

# Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST  
TASK FORCE

Volume 16, Number 4

March/April 1987

Editors: Leslie Kahn  
Mary Vela-Creixell

## YOU Want You to Vote

The Feminist Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table has endorsed the following candidates for the office of ALA Council:

- \*Ginnie Cooper, County Librarian, Alameda County Library, Hayward, CA
- \*Marva L. DeLoach, Head, Cataloging and Records Maintenance, Illinois State University Library, Normal, IL
- \*Zoia Horn, Project Director, Data Center, 464 --19 Street, Oakland, CA
- \*Norman Horrocks, Vice President, Editorial, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, NJ
- \*Salvador Guarena, Chicano Studies Librarian, UC-Santa Barbara Library, CA
- \*Frances M. McDonald, Associate Professor, Makato State University, MN
- \*Bonnie Beth Mitchell, Deputy Executive Director, OHIONET, Columbus, OH
- \*Sandra K. Peterson, Government Documents Librarian, Yale University Library, New Haven, CT
- \*Linda I. Pierce, Anchorage Municipal Libraries, AK
- \*John Sheridan, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO
- \*Catherine (Kitty) Smith, Management Consultant, State Library of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC
- \*Gail Warner, Director, Whitman County Library, Colfax, WA
- \*Darlene E. Weingand, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI



Midwinter '87 Highlights, p. 3+  
Preconference — "...Working  
Together Across Racial  
Lines," p. 5

more-->

IN ADDITION: Please consider this letter to FTF Chairwoman Kay Jones from Betty-Carol Sellen, FTF member and COSWL Chairwoman:

Dear Kay,

Linda Anne Dougherty announced her candidacy for ALA president too late for any action or endorsement (Ed.--by the FTF).

I was wondering if anything about her could appear in WOMEN IN LIBRARIES? I found her brief talk to Action Council impressive and certainly intend to vote for her.

I believe her description of herself as "an alternative to the management model" should be quoted--particularly in light of the fact that a current ALA leader and alleged feminist is quoted as responding to Ms. Dougherty's candidacy with, "What? only a branch librarian?"

Note that, at Midwinter, FTF members expressed no enthusiasm for the other candidates for president.

## You Could Book It Up

"If AIDS is God's way of denouncing homosexuality, /then/ what is miscarriage?"--from I AM WHAT YOU FEAR I AM, poems by Deborah Kelly. (Minneapolis, MN: Lee Publications; dist. by Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, P.O. Box 908, Latham, NY 12110), \$5.00. More good reading from Kitchen Table: THE COMBHEE RIVER COLLECTIVE STATEMENT: BLACK FEMINIST ORGANIZING IN THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES, with a new Forward by Barbara Smith, \$3.25; APARTHEID U.S.A., by Audre Lorde, and OUR COMMON ENEMY, OUR COMMON CAUSE: FREEDOM ORGANIZING IN THE EIGHTIES, by Merle Woo, \$3.50; and I AM YOUR SISTER: BLACK WOMEN ORGANIZING ACROSS SEXUALITIES, by Audre Lorde, \$2.95.

The realities of aging in our society and means of developing support systems are addressed in the journal WOMEN & POLITICS, vol. 6, no. 2 (Summer 1986) and also available from Harrington Park Press as entitled WOMEN AS ELDERS: THE FEMINIST POLITICS OF AGING. Edited by Marilyn J. Bell, the book, available for \$7.95, includes sections on retirement planning, health care, and the special situation of Black women, as well as political analysis.

Sylvia Walby's PATRIARCHY AT WORK is out from the University of Minnesota Press for \$39.50 in cloth and \$16.95 in paper. Here the author develops new theories about the relationship of capitalism and patriarchy, arguing that the former, more than the latter, determines women's position.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS: A NATIONAL DIRECTORY, by Martha Merrill Doss costs \$25 (\$22.50 prepaid) and can be purchased from Garrett Park Press. Professional and trade associations, networks, governmental commissions, guidance and resource centers, and research institutes are covered; geographical and subject indexes are provided.

From the NOW Legal Defense & Education Fund: THE WOMEN'S MEDIA CAMPAIGN WORKBOOK, a how-to about public relations techniques for promulgating activities or registering reactions to media presentations. A copy sells for \$35.

