiser at ALA Midwinter in Washington with Cinder Johanson heading this project. To support the Fairfax County librarians - whose effort is on behalf of the entire profession - contact FCPLEA President Betty Butler at Reston Regional Library 2355A Hunters Woods Pl., Reston, VA 22091; checks may be made payable to FCLE Legal Defense Fund.

Reporter: Michele Leber
(Mike was the president of FCPLEA
in 1981 and 1982.)

ONLINE REVIEW

Ellen Broidy, new Coordinator of FTF, has alerted us to a shocking review of Gurley Turner's Catalyst Resources for Women database in Online Review, June 1983, volume 7, number 3, page 200. The title of the review is "New Sexist Database for Female Librarians," and it deteriorates from there.

Broidy has written a forceful letter to the editor of Online Review to "express our anger and dismay" on FTF's behalf. She points out especially the absurdities of the title, the cute remark about not planning a database for men, the foolishness of adding "sic" after the phrase minority women, and the particularly offensive comment about Turner's first name. Broidy concludes with the suggestion that, "If you cannot provide information useful to online users in a professional manner, please refrain from using the pages of your journal to try out your sexist, racist, juvenile attempts at humor."

Take a look at the review and write a letter of protest to the editor (copies to FTF c/o Broidy at UC-Irvine and to Turner, Catalyst Library, 14 E. 60th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.) It's discouraging to think we have to fight battles at this level! Address of the editors: Martha Williams, Editor, Coordinated Science Laboratory, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801 or Thomas H. Hogan, News Editor, Box 550, Marlton, N.J. 08053.

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An upcoming special issue of the Journal of Library History, entitled "Women in Library History: Liberating Our Past," is scheduled for the November 1983 issue, volume 18, number 4. It will include the following articles:

- "Introductory Remarks" by Mary Niles Mack
- "Biographical Research: Recognition Denied" by Laurel Grotzinger
- "Some Theoretical Considerations" by Suzanne Hildenbrand
- "Librarianship and Other Female-Intensive Professions" by Barbara Brand
- "Women Librarians in France: the First Generation" by Mary Niles Maack
- "Women's Studies in American Library History: Some Critical Reflections" by Phyllis Dain

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The Wisconsin Women Library Workers, a nonprofit organization committed to improving the status of women in librarianship, has a bright new line of T-shirts available for sale. The words "Women Library Workers" and the organization's logo are printed in white on the shirts, which are available in red, blue, and gold (please indicate a second choice). Adult sizes are small, medium, large, and extra large; they have been running a little large. A limited supply of children's size small (6-8) and medium (10-12) are also available. Exchanges are possible. The price is \$5 to members and \$6 to non-members. Add \$1.75 for the first shirt's postage/handling and 50¢ for each additional.

Also available is the Muriel Fuller Memorial Postcard Series of five librarians: Minnie Earl Sears, May Masee, Agnes Inglis, Eliza Atkins Gleason, and Margaret E. Monroe. Cost is \$1.75/packet, 40¢/singles; for orders up to \$5, add \$1 for postage/handling, \$5-\$10, add \$1.50. Orders to WWLW, Box 1425, Madison, WI 53701.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For those of you making plans for ALA Midwinter already, make a note of the FTF meetings: Saturday, 1/7/84, 2 - 4 p.m.; Sunday, 1/8/84, 4:30 - 5:30; Monday, 1/9/84, 2 - 5:30 p.m. The last hour of that last meeting is a joint meeting with COSWL to view the slide show, Women as an Underserved Population.

The American Association of University Women has updated their publication, "Professional Women's Groups Providing Employment Assistance to Women." If you are interested in obtaining a copy, the cost is \$2 plus \$1 for postage. Order from AAUW Sales Office, 2401 Virginia Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

A symposium on "Scholarship and Women's History: Exploring Women's Lives" will be held at Smith College October 19-20, 1983, to celebrate the opening of Alumnae Gymnasium, the new home of the College Archives and the Sophia Smith Collection (Women's History Archive). Anne F. Scott will deliver the keynote address, "The Historian and Her Sources," on Wednesday evening, October 19. Panelists Thursday night will be Ellen C. DuBois and Linda Gordon. For further information, contact Virginia Christenson, The Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, MA 01063.

The National Forum for Women now owns the Woodstock Conference Center, an eighty-acre residential facility suitable for conferences. This is the only conference center dedicated to the discussion of women's issues and the largest gift ever given to a women's organization. Hundreds of women donated money to make the revolving maintenance fund of \$175,000 a reality, including one hundred and twenty women who donated \$1,000 or more. For further information on the Center, including details on how to reserve it for conferences, contact the president, Susan Bernstein, Woodstock Conference Center, 18410, Route 14, Woodstock, IL 60098.

Several films on women's issues are now distributed by The Cinema Guild. Each of the films, whether documentary or dramatic, deals with women and their social roles and personal aspirations. The documentaries include several films produced by The International Women's Film Project. "The Emerging Woman" is the first, and some say the best, film on the history of the women's movement, while "The Double Day" and "Simplemente Jenny" examine the lives of women in Latin America. Two classic Italian films, "Bellissima" and "The Lady Without Camelias", feature strong women characters in their behind-the-scenes looks at the film industry. For descriptive flyers on these and other women's films, or to arrange for rentals, contact The Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019.

POLITICAL NEWSNOTES

Members of Congress and Senators from both parties have joined a broad coalition of civil-rights groups in urging the Supreme Court to reject narrow interpretations of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972. Grove City College, a small private college in Pennsylvania, is challenging the right of the U.S. Department of Education to withhold federal funds because Grove City will not sign a form promising to comply with the law. Grove City contends it should not be covered by Title IX because it receives no direct federal funds, only assistance to its students. A group of legislators, led by Rep. Claudine C. Schneider, R., R.I., and a coalition of civil-rights groups led by the National Women's Law Center, filed a friend-of-the-court brief pleading for a broad interpretation. The Justice Department says, on behalf of the Education Department, that the grants received by Grove City's students constituted federal financial assistance. Other friend-of-the-court briefs have been filed by the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and a group of Hispanic organizations. The American Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities, Hillside College, and Wabash College have filed friend-of-the-court briefs supporting Grove City College.

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Leslie R. Wolfe, director of the Women's Educational Equity Act program in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, is one of 56 employees who lost their jobs in a reorganization aimed at trimming the staff in the Education Department. Other programs affected by the cutbacks include aid to Native American children and migrants. More Reaganomics.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - November 1, 1983. Send articles to Kay Jones.

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