

# Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST  
TASK FORCE

Volume 11 Number 1

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Editor: Michele Leber

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE ACTION

Five of the 12 candidates for ALA Council endorsed by the Feminist Task Force were elected; they are Dorothy Broderick, Judy McDermott, Joan Marshall, Lois Mills, and Elizabeth Talbot. Criteria for endorsement of candidates for office will be developed and discussed at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver in January. Suggestions for such criteria include FTF membership, past or present; personal request for endorsement, and asking endorsed candidates to support Task Force concerns (such as ERA ratification) in writing.

Joan Ariel, Bonnie Jo Dopp, Linda Parker, and Betty-Carol Sellen were elected to the FTF steering committee. Diane Davenport and Carole Leita, both from Berkeley (CA) Public Library, will be co-coordinators and co-recorders. Other current steering committee members, with library affiliations and committee assignments, are:

Joan Ariel	UC Irvine	Nominating Committee
Bonnie Jo Dopp	Wash. D.C. PL	SRRT Liaison
Elizabeth Futas	Emory University	Past Coordinator
Linda Parker	U of Wis Madison	Coalitions Committee
Sarah Pritchard	Library of Congress	Sexual Harassment Committee
Sue Searing	Yale Univ Lib	ALA Schedule Arrangements
Betty-Carol Sellen	Brooklyn Coll Lib	ALA Program Arrangements
Michele Leber	Fairfax Cty (VA) PL	Women in Libraries Editor

As FTF members continued to monitor ALA exhibits for sexism, Showcard Machine Co. of Chicago was named for having the "most offensive exhibit of the year" for its giveaway sign "National Sex Week - If you gave at the LIBRARY, you don't have to give at HOME." FTF members spoke to Showcard booth representatives about the sign, which has been stocked at the Showcard booth at previous ALA conferences, and FTF Coordinator Elizabeth Futas planned to write the president of Showcard and to speak to ALA Conference Manager Chris Hoy and ALA President Peggy Sullivan about the matter. A report of the FTF award also was submitted to daily ALA conference newsletter Cognotes, noting that the sign was tasteless, humorless, and insensitive and that it made light of or encouraged sex-related problems in libraries, from exhibitionism in public places to sexual harrassment in the work force. The item was not used in Cognotes (see page 2).

Responses have been received from eight of the 54 organizations, dealing with women or with subjects of particular interest to women, which were contacted by the FTF coalitions committee. Some materials and newsletters have been exchanged as a result of this contact. A list of responding organizations and their purposes and resources will be included in the November 1981 issue of Women in Libraries. These organizations also will be asked to supply materials for distribution at the ALA annual conference in Philadelphia in July 1982.

UPCOMING ALA CONFERENCE PLANS

General discussion about the management of FTF conference meetings centered on improving organization (e.g., with printed agendas) and participation. On the preliminary schedule for the midwinter conference in Denver, FTF meetings will be Saturday, Jan. 23, 4:30-5:30 p.m.; Sunday, Jan. 24, 2-4 p.m.; and Tuesday, Jan. 26, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Plans for FTF activities at the ALA annual conference in Philadelphia in July include three business meetings and one program; FTF will not co-sponsor programs at this conference. The first scheduled business meeting will include short presentations by representatives of other ALA groups of interest to women (such as LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group and the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship), with a reception after the meeting. Meeting times and information will be included in future issues of Women in Libraries.

