



Women in Libraries

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The Feminist Task Force

Fall 2001

“Beauty” Earns More in the Marketplace

“We all judge people based on appearance; employers make decisions based on looks, albeit unconsciously.” This was the message that Lynn Romer gave at the FTF program at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco last summer. In her talk, “Looksism: Issues in the Workplace,” Romer said that this prejudice is hard to prove, but that there is need for consciousness-raising.

Looksism is at the heart of all “isms”—race, gender, etc., according to Romer. She referred to the obsession in the media about being attractive. Cinderella is “pretty,” whereas the witch is ugly. In *The Lion King* the evil lion is named Scar because of his disfigurement. Books continue to validate this opinion.

Because of the current media, young women see more examples of “beauty” during their adolescence than their mothers did during their entire lifetime. “Fat people have the worst self-image of all,” Romer said.

In the research that Romer has examined, teachers treat “beautiful” students better while “beautiful” teachers receive better attention. The courts are more lenient with attractive individuals. “Ugly” rapists are more likely to be judged guilty

while “beautiful” women are more likely to be judged raped.

Sixty percent of the obese and 30 percent of the moderately obese have been denied employment or refused promotions. The “good looking” earn 15 percent more than those at the “bottom of looksism.”

What can be done about this situation? The first thing that Romer wants is to add “looksism” to the Library of Congress subject headings. Get people to sign petitions for this and then send them to the Library of Congress.

Find materials that protest looksism and get these into the schools. Ask teachers to discuss this as an important issue. Ask writers to include the word “looksism” in the titles of their works. Raise media awareness by protesting the concentration on “beauty.”

A member of the audience suggested that compliments to students should be more on behavior than appearance. Rather than “aren’t you pretty!” comment of the child’s abilities.

The entire audience, with the exception of one man, agreed that Romer had valid concerns about the issue of looksism.

The feminist movement has stressed the need to view women as members of society equal to men in their intellectual capabilities and achievement potential. It has encouraged women to acquire power through earning degrees, making money, demanding to be heard, and refusing to comply. When the highest aspiration of young women is no longer to become Miss America but rather to become President of the United States, then we will know that the feminine gender has truly changed.

Notes

Congratulations to past FTF co-coordinator Veronda Pitchford for her participation in Groundhog Job Shadow Day and the resulting picture in *American Libraries* (May 2001). As a library mentor for a national project showing students the world of work and locally sponsored by the Chicago Library System, Pitchford took high school sophomores on a tour of three special libraries. For information about the 2002 Groundhog Job Shadow Day, visit www.jobshadow.org.

The Elizabeth Cady Stanton Trust is raising funds for a traveling exhibition and Web site. The project began when Hillary Clinton mentioned Stanton's great-great-great granddaughter, Elizabeth Jenkins-Sahlin, at the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention in July 1998. An article on the development of the Votes for Women Collection is in *MS* (April/May 2001). For more information about this project, contact Coline Jenkins-Sahlin at 700 Steamboat Rd., Greenwich, CT 06830; (203)637-5872; cocococo@juno.com.

Women's art seems to be more threatening these days. As you may have noticed in *American Libraries* (May 2001), "Women in the Kitchen," a Barbie-doll sculpture in a library display case was pulled at the Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg. Library dean Paladugu Rao declared the display as offensive and inappropriate but asked for its return after the CMSU Provost Kyle Carter overrode Rao's decision. In the sculpture by student artist Valerie Thompson, four naked Barbie dolls sit at a doll-sized kitchen table around a platter with the bloody head of a Ken doll. Thompson chose not to replace her sculpture explaining, "I was able to make my statement about censorship by not putting it back."

Thompson is not alone in her censorship. The ACLU filed a lawsuit on August 20, 2001, in federal court against the City and County of Honolulu for improperly banning artist Daria Fand's art work from an "Art of Women" exhibit at Honolulu Hale in March 2001. The piece was banned because officials from the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts found Fand's piece, "Last of the Believers," which depicts a nude woman on the cross, to be "controversial" and "offensive."

In March of 1999, officials at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology admitted that a report, initiated by faculty members, proved that the school discriminated against its female science professors. Since then, nine other schools, including Princeton, Yale, and Harvard announced that "barriers still exist" for women faculty. They promise to do better. (*MS*, April/May 2001)

[Ed. Note: Does this come as a surprise to anyone?]



