

WOMEN in libraries



newsletter
of the ALA/SRRT
Task Force on

WOMEN

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Ed: Kay Cassell

"WOMEN IN A WOMEN'S PROFESSION: STRATEGIES" - ALA PRE-CONFERENCE ON
WOMEN IN LIBRARIANSHIP

This report of the pre-conference on women is simply an overview. Pre-conference proceedings plus an issue of Booklegger will give more complete information. Video tapes will also be available at the future date.

Anita Schiller, librarian at the University of California at La Jolla, was the keynote speaker of the two day pre-conference held on the Douglass College Campus, New Brunswick, N.J., July 5-6. Ms. Schiller discussed why librarianship began as a women's profession which was because women could be hired at lower salaries. She indicated that we would have to find ways to change our image as a low paid profession and that the changes must come from the bottom up.

On Friday afternoon leaders of the seven discussion areas gave overviews of their topics as a prelude to Saturday's marathon discussions in these areas of concern with planning for ways to bring about constructive changes.

Pat Schuman headed the discussion group on Self-Image. She pointed out that librarians often seem defensive about their profession and that we must develop a more positive image of ourselves as professionals. This group recommended state task forces on women as a means of improving our self-image and supporting women in the profession.

Liz Futas as the chairperson for the Library Education group pointed out that the action must start in the library schools. Her survey of library schools indicated that many have a larger percentage of men faculty and thus the role models for women students are extremely weak. Areas of concern are the need for more financial aid for women in library schools and more women in doctoral programs. Liz Futas will be coordinating the organization of feminist watchdog committees in library schools through alumni associations. Lois Fleming will be working on continuing education programs for working librarians. Susan Vaughn and Helen Josephine will be collecting additional statistics on library school students and faculty, and Andrea Dorfman will be organizing a one-to one counseling program.

Joan Marshall led the discussion group on Affirmative Action. Ms. Marshall reviewed the legislation pertaining to affirmative action. She discussed the recent suit filed by the women of the City University of New York. One of her recommendations was to hire a feminist lawyer. The need for funding for the affirmative action agencies at the federal level was the subject of one of the resolutions sent to ALA council. It was stressed that affirmative action is slow and that no one should expect quick results. The group also said that pressure for change must come from the bottom.

The Career Development discussion was headed by Sherrie Friedman. This group dealt with how women can rise to administrative positions as well as how we can encourage the development of horizontal career ladders for those who prefer to stay in their speciality. The career development group pointed out the need for continuing education to help librarians obtain the necessary skills to advance and for workshops on interpersonal relations. Concern was expressed about the drive to "upgrade the profession" by recruiting PhD's into librarianship which will result in a disproportionate number of males entering the ranks. Among the committees which have been set up are those on identification of good role models, continuing education and career counseling. The group expressed the need for information on grant proposal writing, budget and fiscal planning, political strategy and system analysis.

Peggy O'Donnell chaired the discussion group on unions with the assistance of Fay Blake and Ann Lipow. This group indicated the need for more information on unions and on libraries that had unionized. This would enable library workers without unions to get in touch with those who could provide help and expertise. As a first step they are doing a survey the results of which will be used to build a network of information on library workers' unions. They hope to publish a newsletter and to establish a coalition of library unions. A resource list of background materials and a manual of organizing tactics are both being planned.

Annalee Bundy, reporting on the experience of the Boston Women in Libraries group, led the discussion group on regional and local organizing. This group distributed a packet of materials they had produced for regional use on the "Library as a Feminist Resource." The packet includes a poster and useful bibliographies on child care, rape, marriage and divorce, birth control and other women's issues. They recommended using state and regional conferences for group exposure.

Kathy Weibel led a tactics group which helped to pull together resolutions for ALA. They suggested a need for an "Old Girl" network to exchange job information. For librarians wanting to prove discrimination charges at home they recommended keeping a diary of pertinent information.