# ALA Midwinter Highlights

•Jean Coleman, ALA's officer in charge of outreach services, resigned late last year. She is now a Rutgers University doctoral student. As liason between SRRT and ALA potentates, she offered enormously astute counsel and advocacy to forward-thinking librarians. Underway by SRRT and especially by FTF members are efforts to honor Jean, whom we all shall miss, even those of us who did not know this remarkable woman. Temporarily assuming outreach responsibilities is Helen K. Wright. ALA is currently recruiting applicants for the permanent job that Jean held.

•A new SRRT group is the Homeless People's Task Force, which seeks to stimulate library policies and services for homeless people, to afford them assistance and other access in libraries equal to that provided to other members of our society, to sensitize library staff to the plight of the homeless and to our means of ameliorating their difficulties, and to develop public relations programs so that other patrons will understand what librarians are doing when we refuse to bar the homeless from library doors. Estimates of the number of homeless people in the U.S. range from 1/2 million to 4 million, of whom the majority are women and children of all classes and races and creeds. This new task force will have probationary status for the period of two ALA conferences. Involve yourself by contacting Jim Byrnes of the Maryland Correctional Education Dept. Libraries.

•Sister, can you spare an hour? Be a Feminist Task Force representative at the SRRT booth in San Francisco by signing up with our chairperson Kay Jones, Reference Dept., Univ. of New Mexico Library, Albuquerque 87131.

SRRT Action Council passed a resolution to boycott TWA for union-busting. Presented by Mary Vela-Creixell, WIL editor, it condemned a situation where flight attendants, mostly female, have been placed in job-threatening circumstances. The airline is ignoring a court order on rehiring its former employees who struck for better conditions. See MS, Jan. 1987 for details.

•The Feminist Task Force has joined MADRE, a friendship association of U.S. and Nicaraguan women. Health & childcare issues are central to MADRE, but it also sponsors tours of Nicaragua and publishes information on a variety of subjects. This information will come to you by way of WOMEN IN LIBRARIES, but you can join MADRE on your own by sending \$10 to 853 Broadway, room 301, NYC 10003.

•Donna Nerboso and Jody Bush have volunteered for work on the ALA Awards Committee. Lorene Ludy, also of the FTF, chairs the Equality Award Committee this year. The 1986 winner of that prize was longtime FTF member Kay Cassell. Feminists have so much to do, it's no wonder that they/we keep winning awards for accomplishments.

•Thanks to Bethany Lawton, the FTF Sexism Awareness officer, for her letter in the Dec. 1986 AMERICAN LIBRARIES, where she protested the expression "resource rape" in the context of interlibrary loan and small libraries: "To use the term 'rape' as a catch word for differing interloan levels denigrates the very real experience of rape with which women must deal." ...Is there no justice? Bethany recently lost a suit against the Minnesota town of East Grand Forks, which made a male store manager its library director instead of giving that post to her, a female person with a library degree. Appeal seems hopeless, as the same judge who ruled against her will surely preside over any future hearings. If you can help Bethany Lawton to defray her legal expenses, send your contribution to her at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks Library. And to read about just a few other cases of sex discrimination, turn to the July 1986 editorial in SCHOOL LIBRARY

## ALA etc.

### JOURNAL.

•Have you seen the February 1987 CHOICE, which includes portions of BUILDING WOMEN'S STUDIES COLLECTIONS: A RESOURCE GUIDE? Compiled by a score of feminist librarians, it will soon be published as an entity. Ideas for marketing other than direct mail are solicited by Joan Ariel, University of California-Irvine Library.

•COSWL is working on having subcommittees on which non-members of COSWL, which has membership by appointment, can participate. An ALA intern may also come to be involved in COSWL activities. And speaking of work, COSWL is continuing its agitation for salary ranges to be included in job notices in library publications.

★Coming up in San Francisco: of course, "Librarians as Colleagues: Working Together Across Racial Lines," the FTF preconference at the University of California at Berkeley, June 24-26; also RASD's Women's Materials and Women Library Users Discussion Groups's presentation of feminist small presses at ALA's convention; and ACRL's Women's Studies Section panel discussion of information by, for, and about women of color in the U.S.; as well as feminist entertainment sponsored by the Feminist Task Force; sit in too on ALA's Committee on Pay Equity, headed by Mike Leber, Fairfax (VA) County Library, former WIL editor.