Women in Libraries

<http://www.lib.wayne.edu/ftf/>

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To subscribe to the Feminist List, send this e-mail message to: listserv@mitvma.mit.edu:

subscribe feminist firstname lastname

Send articles, comments, or materials for review, but not subscription questions, to Nel Ward, 107 SW Coast Street, Newport, OR 97365. (541-265-9141; email nward@beachhousebb.com)

Send books for review to Sherre Harrington, Stevenson Library, Vanderbilt University, 419 21st Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37240. For reviewing information, go to <http://staffweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/feministbooks>.

Feminism in College: Where Are We?

Backlash 101 may be the latest course for feminist college professors as Carolyn Byerly found when she went into her tenure review at Ithaca College in central New York. Believing that she was strong in teaching, research, and service in professional and community activities, areas important to tenure committees, she found the reverse.

Committee members appeared concerned about her students' complaints that she was bringing feminist, gay, and progressive agendas into the classroom. Before her tenure application, student evaluations had been positive.

With the tenure committee result, she discovered that academic freedom may apply only to traditional male scholars and others in the mainstream. "No one minds the study of gender issues anymore," she states. "The problem

is when you bring an activist angle with you and start challenging ideas, practices, and policies."

Her challenge now accompanies an anti-discrimination charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. With this action, she has also discovered that her case may be only one of many with the same concern.

Yet women's studies programs are flourishing at many universities. Barbara Gold, a classics professor and associate dean of faculty at Hamilton College in New York (state), discusses the impact of feminism on teaching methods from "stand up and read your notes" to collaborative and interactive approaches.

Universities consistently say they are searching for women and minority faculty. Yet, says Linda Mabry, an African-American law professor who resigned from Stanford University in 1998 because of its discriminatory practices, "They want people of color and women who won't make them feel uncomfortable—that's what they mean by qualified."

"If you take a feminist perspective or interject race, they'll just say your work is substandard. Since they have so much power to define these standards, it's really easy to walk away thinking that you are not up to the task."

Feminist scholars are commonly told that they

publish in the wrong journals, their work is too unconventional, or the subject of their research cuts across too many disciplines and cannot be properly assessed, according to Gretchen Sidhu's "Academy Blues" (*MS.* August/September 2001).

According to Annis Pratt of the Academic Discrimination Advisory Board at the National Women's Studies Association, schools overload women with committee assignments, knowing that women are less likely to say no. Or they hire women who don't look like they will succeed. And they bring in feminist

women and then refuse to intervene as staff hostility grinds them down. "Women think academia is a place populated by intellectuals who behave rationally," Pratt reflects. "But this is not a merit parkway—it's more like a big male gang grope."

The one place in academics where women can find positions is with part-time jobs offering no benefits or promise of longevity (see "Road Scholar: Women in Academia," *MS.*, February/March 2000).

And for more horror stories check out the article in *Ms.* (August/September 2001). If you are a female academic facing discrimination, you can get financial help or legal assistance through the Legal Advocacy Fund of the American Association of University Women: www.aauw.org or laf@aaup.org or call (800)326-AAUW, ext. 145.

Which schools are best for women? Check out the essays in "Ms. Goes to College" (*Ms.*, August/September 2001). Students from several colleges provide essays about their experiences.

Memorable quotes: "Be quiet. This may be the only intelligent thing she says all day." (From an engineering professor at North Carolina State University) "University of Michigan guys sold hundreds of T-shirts that said 'FRESHMEN GIRLS: GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE SKINNY'"

What is "glomming"? At California Institute of Technology, an esteemed school of science and technology in Pasadena, a man or group of men stalk a woman until she finds a boyfriend. Male students find this "normal and natural."

Online/Web Courses Work for Women

The following has been abstracted from "Digital Feminism: Reaching Women through Web-Based Courses" by Melissa Alsgaard, Lecturer in English at North Carolina State University (*Feminist Collections*, Fall 2000). Alsgaard's main page for her coursewebs is available at <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~malsgaa>.

"I wanted to let you know that I enjoyed the Online discussion because it took away 25 pairs of eyes watching as I stutter out my point while trying not to lose track of the argument."

"This is my first class in almost 14 years. I am recently divorced, raising my daughter, and working. Do you have any pointers to help me succeed?"