A spontaneous discussion group on feminist values developed a group called S.H.A.R.E. (Sisters Have Resources Everywhere). S.H.A.R.E. will begin by coordinating a talent bank of women's skills, interests and personal expertise. A directory of names gathered at the pre-conference and ALA will be printed immediately so that activities generated at the conferences can continue and local projects can be started. A second edition of the directory is planned. If you wish to join in S.H.A.R.E., mail a 3x5 card to Prof. Renee Feinberg, Brooklyn College Library-Reference Division, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210. Indicate your complete home

and work address with telephone numbers and the skills and interests you want to exchange. Carol Leita, co-coordinator, is in charge of the first directory.

Needless to say much discussion went on during free time and often until the early morning hours. The positive feelings of the pre-conference were reflected in Dorothy Broderick's resolution at the end of the pre-conference saying that it has been productive and carried out in an atmosphere of good humor.

ALA REPORT

An immediate product of the Pre-Conference on Women was that several resolutions were written and presented to ALA Council and membership. Council passed our resolutions calling for:

- 1) ALA support for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment,
- 2) the Office of Library Personnel Resources to develop guidelines whereby persons in both administrative and service positions may receive the comparable reward resulting from an accurate, non-discriminatory valuation of these two major categories of employment, and
- 3) the Committee on Accreditation to evaluate the positive implementation of affirmative action as one of the criteria for accreditation or re-accreditation of the library schools.

Resolutions which failed to gather enough Council support for passage were

- 1) a resolution stating that ALA supports governmental funding of child care centers and recommends that libraries provide child care services to parents in their employment and
- 2) a resolution which asked for the elimination of sexist terminology and marital status in future ALA publications and in official ALA documents.

The vote on this last resolution was a tie vote which had to be broken by ALA president Jean Lowrie. President Lowrie voted against the resolution indicating she liked being a chairman. Many women wrote letters of protest to Chairman Lowrie. A resolution instructing the ALA Washington Office to work for adequate funding of the agencies monitoring federal affirmative action regulations was referred to the Legislative Committee.

Two of our resolutions were presented at the Friday afternoon ALA Membership Meeting. The membership passed the resolution which states that ALA supports the right of library workers to protest discrimination through appropriate governmental agencies and through private attorneys without fear of retaliation. A resolution encouraging libraries to employ top administrators for limited terms and that these administrators be evaluated periodically by the entire staff provoked a great deal of discussion but failed to get enough votes to be passed.

To the credit of ALA Council they passed a resolution calling on SCMAI to make a formal inquiry into the Michael McConnell case. The

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results of this inquiry will be important for all librarians fighting discrimination in libraries.

Many programs at ALA were concerned with women and sexism. The SRRT Womens' Task Force presented a program on how to file complaints. Four representatives of federal, state and city agencies and a feminist attorney discussed existing legislation, illegal sex discrimination and retaliatory acts practice by employers, the rights of the complainant, methods of conciliation and the compensation awarded in cases of proven discrimination. The panel answered questions from the audience about the discriminatory aspects of child care, how a superior can prepare to handle sex discrimination complaints and specific violations of federal laws and executive orders.

Diane Gersoni-Stavn, author of "Sexism and Youth", spoke at the CSD discussion group on Sexism in Library Materials for Children.

The sexist speech award for the conference goes to Fred Glazer, West Va. State Librarian. Speaking at the Library Public Relations Council dinner, Glazer discussed techniques for enticing patrons to libraries ranging from sending mini-skirted cuties to place posters in store windows to hard-core graffiti approaches of reviewing children's stories.

SALARY DISCRIMINATION CONTINUES

The July 1974 Library Journal article "Placements and Salaries 1973" reveals that the average woman graduate's salary was \$9271 compared with \$9754 for the men and the median women's salary was \$9000 compared with \$9303 for the men. The authors stated: "What is quite clear, however, is that, by and large, men characteristically fare better in salaries offered in every type of library".

NEW WOMEN'S PUBLICATIONS

Jacobs, Sue-Ellen. Women in Perspective, A Guide for Cross-Cultural Studies University of Illinois, 1974. \$3.95 pap. This bibliographical work on women is divided into two main sections - one arranged by geographical area and the other by subject such as marriage, divorce, prostitution, homosexuality, women in literature, etc. Though it's not comprehensive, it lists both books and articles in each area and should be useful. The international section of the book has long been needed. Author index.

