

Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST
TASK FORCE

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Editors: Kay Jones
Leslie Kahn

ALA IN DALLAS

As usual, the ALA annual conference was harried, hurried, and exciting. There were more meetings of interest to women than could be covered by any one person, but reports of as many meetings as possible are included here.

WOMEN'S COALITIONS

The initial meeting of the Feminist Task Force was an introduction to women's groups in ALA. Contact people from the various groups gave brief presentations: Sally Hunt, LAMA Women Administrators' Discussion Group; Joan Ariel, ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group; Sarah Pritchard, Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship; Gurley Turner, RASD Discussion Groups on Women's Materials and Women Library Users; and Ellen Brody, Feminist Task Force. Carol Starr talked about Women Library Workers and the WLW Journal, and Kay Jones made a pitch for Women In Libraries. The purpose and programs of each group were outlined. Colorful handouts were distributed, and interest was expressed in providing programs like this one on a regular basis. This type of exchange is very important in bringing new women into the various groups, hopefully meeting the needs of both the individuals and the groups.

THE GENDER GAP

Saturday evening's program, The Gender Gap: a Colloquium on Women & Power, conflicted with the reception at the Dallas Public Library; but for those of us who went to the program anyway, it certainly was worth it. The two speakers, Elizabeth Minnick and Eddie Bernice Johnson, dynamically contrasted the philosophical with the practical. Minnick, an academic philosopher and consultant, pointed out some of the theoretical underpinnings of power: power is not violence, when violence must be used it is a clear indication that power has been lost; a balance of power spreads power, doesn't dissipate it; pursuit of happiness includes responsible participation in public life; equality doesn't mean sameness... we have a right to be different. Johnson, a former member of the Texas House of Representatives, shared some of her ideas: to acquire power, women must identify an issue, know what they want, and organize in order to get it; power is the ability to influence a decision; women want power to straighten things out, not for their own personal glory; practically, we must do our homework and participate and stand up for our own ideas...don't let the men intimidate us. Johnson calls women the "napping giant," not really asleep, but not wielding the influence we should be. In the question and answer session, Minnick reminded us that it's not corrupt to be realistic, and both speakers stressed the importance of women getting together and organizing to make the best use of our shared power.

FTF BUSINESS MEETINGS

Ellen Broidy chaired the business meetings. Katharine Phenix asked the group for nominations for the Equality Award. The award is to be given to an individual or group for an outstanding contribution towards promoting equality between women and men in the library profession. The contribution may be either a sustained one or a single outstanding accomplishment. The \$500 cash award is donated by Scarecrow Press. The first recipient of the Equality Award was Margaret Meyers, COSWL's staff liaison at ALA headquarters.

Noel Peattie brought up the intellectual freedom issue of the antipornography city ordinance in Minneapolis which defines pornography as violating the civil rights of women. The ACLU opposes the ordinance which was passed by the city council but vetoed by the mayor, and some feminists in Minnesota are in favor of it. Beverly Simmons and Mary Beth Minnick volunteered to gather information on the issue and report at midwinter. Karen Thornburn reported that SRRT Action Council is going to increase dues for SRRT from \$5 to \$10. FTF budget was decreased from \$800 to \$450 for the coming year. Maureen Endres reported for the Program Committee: next year's committee needs to start early, a local contact person would be invaluable; more publicity is needed. Attendance at The Gender Gap was only around 75; the conflict with the reception was pretty serious. Let's go to an afternoon program to avoid the conflict in the future.

In spite of the fact that the Sexual Harassment subcommittee (Mary Beth Minick, Sarah Watstein, and Stephanie Kreps) was unsuccessful in its attempt to acquire a Goals Award, they want to continue the project. FTF feels that the project deserves visibility and the best credibility we can manage. The proposal for funding is being strengthened and will be resubmitted. The Sexism Awareness subcommittee pointed out three "baddies": Silver Burdette's sexist robot, a restaurant guide with a man armed with knife and fork chasing a female tomato, and Neiman-Marcus' awful bathing suit display. Suzan Connell and Sarah Watstein drafted a letter protesting the window dressing at N-M as anti-woman and insensitive to women's rights, and urged its removal. A copy will be sent to the Dallas newspaper and Sandy Sweeney will monitor it.