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\* YOU DIDN'T SEE IT THERE FIRST... \*

\* When the item about FTF's "most offensive exhibit of the year" \*

\* award to Showcard Machine Co. was not used in Cognotes the day \*

\* after it was submitted, I asked Alice Norton why. PR consultant \*

\* Norton was commissioned to be managing editor of the slicker, \*

\* new-look conference newsletter, previously put out by JMRT \*

\* (which still provided a coordinating editor and much of the \*

\* editorial help). Norton said she checked any possibly contro- \*

\* versial items with such ALA officials as Executive Director \*

\* Bob Wedgeworth or American Libraries editor Art Plotnik. When \*

\* I asked Plotnik about the item, he took the original copy from \*

\* a Cognotes file, remarking "I don't know what Cognotes is" - \*

\* but that he did know what AL was and could use the item there \*

\* (and did - AL July/August 1981, p. 430). So Plotnik was good \*

\* to his word, leaving the question of what has happened to what \*

\* was a relatively independent newsletter, leaving us wondering \*

\* just what this new Cognotes is... \*

\* - M.L. \*

\* \* \* \* \*

AN ALA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Anne B. Follis, founder of Homemakers' Equal Rights Association (HERA) and author of I'm Not a Women's Libber, But... called for more action and involvement from supporters of ERA, which she called "very fundamental, very basic, and very reasonable." Speaking at the ERA Task Force meeting, Follis noted "Without ERA, we don't know from court case to court case, legislature to legislature, or state to state what our rights are." (And opponents call ERA ambiguous!) Follis cited current inequities based on sex in state law, called the pro-family movement totalitarian and autocratic, and issued an invigorating charge to action at a meeting unfortunately inconveniently scheduled and sparsely attended.

ALA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Bay Area writers Dorothy Bryant and Susan Griffin spoke about their work at the FTF-sponsored program "Women Writing/Writing Women," speaking to an audience which included some of their colleagues, among them author Tillie Olsen.

Bryant, author of The Kin of Ata Are Waiting for You, described her venture into self-publishing with Ata Books, because she wanted to be in control of her own books and did not "want to play their (big publishers') game." And self-publishing, she noted, is no worse economically than being with a big publishing house. Her new novel Killing Wonder, coming this fall from Ata Books, is a murder mystery in which all the suspects are women writers.

Griffin called her latest book, Pornography and Silence, "psychoanalysis from a feminist point of view" and said it extends the ideas expressed in her earlier book Women and Nature. In pornography, she said, a woman is not a real woman but an image of nature; pornography itself she called objectifying, controlling, demeaning, and debasing. Griffin also delivered a message from author Alice Walker, who had been scheduled on the program but did not appear to speak.

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"With Reference to Women," co-sponsored by FTF, Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, and RASD Discussion Group on Women's Materials and Women Library Users, focused on access to materials about women. The consensus: we need a broader, preferably national effort, which requires funding, plus uniformity in such areas as subject headings.

A significant problem in access is the virtual lack of indexing of women's periodicals; Reader's Guide, for instance, indexes only two feminist periodicals (Ms. and Working Woman) and nine general women's periodicals, according to Cathy Rentschler from H. W. Wilson Co. But Rentschler noted progress in changing sexist subject headings in the Sears List and in Wilson indexes (each of which has a separate editor and subject headings list). Linda Parker called for a national data base; Katherine Dickson recommended DIALOG, Women's Studies Abstracts, and her own BPW Foundation Library's vertical file as information sources; and Deborah Brecher described her own developing National Women's Mailing List, a two-directional repository of information for groups and individuals. (Contact Women's Information Exchange, 1195 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110 for information and registration forms.)

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Unfilled needs of female library users were highlighted in the slide/tape show "Women as an Under-Served Population," narrated by Ellen Broidy, co-sponsored by Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship and RASD Discussion Group, and available from ALA Headquarters Library on interlibrary loan. Women's information and service needs may not be expressed - because of ignorance, embarrassment, resignation, economic level, or cultural background - and materials to serve these needs may not be made available or kept up-to-date by libraries.

During the discussion after the slide/tape show, moderator Jane Williamson and panelists Diane Bish, Barbara Haber, and Joanne Genet suggested getting on mailing lists of women's organizations, linking with community resources (especially local women's centers), providing programs for women (divorce and employment were the most popular topics at Women's Action Alliance), and having handouts available.

