

Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST
TASK FORCE

Volume 11 Number 4

March 1982

Editor: Michele Leber

NOTES FROM DENVER

The ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver in January was a working meeting for the Feminist Task Force, particularly for its Elections Committee (formerly Nominating Committee), which made plans to nominate candidates for ALA offices, presented guidelines for endorsing candidates, and formulated questions for the three nominees for ALA Vice President/President Elect to answer by mail (see p.2).

On issues of major concern during the conference, FTF took the following action:

- * endorsed the SRRT resolution opposing the Office of Personnel Management new draft qualifications for the Federal Librarian Series.
- * endorsed the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship position on the ERA boycott, that ALA joined and supported a national boycott and should continue to do so until advised otherwise by COSWL.
- * opposed the final draft of the Intellectual Freedom Committee's revision of "Sexism, Racism, and Other -isms in Library Materials" for its lack of clarity in the isms listed, equivocation in use of the term "allegedly," emphasis on balanced collections as a solution to the isms problem, and poor writing generally in the document; FTF will reply to IFC about the Isms statement.
- * supported the ERA Task Force proposal for a Carnegie Reading List Fund Grant to prepare and distribute an annotated bibliography and accompanying essay about the ERA, as "a first step to a national dialogue and study of this overall issue."

Other announcements/actions: Women in Libraries will broaden its scope to include news from the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship and other women's groups in ALA; FTF will contact other ALA groups inviting them to submit material to WIL. The FTF Sexual Harassment Committee is contacting other national groups interested in this issue and is requesting personal testimony on the problem; see announcement elsewhere in WIL:

Candidates for ALA Council endorsed by FTF are: Mary Biblio, Carolyn Foresman, Elizabeth Futas, Joan Goddard, Diane Kadanoff, Nancy Kellum-Rose, Eric Moon, Elizabeth Morrissett, and Susan Vaughn. FTF members running for other offices are Kay Cassell, RASD President nominee, and Liz Dickinson, candidate for PLA Council. (Keep in mind the effectiveness of "bullet voting": when multiple votes are possible, as for ALA Council, the weight of each vote is greater when fewer votes are cast. It is not necessary to vote for the maximum number of candidates.)

PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS REPLY

Since candidates for ALA Vice President/President Elect did not speak at FTF midwinter meetings, their answers were requested to four questions formulated by the FTF Elections Committee. Following are the questions and responses from Norman Horrocks, Director, School of Library Service, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; Alice B. Ihrig, Director, Civic and Cultural Programs, Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, IL; and Brooke E. Sheldon, Dean, School of Library Science, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.

1. In 1977, ALA passed a resolution in support of the national boycott of states which have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. If the boycott extends beyond June 30, 1982, will you continue to support ALA meeting in ratified states only?

HORROCKS: I feel that ALA should continue its policy of meeting only in States which ratified the ERA. This would be consistent with our earlier policies of not meeting in those States whose Associations discriminated against Black librarians. As ALA President, however, I would be guided by the actions and advice of NOW, the ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, and the SRRT Feminist Task Force concerning the desirability of continuing the boycott or adopting alternative tactics.

IHRIG: In talking with many ERA supporters in ALA, I sense a willingness to go back to Chicago for Midwinter because the cost drains ALA. I would favor withdrawing the boycott only for this purpose and only if ALA commits itself to working with chapters in a campaign to put ERA into state constitutions. I lobbied for the ERA clause in the Illinois Constitution and have been co-chair of the ALA ERA Task Force. Our coalition-building should be continued.

SHELDON: In 1977 I voted to support the national boycott of states which have not ratified; my position on the council and on the executive board has consistently affirmed ALA's moral and fiscal support for groups working actively to pass the ERA. I believe that ALA as one of the most influential associations in the world should continue to meet only in ratified states as long as the possibility exists that the boycott may make a difference.

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2. In your analysis of the ALA committee structure and membership, can you pinpoint committees in which women merit a stronger voice/role? How would you address this inequity and implement change?

HORROCKS: The most powerful ALA Committee is the Executive Board, which at the present time has as its voting members ten women and two men, but may not be as strongly "feminist" as some in recent years; not all feminists are women nor all women feminists. My position has not changed in this matter. I think that Committees should reflect as closely as possible the membership of the Association. I would make my appointments and nominations achieve this make-up, i.e., to represent the over 70 percent female membership in ALA. This is particularly important in the case of those committees that make appointments and nominations, such as the Committee on Committees and the Nominating Committee. The other major committees should also be constituted in this manner, e.g., those for Legislation, Intellectual Freedom, Accreditation, Organization, and Planning. This is a major area in which the President can be influential and effect change.

IHRIG: Representation of women has improved. I would seek to make appointments which would follow the ratio of members as a minimum. A president has few appointments to make -but can influence future makeup. I would like to give some "unknowns" a chance to serve.

