



Women in Libraries

Volume 18, Number 1

September 1988

ALA Highlights—Conference '88 Notes

ACRL Women's Studies Section Program: Women in Third World Countries: Research Trends and Collection Development Challenges

Speakers: **Kate Cloud**, Director of the Office of Women in International Development, University of Illinois

Pauline Manaka, Georgia State University

Asunción Lavrín, Howard University

Jyotsna Vaid, Texas A & M University

Kate Cloud lamented that feminists from developed nations emphasize problems exclusive to women. She called for researchers to examine improvements over time in women's conditions. Until recently, she said, Marxist analysis dominated studies of the Third World and that these studies, like those of feminists, focused more on matters such as birth control, education, and careers than on women's growing participation in society at large. She recommended the 1985 Humphrey Institute publication, "Women, a World," which sells for just \$5. Data on gender analysis is difficult to find, but this report provides solid facts.

Pauline Manaka discussed African Studies, remarking that women of color struggle on at least two fronts, against imperialists and against male chauvinists. She connected these two fronts, indicating that Victorian colonization of Africa induced a new kind of oppressive separation of the sexes. Manaka urged us to look at pre-colonial African culture to determine the extent of the interdependence of those two struggles. She discouraged comparisons of women's rights in Africa with those in more developed countries.

Though the Second Wave of feminism in the U.S. may suffer from its white middle class bias, studies of women in Latin America focus on the poorest women, according to Professor Asunción Lavrín. She called for more research on the role of women in right-wing regimes like those in Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. She said some excellent new literary studies have been done as well as research on how women's labor influences family life.

Jyotsna Vaid, a specialist in language at her university's Department of Psychology, said research was diverse and listed studies on concerns of the working poor, the effects of modernization, the urban women's movement, education, labor, biography, and the interpretation of women's roles according to Hindu and Islamic texts. In addition to government reports, daily newspapers and statistics, women's presses are publishing in South Asia.

Librarian Merry Burlingham, University of Texas at Austin; Thomas Niehaus, Tulane University; and Beth Stafford, University of Illinois, also contributed to the to the discussion.

Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship

A major project of this group is the oral history videotape about older women of color in our profession, individuals who have contributed greatly to librarianship. Costs of production and

costs of the final product to libraries (the videotape should be affordable) have been a concern, but a funding source to decrease both expenses seems likely.

The group is writing a policy on sexual harassment for ALA headquarters and planning a workshop for trustees and administrators on nondiscriminatory hiring practices.

COSWL instigated and continues to improve childcare at ALA conventions and compiles statistical reports on women's place in libraries and in ALA.

Feminist Task Force

FTF's major program this year, cosponsored by numerous other divisions of ALA and by REFORMA, was to investigate strategies for combating racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination in libraries. Comments:

- **Clara Stanton Jones**, past president of ALA: Search for the truth about human beings and their relationships with each other. It is unprofitable to be racist or sexist, but racism and sexism have fastened to people's minds despite scientific and historical evidence.
- **Aileen Hernandez**, former NOW president: Focus, not only on the problems of the "disadvantaged" but on their survival strengths and their cultural wealth. Racism, she said, is simply being down on something you're not up on. Spanish was spoken in the New World long before English was introduced. Beware of stereotypes like that of the Asian, perceived as a good worker but too passive for managerial positions. Give up the word "minority" when referring to nonwhites, because whites soon will be just another minority in the U.S. as they are worldwide. From the earliest days of the women's rights and abolitionist movements, feminism and antiracism have been cooperative efforts with many similar values; this proud heritage must live on.
- **Elizabeth Rodriguez Miller**, REFORMA president: Share publications, attend each others' meetings, and exchange information, we who share interests in a multicultural world.
- **Betty Tsai**: Librarians, as information managers, may have to lead the way into the future. Other professions are not making good progress. When recruiting people of color, think ahead to creating opportunities for advancement. Think also of restructuring; our institutions are built on white European principles alone.

- **Marva DeLoach**: Empower people of color both in libraries and in our professional organizations. Don't hire on soft money. Be in touch with government officials about affirmative action.

- **E. J. Josey**: We must fight racism in libraries and in the community at large. Racism is nasty and brutish; it must be short-lived as well. Let us reaffirm our commitments so that we may strengthen each other against discouragement or burnout.