These are email messages to the online courses and Web-enhanced live courses that Melissa Alsgaard offers students. She does so because "both types of courses offer students numerous benefits, including flexibility and increased access to the material . . . [for] both nontraditional and traditional students."

She provides online syllabi for both types of courses and both e-texts and bound copies for the readings. Discussion can be through a forum, not dependent upon time, or a chat room in real time. For the chat room, students select the time most convenient to them from two to four sign-up times, and then everyone signs on at the same time. Online resources—databases, articles, and relevant online "exhibits"—are linked to assignments and to the syllabi themselves. Student papers are submitted as attachments to emails with comments and grade mailed back.

Although the students' responses to the assignments are similar in both formats, two differences exist between the two formats of the course. The first results from the higher number of nontraditional students in the online courses, including mothers and women who work fulltime. These nontraditional students often possess real-world experiences and a greater drive for academic success, which regularly leads to more in-depth discussions.

The second notable difference is the number of female students who speak frequently and assertively. This phenomenon occurs almost instantly in the online courses, while it takes until at least mid-semester for even a close facsimile to be present in the live classroom.

"As I was gradually moving toward more online resources and discussion, what struck me was that in forum and chat room discussions, I heard the voices of students who had never voluntarily spoken in class. In both formats, the discussion was led primarily by women. Further, the female students also began to question and disagree with the statements," said Alsgaard.

The reasons for greater response? Students indicated that they were "more comfortable" and that they had more time to compose their replies and even rephrase them before posting. The majority of the women thrived in these virtual spaces.

Success of the process resulted in the first Women and Gender Studies online course on Alsgaard's campus, a class in the development of and a basic introduction to Women's Fiction. By the second week, several students had begun email and chat contact with their classmates without any direction from the instructor, and by the third week, 21 of 25 enrolled students actively participated in the discussions.

Alsgaard's conclusion is that virtual space offers a comfort zone enabling her students to flourish while allowing them a flexible schedule to weave their education into their busy real-world lives.

Need to find a place to work for change? The June/July 2001 issue of *Ms.* has four pages of organizations doing important activist change—labor, peace, refugee rights, welfare, human rights, consumerism, economics, and more. Each sketch gives a brief description, quotation from an leader or involved person, and contact information, including address, telephone, and email.

Creating New Eleanor Roosevelts

In rustic Val-Kill cottage, 31 teen-age girls gathered in the living room to sit through leadership training sessions. "Before coming here I'd heard of Eleanor Roosevelt," said 16-year-old Brittany Hogan, who came from Chicago. "But I didn't know that she did so much for minorities and women."

"I can't be Eleanor," interrupted Rachel Ladd, a 16-year-old from Hartford, VT, "but I know I *can* be Rachel Ladd."

Although the outspoken Roosevelt was perhaps the most famous woman in the world when she died in 1962 at the age of 78, Maryann Fallek, the coordinator of the Val-Kill program, said, "Sadly, many young women don't know what she did and what she was." In offering teen-age girls lessons in Roosevelt's life and beliefs, Fallek said, "The hope here is to instill the definition of leadership as she lived it."

More than 300 students competed for the privilege of attending the Girls' Leadership Workshop at Val-Kill. The winners, high school sophomores and juniors, arrived from 12 states and the Caribbean island nation of Dominica. They paid a \$100 registration fee and their transportation to Hyde Park, NY, although the program covers those expenses for girls unable to pay.

"Most leadership courses stress being successful and making a lot of money, but we want the girls to know that there is a side of their life where they can give to others, said Daniel A. Strasser, executive director of the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill. Therefore the program, now in its fifth year, inculcates social commitment, community service, and the struggle for human rights.

The young women attend sessions on Roosevelt's life, on building leadership skills, on conflict resolution, on racism, on women's history, and on environmental awareness. There have been tutorials on public speaking and visits to a day-care center for Alzheimer's patients and to a food pantry.

On a trip to Manhattan, the girls heard a talk by Wilma Guzman, a Civil Court judge, and a briefing at the United Nations from Ambassador Cameron

Hume of the U. S. Mission.

Although the program is intended to nurture leaders, many participants already qualify. Some, like Ladd are presidents of their school classes. Liz Holland, 17, is the head of a peaceful protest in her high school in Wakefield, RI. To protest the school's poor luncheon offerings and rushed lunch breaks, she led classmates who made 750 peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches while her mother baked ten pounds of cookies.

