



Women in Libraries

Volume 25, Number 1

The Feminist Task Force—25 Years

March 1996

San Antonio: Planning New York, 1996



Authors' breakfast:

With the theme, "Feminist Perspectives on Racism," three speakers have agreed to participate in our Feminist Authors' Breakfast. Cheryl Clarke and Minnie Bruce Pratt, lesbian poets, and Barbara Smith, author and editor, are scheduled to speak and read from their work.

Cheryl Clarke, author of poetry collections *Humid Pitch*, *Living as a Lesbian*, and, most recently, *Experimental Love*, is a doctoral candidate in English at Rutgers University. She also works at the university as Director of Diverse Community Affairs, where her work addresses lesbian and gay concerns as well as those of students with disabilities.

Minnie Bruce Pratt has published several books of poetry, including *Yours in Struggle*, *S/He*, and *Crimes against Nature*. She has also written a number of essays on issues of racism and other forms of discrimination.

Barbara Smith, with Audre Lorde, founded Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. She has edited several books and written many articles about racism and the women's and lesbian communities.

The breakfast is set for its usual Sunday morning slot, July 7 this year at 8:30 am. To buy tickets, send \$18, \$12 for library school students, to Dorothy Granger, Pacific Oaks College, 5 Westmoreland Place, Pasadena, CA 91103. Tickets will also be available at the conference, but will cost slightly more.

Planning, continued on page 2

March 1996

FTF Endorses ALA Candidates

Barbara Ford was endorsed for President. She has a long record of support for feminist activities in ALA and has served on the Social Responsibilities Action Council (SRRT) and on the Committee on the Status of Women in Libraries (COSWL). Other candidates are Ching-chih Chen and Charles Beard.

The task force voted to endorse these candidates for council:

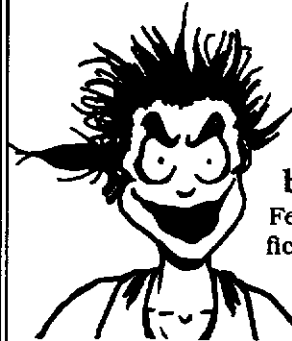
Rita Auerbach, Estelle Black,
Elaine Harger, Eleanor R.
Kulleseid, Beverly Lynch, Virginia
B. Moore, Linda Perkins, Mark
Rosenzweig, and Patricia M. Wong.

There was no endorsement for treasurer because there was too little information available about the candidates.

Issue Highlights

ALA in Texas

With our boots and our umbrellas, we're back from San Antonio and ready for New York . . .



It's cold outside—
time for a good
book

Feminist fiction and non-
fiction, featuring
*The Revenge of Hothead
Paisan*, page 3.
How mad can we get?

Hothead Paisan, Homicidal Lesbian Terrorist
© 1995 by Diane DiMassa and Giant Ass Publishing

Planning

Continued from page 1

Lesbian archives tour

Preliminary planning is underway for a tour of the Lesbian Herstory archives. Polly Thistlethwaite, a longtime FTF member, is coordinating the tour with Rosemary McAndrew. The Archives is in Brooklyn's Park Slope, and plans include a flyer with a detailed map, and a meeting point in Manhattan with a guide to the Archives.

Program for San Francisco

In New York, the authors' breakfast will fill the role of FTF's program, but we often have a free program as well. Betty-Carol Sellen volunteered to discuss possibilities with Bay area librarians, and report back at the New York meeting.

FTF to cosponsor sessions

Two groups asked the Feminist Task Force to cosponsor programs at the 1996 Annual Conference.

- The Women Studies Section of ACRL is sponsoring, "Leadership & Collaboration: Librarians Develop Women Studies Electronic Resources," to be held on Monday, July 8, 9-11am.

- The Library History Round Table of the Library Research Forum is sponsoring the program, "Women in Influence: Implications of Feminist Leadership, Resources for Library Historians," to be offered on Sunday, July 7, from 9:30-12:30.

Despite a partial conflict with FTF's Sunday morning breakfast, members agreed to cosponsor both programs.

Futas fund created

A memorial fund has been created in the name of Elizabeth D. Futas. Its theme is "A catalyst for change," and a booth will be set up in the exhibit area to promote the fund. Futas was a collector, and items from the estate will be awarded to donors to the fund. Those interested in volunteering to work at the booth or help the fund in other ways may contact Bob Cookingham, Hunter School of Social Work, 129 E. 79th Street, New York, NY 10021; or e-mail rtccc@cunyvm.cuny.edu.

Futas was known for her political activism and her compassion. She died during an ALA conference last year.

Carlson acting coordinator

The office of coordinator-elect has been vacant for a year, though a member has agreed to act in this role. Kristin Carlson will fill in at the New York conference for Linda Kimsey, FTF coordinator, who is unable to attend. She will then run for the office.

March Book Reviews

Psychic detective

Just talkin' on the phone

Allen, Kate. *I knew you would call*. Norwich, VT: New Victoria Publishers, 1995. Paper, ISBN 0-934678-70-7, \$10.95.