- Ideas from the audience:

The Nation: Include space on ALA membership forms for contributions to a fund to provide grants for librarians of color to attend conferences. Local organizations may apply this tactic, and such grants could be available to students of color. New York has introduced this regionally. Support librarians courageous enough to speak out against injustice and folly. Make research into this problem a priority. Publicize avenues for grievances against discrimination and harassment. ALA could prepare a databank of speakers who are not white; this listing should pertain to matters of professional interest in addition to discrimination concerns—we all need role models.

In our own institutions: Build union activism, arrange in-service programs with outside experts, create a forum for expression for people experiencing racism; build coalitions with other concerned groups; refuse tokenism.

Recruitment: Professional assistance for scholarships with government support. Recruit young people working in libraries. Created guidelines for transferring foreign library degrees. Offer guidance about where to place job announcements. Show interested people that there's something for everyone in librarianship and make good on that promise. Let computer people, business minds, science buffs know that libraries can use their abilities. ALA and library schools could work more closely together. School librarians, by showing students the fun and power of using libraries, are good recruiters. Be terrific and tell people that being a librarian is terrific. Show in advertising, say, during National Library Week, that ours is not a closed club for whites.

More from the Feminist Task Force

Christine Jenkins reported on Senate Bill 2033, the Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1988. This act defines obscenity so broadly that much advertising and even children's books could be open to charges. A library's entire

collection could be confiscated after just two complaints. Senators Patrick Lahey and Edward Kennedy are leading the opposition to the bill.

ALA Council passed a resolution that no person afflicted with HIV, ARC, or AIDS be barred from libraries. In the works is a resolution opposing

mandatory drug testing of library workers.

Pay Equity: The more women in a field of endeavor, the lower the salaries. Some claim the solution is simple: hire more white men for library work. We argue that sexism and other such injustices be eliminated. ♦

Sexist Subject Headings



The National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) is suggesting that the Library of Congress introduce several changes in subject headings as well as new descriptors pertinent to women's topics and feminist scholarship. Many current headings reflect the sexist exclusivity of past male dominion.

The NWSA, in a letter, is urging that the Library of Congress remove those subject headings that contain "sexist, exclusive terminology that is at once inaccurate and inequitable" and replace them with inclusive terms like these:

Cro-Magnon man/suggested: Cro-Magnons
Fall of man/"The Fall" (Biblical theme)
Fossil man/Prehistoric humans
Freedman/Freed slaves
Lumbermen/Lumber workers or loggers
Man/Humans
Manpower/Human Resources
Suffragettes/Suffragists
Workmanship/Artisanship

The group also suggested new descriptors including:

Acquaintance rape
Afro-American feminism
Child support enforcement
Family planning
Feminist art
Feminist ethics
Feminist fiction
Feminist theology
Homophobia
Lesbian authors
Lesbian feminism
Nonsexist children's literature
Pregnant workers
Socialist feminism
Women - friendship
Women's movement
Women's music
Women's power

Similar changes in subject headings are being offered by several organizations including the Hennepin County Library.

In the English language, where it is possible to be nonsexist, terminology that does not recognize women's equality is all the more pernicious and damaging, both to individuals and to society. The NWSA letter said, "By making women or other groups invisible through language, we rob learners of crucial information and diminish the complex reality of our world. By describing more accurately the categories of information, the Library of Congress would be acknowledging the lush diversity of our culture." ♦



Women in Libraries

the Newsletter of the American Library Association's Feminist Task Force, is published five times a year, from September to June.

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Women in the News

Jane O'Reilly, in *The New York Times Magazine*: "And then the Republicans. For pity's sake. Voters, men and women, favor candidates who support the proposed equal rights amendment by 63 percent to 14 percent. Voters, men and women, support 2 to 1 a woman's right to choose an abortion. Yet the Republicans offer us a platform that renounces both and offer us . . . Dan Quayle, whom we will vote for, it seems, because he's a pretty face. It doesn't make any sense. . . . If Dan Quayle reminds veterans of the bitterness of the Vietnam War, he reminds women of the chances we never had because men had the system locked up. The places were reserved, father to son."

In Flint, Michigan, a county judge prohibited a woman from having an abortion during a divorce proceeding, claiming that since no Michigan court had ruled on when a fetus becomes a child, he must consider the case as if the fetus were born. The judge called the estranged husband's bid to block the abortion a type of custody fight. The woman, Shawn K. Lewis, appealed. Michigan's court ruled in her favor but turned to the U. S. Supreme Court for help. The Supreme Court, without comment, agreed that Lewis had a constitutional right to control her own reproductive processes and could end the pregnancy. *The New York Times*, September 27, 1988.