Nominations for FTF Steering Committee were Pat Lucas from Illinois, Donna Nerbosa from New York, Christine Jenkins from Michigan, and Susan Beck from New Jersey. Since we have four openings, Diane Kadanoff moved we accept the slate by acclamation and it was so voted. On the subject of endorsements for ALA offices: FTF has always considered endorsing candidates for President, Vice President, Treasurer, and for Council. Broidy reported that the Sociologists for Women in Society voted to discontinue endorsement and go to gathering information by questionnaire and disseminating the results in tabular form. Support was expressed for gathering information and passing it along to other women's groups in ALA. Discussion favored also endorsing candidates or announcing "no decision" decisions. We need to get a time line worked out so that WIL doesn't announce what endorsement decisions have been made before all endorsement decisions are made (sorry about that; will a plea of ignorance get me off the hook?). Targeting candidates who support women and women's issues is very effective; we need to use this power well.

Miriam Crawford announced that the SRRT/Library Unions Task Force is planning a program at Annual next year on sexual harassment. Helen Lewis, University of Connecticut, Storrs, is working on it and asked for our cooperation. We will cosponsor the program and our Sexual Harassment Subcommittee will work with her. K. Phenix and Norman Horrocks will work on a statement on sexual harassment to add to the ALA Policy Manual.

The FTF Steering Committee met briefly after the second business meeting and announces the following assignments:

Coordinator:	Gail Warner
Recorder:	Sarah Watstein, Christine Jenkins
Action Council:	Karen Jackson Thornburn (continuing)
Coalitions:	Jody Bush, Donna Nerbosa
Elections:	Susan Beck
Programs:	Julia Koehler, Pat Lucas
Sexism Awareness:	Ellen Broidy, Lorene Ludy
Sexual Harassment:	Stephanie Kreps
Women in Libraries:	Kay Jones, Leslie Kahn (continuing)

Please remember that, as an open group dedicated to equality and cooperation, FTF encourages any person interested in any of these subcommittees to volunteer her/his assistance.

ACRL WOMEN'S STUDIES DISCUSSION GROUP

Joan Ariel chaired the meetings and announced that the mailing list is almost up to 100 people. At ALA in Chicago, ACRL WSDG and ACRL Western European Specialists will hold a joint program on Women's Studies in Europe. A forthcoming issue of Special Collections will be on women's studies. Representatives from two publishers, Julia Johnson from Garland and Diantha Thorpe from Shoestring, were present and expressed interest in working with people with ideas for reference works in women's studies. Sarah Pritchard reported on a conference on archives, "Preserving Women's History: Archivists and Historians Working Together," which included sessions on archives of corporations and individuals, papers on media, women of color, lesbian archives, and online databases. The conference showed the lack of knowledge of the detailed holdings of collections and the need for a clearinghouse or a central location where guides and information about collections could be available. Elizabeth Snapp, Texas Women's University, will chair a committee to explore ways to increase our knowledge of what is available where.

Ariel distributed the draft of the Collection Development Checklist for Women's Studies. In final form, it will be a guide to standard reviewing media, feminist journals and review media, feminist and small/left publishers, o.p. dealers, association journals with reviews, audio-visual and microform selection sources, publishers who have women's studies catalogs, working papers, and a miscellaneous section. Information Access Corporation has developed two databases, Magazine ASAP and Trade and Industry ASAP, which have full text online. The only women's journal included is Working Woman. Ariel will write a letter to the company suggesting the inclusion of other titles such as MS and Essence.

The group discussed the need for a survey of the status of women's studies in ARL libraries to determine if there is a separate budget or selector for women's studies. Since there are pertinent collections in non-ARL libraries, an effort will be made to broaden the survey group by publicity in newsletters or by using a different mailing list. There is an ARL Conspectus project, surveying library resources, but it is done by call number which would omit multi-disciplinary areas such as women's studies. This discussion will continue at midwinter. From now on, elections will be at midwinter with offices to begin after the summer conference. Ariel will continue as Chair through the Chicago conference; Sarah Watstein was elected Vice-Chair. There was a short discussion of the pros and cons of becoming an ACRL Section. It would bring increased visibility, funding, and formality. This discussion will also continue at midwinter.

Linda Lewis, Reporter
University of New Mexico

WOMEN ONLINE

The ACRL Women's Studies Discussion Group and the RASD Discussion Group on Women's Materials and Women Library Users sponsored a program and discussion called "Women Online." Joyce Duncan Falk presented her ideas on "Searching Online for Women's History and Popular Culture." Falk concluded that online searching is especially useful for an interdisciplinary topic such as women's studies and that the indexing has greatly improved in the last few years. She reminds us that women's topics make useful examples for handouts. Cheryl Sloan spoke on "The Development of a Women's Studies Database," subtitled, "A dream of a common language for a women's issues database." Sloan described the project, the purpose of which was the development of a thesaurus, a hierarchical controlled vocabulary with search capabilities. Beginning with 9000 terms, the staff purged, merged, edited, and analyzed. After final evaluation, the resulting publication should be available in the spring of 1985. Gurley Turner introduced Catalyst, the national nonprofit organization founded in 1962 to promote the full participation of women in business and the professions. The library, begun in 1975, now handles over 28,000 requests for information per year. In 1980, Mellon provided the funds and Educational Services Group at BRS provided the expertise and the Catalyst Resources for Women, the first specialized bibliographic database on women and work, was initiated. The 6,000 items online are accessed primarily by universities and concentrate on women's issues such as flextime, job sharing, career opportunities, and minority women. In the discussion period, it was announced that Sarah Pritchard has devised evaluation criteria to be used with databases. Her article will appear in the Fall, 1984 issue of Reference Librarian.

COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN LIBRARIANSHIP

Neel Parikh chaired the meetings. Ellen Broidy reported on analysis of Council nominations. Follow up is important; who is elected from those we have supported? A content analysis of statements will be run to see how statements correspond with election; Broidy and Louise Berry will work on the analysis. Mary Lou Goodyear reported for the Legislative Subcommittee: 8 topical Legislative Fact Sheets are available for dissemination; contact Margaret Meyers at ALA hq for copies.

COSWL received a Carnegie award to publish the bibliography series. The lists should be brief, 10 to 20 items on library resources for women in specific subject areas. Parikh is organizing the project and volunteers are still needed for health resources and Native American women and Asian women. Mary Lou Goodyear is applying for a Goals Award to research role models of minority women librarians. The funds would be to cover telephone charges for oral interviews by library school students with potential models. Also, a curriculum package is to be developed.

Katharine Phenix is working on a geographical breakdown for help with the indexing for the bibliography clearinghouse. Phenix also announced that a new editor is needed for the directory of women's groups in library and information professions. Work should start in September. If you are interested in helping Phenix with either of these projects, please volunteer directly to her at 906 Ogden Street, Denver, CO 80218. Diane Kadanoff and Marnie Warner are working on the Speakers' Bureau which will provide information on how to locate speakers, profiles of the potential speakers, and procedures for inclusion. Julia Koehler is working on collecting information on the hazards of VDTs. Please forward citations or copies of articles to her at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City. E.J. Josey has created an ALA Commission on Pay Equity, co-chaired by Helen Josephine and Cynthia Johanson. Appreciation was expressed to Josey for carrying through on this campaign promise.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Again I felt proud to be a librarian, as the Librarians' Caucus programs, although not well attended because of the ALA-NWSA conference conflicts, were splendid. Having read over the past few years a spate of articles supporting the view that we should spend more on best sellers, I thought Jackie Eubanks, of the Brooklyn College Library, brave for advocating that we select foremost for quality. A person in the audience took her point a few steps further and declared, "Every time you hand a child a sexist book, you cut your salary in this female profession." Eubanks' special expertise is in small presses. She notes that numerous scholarly tomes costing in excess of forty dollars repeat information available sooner in four dollar small press titles. Cost conscious librarians would do well to send for alternative publishers' catalogs. Condemning the standard review sources as well as magazines such as MS, Eubanks suggested that someone compile a Women's Books in Print, just as she produced Alternatives in Print some years ago. The Librarians' Caucus of NWSA had several tables displaying small press materials at the convention. Ms. Eubanks informed us that fewer than 50% of the exhibited titles are on OCLC, which is even worse than BIP's 60%. Reference librarians must urge catalogers to put records into OCLC. And collection development librarians need to select these less expensive, often high quality, small press publications.

Susan Searing, Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large for the University of Wisconsin System, treated us to a preview of an article to appear in the forthcoming issue of Special Collections. As she described the advantages and liabilities of the separate as opposed to integrated women's studies collections (that is, women's studies books integrated into the larger collection, I started looking forward to reading her full article; she is so thoughtful.

Jacquelyn Marie spoke to the question, "Where are the Women of Color in Libraries?" She and Elaine Bell Kaplan's article, "Women of Color in the United States," is included in G.K. Hall's Women's Annual 1984. In the meantime, we can use the bibliography that she presented to me, which, on its verso, supplies some statistics.

Next year in Seattle, the Librarians' Caucus of NWSA will present two workshops, one on censorship, the other on librarianship as a feminized profession. For more information, contact Connie Miller, University of Illinois at Chicago, Box 8198, Chicago, IL 60680.

