

Women In Libraries

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALA/SRRT FEMINIST
TASK FORCE

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REPORT FROM MIDWINTER

San Antonio was beguiling in mid-January, its weather unseasonably warm, its river walk a lure, and its eating spots wonderfully diverse and plentiful. And ALA, at its highest levels, was more concerned about its own fiscal health than about the proposed standards for federal librarians which should be of highest concern throughout the profession (see p. 5).

However, three resolutions concerning the standards were passed at the last midwinter Council meeting, one with an amendment presented by Councilor and Feminist Task Force-member Jody Bush and endorsed by FTF and the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL). This resolution, from the New Jersey Library Association, asked that ALA continue to communicate its concern about the standards to Congress and appropriate federal agencies and that ALA "explore all legal recourses, should these standards be implemented without significant changes."

Bush's amendment to the resolution asked for more specific and immediate action, requiring the Executive Board and staff "to give immediate priority attention to the matter of the proposed revised OPM standards, including consulting with ALA's legal counsel on possible actions and strategies" and that "the Board or staff, through American Libraries or any other feasible source, report currently and continually on progress in combating implementation of these standards, and submit a full report to Council at the Los Angeles conference."

FTF also endorsed a resolution, from Councilor and FTF-member Elizabeth Futas, commending the "outstanding work on behalf of professional librarians" of the Office for Library Personnel Resources (OLPR) and asking that Executive Board, which has cut one and a half positions from OLPR, report at midwinter 1984 on how to restore OLPR staffing. This resolution was passed by Council.

FTF members voted unanimously to endorse E. J. Josey for president of ALA "based on his record of support for feminist positions on issues considered by ALA (and) his history of working with ALA feminists to promote socially responsible positions and actions on issues of concern to women." (There will be a list of FTF endorsements for Council and other offices in the next issue of WOMEN IN LIBRARIES.)

VISIT FROM THE CANDIDATES

ALA Presidential candidates E. J. Josey and Ella Gaines Yates attended the first midwinter FTF meeting to answer questions presented by FTF Elections Committee Chair Maureen Doyle Endres:

1. Concerning your presidency of ALA, what will be the theme of your administration, what objectives do you expect to meet in your term of office, and how can the FTF assist you in meeting your objectives?
2. Equal pay for equivalent work is increasingly important in these recessionary times. ALA is on record as supporting pay equity; what concrete steps can the association take to demonstrate this support?

Yates, comparing ALA's economic problem to the country's, said ALA "must face reality and act with clear vision and purpose," and she stressed the need for unity within the association. Her concerns included the OPM standards, staffing libraries with persons with less education (especially graduates of 2-year computer courses), publishing industry problems, pay equity, censorship, legislation, and federal funding. Yates declared herself "part and parcel against inequity in pay" and cited her work in this area, notably as director of Atlanta Public Library during three classification studies, all of them won in terms of the library. She recommended doing local pay and classification studies and educating politicians and the public on the issue, and she stressed that ALA should provide current studies and statistics and help in any way possible. But, she noted, ALA can't give such support unless it is solvent.

Josey cited his record in ALA on women's rights and his support of all FTF resolutions, and he pledged to fight for equal opportunity and affirmative action in libraries and to continue his support of ERA. As president-elect, he would form a "blue ribbon" task force of librarians and lawyers ("maybe Ella would serve," he remarked) to look at such issues. Saying it would be premature to announce a theme for his presidency, Josey said it would be people-oriented and "relevant to your cause and my cause and the cause of saving libraries from extinction." He would consult with various groups, including FTF, during his term of office and would support ALA's goals.

To support pay equity, Josey recommended more funding for OLPR and COSWL; asking groups such as FTF, COSWL, OLPR, and the ALA Washington office to work on introducing legislation; investigating non-ALA sources of funding, and opposing any OPM classifications aimed at lowering librarians or other women's occupations.