Law students Carolyn Killeen Foley and Pamela Horn responded to a New York Times story, "Women in the Law Say Path is Limited by Mommy Track," with the following words: "You challenge a woman's ability to act in both the traditional roles of mother and partner, without pointing out the impossibility of a man playing the role of father and partner. . . . You have thus inspired us with a fear for our male counterparts. Our concern is that these men have not been provided with the corresponding barrage of statistics that should influence their choice to attend law school. How much opportunity will a father-partner have to contribute to the moral, intellectual and physical growth of his children? . . . What are his prospects for a lasting relationship? Can he be a good father and a good lawyer? What do the statistics say?" *The New York Times*, August 26, 1988.

Women working together: The move towards legislation in support of parental leave is getting new energy, as more than two dozen women's

groups began a joint lobbying campaign. A family and medical leave bill which would require all but the smallest businesses to allow workers to take up to ten weeks of unpaid leave to care for children was under consideration in the House in September. Women's groups representing a broad range of philosophies, from Church Women United to the National Abortion Rights Action League, banded together to support the bill. *The New York Times*, September 8, 1988.

Black librarians were victorious after a separate court battles in Illinois and Washington, D. C. Jocelyn Williams, Black Caucus (BC) member, and others, representing more than 300 black plaintiffs, sued the Library of Congress for discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. After a 16-year lawsuit, \$805,000 in damages was awarded. Margaret Collins, also a BC member, won compensatory and punitive damages in Illinois when she established that her employer had taken retaliatory action when she filed charges of racial discrimination. *Black Caucus Newsletter*, ALA, August 1988.

Feminist philosophers will meet in Duluth, Minnesota to discuss "Explorations in Feminist Ethics: Theory and Practice," on October 7 and 8, 1988. The series of lectures, covering a range of approaches from the practical to the most theoretical, is sponsored by the University of Minnesota's Institute for Women's Studies. Call 218-726-6142 for information. ◆

Books for Kenya

African-American Heritage, Inc., hopes to send 2,000,000 books to Kenya through its project, "Mountain of Books." The group is a nonprofit organization whose aim is "to promote African-American cross-cultural understanding, friendship and assistance." The Black Caucus of ALA has given the project their enthusiastic support. The project needs books in good condition, periodicals, nonbook materials and educational games in all subject areas and at all age levels. Send what you can, with postage to help with shipping costs, to Mountain of Books Project, African-American Heritage, Inc., 4601 Market Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19139. ◆

Hospital for MADRE

The Women's Peace Network, in behalf of MADRE, has asked for donations to purchase hospital supplies for Nicaragua's first women's hospital, the Bertha Calderón Women's Hospital in Managua. The Feminist Task Force has been supporting MADRE, and in New Orleans, FTF decided to make an official contribution if possible. If you wish to organize a local fund-raising group or make a monetary contribution, write to MADRE, A Project of Women's Peace Network, 853 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. ♦

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review issue in November.

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Without you, *Women in Libraries* cannot survive. Produced by a volunteer effort, the newsletter uses subscription funds only for printing and mailing. Subscribe today by clipping the coupon on the back.

Acquisitions Notes

Third World Newsreel celebrates its 20th anniversary with a new program guide, sponsored in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. The guide includes annotations and ordering information for films and videos about society, politics and women's lives around the world from the perspective of the progressive left. It is a refreshing alternative to the limited commercial releases commonly available. The films cover a broad range of topics (many untraditional). Their shorter length (many under 20 minutes) is an asset for classroom use. Order from Camera News, Inc., 335 West 38th Street, New York, NY 10018.



The State University of New York at Albany has produced two materials useful to women in higher education.

Your Right to Fight: Stopping Sexual Harassment on Campus, a video, "teaches students how harassers operate and illustrates numerous empowering strategies for stopping harassment," according to Dr. Carol Waterman, who wrote the script. Undergraduate students enact four common scenarios followed by discussions.

Women and Tenure at Albany: A Guide for Faculty, is a booklet of advice to help women through the tenure process. Compiled by women faculty at Albany, it attempts to address the "tenure gap," as men continue to be more likely than women to receive tenure.