## Women's Studies Imperiled

Discussions continue in ACRL's Women's Studies Section, formerly a discussion group. At Midwinter, members examined threats to women's studies programs: insistence that the field is ersatz or propaganda, generalization into "gender studies," etc. Sue Searing remarked on a migration by top scholars from "personal is political" explorations of women's daily lives to more theoretical efforts. Is this greater abstraction an appeal to the establishment for legitimacy? Is it a loss to a discipline which has in the past taught people how to study experience? Or is it a distillation of lessons learned from these experiences?

No conclusion was available as to whether or not women's studies should be the province of separate academic departments or integrated within each school. The need for a women's studies specialist in the library was considered essential, however, since access to resources about women can be so difficult. Feminist librarians, Polly Thistlethwaite declared, must be watchdogs, checking for & acquiring materials outside the mainstream, developing means of retrieving them.

Ruth Dickstein, who organized the discussion, offered advice on responding to attacks on women's studies: walk a fine but firm line. Don't be silent; after all, women hold up more than half the world. On the other hand, don't drain all your energies in spending too much time preaching to those who will forever refuse conversion.

Postscript: The next issue of SIGNS will have articles about the mainstreaming of women's studies. Read them and then, as an experiment, check if, and if so, how they receive citing in online databases.



## Toward a Meeting of Minds

Monday, May 4, at the Doral Inn, New York City, the Women's Rights Litigation Clinic of Rutgers University will present A Forum on Reproductive Laws for the 1990's. Topics of investigation will include time limits on abortion, the fetus as a patient, prenatal screening, reproductive hazards in the workplace, interference with reproductive choice, and reproduction involving third parties. If you wish to attend, send \$45.00 (which includes lunch and materials) to "Reproductive Laws for the 1990's Project," Women's Rights Litigation Clinic, Rutgers University School of Law, 15 Washington Street, Newark, NJ 07102 or call (201) 648-5637.

For information about three-week seminars in Greece, Italy, Kenya, Thailand, and elsewhere, send an inquiry to The International Women's Studies Institute, 1230 Grant Ave., Box 601, San Francisco, CA 94133.

A seminar in advance of the IFLA-Library Association of Australia will meet August 27, 1988. "To Give or Not To Give: Women and the Power of Managing Information" will cover explorations of information as a political instrument, women as information providers, women as an information-poor class, and the power of librarians to change society. Contact LAA Status of Women in Librarianship, c/o Jinett de Gooiger, Ansett Airlines of Australia, Engineering Base, Melbourne Airport VIC 3045, Australia.

"Confronting the Violence: Our Work, Our Struggle, Our Vision, Our Future" is the name of the July 27 - August 1, 1987 National Coalition Against Sexual Assault conference. For details, write to Marybeth Carter, Self Help Center, Inc., 341 East "E" St., Suite 135-A, Casper, WY 82601 or phone (307) 235-2814.

The deadline for our own Feminist Task Force Preconference, "Librarians as Colleagues: Working Together Across Racial Lines," is April 10. The 2½-day program takes place in San Francisco June 24-26 and costs a basic sum of \$145 for registration, and room and board for Wednesday (room only), Thursday (room and three meals), and Friday (breakfast and lunch). Add \$18 if you want a single room and \$16 if you want to stay over Friday night. Checks, payable to SRRT Preconference, go to Betty-Carol Sellen, Brooklyn College Library, Brooklyn, NY 11210. She can also send a flyer with additional information about this important training.

## OWL Wants You! - Give a Hoot

Ohio Women Librarians (OWL) is a recently formed organization, the purpose of which is multifold: to educate women candidates for administrative positions, to advocate promotion of qualified women into such positions, and to provide mutual support for women managers in Ohio public libraries. Formed last year, OWL's membership includes special and academic as well as public librarians. Since the group's inception, women have been appointed to five top-level administrative posts, four of which were previously held by men. Membership in OWL is \$7 annually. For additional information, reach Virginia Lowell, P.O. Box 513, Northfield, OH 44067.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GIRLS!  
 In response to the editors' request, Chris Jenkins, of the Ann Arbor Public Schools, has compiled this list of nonsexist titles for children: "12 Books from 12 Years to Celebrate the 12 Days (or Months) of Whatever You Feel Like Celebrating."