SHELDON: While it would not be useful to arbitrarily impose quotas or ratios of women to men on ALA committees comparable to the 80% - 20% ratio in the work force, it is obvious when one examines the current composition, there are inequities. Areas of concern include: ALA Endowment Trustees are all male; the Committee on Accreditation is dominated by males as is the International Relations Committee, the Publishing Committee (although chaired by a woman), Research Committee, and the Advisory Committee for American Libraries. It should also be noted that women do outnumber men on several other committees, and that two key committees (Intellectual Freedom and Legislation) have about equal representation of both sexes. I believe that it is the obligation of the incoming ALA president, in making appointments, to be sensitive not only to the ratio of men to women, but also to the nature of the committee or task force. That is, certain committees, by virtue of their charge, are more powerful than others; some are much more visible; others are far more influential in directing the course of American Librarianship. As president elect, I would consult widely with groups and individuals before making appointments, and consider the factors cited above in appointing women and minorities to key roles.

Beyond the overall committee structure, it has been my experience that there are many opportunities in the ALA decision making process where the view of women and of other interest groups should be consulted before position papers are written, appointments made, and/or action taken.

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3. What role should ALA take in addressing the issue of pay parity/comparable worth?

HORROCKS: Much of the legal advice ALA has received in the past few years has limited the avenues open to the Association in this area. We should be seeking creative ways to overcome the existing barriers so that ALA can lobby at all levels to achieve parity. ALTA should be urged to use its influence on this issue. ALA should seek to cooperate with other bodies to seek support for parity as a priority issue.

IHRIG: Something stronger than presently being done, though we have representation on the national group. This could replace ERA as the most important issue of the time and MUST BE PURSUED in view of the position of the administration of the U.S.

SHELDON: I think we can be proud of the leadership role the Office of Library and Personnel Resources has taken in working with COSWL, LAMA/PAS, SRRT, and many other groups in researching the issues, and in providing support to library workers who seek to challenge the practice of pay discrimination. The new "Topics in Personnel" kit on Pay Equity is intended to be an action guide to help working librarians discern if this type of sex discrimination exists, and to tell them how to proceed to protect their rights. I believe that OLPR should continue and intensify its efforts in this regard, and that concerned groups in ALA should be provided the means and opportunity to meet and devise strategies to insure that each librarian, particularly those entering the profession, is aware of pay equity issues, and of the back up support that is available through ALA.

Librarianship is a wonderfully satisfying occupation. Most of us have not chosen it lightly. The solution that men and women should move to another (male dominated) profession in order to be adequately compensated is repugnant to all of us. I believe that now is the time to give highest priority to those activities which will strengthen the professional role and status of the individual members of the association. The president of ALA can and must work with the board and council to see that the necessary resources are channeled to accomplish these objectives.

4. What critical issues/problems do women face in librarianship: the workplace, the profession, and professional organizations?

HORROCKS: The barriers faced are the traditional ones which have confronted women in seeking top management positions. Clearly the critical issues are those of pay parity (see point three, above), insufficient representation at top levels, and the inflexibility of work schedules. Within the profession itself most of the problems stem from the above items. In professional organizations it is becoming increasingly difficult for those below the managerial level to obtain funding for attendance at conferences and workshops. This is likely to have a greater adverse effect on women. Currently at Dalhousie I am chairing the University President's Committee on the Employment of Women and am well aware of the issues raised in this question.

IHRIG: In the few words allowed, representation and recognition and rewards. We need to convert our numbers into a stronger voice in the three areas.

I want ALA to get to the public with a stronger message of involvement in support for libraries of all kinds. I want ALA to speak to the special problems of women and stop pretending they do not exist. I want ALA to stand for equality. And I want the many inactive women in the field to become involved. If ERA dies, there will be another chance ONLY if organizations like ALA pursue the principles.

SHELDON: In the work place the most urgent issue is the alarming trend to down-grade minimum qualifications for professional librarians at federal, state, and even county levels. We must bring ALA's expertise in non partisan lobbying to bear at state as well as federal levels, and we must move quickly to reverse a trend which if it gains momentum will be disastrous.

The need for special help for women in career development is of major concern. The central issue here is not necessarily to make all women administrators; rather to open up any career paths or roles that may seem desirable to both women and men. Opportunities such as those afforded by the University of Washington career assessment center should be expanded and made available through library schools, regional associations, and our national association.

As one of 14 woman Deans in 69 accredited Library Schools, I am sensitive to both the opportunities and the barriers women experience in seeking equal opportunity in our profession. Of particular concern are minority women who share the added burden of sexism along with other obstacles to career fulfillment.

Another current issue which should be addressed by ALA is the numbers of librarians who are discharged because of funding cuts. Children's librarians in particular have suffered in this regard.