### ERA TASK FORCE UPDATE

The ALA ERA Task Force, chaired by Kay Cassell and Alice B. Ihrig, received an additional \$5000 from ALA at the annual conference for its last year of ratification efforts. Funds - from ALA, from button sales at conferences, from members when renewing membership - have been used for speakers, workshops, and other political action by state chapters in unratified states

Other action suggested to all state chapters includes: using the portable ERA exhibit for state library conferences; selling "ALA is for ERA" buttons at state library conferences and donating proceeds to the state ERA coalition; sending a library association representative to ERA coalition meetings in the state; developing a flyer such as the one done by the Illinois Library Association ERA Task Force and distributing it to libraries in the state; or getting ALA ERA Task Force funds for pro-ERA work. (To borrow the ERA exhibit or apply for funds, contact ERA Task Force, c/o Pat Scarry, ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.)

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### AMA AND ERA

The policy-making body of the American Medical Association refused to endorse the ERA, opting instead merely to "affirm the concept of equal rights for men and women" and to publish information about the amendment in its journal. The action was taken at the AMA annual meeting in Chicago in June, despite warnings by critics that the association's failure to come out for the amendment is hampering recruitment of new members among younger professionals. (From HER SAY 15 June 81)

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### WOMEN EDUCATORS' AWARDS

Entries for two annual WOMEN EDUCATORS competitions are due in December. Both awards will be presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in New York City, March 19-23, 1982.

Materials relating to women that have been developed for use in educational settings may be submitted for the Third Annual Curriculum Materials Award. One copy of the materials should be submitted, with a one-page description of how the materials relate to sexism, sex role stereotyping, and the image of women and girls, to Mary Harris and Nancy Smith, Curriculum Award, WOMEN EDUCATORS, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. Entries must be postmarked by December 15, 1981.

(Previous winners of this award are The Whole Person Book: Toward Self-Discovery and Life Options and Changing Learning, Changing Lives, co-winners of the first award, and Materials for Feminist History: The U.S. Then and Now.)

Published or unpublished research reports in journal article format on any aspect of women in education are eligible for the Fifth Annual Research on Women in Education Award, if research was conducted or written up during 1980-81. Send five copies of the entry (on four of which the author is not identified) and five copies of a 200-250 word abstract of the entry to Cheryl L. Wild, Coordinator Elect, WOMEN EDUCATORS, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ 08941. The deadline for entries is December 1, 1981.

WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY AWARDS

Seven community teams have been selected to participate in Radcliffe College's Women in the Community project, funded by a \$250,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The communities whose teams were selected are Ellensburg, WA; Colorado Springs, CO; Milwaukee, WI; Champaign, IL; Rocky Hill, NJ; Atlanta, GA; and Memphis, TN.

Four-member teams, which include a women's studies scholar, a member of a community organization, an academic librarian, and a public librarian, are preparing programs about women to be offered in their local public libraries. The programs will focus on the project theme "Women in the Community: Where Were They? Where Are They? Where Are They Going?" Community teams will use local library and human resources for planning and will offer programs between February and July 1982 that are responsive to the needs of their local communities.

Barbara Haber, curator of printed books at the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America at Radcliffe College, is project director.

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

"Women at Work: A Conference for Midwest Library Workers," sponsored by Wisconsin Women Library Workers and national Women Library Workers, will be held October 3-4 at the Atwood Community Center, 2425 Atwood Ave., Madison, WI. Women from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin are encouraged to take part in the conference, which will include discussions of pay equity, sexual harassment, and organizing for change in the workplace. (Conference registration was due Aug. 31, with \$18 fee; interested unregistered persons might contact Wisconsin Women Library Workers, P.O. Box 1425, Madison, WI 53701.)