Ahlum, Carol and Jacqueline M. Fralley. Feminist Resources For Schools and Colleges: A Guide to Curricular Materials. The Feminist Press, SUNY/College at Old Westbury, Box 334, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568. \$1.00 plus \$.25 postage. A most useful annotated bibliography which includes sections on sexism in education, materials for the elementary school teacher and for the high school and college teacher and multimedia. A short but impressive complete work.

The alicejamesbooks press (138 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138) was recently reviewed in Sipapu. Noel Peattie says: "Not all of it (women's material) is of good quality, but when high caliber is achieved it stands out like a nugget of gold... The books from... alicejames books...constitute a good-sized nugget in themselves".

KNOW, Inc. has an impressive list of materials on women for sale. Write for their catalog at P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Penn. 15221. Their list includes books, pamphlets and a new poetry series.

You'll also want a copy of First Things First which is a catalog of books for women. They operate as a mail order house. Write them at 23 Seventh St. S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003 for their catalog.

The Ford Foundation recently published a 32 page pamphlet entitled That 51 Per Cent: Ford Foundation Activities Related to Opportunities For Women. The pamphlet discusses Ford grants which have supported the work of women and the work of the women's movement. Write for your copy at Ford's Office of Reports, 320 E. 43 St., New York, N.Y. 10017.

MCGRAW-HILL Aims to Banish "The Little Woman"

Dont't be afraid to show men as quiet and passive, fearful, indecisive, illogical or immature, or women as tough, aggressive and insensitive. Never use such words as "the fair sex," "the ladies" or "the girls" when adult females are meant. For "manmade," read "synthetic" or "of human origin," and for "stewardess" read "flight attendant".

These are some of the guidelines laid down in order to present equal treatment of the sexes in McGraw-Hill publications. The company says the guidelines, just circulated, are designed "to eliminate sexist assumptions form McGraw-Hill Book Company publication...and to make McGraw-Hill staff members and authors aware of the ways in which males and females have become stereotyped in publications."--from Publishers Weekly, September 2, 1974.

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUND DISCRIMINATING AGAINST WOMEN

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, has been notified by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that evidence reveals that females are restricted in various classifications and in classified jobs, blacks are restricted to labor and unskilled jobs. Louisiana State University limits female employment opportunities for promotion and full-time positions, males receive higher salaries than females having the same responsibilities, etc. In March 1974 two former LSU faculty women who had filed charges of sex discrimination received their Letters of Determination from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. A class action female sex discrimination in employment charge against LSU was recorded by HEW which indicated an on-site visit pending. In May the University was notified via copy of Dr. Helen Wheeler's Letter of Determination that there is "cause to believe that Respondent (LSU) has discriminated against faculty members on the basis of sex in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, amended." Dr. Wheeler, then an Associate Professor on the graduate faculty of Louisiana State University, in Nov. 1972 filed the first female sex discrimination charge against the University charging wage-differentials, disparate treatment of sexes and harrassment.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

This newsletter will be published every two months. I hope that many of you will want to contribute information to it. I particularly hope you will send me reports of regional women in libraries activities. As a minimal effort in organizing women librarians in your area, why not have a women's suite at a state or regional library conference.

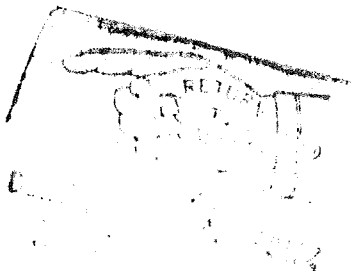
Subscription rates for this newsletter are: a \$2.00 donation for individuals and a \$4.00 donation for organizations and libraries.

I hope you all know that Liz Futas is the new chairperson of the Task Force on Women. Her new address is New Brunswick, N.J.

Deadline for information for the next newsletter is Oct. 20, 1974.

Here's wishing you and the Task Force a most productive year.

Kay Cassell
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