"Then we encouraged the students to try our lunch instead of the school's," she said. They did, and the school re-examined its catering contract and changed the lunch hours.

Other girls have surmounted physical challenges. Sarah Kemp, 16 had severe speech problems. "As a child, I could barely speak at all," she said, "and spent years and years working with speech therapists." Kemp is now a member of the debate and speech team at her high school in Monticello, NY.

If there was an anchor in Roosevelt's life, historians say, it was Val-Kill, the cottage built 2.3 miles away from the Roosevelt manor house by her husband in 1925 to help her escape from a domineering mother-in-law. "It was the place where Eleanor established her own identity," Strasser said.

After Roosevelt's death, the property was occupied by her family before being sold. Months away from the wrecking ball, Val-Kill was saved by a community rescue effort in 1977 when it came under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. It was opened to the public in 1984 and has 77,000 visitors a year.

And a bit more about art! When the National Park Service told California artist Nicolino that he could not string 20,000 bras across the Grand Canyon, he quit. But artist Emily Duffy wanted the hand-me-downs for a "ball of bras." Nicolino decided he would do that instead. Duffy said that she'd beat him at this game. Got bras? Send them to PO Box 1555, El Cerrito, CA 94530 or check her website at www.braball.com.

Women's Groups in ALA, Annual Conference 2001

An annual program during ALA's summer conference is the one called "Women's Groups in ALA." Hosted alternately by the participating members, it allows for discussion of issues of current concern to the constituency. In San Francisco, Diedre Conkling, FTF, coordinated the meeting. Following is the information about the women's groups that she compiled and distributed.

Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL)

COSWL was established by Council as a Council Committee on July 23, 1976. Committee initiatives include: continue to escalate concerns regarding salary ranges; prepare and publish *think piece* on the status of women in librarianship today; with other women's groups, plan program on salary negotiations for Annual 2001; with other women's groups, publish brochure on women's groups in ALA; and review charge.

To find out more about our mission and activities go to the website at <http://www.ala.org/coswl/>

Contact: Sarah Barbara Watstein, Director, Academic User Services, BCU Libraries, James Branch Cabel Library, 901 Park Ave., PO Box 842033, Richmond, VA 238402-33. Phone: (804)828-9136; fax (804)828-0141; email: swatstei@vcu.edu.

Feminist Task Force (SRRT/FTF)

ALA's SRRT Feminist Task Force (FTF) was founded in 1970 by women determined to address sexism in libraries and librarianship. FTF was the first ALA group to focus on women's issues. Other ALA women's groups fostered by FTF include the standing ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL), the Committee on Pay Equity, the RASD Discussion Group on Women's Materials and Women Library Users, the ACRL Women's Studies Section, and the LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group. The Feminist Task Force continues to be one of SRRT's largest and most active groups,

concerned with a broad, evolving set of feminist issues.

Check out our website at <http://www.lib.wayne.edu/ftf>. To join *FEMINIST*, the discussion list, send an email message to listserv@mitvma.mit.edu. The message should consist of the following line only: subscribe feminist. Insert your complete name after the word feminist.

Contacts: FTF Coordinator: Jennifer Baltes, 349 Point to Point Rd., Bel Air, MD 21015-8945. Phone: (410)638-4131; email: jenny_baltes@hotmail.com. FTF Coordinator-Elect: Sarah Dentan, 820 Oxford St., Berkeley, CA 94707. Phone: (510)644-6870; fax: (510)549-3057; email: sarahdentan@gurmail.com.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table (GLBTRT)

The GLBTRT was founded in 1970 as the Task Force on Gay Liberation. We are acknowledged as the nation's first gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered professional library community and the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered information and access needs of individuals at large. At ALA conferences we regularly sponsor programs, socials, and read alouds. One of our major activities is presenting two book awards (one for literature, one for non-fiction) to the best books with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered themes. Currently we have more than 195 members, but we are always looking for new faces. Visit our website: http://calvin.usc.edu/~trimmer/ala_hp.html.

Join our discussion list: to subscribe, send mail to listproc@ala.org with the text: subscribe glbtrt-l your name.