In answer to questions from the audience, Yates advocated reassessing our direction and readjusting the budget (by consolidating programs, for instance) to meet ALA's fiscal problems, while Josey emphasized seeking outside funding and establishing an ALA development office. Asked about the percentage of women in ALA being lower than that in the profession at large, Josey said he would appoint women in proportion to their numbers in the profession and said he wants to build a broader base for ALA and encourage membership. Yates responded that women were more supportive of men than of other women and that men also tend to spend their own money on dues and conferences more than women. Women must be more supportive of each other, she said, and "maybe we need to look at our own posture."

Both noted a general trend to conservatism in the area of ALA and social issues. But Yates, who said she has been in and out of ALA since 1950 because of her disenchantment concerning ALA and minorities, added that "I've seen ALA come

a long way." ALA has a stake in societal issues, Josey noted, since libraries are a part of society, and a strong ALA is needed to counter conservative trends in society.

Yates, a self-described realist and pragmatist, acknowledged the limitations of a 1-year part-time position away from headquarters, but said she would like to lay a foundation. Observing that she hasn't had time to attend FTF meetings, she concluded that "if E. J. gets elected, I will be here."

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Other midwinter action: charges for the WIL list of subscribers will be cost plus \$5 for nonprofit groups and cost plus \$25 for profit-making groups. ALA annual conference program notes: the FTF program "Guns or Butter: Society's Share of the Pie," featuring Author Sheila Tobias, will be co-sponsored by the SRRT Peace Information Exchange as well as COSWL. Marilyn Hawkins will provide flyers for the program. During a time slot previously allocated to presentations by women's groups, FTF instead will co-sponsor "Up Your Wages: Practical Steps Towards Pay Equity" with the SRRT Library Unions Task Force. A "Women's Night Out in L.A." is planned for Monday, June 27. There will be more annual conference information in upcoming issues of WIL.

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COSWL AT MIDWINTER

The major upcoming activity of the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship may come from its Legislation Subcommittee, which is considering acting as the catalyst to form an ALA political action committee. The subcommittee also will look at issues for COSWL involvement (e.g., OPM standards, Social Security as a women's - and thus librarians' - issue) and will encourage having more information about such issues in the ALA Washington office newsletter. Subcommittee chair Sharon Rogers requests ideas for the COSWL agenda and also names of persons for a list of expert witnesses, on general library issues and on women in employment. Contact Rogers at 2435 Old Stone Ct., Apt. 8, Toledo, OH 43614.

The ALA Equality Award, proposed by COSWL, was approved by the ALA Awards Committee at midwinter. Scarecrow Press will donate \$500 for the award and will cover administrative costs. Other items:

- no childcare center will be provided for the Los Angeles conference, but COSWL will continue to coordinate with the L.A. Local Arrangement group to find space and volunteers to provide some childcare
- no action was taken on the Nestle boycott, but the boycott is ongoing; Dalhousie University students endorsed it November 29, 1982
- paraprofessional library groups in ALA convention cities will be contacted and invited to COSWL meetings
- the project on reentry women is proceeding, with the questionnaire being revised
- a Carnegie Grant will be requested for compiling bibliography inserts for the COSWL brochure "The Library Is a Feminist Resource"

OPM STANDARDS - A FEMINIST ISSUE

The U.S. government is the single largest employer of librarians in the country. Thus the standards the government sets in employing and compensating librarians affect the entire profession. And so, in a female-dominated profession, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) standards for the Library-Information Service Series, in a third draft and under audit, is a full-blown feminist issue.