1975 - Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. Making the Tucks, a family who accidentally stumble upon a spring with water endowing them with the gift of eternal life. Seventy years pass, the Tucks have not grown a day older, and then one day a young girl discovers them and learns their secret. An unforgettable fantasy and an excellent choice for a book discussion. 5th grade through adult.

1976 - Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, by Mildred D. Taylor. Dial. Nine-year-old Cassie Logan is a Black girl growing up in rural Mississippi during the Depression. She and her family endure the racial segregation and poverty of that time and place, and Cassie learns the many ways of facing adversity with intelligence and dignity. This Newbery Award-winning book has a vivid sense of place, many memorable characters, and such readability that it is difficult to put down. A superb read-aloud. 5th grade through adult.

1977 - Ramona and Her Father, by Beverly Cleary, illustrated by Alan Tiegreen. Morrow. Ramona Quimby, a major character in Beverly Cleary's books for a number of years, has grown from a quippy preschooler to an independent nine-year-old. In this story, Ramona's father has just lost his job, and the family must make adjustments accordingly. The relationship between Ramona and her father makes delightful reading, and you'll want to get Ramona and Her Mother to find out what happens next. 2nd grade through adult.

1978 - A Year at Maple Hill Farm, by Alice and Martin Provenson. Atheneum. The Provenson's beautiful illustrations show the cycle of seasons for the animals (and, incidentally, the people) at Maple Hill Farm. Here are animals with distinct personalities, from Eggnog the cat (who hates to go outside and throws up a lot) to Whiney the sheep (who faints from fear when being shorn). Anyone acquainted with animals will recognize the realism in this look at farm life and the changes that seasons bring. Preschool through adult.

1979 - Oliver Button Is a Sissy, by Tomie DePaola. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. "Oliver Button was called a sissy. He didn't like to do things that boys are supposed to do. Instead he liked to walk in the woods and play jump rope." So, when his parents insist on his getting more exercise, he joins a tapdancing class and practices hard, despite the teasing he suffers from the older boys. Comes the talent show and it's Oliver's turn to shine! A heartening story of role-free behavior and the strength it takes to stand out from the crowd. An excellent read-aloud too. 1st grade through adult.

1980 - Maudie and Me and the Dirty Book, by Betty Miles. Knopf.

A realistic novel about censorship, narrated by eleven-year-old Kate, who begins, "To look at me, you'd probably think I was pretty ordinary--except for my feet, which are size 9 1/2.... You wouldn't expect me to get into trouble at school." Kate reads a book about the birth of puppets to a class of first graders, upsetting a parent concerned about sex education in the schools and sparking a community controversy over library book selection. A good read and a thoughtful introduction to the topic of censorship. 5th grade through adult.

1981 - Self Portrait: Trina Schart Hyman, by Trina Schart Hyman. Addison-Wesley.

A fine combination of words and pictures illustrate this beautiful autobiography. Hyman's story begins with the little girl fascinated with Little Red Ridinghood. The interesting and unconventional life of this woman whose love of drawing develops into a career as an illustrator makes her a good role-model. Her anecdotes make her friends and family come alive for the reader. A great gift book for adults too. 5th grade through adult.

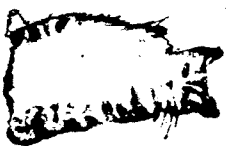
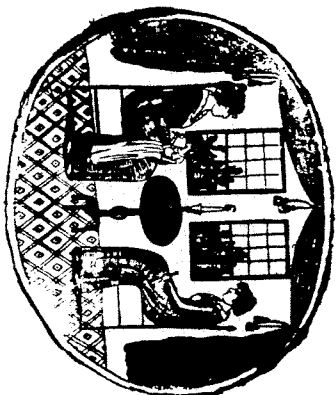
1982 - The Bedspread, by Sylvia Fair. Morrow.

Two elderly sisters decide to embroider their plain white bedspread with scenes from their childhood. Two different but complimentary pictures emerge, one a marvel of intricate stitchery, the other a lively jumble of playful children. The pictures tell a story that makes a great read-aloud, with just the right combination of humor and warmth. 1st grade through adult.