Contacts: Faye Chadwell, Head of Collection Development, 1299 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1299. Phone: (541)346-1819; fax: (541)346-3485; email: chadwell@oregon.uoregon.edu. Stephen Stratton, Social Sciences Librarian, James Branch Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University. Phone: (804)828-112; fax: (804)828-0151; email: sestratt@vcu.edu.

Women's Groups in ALA, Annual Conference 2001

Pay Equity Committee

The Pay Equity Committee was established by ALA Council on recommendation of the Special Presidential Committee on Pay Equity (1984-86). The charge of the committee is to (1) promote the visibility of the pay equity issue as it affects library workers, both to the profession and to outside groups; (2) act as a resource on the issue of the Association and its units; (3) develop and implement educational activities through conference programming, poster sessions, and publications; (4) continue active involvement and ALA representation in the National Committee on Pay Equity; (5) develop a national network of resource persons and provide information to state and local groups working to achieve pay equity; and (6) provide advisory support for pay equity litigation cases involving library workers. For more information go to <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/council/committees.html#equity>.

Contact E.J. Josey, 5 Bayard Road - #505, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-1905. Phone: (412)648-7001; fax: (412)648-7001; email: josey@lis.pitt.edu.

Women Administrators Discussion Group (LAMA)

The LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group provides a forum for discussion of problems of particular concern to women in administrative positions. Before each conference the chair asks members for possible discussion topics. A ballot is then sent out to decide on the topic. A short list of readings on the selected topic is sent out prior to the discussion. Recent topics have been Recruiting and Hiring—Where have all the librarians gone?; Cross-generational Team Building—Gen X and the Baby Boomers working together; Nurturing Creativity in the Workplace; and Servant Leadership (which led to co-sponsoring with the LAMA HRS Staff Development Committee an ALA program). Some information is available at <http://www.ala.org/lama/committees/div/wadmin.html>.

Contact Elizabeth A. Avery, Western State college,

Savage Library, 600 N. Adams, Gunnison, CO 81231. Phone: (970)943-2053; fax: (970)943-2042; email: bavery@western.edu.

Women's Studies Section (ACRL/WSS)

The Women's Studies Section of ACRL was formed to discuss, promote, and support women's studies collections and services in academic and research libraries. Areas of interest include Core Lists of women's studies resources; Serials and Books, Publication of research findings; Electronic access to materials; Cooperative collection development; Working with publishers of women's studies materials; Promoting library and information services to women; and Technological applications. The first meeting of the Women's Studies Section was at ALA Midwinter in January 1988. Membership has continued to grow at a rapid rate, and the section now has almost 1000 members, including women's studies specialists and many other librarians who are interested in topics and issues which impact this area of the profession.

Visit our website at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/wss/wsshp.html>. Subscribe to the discussion list by sending a message to listproc@ala.lala.org. Leave the subject blank, and in the body of the message enter: Subscribe WSS-L your name.

Contact Connie Phelps, University of New Orleans Library; email: cphelps@uno.edu.

Media Deliberately Misleads Readers

"Separating sexes increases test scores" is a headline from the 9/25/01 *Oregonian*. Most of the early part of the story gave credit for higher scores for some 4th-grade classes to putting boys and girls in separate classes.

It is only in the second half of the newspaper article that the reader discovers that "more time was devoted to math nad reading, the school day was lengthened by 20 minutes, and Wright [the principal] began seeking support and tutors outside the school.

It appears that the writer overlooked the many other factors that could have influenced the dramatic improvement.

Book Talk

Of the Modern Library top 100 novels of the twentieth century, only nine were written by women and only two made the top 50: Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* and Carson McCullers' *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. No book by a woman of color is on the list. So let's talk about the books by women and the women who created them!

Need a definition for feminism? Check out the one by bell hooks in *Feminism Is for Everybody*. "Most people have no understanding of the myriad ways feminism has positively changed all our lives," she claims in this work that demands a return to the "necessarily radical" politics of grassroots activism. In hooks' discussion of racism and elitism, she states, "While individual white women have incorporated an analysis of race into much feminist scholarship, these insights have not had as much impact on the day-to-day relations between white women and women of color." To have true feminism, we must deal with the interrelationship of gender, race, and class.