OPM periodically reviews federal job classifications, lately with an eye to Director Donald J. Devine's desire to "reduce the restrictive impact of credentialing," according to Ann Heanue of the ALA Washington office. The library series (monitored by ALA, the Library of Congress, the Federal Library Committee, the national libraries, and other federal agencies) have been criticized particularly for lowering the entry level for librarians (but not for positions in comparable male-dominated professions), substituting experience for education, and violating procedure in drafting the standards. Specific objections to the third and current draft, as outlined by the ALA Washington office, are:

- OPM has arbitrarily singled out librarians for discriminatory treatment by lowering the entry grade level for master's degree holders from GS-9 to GS-7, two grades below the entry level in the current librarian standard and below that for other professional series. Other recently-issued professional series such as accounting, auditing, and cartography accept as proof of eligibility at the GS-9 level the master's degree as defined by each professionally accredited college or university offering the master's degree.
- Librarians would be required to stay longer in graduate school and pay more tuition than master's degree holders in other professional series. The new draft stipulates that librarians are eligible for a GS-9 if they complete all requirements for a master's or equivalent degree in library-information service for which at least 2 full academic years of graduate study is required. Under the current standards, librarians who have completed all requirements for a master's degree enter at the GS-9, as do holders of master's degrees in other professional series. OPM's own guidelines for grade eligibility based on graduate education specify that completion of all requirements for a master's or equivalent degree or two years of full-time graduate education qualifies for entry at the GS-9 level.
- An undergraduate major in library and information science is substituted for the MLS as the basic educational requirement for the entire professional series despite a great deal of documentation submitted previously pointing out that the four-year LIS degree is inappropriate and is not a recognized program accredited by any accrediting body.
- The factor level descriptions, i.e., the criteria used to place federal government positions in the correct grades on the basis of duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required, place more stringent requirements on librarians than are stated in the Primary Standard for all occupational series and in the standards for other professional series. This inappropriately rigorous language will restrict advancement once librarians are employed.
- Experience and on-the-job training are fully substitutable for graduate education but there is no validation instrument to measure the trade-off

between professional or paraprofessional experience and graduate education.

- There is confusion between work assignments appropriate for technicians and those requiring professional library and information science expertise.
- There is no provision for advancement beyond GS-14 in the series. This is especially troublesome in a profession which is female-dominated for it makes it very difficult for women in the profession to move into the top administrative grades of the federal service.

Last fall OPM and Devine came up against the pay equity issue, particularly after hearings on pay equity by subcommittees of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service (at which past-president of ALA Elizabeth Stone testified). The hearings were conducted by Reps. Geraldine Ferraro, Mary Rose Oakar, and Patricia Schroeder, who then asked the General Accounting Office "to conduct a major study of sex discrimination in government wage-setting, with top priority given to the situation of government librarians," according to the Washington Post, January 6, 1983. Ferraro has asked Devine to postpone publishing the library standards until the GAO review, which was to start in mid-January, is completed.

There has been criticism of the relative lack of attention from the library press to an issue so critical to the profession. Joan Higbee, who chairs the DCLA Committee Charged with Review of the OPM Standards, bemoans "an absolute breakdown of information dissemination in a crisis situation." A November 1982 mailing by DCLA to its 1200 members and others (including ALA Councilors) outlined the situation and urged individual letter writing to Congressional representatives. (Higbee credits FTF-member Jody Bush with triggering a lot of activity in New England after the mailing.)

Individual action still is crucial. ALA Washington office's Heanue urges people to write their Representatives and Senators asking them to write two letters:

- to Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General of the United States, General Accounting Office, 441 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20548, in support of expediting the review of the proposed standards for federal librarians, and
- to Donald J. Devine, Director, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20415, asking to postpone publication of the proposed final standards for the federal library service series until GAO has completed its review

(Thanks also are in order, to the three Congresswomen who conducted the pay equity hearings and requested the GAO review - Ferraro (D-NY), Oakar, (D-OH), and Schroeder (D-CO); to seven Senators who gave bipartisan support in December to a request to extend the review period - Max S. Baucus (D-MT), Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-KA), Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), Paul Laxalt (R-NV), Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH), Claiborne Pell (D-RI), and Charles H. Percy (R-IL) - and to Sens. Mark O. Hatfield (R-OR) and Lowell P. Wiecker (R-CT) for a January letter of support.)