Leslie Kahn, Reporter
Newark Public Library

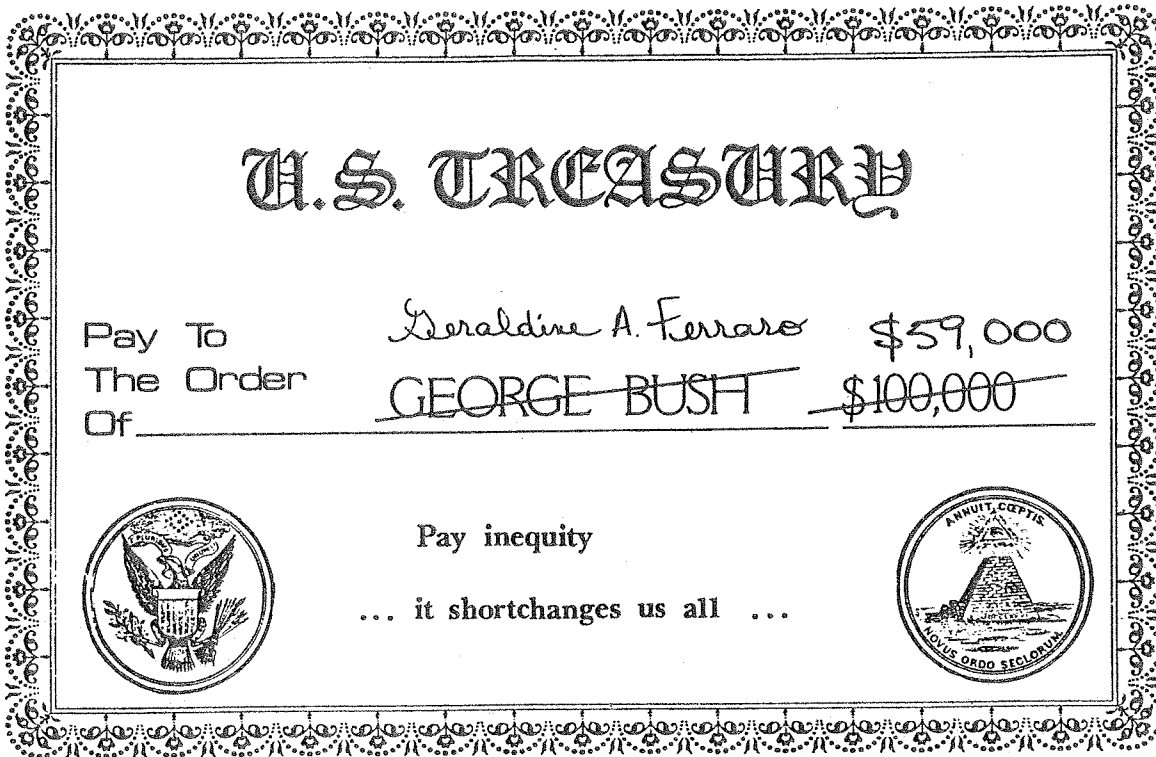
NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION

For those of you who don't know about NWSA, it was founded in 1977 to further the social, political, and professional development of women's studies throughout the country. Its membership consists of individuals, academic and community-based programs, projects, and groups interested in feminist education. NWSA's aims include the elimination of oppression and discrimination based on sex, race, age, class, religion, and sexual orientation. Write NWSA, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742, for further information.

SPEAKING OF WOMEN'S STUDIES...

There is a very good article on the subject, "Women's Studies: Changing the Landscape of the Traditional Academic Disciplines," in the August 1, 1984, Chronicle of Higher Education, pages 5-6. If you haven't read it, you should!

POSTCARD AVAILABLE



This is the face of a wonderful postcard for sale by Sol, P.O. Box 2111, Capital Plaza, Md. 20784. The verso says, "It is appalling that in 1984 women still are paid on the average only 59 cents for every dollar paid to men. EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK should be more than just a slogan!" If you want some, order Peace Card Vol. 4, no. 7; the cost is 45¢ for 1 to 9 copies, 40¢ for 10 to 24.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON PAY EQUITY

If you are interested in working for pay equity, you may want to consider joining the NCPE. It's the only National coalition of organizations and individuals who have joined together for the sole purpose of achieving economic equality for women and minorities through pay equity. The committee engages in education, research and advocacy, and it serves as an energy bank and information clearing-house for pay equity, as well as a central source of publicity. To join or to get further information, write NCPE, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Room 422, Washington, D.C. 20036.

TV SHOW ON PAY EQUITY

The Labor Institute of Public Affairs of the AFL-CIO has produced a television documentary on pay equity for women. It profiles a library clerical worker at the University of Maryland who is also president of a local union. The 23-minute program includes information on the current position and history of women in the U.S. workforce and depicts the lobbying efforts of the library worker for a comparable worth study of the state employee compensation system. The "Pay Equity" videotape can be ordered from the Department of Education, AFL-CIO, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, Attention: Dorothy Shields, for a rental fee of \$5 or a purchase price of \$40. 3/4" and 1/2" VHS or Beta formats are available.