The latest award for British novelist and playwright Doris Lessing is the Asturias Prize for literature. The jury of the \$28,000 Spanish prize praised the 81-year-old writer as "an impassioned freedom fighter, who has spared no effort in her commitment to Third World causes, through literature and the personal experience of a hazardous biography." Lessing, whose books include *The Fifth Child* and *Love, Again*, earlier

was named the winner of the \$43,000 David Cohen British Literature Prize 2001. Her next novel, *The Sweet Dream*, is to have been published in September.

Kate Grenville won the Orange Prize, Britain's richest award for fiction, for her novel *The Idea of Perfection*. The award, which honors the best novel written by a woman and published in the United Kingdom, carries a \$42,300 prize. Grenville, one of Australia's best-known authors, has written six novels. She began her working life as a film editor but now teaches creative writing in Sydney.

Barbara Kingsolver, best-selling author of nine books, wants to change the world. "Throughout history, every movement toward a more peaceful and humane world has begun with those who imagined the possibilities," she said to explain her establishment of the Bellwether Prize for outstanding writing on social change.

The anonymously judged prize presents \$25,000 in even-numbered years to authors of unpublished manuscripts and guarantees them publication by a major publisher. The first winner, Donna M. Gershten, has her novel, *Kissing the Virgin's Mouth*, published by HarperCollins this year. According to Kingsolver, "The narrator uses her wits, sex, and femininity to suggest an alternative to victimization." For more information about this award, see www.bellwetherprize.org. (Ms., June/July 2001)

Eudora Welty, Pulitzer Prize Winner, Dies at 92

Eudora Welty, whose loving depictions of small-town Mississippi in richly crafted short stories and novels brought her international acclaim and a Pulitzer Prize, died July 23, 2001 at Baptist Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi.

Welty's vivid imagery and shrewd dialogue brought the South to life in "The Ponder Heart," "Losing Battles," and "The Optimist's Daughter," for which she won the Pulitzer in 1973. She also was praised for her heart-wrenching photographs of Depression-era Mississippi that showed the pride she saw among even the poorest people.

"She was exceptional, a beautiful writer, very knowing, measured," Nobel laureate Toni Morrison said. "There was a profound kind of intimacy in her writing that was not smart-alecky. She just understood people and revealed things about them economically." Welty was adored by critics, fellow writers and even musicians. Country star Nanci Griffith cited her as an influence, and an incident from Welty's memoir, *One Writer's Beginnings*, inspired Mary Chapin Carpenter to write the song and children's book *Halley Came to Jackson*.

(*The Oregonian*, 7/24/01)

Book Talk

Women have been the subject of popular music for centuries, but it was in the 60s that they were both objects of sex and romance, depending on whether you listened to the Rolling Stones or the Beatles. With this concentration on the typical "whore/virgin binary," ethnomusicologist Sheila Whitley looks at the "real woman" in the world of rock. Her book, *Women and Popular Music: Sexuality, Identity and Subjectivity* (Routledge) takes a look at prominent female musicians from Joni Mitchell to the Spice Girls in search of feminism. Great enthusiasm and persuasive speculation in the context of the political and artistic scene.

February 10 is V-Day. Last year 18,000 people New York's Madison Square Garden protested violence against women and celebrated the vagina thanks to Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. Three women out of 60 semi-finalists from 46 countries were also awarded grants to stop rape. Jennifer Jadwero, 13, of Kenya plans to start "Promote Youth Against Rape Clubs." Silke Pillinger and Karin Heisecke, both 28, of Germany will print anti-rape slogans and information on bread and pastry wrappings. Regine Bandler, 49, and Ana Bosch, 48, of Brazil will use their grant to provide theatrical workshops and other forums to change public opinion on sexism and sexual violence. For more information about their plans, check out *Ms.* (June/July 2001).

On April 17, 2001, Ann Telnaes won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning, making her the second woman to achieve this distinction. This prize is awarded for originality, editorial effectiveness, quality of drawing, and pictorial effect. The first woman to win this award was Signe Wilkinson. Her bold, stylized artwork appears in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*. Telnaes is a regular feature on the NOW (National Organization for Women) website because of her strong and insightful focus on women's issues, particularly reproductive rights. The cartoons also regularly appear on the Viewpoint page of the *National NOW Times*.

In *The Real Anita Hill* he [Brock] described her as incompetent, unstable, even kinky.