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"Women's Studies: Its Impact on Society, Technology, & the Arts" will be held October 29-31 at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, at the Student Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd. The conference is free and open to the public, and child care will be available; it will include lectures, colloquia, films, discussions, and art and library exhibits, with speakers from a variety of academic and other settings. For registration forms, contact Office of Women's Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Mitchell Hall 115, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee WI 53201, phone (414)963-5918. Registration for three optional buffet meals must be made by October 15. This conference is partially funded by a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Committee.

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The 3rd Biennial Conference on Women in Business, sponsored by Women Business Owners of New York (WBONY), will be held at the Sheraton Centre, New York City, October 26-30. Major corporations will be underwriting much of the conference, as well as providing faculty for seminars; topics will include improving management skills, effective business and financial management, the art of negotiating, and how to budget, write a resume, and get credit. For further information, contact Pamela Wilson or Debbie Walter at (212)736-5050 or WBONY at 150 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019, (212)245-8230.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Jensen, Joan M. With These Hands: Women Working on the Land. Feminist Press and McGraw-Hill. 1981.

Jensen has compiled an anthology of rural women's experience as seen through their own writings. It includes diaries, letters, journals, prose, and poetry. There are six chapters - native American women, 19th century women on farms, women of the south, women's experience on the frontier, women and rural reform, and women since the 1930s struggling to remain on the land. The author has written an introduction to each chapter. It is an unusually interesting and powerful book which includes as a bonus a photo essay on women in the depression.

Kessler-Harris, Alice. Women Have Always Worked: A Historical Overview. Feminist Press and McGraw Hill. 1981.

This work explores the history of the working lives of women in the United States from colonial times to the present. Kessler-Harris has written about women's work both inside and outside of the home. Each chapter includes photographs. Another in the Women's Lives/Women's Work Series, it provides a good overview of the subject.

Stineman, Esther. American Political Women: Contemporary and Historical Profiles. Libraries Unlimited. 1980.

Stineman has provided us with portraits of 60 women who have been involved in some aspect of politics. They include congresswomen, ambassadors, governors, mayors, etc. A bibliography of writings about each woman is given as well as a list of selected speeches and writings by the woman. It is an impressive group of women, including Bella Abzug, Barbara Jordan, Ella Grasso, Helen Gahagan Douglas, and many others. The appendices are most interesting too. Stineman has compiled an annotated bibliography on women in politics and political issues relating to women and has included lists of women in Congress, 1917-1980, and women in other key positions in government.

-Kay Cassell

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## FREEBIES

A single copy of Sexual Harassment of Students in Higher Education, a report prepared by the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs, is available from the council at 425 13th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004.

"Families at Work: Strengths and Strains" details the results of a survey by Lou Harris and Associates. Among the findings:

- \* working women prefer part-time to full-time work by 41 to 17 per cent
- \* 51 per cent of professional, managerial, and executive women said they prefer to work part-time; 19 per cent wanted to remain full-time
- \* if money were no object, 45 per cent of working men preferred full-time work and 28 per cent wanted part-time work

\*70 per cent of 104 human resource managers from the Fortune 1300 companies expect their organizations to have job sharing policies within five years

The report, the fourth in a series of General Mills American Family Reports, is available free from General Mills, Inc., Box 6, Dept. 760, Minneapolis, MN 55460.

A capsule account of women's credit rights under the Equal Credit Opportunity Card is on a punch-out wallet card, part of a brochure from American Express. The "Women's Credit Rights Card" brochure, with valuable consumer information for women, is free for distribution in multiple copies of 25. To order write Women's Credit Rights Card, Consumer Affairs Office, American Express Company, American Express Plaza. New York. NY 10004.

SOURCES & RESOURCES

The ALA OLPR survey of The Racial, Ethnic, and Sexual Composition of Library Staff in Academic and Public Libraries is available for \$5 from OLPR/ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. For the survey OLPR questioned a sample of 1233 public and academic libraries and had a return rate of 86 percent. Data reported are for positions as of January 1, 1980. A report of the survey was published in American Libraries, June 1981.

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New publications from Women's Action Alliance include a directory of women's centers in New England and the report of a media monitoring project.