For more information or to order either, write or call: Affirmative Action, AD 301, University at Albany, SUNY, Albany, NY 12222; 518-442-5415. ♦

For Crying out Loud is a newsletter for women survivors of child sexual abuse, published in Cambridge, which includes short pieces on the experiences of incest and the steps survivors are taking towards recovery. Poetry and drawings reveal the pain and betrayal these women knew as children. Contributors share experiences and resources and are building a support network. Write to Survivors Newsletter Collective, Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139.

Each issue of *Aunt Edna's Reading List* includes brief reviews of five or six selected alternative books for women. Send \$10 to Aunt Edna for 12 monthly issues: Aunt Edna, 2002 H Hunnewell Street, Honolulu, HI 96822.

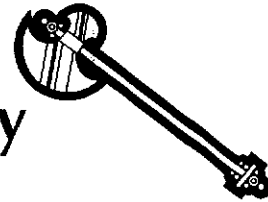
The Feminist Press has some new books to announce. *Get Smart: A Woman's Guide to Equality on Campus*, by Montana Katz and Veronica Vieland, uses case studies to describe problems women may encounter in a variety of college settings, and gives the reader solutions. In addition, the authors include a list of resources and organizations for the advancement of educational equality for women. To be published next spring is *Seeds: Supporting Women's Work in the Third World*, edited by Ann Leonard. This is a collection of eight portraits of development projects organized by women in the Third World. These projects, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, were designed to involve women in decision-making and earning. Women organize a bus service in Kenya, a forest conservation project in Nepal, and a community waste recycling system in Mexico. Order both books from The Talman Co., Inc., 150 Fifth Avenue, Room 630, New York, NY 10011. ♦

"Each One Reach One," an ALA preconference on recruitment

Kay Jones, University of California at Sacramento, attended the recruitment preconference, "Each One Reach One," as the representative for the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL) and submitted this report: The experience was terrific. On Thursday night, three women library school students explained their reasons for choosing librarianship as a profession. Dr. Vartan Gregorian inspired us to rethink our image as librarians. Kathleen Heim introduced Friday morning's program by providing an overview of recruitment to the profession and a quick glance at the book she edited for the occasion, *Librarians: The New Millennium*. William Moen discussed the final chapter in the book, a survey of library school students. Not surprisingly, the average library school student is a woman in her late thirties who has worked since receiving her first college degree, perhaps in a library on a support staff. Following this, we got down to work. Kathleen Murnion introduced the concept

of strategic marketing planning as applied to recruiting to the profession. We broke up into four regional subgroups and discussed our target groups and specific strategies to be employed. I participated in the group for the western region which decided we wanted the best and the brightest from all target groups. We spent the most time on strategies for the target group of bilingual, multicultural populations. Some specific ways we could reach potential library school students included using Equal Opportunity Program rosters, classes in English as a second language, ethnic associations, ads in community publications, mentoring programs such as the one UCLA has with REFORMA, scholarships and internships, speaker's bureaus, peer group leaders, career days, and others. If each of you would identify a promising potential librarian and encourage her or him to go to library school, then "Each One Reach One" would be more than an empty motto. Let's all try it. ♦

Panel: The Creation of Patriarchy



Speakers: **Gerda Lerner**, historian and author
Rebecca Bingham, Director of Library and Media Services, Louisville Public Schools
Sharon Hogan, Director of the Research Library, Louisville University, Baton Rouge

At a panel sponsored by The Library History Round Table, **Gerda Lerner** spoke on her latest book, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, the first volume of her *Women and History*. Dynamic and forceful, she described the growth of the patriarchal system. To answer the question, "why patriarchy?" Lerner had first to examine the origin of patriarchy. It was not the result of one event, she said, but the result of a lengthy historical process beginning with bartering for brides, followed by the written word. In her discussion of the change to patriarchy, she focused particularly on the issue of gender, defined as the social constructs imposed upon the biological given. Women are not nor have they been biologically inferior to men, but these societal constructs of sexual behavior have defined and limited women and played an

important role in shaping traditional interpretations of history.