Where do we go from here? Following the confirmation of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court by a bare two votes, David Brock wrote a vitriolic book on his take of Anita Hill. In *The Real Anita Hill*, he described her as incompetent, unstable, even kinky. Now Thomas is on the court, Hill is at Brandeis, and Brock has recanted. Now he says he printed charges he knew were false, "dumping virtually every derogatory—and often contradictory—allegation I had collected on Hill into the vituperative mix" He falsely trashed evidence that Thomas had been a good customer of porno videos and falsely trashed Hill's supporters. Nearly 10 years has passed. And what should libraries do with Brock's books? Keep the second and trash the first? Keep both and cross reference? A very sticky question indeed.

Women's Resources International claims to be the most comprehensive women's studies resource available. Citations and abstracts are drawn from a variety of essential women's studies databases which range in coverage from classic works and core studies to the latest scholarship in feminist research. Source documents include related websites, internet documents, professional journals, conference proceedings, books, book chapters, government reports, theses, etc. covering feminist studies, women's rights, gender discrimination, sexuality, etc.

Many publications exist for women suffering in abusive relationships and from domestic violence. But there is almost nothing relevant for teenagers although the abuse almost always starts with women when they are young. When the non-profit Raphael House of Portland, Oregon, decided to write a booklet for teens called "Take Care," they wanted the audience to identify. So almost one-third of the information in the booklet is from youths suffering from physical and emotional abuse to make their point clear, according to editor Erika Wehrley, community education coordinator, who conducted focus groups and talked to local high school kids about their insights into teen relationship violence. To find out more about this booklet, contact Raphael House in Portland, Oregon.

Offerings from FEMINIST Listserv

The LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, a sister organization to ALA, gives unique aid to librarians who face workplace discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, age, disability, or place of national origin; fair employment practices; and professional and personal adversity due to their defense of intellectual freedom.

If you or someone you know faces a professional and personal challenge of this kind, go to <http://www.merrittfund.org> for an application. At the Merritt Fund Web site you also will find information about donating to the Fund and can learn more about Dr. LeRoy C. Merritt and the Fund established in his name. Information is available at (800)545-2433, press 1, then ext. 4226 or merritt@ala.org.

Another women's-issues web site has fallen into the hands of porn merchants, according to Mev Miller who forwards an email from Joan Korenman (U. of Md. Baltimore County). In the past, the National Coalition against Sexual Assault had the URL www.ncasa.org. Now, if you go to that URL, you'll see a big ENTER sign to click on. Like many porn sites, this one has arranged things so that attempts to return to the previous site or close the browser will trigger porn screens. (CTL-ALT-DEL will work, but simply clicking on the X to close the browser will trigger more porn.)

The most disturbing thing about this latest takeover is that many highly respected websites dealing with rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence, including support sites for survivors, recommend this site to their readers and contain links to it.

I just purchased a pocket pc and will be purchasing ebooks, wrote Deb Nordgren at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. She continues, I'm taking advantage of some of the free ebooks available also. I'm very frustrated that nearly all of the titles available are by male authors. Amazon.com has "Damsels in Distress" as a category of free ebooks! This is 2001, and this type of reference is clearly out of date. I have the same concern for contemporary publishing for purchased ebooks. As feminist librarians, I think we should try to influence publishers on this also. I'm very concerned that as we move to an all digital world that the "books" we need will be lost. I did write barnesandnoble.com and amazon.com and expressed my concern. Are there other strategies?

In writing Jenny Baltes about a co-sponsorship of a proposed program, Susan D. Kane, member of the ACRL Intellectual Freedom Committee, discussed a potential program for ALA 2002 in Atlanta.

"Last May, the EEOC issued a preliminary ruling in a case of eleven Minneapolis public Library employees who filed a year ago. They claimed that patron use of pornography created a hostile workplace environment and constituted sexual harassment. The EEOC agreed and ruled in their favor, and they should be entering a mediation process. The question of filtering was raised in this case, but I do not think the EEOC ruling required filters although some librarians in the case feel that they are necessary to truly answer their concerns. . . . The ruling has very wide implications, as obviously, university libraries are not exempt from the requirement to provide a harassment-free environment." More about this issue can be found in the article "Cyberlaw Journal: Controversial Ruling on Internet Filters," Carl S. Kaplan, 6/1/01, NYTimes on the web.