Kate Allen has a new detective, Marta Golcochea, a Basque-American, and perhaps you can guess from the title what she does: she's a phone psychic. This is a new sort of occupation for a female detective, and her work does have the potential to introduce her to any number of strange and troubled people. Marta lives in a tight-knit lesbian community, deeply depressed over the end of a love affair. When she begins to go to a support group, she meets someone new and, when she begins to feel an interest, the new love is accused of murder. Allen knows something about depression; Marta's behavior and feelings are familiar to anyone who has lived with its debilitating effects. The settings seem real, and the vulnerability of women to bigotry, especially from cowards who threaten to get at us through our cats, insightfully drawn.

—MT



Women in Libraries

Women in Libraries, the Newsletter of the American Library Association's Feminist Task Force, is published four times a year. To subscribe, inquire about your subscription, or to change your address, write to Diedre Conkling, Publisher, *Women in Libraries*, c/o ALA, SRRT, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Subscriptions are \$5 for individuals, \$8 for institutions (prepaid), or \$10 for invoiced subscriptions.

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March Book Reviews

The nature of anger, in fact and the comics

Heavenly murder

Glamuzina, Julie, and Alison J. Laurie. *Parker & Hulme: a lesbian view*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, 1995. Cloth, ISBN 1-56341-066-4, \$26.95; paper, ISBN 1-56341-065-6, \$12.95.

Originally published in New Zealand in 1991, *Parker & Hulme* relates the story of the 1950s New Zealand murder case recently translated to cinema as *Heavenly Creatures*. Laurie and Glamuzina examine the scandal and spectacle in contextual terms, considering events and circumstances of the participants both before and after the murder. Matter-of-factly describing the murder, they make an effort to "desensationalize" the crime. In spite of their efforts, however, the crime remains sensational; it is simply that kind of crime.

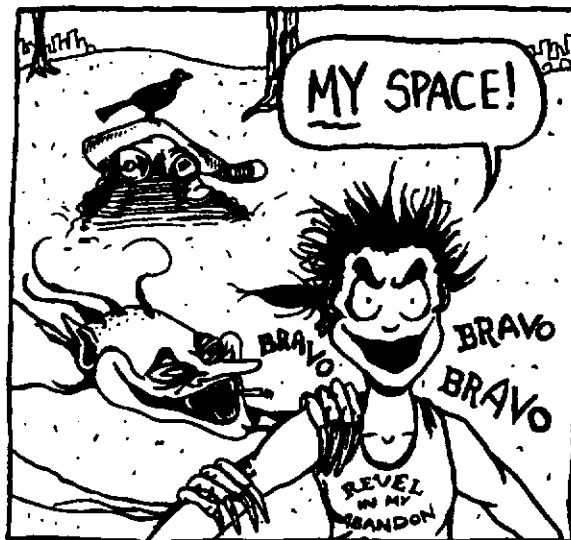
A 'normal' family

Two teenage girls, Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme, best friends, live a vivid fantasy life. When Pauline's mother decides the relationship is unhealthy, the girls take her for a walk in the park and brain her with a brick. Their cold-blooded planning, together with Pauline's gleeful journal account, are chilling, indeed. Yet the authors' descriptions of the prudish nature of New Zealand society, the fact that both girls' families were outside of accepted norms, and the tension between outside norms and the secrets they lived with, make the crime less puzzling. Neither girl's family was "normal," in the society of the 1950s. In one there was a love triangle and an impending divorce; in the other, the parents were not married.

The authors' state, "we do not suggest that the western patriarchal nuclear family model would ever be stress-free since it functions as a mechanism to control women and children in order to benefit men and perpetuate male supremacy. The suggestion that some families are 'dysfunctional' implies the existence of a 'functional' family, a concept we reject."

The book is a fascinating and thorough account of the crime, the trial, and the public response to an unusual crime, with meticulous attention to contemporary social values and their effects.

—MT



© 1995 by Diane DiMassa and Giant Ass Publishing

Hothead Paisan, Homicidal Lesbian Terrorist
One thing for sure—you always know just how she feels

Any woman's revenge

DiMassa, Diane. *The revenge of Hothead Paisan, homicidal lesbian terrorist*. Pittsburgh, PA: Cleis Press, 1995. Paper, ISBN 1-57344-016-7, \$16.95.

If you did all the things you dreamed of in your angriest dreams, the result might look something like Hothead Paisan roaming the streets in this collection of comic stories. Angry, aggressive, with a charming, wacky smile and a maniacal glint in her eye, Hothead does for us what we are too normal to do. She doesn't contain her anger; she lives it, and we root for her all the way. A man gets in her space, she removes the offending part with a chainsaw. Men rape, she . . . well, I don't need to go into any detail.

There's no shortage of appropriate weapons, and Hothead wields them with panache. And don't forget her cat, Chicken, who dances, talks, eats, and watches Hothead, nobly representing all our cats. Diane DiMassa has created the perfect underground comic for lesbians and feminists; she's the woman's answer to R. Crumb.

—MT

Resources to be updated

Both the SHARE Directory and the brochure need to be updated. Dorothy Granger, Rosemary McAndrew, and Theresa Tobin will begin planning for the Directory. SHARE means Sisters Have March 1996

Resources Everywhere, and is a list of feminists around the country.

Madeleine Tainton and Linda Kimsey will work on a new brochure.



New York, 1996

Next: a special double issue

- *More about the authors' breakfast*
- *Four pages of reviews—at least*
- *Annual conference calendar*

Women in Libraries
American Library Association
Office for Library Outreach Services
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611



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