Finally, we must combat in ALA the sexism that relegates women's concerns to the level of "personal problems." We must educate those who would deny that the American Library Association, the most powerful library association in the world, should and must assume a leadership role in concerning itself with these public issues.

**a word to
the wise**

library

American Library
Association

PLANS FOR PHILADELPHIA

FTF will hold two program meetings and two business meetings at the ALA Annual Conference in Philadelphia in July. Programs will be a one-woman show by Joanna Featherstone July 11 from 8 to 10 pm and a program featuring ALA women's groups July 10 from 2 to 4 pm. Wine and cheese will be served after short presentations by representatives from FTF, COSWL, ERA Task Force, LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group, RASD Discussion Group on Women's Materials and Women Library Users, and the recently formed Women's Data Base Group. FTF business meetings will be July 12 from 2 to 4 pm and July 13 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.

"Women and Power(lessness)," featuring Jane C. Brown, Vice President and Director of Marketing with Goodmeasure, Inc., will be cosponsored by COSWL and LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group July 13. A list of conference meetings of interest to women will be included in the next issue of Women in Libraries.

FTF will have a table for exhibiting materials of interest to women at the conference. There will be a \$5 fee for cartage and table costs for women and women's groups submitting materials for the table.

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COSWL CONFERENCE NOTES

In its continuing analysis of nominees for ALA councilors at large, the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship reported at midwinter that 1982 nominees are 48% female and 52% male, while ALA membership (based on a sample of 1746 names in 1980) is 74% female and 26% male. Nominees in 1981 were 69.2% female and 30.8% male; current council membership is 65% female and 35% male. The 1982 nominees also are predominantly from academic and public libraries (27% and 21% respectively) and in high level positions, notably directors and library school faculty. A report of 511 employer registrations from the 1981 annual conference placement center showed that only 55.4% listed salary ranges, as urged by COSWL; 19.6% listed minimum salary, and .8% gave no salary figure.

In other action at midwinter, COSWL appointed a liaison to the ALA Washington office, accepted a grant proposal on reentry women for forwarding to the Awards Committee, and voted to maintain membership in the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women, the National Committee on Pay Equity, and the National Women's Studies Association, in that priority order. COSWL has issued a revised Directory of Library and Information Profession Women's Groups (\$1 from ALA), and the slide-tape program "Women as an Under-Served Population," from the 1981 annual conference, is available on interlibrary loan from the ALA library. The program, with 100 slides, runs approximately 25 minutes. Contact ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The FTF Committee on Sexual Harassment is interested in gathering information on and documenting instances of sexual harassment of women working in libraries. All responses will be strictly confidential, and it is not necessary to include your name or the name of your institution. If you have experienced sexual harassment or unwanted sexual attention (either physical or verbal), please send us a brief statement about your situation. You may have experienced harassment from either co-workers, supervisors, or members of the public and library clients. We would also be interested in any suggestions you may have for ways to effectively combat this problem. Send short, informal descriptions of instances of sexual harassment in libraries or other similar institutions (with your name if you wish further contact from the committee) to: Sarah Rutchard, 1700 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

In the November 1981 issue of the Phyllis Schlafly Report, Schlafly accused American libraries of having biased collections - pro-ERA, for instance - and listed 37 desired titles in the categories of pro-defense, pro-family, pro-basic education, and pro-life. The Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, doubting Schlafly's thesis, asks that libraries accept the challenge, check their holdings against Schlafly's lists, and let her know the result. (Schlafly's list, if not available in your local library, can be had by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Phyllis Schlafly Report, Box 618, Alton, IL 62002.)

Katharine Phenix, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, found most of Schlafly's titles, many in multiple copies, in a search through the University of Illinois Library automated circulation system; a card catalog search probably would have found more. In a search through OCLC, Phenix found Schlafly's pro-defense titles well represented in armed services libraries. Schlafly's remarks were directed particularly toward public and school libraries; so pick up the challenge and let Phyllis know.

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

The Fourth Annual Conference on Planning a National and International Communications System for Women will be held April 17 and 18 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, sponsored by the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press in cooperation with the International Women's Tribune Centre. Emphasis of the conference will be on building a world news service for women. Registration fee of \$65 is due by April 14; contact Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3306 Ross Place NW, Washington, DC 20008, telephone (202) 966-7783 or 363-0812.

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The ninth annual conference of the Barnard Women's Center, "Towards a Politics of Sexuality," will be held at Barnard College in New York April 24 and will attempt to redefine the relationship of female sexuality to power and autonomy. Speakers at the morning session include historians Ellen Carol Dubois and Linda Gordon, author of Women's Body, Women's Right. Registration fee of \$20 (regular) or \$10 (student or limited income) is due by April 12. Contact the Women's Center, Barnard College, 117th St. and Broadway, New York, NY 10027, phone (212) 280-2067.