Felice Newman at Cleis Press is looking for help in creating a new book on women's sexuality, *The Whole Women's Sex Book*, for publication in 2002. This will feature brief, anonymous quotes from a diverse array of women addressing all aspects of women's sexuality. The book will be comprehensive, positive, sexy, and helpful and will reflect the concerns of ALL women—heterosexual, lesbian and bisexual, young and old, partnered and single, trans and traditionally gendered, sexually experienced and new to sexual exploration.

Newman would like to reach women who will complete a confidential questionnaire. Responses will be woven throughout the text, appearing anonymously. She may write back to ask additional questions and then will send a notice when the book comes out. Input will make this a great resource, one that will provide encouragement and support to thousands of women. Women willing to complete the questionnaire should contact Felice Newman at fnewman@cleispress.com.

In 1999, Newman wrote *The Whole Lesbian Sex Book: A Passionate Guide for All of Us*. *Library Journal's* review said, "Newman's sex guide for lesbians is superb. Why can't more heterosexual sex manuals be this good?" Now she plans to answer LJ's question.

Notes from FTF Meeting at Annual Conference

Saturday, June 16

The Feminist Task Force met three times at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. The first meeting, part of the SSRT All-Task Force Meeting on Saturday, June 16, was a casual discussion of direction and input into the agendas for the next two, more intensive meetings. Because people are limited to participation in one SSRT task force meeting at the All-Task Force Meeting, FTF has decided to schedule two other meetings during the Annual conference.

Sunday, June 17

The discussion regarding conflict time was continued at the Sunday, June 17, meeting. There was emphasis that FTF make every attempt to not conflict with such meetings as those scheduled by COSWL, LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group and Women's Studies Section/ACRL. Coordinator Jenny Baltes will communicate with coordinators of other women's ALA groups to try to schedule meetings at Midwinter with a minimum of conflicts. The FEMINIST listserv and *Women in Libraries (WIL)* will ask for input on issues to address at future meetings.

Sherre Harrington, Media Review Editor for *WIL*, asked for input for choosing materials to review. In the past, *WIL* has concentrated its books reviews on publications from small women's presses. With the loss of several presses resulting in a dearth of material from these sources, there may be a need to expand the criteria for books reviewed. Peer women's presses were identified as Seal Press, Calyx, and Naiad; however, many feminist writers are published by male-owned presses. It was decided to stay with small presses if at all possible to highlight materials that librarians would not find reviewed in the mainstream reviewing literature. Sherre will contact Charles Willett at *Counterpoise* and Pat Kelly at Publishers Group West to locate more alternative press titles.

Another discussion point was the Amelia Bloomer Project, an annual list of recommended books for young readers featuring feminist messages; i.e., empowered and empowering female characters to begin in January 2002. Chair Jenny Baltes announced that procedures and nomination criteria had been refined in the meeting on the day before and that the current list of nominations had been evaluated. Lauren Wohl at Winslow Press has offered to help with publi-

cizing the list. The project members are searching for nominations: books must have been published since June 2000 and show quality and interest for readers up to age 18. Nominations can be sent to Nel Ward, 107 SW Coast Street, Newport, OR 97365 or nward@beachhousebb.com by October 31, 2001.

Other items included the promotion of the Lynn Romer program on that evening about how lookism enters the workplace and affects hiring, promotion, and firing practices. The FTF website also needs updating. Jenny Baltes will ask Adrienne if she wishes to continue maintaining the website. There should also be a link on the FTF website to the Amelia Bloomer Project website.

Monday, June 18

The first discussion at the Monday, June 18, meeting was a review of the notes from the Introduction to Women's Issues meeting. One issue that came up was a mentoring program for new women librarians. Deb Gilchrist had developed and coordinated one in the past; it was reported to be successful but very labor intensive.

Jenny will send the notes from the Issues meeting to coordinators of ALA women's groups to ask which of these issues might be their charge. They will also be sent to all attendees, along with a "we need you!" reminder to join FTF, subscribe to *Women in Libraries*, join SSRT, and subscribe to FEMINIST (listserv). The notes will also be sent to FEMINIST to solicit ideas for conference programs.

The last part of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of programs for ALA Annual 2002 in Atlanta. Ideas are as follows:

A young readers' author—perhaps someone whose work is on the Amelia Bloomer list

How men feel "deprived" because of feminism with strides made in women's rights

How legislation, such as the new fetal bill is claimed to be protecting women, yet destroys their rights

Women's Night Out, perhaps with local musicians

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