Women's Centers in New England: An Annotated Directory has current information about the services, programs, publications, resources, and special facilities of women's centers throughout that region. The directory (\$5.50) focuses on community-based centers but also includes campus-based centers which serve community women.

The results of a monitoring project conducted by women consumers across the country to survey the number and portrayal of women in radio and television commercials are reported in The Radio and Television Commercial Monitoring Project: Summary Report (\$2.50). More than 40,000 commercials were monitored by 465 women from 75 local organizations in 41 states; organizations involved include the Womens Committees of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild, American Association of University Women, Catalyst Resource Centers, and the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation. Some findings:

- \*men outnumber women two to one in television commercials, five to one in radio commercials
- \*a non-white actor of either sex appears, on the average, in one out of every 11 television commercials and one out of every 47 radio commercials
- \*when women do appear, they are characterized as "confident" only 27 per cent of the time

These publications are available from Women's Action Alliance, Inc., 370 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

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"Defining Ourselves: Myths and Realities for Women in Libraries" is a programming package designed for use at workshops, in-service library training programs, and vocational counseling sessions. The package, which is intended to promote discussion of basic sex role stereotypes, includes 16 transparencies with accompanying script to "trap the unwary viewer in her/his own prejudices and define relevant terms as a basis for discussion"; supplementary data about myths and realities of women in the workforce, and a list of discussion questions. The package is \$25 from Wisconsin Women Library Workers, P.O. Box 1425, Madison, WI 53701.

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A 29-minute film "Beauty in the Bricks " comes highly recommended by Mary K. Chelton, Voice of Youth Advocates. The film, about a 15-year-old black girl and her friends growing up in a West Dallas housing project, is available for rent (\$45 for three days) or purchase in 16 mm film (\$425 purchase price) or 3/4 or 1/2-inch video-cassette (\$300 purchase price) from Media Projects, Inc., 5215 Homer St., Dallas, TX 75206, (214)826-3863. Send requests at least three weeks in advance.

## MORE MEDIA

"Daughters of Time," a new half-hour documentary about current trends in nurse-midwifery, airs nationally on PBS September 30. The film, from Durrin Films, Inc., is a winner of a CINE Golden Eagle, a finalist in the American Film Festival, and premiered at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. "Daughters of Time," which shows contemporary nurse-midwives at work in a hospital birthing room, at home, and in an alternative birth center, is distributed by New Day Films, P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417, (201)891-8240. Sales of the film are \$450, rentals \$50.

Three 50-minute videotapes - "Feminist Visions of the Future," "Male-Female Relations," and "Parenting" - were produced in 1980 at California State University at Chico and are available for \$250. A workbook with discussion questions, the script, and a brief biography of the experts interviewed in the tape is included with each. The tapes are suggested for use in women's studies, sociology, psychology, home economics, and other courses. Three tapes produced in 1979 in the same Women's Issues Videotapes series and still available are "Women and Careers," "Women and Health," and "Women and Family." Contact Dr. Gayle Kimball, Coordinator, Women's Studies Program, CSU, Chico, Chico, CA 95929.

## HOTLINE

Dial 800-221-4945 for taped information and an action message from WOMEN USA, on such issues as ERA, inflation, child care, social security, and reproductive rights. WOMEN USA, founded by Bella Abzug, Patsy Mink, Yvonne Burke, Gloria Steinem, Maggie Kuhn, and Brownie Ledbetter, also will be lobbying Congress on women's issues. For more information contact WOMEN USA at Box 8214, Washington, D.C. 20024 or 76 Beaver St., New York, NY 10005.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - November 1, 1981

WOMEN IN LIBRARIES is published 5 times a year from September to June. Subscriptions are \$4 for individuals, \$6 for institutions (prepaid), and \$8 for institutions (invoiced). Make checks payable to WOMEN IN LIBRARIES and send to Michele Leber, 4927 Gadsen Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032.

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