Pressure from librarians has helped bring about what Devine described to the Washington Post as a "very unusual" second review of federal standards. Now is the time to intensify pressure with more letters to Congress - this is a feminist issue, crucial to each of us.

PAY EQUITY REPORT

The 1982 annual meeting of the National Committee on Pay Equity, held December 6, 1982 in Washington, featured optimistic state of the organization reports from Board of Directors Chair Nancy Perlman and Executive Director Joy Ann Grune and an account of how pay equity does work in Australia.

In 1982 NCPE participated in the Congressional hearings on pay equity, worked on the Democratic National Party Conference pay equity resolution, gave assistance to more than 300 persons, raised \$88,000 and \$10,000 in in-kind contributions, and listed 119 organizational and personal members. Primary program activities also were defined during 1982, Perlman said, and activity has started in the following areas:

- developing reports or briefing papers on facets of pay equity (nearly complete)
- sponsoring conferences of experts to plot new directions and strategies in each tactical area (meetings already are planned on organizing and bargaining and on the use of federal laws)
- building a public education program involving public relations, speakers, and educational materials (NCPE recently submitted a proposal for a national polling project to Levi-Strauss)
- initiating target campaigns to assist state and local groups in pay equity efforts with tactical advice, information, and referral

While interest in pay equity is growing, so is resistance to it, Grune noted; employers who resist pay equity are "getting their act together" and getting stronger, and it is difficult to get job evaluation results implemented. NCPE needs to become more involved in the private sector, she added; most requests to NCPE for information come from state and local public officials.

Australian economist Ronald C. Duncan, who researched comparable worth in Australia, described the process and its results. Semi-judicial state and federal government wage tribunals have set minimum wages in Australia for years. Until 1969 jobs were categorized as predominantly male or female, with wages for male jobs set to support a family and those for female jobs set to support an individual. Before World War II, minimum wage rates for female jobs were 54% of men's; during the war rates for female jobs were 90% of men's, and after the war rates for female jobs were set at 75% of men's.

In 1969 Australia introduced "equal pay for equal work," no longer categorizing jobs as male or female, and in 1972 "equal pay for work of equal value" was introduced, to be fully implemented by 1975. This was an economically and politically favorable period for such change (the first Labor government in 23 years), while more women were joining the work force, with community acceptance. And while this would be costly, government felt it was a cost that should be borne. As a result, women's minimum wage rates rose from 77.5% to 93.3% of men's from 1969 to 1977, and actual earnings of women rose from 59% to 76% of men's during this period. (Differences were caused by women being in lower-paid jobs and working fewer hours, Duncan noted. Occupational distribution of women did not change during this time, however, so gains were due to pay equity.)

"The bright spot from your perspective," Duncan concluded, "is that it has been done in Australia, it does stick, and its consequences, as far as we can tell, are not nearly so bad as its adversaries would have us believe."

JOB MARKET FOR LIBRARIANS

Both numbers of librarians and positions for librarians are expected to increase slightly until 1990, according to a King Research study of current and projected librarian supply and demand.

Data reported by Nancy K. Roderer, Vice President Operations of King Research, Inc., at midwinter, shows 130,000 librarians in the U.S. with 19,000 librarian jobs available a year, or approximately 15% of total employment, a percentage Roderer called standard for professional employment. There are 7,000 library graduates a year, a small number of whom go into other information jobs.

Research also showed a neat balance between librarian jobs filled and vacated each year. Of those filled, 1/3 come from library education, 1/3 from other library employment (3/4 from the same type of library), and 1/3 from other situations. Of librarian jobs vacated, 1/3 retire, 1/3 go to other library jobs, and 1/3 go to other situations.

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Copies of the December 1982 Wilson Library Bulletin, which features six articles about women's issues, are available on written request to WLB at The H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Ave., Bronx, NY 10452. Thanks to WLB Editor Milo Nelson for giving feminists this forum.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - March 1, 1983

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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