AND ON THE POLITICAL FRONT...

With the emergence of the gender gap in the 1980 election, several national women's rights organizations joined together to increase the voting power of women, especially those who have been under-served by the political process. In 1982, the Women's Vote Project was created by 50 groups to raise the number of women registered and voting. Registration drives are targeting low-income women, single parents, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian women. The coalition slogan, "It's a Man's World unless Women Vote," is part of a massive campaign to increase substantially the number of women at the polls. For further information, write Women's Vote Project, 1410 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

One vote does count. Many women believe that their votes won't have any effect on the political process. However, the outcomes of most elections, on the national as well as the local level, can be decided by a very small number of votes. Some examples: if one person changed her/his vote in every precinct, Richard Nixon would not have been elected President in 1968; if women had voted in the same numbers as men during the past two decades, three out of the past six presidential elections would have turned out differently; Congressional elections are frequently won by only 2,000 votes, which means that if the votes of one out of every 250 eligible voters in a district are switched, a different congressperson might be elected; and local elections are often decided by 50 votes, yet these are the elections which may have the greatest impact on an individual woman's life because they determine property taxes, police and fire protection, parks and land use, the quality of education, and other important issues. This information was compiled by the National Commission on Working Women.

Joanne Woodward is the Chair of the National Women's Conference to Prevent Nuclear War and that organization is stressing the fact that your vote can help to prevent nuclear war. Woodward says, "It is essential in this dangerous nuclear age that everyone participate in this democracy by voting. I urge all citizens to learn the facts, know the positions of the candidates for electoral office, and vote with your informed judgment."

The newsletter of Choices, the Creative Health Organization, On the Issues, editorializes that if we don't all register to vote, we may face a Reagan Supreme Court for the next 25 years. It points out that by Inauguration Day, January, 1985, five of the nine Supreme Court Justices will be over 75 years of age. Continues the editorial, "Reagan's far-right ideology has been very evident, and his appointees to-date have been completely insensitive to the needs of women, children, minorities, and elderly," and concludes, "Please register and VOTE."

The National Organization for Women has set up a Women's Political Development Campaign to get women registered, train female candidates, and launch a vast publicity campaign in support of women candidates and women supporters such as Walter Mondale. If you are interested in financially supporting this Campaign, the address is NOW, P.O. Box 7813, Washington, D.C. 20044.

Although some of these voices are very partisan, the words are basically the same: get registered and vote. See that your friends, co-workers, and every feminist you know registers and votes. Be sure that information on the stand of all the candidates on important issues is clear, issues such as pay equity, employment and training for women and minorities, child care, affirmative action, the Equal Rights Amendment, and peace. This is the year that women can make a very real difference; let's do it!

ROOSEVELT CENTENNIAL

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Eleanor Roosevelt, her country home, Val-Kill, will be officially opened to the public on October 11, 1984. The only American woman to be honored by a national historic site of her very own, Roosevelt's life will be thoroughly studied this year through conferences and discussions. If your library is planning a display on Roosevelt, the National Women's History Project, P.O. Box 3716, Santa Rosa, CA 95402, has collected information in which you may be interested.

Dr. Maurine Beasley, University of Maryland, in The White House Press Conferences of Eleanor Roosevelt (Garland, 1983), points out that Roosevelt held 348 press conferences during FDR's presidency and allowed only women reporters to attend. As a result, the United Press was forced to hire its first woman reporter. This book and other recent titles on this important leader might make an interesting commemorative display for the centennial.

A NEW JOURNAL OR TWO

Feminist Teacher, a quarterly magazine that will deal with ways to combat sexism and other types of oppression in the classroom, is now accepting subscriptions for its first issue in Fall of 1984. This interdisciplinary forum aims at developing a nationwide network of feminist teachers of grades preschool through graduate school. \$12 for individuals and \$20 for institutions, order from the Feminist Teacher Editorial Collective, Ballantine 442, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

The Brown Papers, a quarterly which will explore issues important to women of color and record their contributions to American life. Published by the National Institute for Women of Color, the cost is \$15 per year. Order from NIWC, 1712 N Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036. Act now to get the inaugural issue!

Send articles or comments to Kay Jones, UNM Library, Albuquerque, NM 87131. WOMEN IN LIBRARIES, Newsletter of the American Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table Feminist Task Force, is published 5 times a year from September to June. Subscriptions are \$4 for individuals, \$6 for institutions prepaid, and \$8 for institutions invoiced. Send checks, payable to WOMEN IN LIBRARIES, to:

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