1983 - Something Special for Me, by Vera B. Williams. Greenwillow. Rosa, who first appeared in A Chair for My Mother, lives with her mother and grandmother. Her birthday is approaching and she may pick out one special present for herself with the money her family has saved from her mother's waitressing tips. Rosa's decision and her final choice make an absorbing tale, and the illustration are full of color and spontaneity. Stop at a library or bookstore and read this book; it will improve your day. Another fine read-aloud. 1st grade through adult.

1984 - The Fragile Flag, by Jane Langton. Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. Harper & Row.

This realistic fantasy is the story of a children's peace march and its effect on the children and adults (including the U.S. president, who is enamored with a Star Wars type of superweapon known as the "Peace Millie"). Nine-year-old Georgie Hall, who appeared in The Piedling, is the intense heroine of the story; she is determined to walk from Massachusetts to Washington, D.C. to deliver her message. A hopeful novel about grassroots organizing as well as a good read and an exciting one. 5th grade through adult.



## LET'S HEAR IT...continued

1985 - Starring First Grade, by Miriam Cohen. Illustrated by Lillian Hoban. Greenwillow.

This title represents an entire series of picture books by this author and illustrator about Jim, Paul, Anna Maria, Margaret, and their classmates, a multi-racial group introduced as kindergarteners in Will I Have a Friend? Each book deals with particular issues--finding friends, getting lost, learning to read--important in the lives of young children. The author has a fine ear for children's conversations, and the illustrator has an equally fine eye. Other titles include The First Grade Takes a Test, Jim Meets the Thing, and When Will I Read? Preschool through adult.

1986 - Not So Fast, Songololo, by Niki Daly. Atheneum.

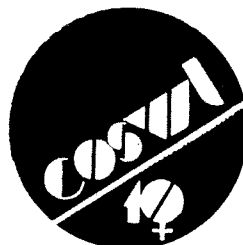
A picture book set in South Africa, where a boy and his grandmother take the bus into the city to go shopping. His heart is set on "new red tackies" (sneakers), and by the end the tackies are his. This simple story shows the warm relationship between the generations set against a background of segregation (all the bus occupants are Black, all the car occupants white). Kindergarten through adult.

Note: This article, rerun from the last issue, when it was poorly printed, is presented with apologies to author and readers alike. Look also for Christine's article "Gay and Lesbian Books for Young Adults" in The Feminist Bookstore News, vol. 9, no. 3 (Jan. 1987).

## Appeals

Linda Marchiano, who starred in Deep Throat, evidently much against her will, is now suffering a life-threatening liver disease. Although that film has made millions of dollars, Linda Marchiano never got any of them. If you can help pay for her medical care, send your tax-deductible contribution to The Linda Marchiano Fund, c/o NAPCRO, P.O. Box 7604, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Four years ago, The Christian Science Monitor fired reporter Christine Madsen because she is a lesbian. Her suit still needs funds. Please send your contribution to the Madsen Legal Fund, Box 314, New Town Branch, Boston, MA 02258.



## And Another Appeal

Like ALA, the editors of WOMEN IN LIBRARIES are revising, updating, and improving our records. Unless you have recently renewed your subscription, would you kindly send a note to Mary Vela-Creixell at the address below, telling her when you are due to renew. Anyone not certain of the date is probably due to resubscribe after the next issue, vol. 16, no. 5 (June 1987).

Thank you for your consideration. We also are soliciting on two other fronts: Any information or articles you can provide (c/o Leslie Kahn) will be appreciated. Donations above the subscription price are also sought. Special thanks to those who have already been so generous.

WOMEN IN LIBRARIES, the Newsletter of the American Library Association's Feminist Task Force, is published five times a year, from September to June. Send articles, comments, or books for review to:

Leslie Kahn  
2 Manchester, 2A  
Newark, NJ 07104

Subscriptions are \$5 for individuals, \$8 for institutions prepaid, \$10 for invoiced subscriptions. Send checks, payable to WOMEN IN LIBRARIES, to

Mary Vela-Creixell  
9530 Winsome  
Houston, TX 77063