The appropriation of women's sexuality and reproductive capacity, Lerner said, preceded establishment of the concepts of class or private property. Briefly, she outlined how men learned to institutionalize women's sexuality and subordinate it for their own political benefit. "Women and children were the first slaves," Lerner said, beginning with the debt enslavement of impoverished families. The subordination of women forms the model for slavery which is the model for class hierarchy and racism, Lerner said. Women's "participation" in the system was enforced, Lerner explained, through force, economic dependence and ties to children and family. The devaluing of female spiritual symbols contributed to this system and permeated western civilization, specifically through what Lerner called the "founding metaphors": 1) the symbolic devaluing of women in relation to the divine, and 2) the Aristotelian notion of women as "incomplete and damaged human beings of an entirely different order than men."

As a society or culture, we define ourselves by our economic, political, and social institutions, and our notions of gender, through these metaphors, have influenced every aspect of our heritage—our language, philosophy, even our systems of classification. Women appear to have no written history at all, Lerner said, for the categories by which knowledge is organized are based upon the patriarchal metaphors.

Society has believed these notions of gender to be "natural" and has let them remain unchallenged because they are invisible. Lerner's purpose in writing this book, in line with other feminist scholars, is to expose the fallacy of patriarchy as a "natural" phenomenon and to dismantle the outdated institutions which support it.

Rebecca Bingham, Directory of Library and Media Services of the Louisville Public School System, paralleled the historic gender conditioning explained by Lerner to the field of school librarianship. She pointed to the fact that education has been traditionally dominated by males in positions of power, leaving school librarians to work in isolation. This structured condition of separation, she said, has prevented school librarian solidarity or network support. She called on all school librarians to become more aware of our potential, to grasp our collective strength as women and realize the richness and worth we can provide. As Lerner showed how women have been central to the making of history, Bingham pointed out that nothing happens in the school or educational setting without the integral involvement of school librarians. We have until recently failed to recognize this.

Bingham called on school librarians (and all women) to overcome the deep-seated resistance within ourselves (within our gender-conditioned society) and believe in our input as being valid, respectable and worthwhile. She said we must rid ourselves of a way of thinking of the "great men" of the library world and think instead of our "anonymous library foremothers." Bingham echoed Lerner when she said that patriarchy is a historical construct; it had a beginning and it will have an end. Change will begin, she said, once we fully understand the situation. Bingham admonished us to step out and take our part in visualizing and implementing programs to empower the library user.

Sharon Hogan, Director of the Research Library at Louisville University, Baton Rouge—one of a few female ARL directors—addressed the history of the absence of women in academic libraries. She

presented some disturbing statistics to document the "climb to the top" of a few. She noted the sex stereotyping of women in libraries, reading an early call for female librarians which said that women were desirable workers for they "soften" the work environment and, of course, "lighten our labor." Hogan did note the importance of support and encouragement for women with management in mind and stressed her role as a mentor for other women. Although she called herself a "predictable statistic," she encouraged women to aspire to the directorship of ARL libraries.

The audience then asked questions which stimulated further contributions from the speakers. Participation was heated, for we all wanted to contribute our experiences or positions in librarianship and in a patriarchal society.

"I think the changes that are going to be necessary in order for women to be fully emancipated are the most fundamental and structural changes that have ever been made in the history of the world," Lerner said. "In order for men and women to be really equal in access to resources and power, we're going to have to have 50/50 representation of women in every institution of the society," including, she said, the college of cardinals, the senate, the legislature, both nation and state, trade unions, and the corporate board of every organization.

To begin with, Lerner said, each child must be the responsibility of two parents. This would be "one of the most revolutionary changes ever made in 4,000 years of human civilization." "Surely," she said, "if the corporate director of Mobil Oil is supposed to be taking his equal share of raising his little small child," our institutions and the "ways in which we run our lives would have to be humanized in such a way that we do not have that separation between the world of work and the world of community."

Asked how long change might take, Lerner said "I don't think it's going to take 200 years to end patriarchy, because I don't think we'll survive patriarchy for another fifty years. I mean, very seriously, eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation of the great men, 'we have had about enough of that,' and I don't think the world can much longer stand the macho antics of our great leaders in a nuclear age. . . . Unless we begin to dismantle the power basis of patriarchal institutions and patriarchally oriented men, I do really have a very pessimistic view of our survival." She concluded, on a more hopeful note, "I see very fast change ahead."

Lerner's book, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, is published by Oxford University Press, 1986. ◆

Librarians as Colleagues across Racial Lines: Strategies for Action

A Selective Bibliography

July 9, 1988, ALA, New Orleans

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Nonbook Media

Copeland Griggs Productions. "Valuing diversity." A three-part film/video series. 411 - 15th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94117.

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