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"New Women's Cinema," the 1982 Women's Independent Film Festival, will take place during the week of May 17-22 at the Bleecker Street Cinema in New York City and then will tour nationwide. The festival, sponsored by Women Make Movies, Inc., will feature American and international independent films released in the last three years and produced/directed by women.

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"Hope, Courage, Inspiration and Creativity" is the theme of the 11th Women's Writing Conference/Retreat sponsored by the International Women's Writing Guild, which will be held at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY, August 13-20. The conference/retreat, open to all women regardless of professional writing accomplishments, will include more than 30 workshops on standard writing subjects as well as such topics as storytelling, writing commercial song lyrics, yoga, and body alignment, all geared to stimulate creative energy. Cost for the week is \$350 inclusive of room and board. Contact Hannelore Hahn, Executive Director.

WOMEN'S HISTORY WEEK FOLLOWUP

The National Women's History Week Project, wanting to record the observance of the March 7-13, 1982 event, asks that libraries and schools provide: slides of events; samples of fliers, press releases, newspaper articles, or printed programs about the events; and impressions of attendance, how programs were received, and who main organizers and supporters were. NWHW will show slides to promote NWHW celebrations nationwide; maintain national archives for all NWHW activities state by state; pass on ideas, experiences, and suggestions through the updated Curriculum Guide and Organizing Guide for 1983; and facilitate networking. Contact National Women's History Week Project, 232A Coddington Center, Santa Rosa, CA 95401.

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WOMEN REVIEWERS WANTED

CHOICE, the review journal for academic libraries published by ACRL, is always looking for good reviewers and is especially interested in adding women faculty members to its reviewer pool. Readers of WIL are asked to recommend teaching colleagues, particularly in the sciences, technologies, and social sciences, including women's studies. There is also some need for librarian reviewers of reference materials in the fields named above, but the primary call is for undergraduate teaching faculty. Names may be suggested, or would-be reviewers may write directly, to Virginia Clark, Assistant Editor, CHOICE, 100 Riverview Center, Middletown, CT 06457. Suggestions of publications to be reviewed also are welcome.

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WOMEN'S MATERIALS EXHIBIT

The Librarians' Task Force of the National Women's Studies Association is planning a program on access to library resources for research on women for the 1982 NWSA Conference to be held June 16-20 at California State University, Humboldt at Arcata, CA. In conjunction with this program, there will be an exhibit of library instruction materials related to women's studies. If you or your library have prepared any bibliographies, guides, AV materials, etc., that you would be willing to donate or lend for this exhibit, please contact or submit copies to: Beth Sibley, Moffitt Undergraduate Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

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MATERIALS AND MISCELLANY

"Who Will Protect the Family?" is scheduled for broadcast on PBS stations April 16 at 10 pm. The 57-minute color documentary with reporter Frances Fitzgerald focuses on the controversy surrounding the ERA ratification in North Carolina, from Sen. Jesse Helms to actor-activist Alan Alda, over a three-year period. The documentary seeks to examine not only what happened to the ERA but also where two equally strong opposing movements will go from here. A collaboration between Fitzgerald and independent video producer Victoria Costello, "Who Will Protect the Family?" is available in 1- and 2-part versions in all video formats and 16 mm film. Contact Takoma Video Lab, 32 Columbia Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20012/

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Simultaneous celebrations: April 18-24 is both National Library Week and National Secretaries Week, a true celebration of the importance of women office workers, with its 1982 campaign "Raises & Roses." Hear, hear!

The 1982 Index/Directory of Women's Media, from Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, is a current (updated in November-December 1981) network of women's media. The directory, international in scope, includes 351 women's periodicals (including WIL), more than 80 women's presses and publishers, 64 women's bookstores, 33 library collections on women, plus women in other areas of the arts and communications. Listing is by zip code, with alphabetical indexes for large subject areas. The index section is a five-year (1977-1981) annotated index to the WIFP monthly publication Media Report to Woman. At \$8 (and 40% off for orders of three or more), this is a best buy for women's networking. Available from WIFP, 3306 Ross Place NW, Washington, DC, 20008.

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Jean Wiley Huyler, author, consultant, and instructor, has received the Washington Press Association Torchbearer Award. Huyler is offering her manual Demystifying the Media at \$2 less than market price to WIL; order for \$5.95 plus 75¢ postage and handling, and 6% tax in Washington state, from her at 922 N. Pearl, A-27, Tacoma, WA 98406.

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Women and War: El Salvador, a 44-page collection of articles, testimony, photos, and poetry on the role of women in the struggle of El Salvador, is the latest publication from Women's International Resource Exchange Service. Available for \$3 postpaid from WIRE, 2700 Broadway #7, New York, NY 10025.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - June 1, 1982

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 Michele Leber, 4927 Gadsen Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032.

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