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Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship

(COSWL) 

1997 Midwinter Conference

Washington, D.C.

Summary

Saturday, February 15, 1997: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.; Hyatt Hotel, Burnham Room

Committee Present:

Naomi Caldwell-Wood, chair; Coleen J. Sullivan, ALA-OLPR Staff Liaison, Sherrie Bergman, Helga Borck, Susan Freiband, Betsey Kruger, Theresa Tobin, Trellis Wright and Narda Tafuri - Intern.

Guests:

G. Margaret Porter, Rebecca Graham, Cynthia Churchwell, Peggy Sherry.

There was a change in the original agenda order as outlined by chair, Naomi Caldwell-Wood. The first agenda item was switched to item number 3, Discussion of COSWL.

Discussion of COSWL

The Committee discussed with Coleen Sullivan, Director of OLPR and ALA Staff Liaison, the need for the Committee to receive a schedule of all women's groups that are meeting during the ALA Annual and Midwinter conferences. In addition, the Committee would like some Conference Planning help. It was felt that there was a need to minimize times other women's groups conflict with each other. Theresa Tobin indicated that the Committee wanted to see the "big picture". Naomi said that if we had a schedule of the other women's groups that are meeting we could funnel ourselves out to meet with these other groups. The Feminist Task Group was perceived as being most critical. Coleen indicated that now groups are being asked to funnel things more through their liaisons.

Betsey Kruger indicated that a book contract has been negotiated with Scarecrow Press for the 4th edition of *On Account of Sex Bibliography*. She asked if Coleen needed a copy for ALA's files. Betsey also asked if there was funding available from OLPR for a student to type the manuscript. Coleen said that a copy of the contract would be good for the records and that there may be money for someone to type the manuscript. Coleen also indicated that the Report on Gender and Ethnicity report was now overdue. Susan Freiband stated that it would be helpful to identify those kinds of publications that have come out on women and gender in the past from ALA. Coleen said that she would look in the ALA Library to see if a list was available.

Coleen stated that the Executive Director of ALA wanted a Diversity Initiative and that there was \$1.5 million in unallocated money set aside for this task. There has been a delay in the recruitment of a Diversity Officer for ALA. Part of the problem has been in defining the role. Trellis indicated that part of the problem in locating such a person may be the salary the organization is willing to allocate as corporations are paying top dollar for such individuals. Coleen stated that the Diversity Officer's salary was based on the ALA's Assistant Director's salary. A few candidates were found, but perhaps salary is an issue that needs to be addressed. Coleen was asked to supply the Committee with the following items: List of Women's Groups Meetings, Conference Planning assistance, a list of ALA women's groups publications, and support for manuscript typing.

Coleen indicated that the new ALA President, Barbara Ford, wants to open doors to having more interns. Naomi asked what the procedure was for rolling an intern into a full member. Coleen indicated that right now there is no procedure, but the chair of a committee can make a recommendation.

Naomi asked what the best way would be of having people appointed to the Committee and what could be done for people wanting to stay on the Committee. Coleen indicated that appointing Committee members and chairs was at the ALA President's discretion. However, the Committee could make recommendations to the President. An ALA Handbook for chairs and liaisons will be coming out and may help aid new chairs that do not have experience. Coleen asked Naomi what kind of training she received as a new committee chair. Naomi indicated that she had not received any training. Coleen indicated that there was a need to look at orientation for new committee chairs. Naomi indicated that it would have been helpful to know who to call and to have guidelines. Sherrie Bergman indicated that there were two issues. First, new ALA chairs and the need for their orientation and second, the history of work of COSWL. G. Margaret Porter indicated that terms are not staggered so people leave and come in all at once. Coleen indicated that the terms are staggered, however, sometimes people leave mid-term creating the problem of new people starting all at the same time. Theresa indicated that as Committee members perhaps we could do some outreach to past Committee members. Naomi suggested that perhaps we could have a women's group forum and invite past members to talk to us. Coleen indicated that there was money for such an event.

Sherrie Bergman, Helga Borck, and Theresa Tobin volunteered to put together a women's forum. Coleen will get together a list of who was on COSWL for the last 4 years. It was suggested that Susannah Hildenbrandt be asked to write an article for *Library Journal* on COSWL. Trellis indicated that Susannah's history and knowledge of the Committee make her the logical choice to write such an article.

Update Bibliography/Clearinghouse Task Force

Naomi asked Coleen for a copy of the current Bibliography/Clearinghouse Task Force. Coleen said that she would provide a copy of the current list. Betsey Kruger reported that the 4th edition of *On Account of Sex Bibliography* has a manuscript deadline date of August 1998. Sixteen people collected information in order to create the manuscript. A contract was signed with Scarecrow Press to do the publication rather than with ALA because ALA needed to realize at least \$30,000 in profit in order to sponsor a publication. Naomi asked how much the publication would cost. Betsey said that the last edition was about \$50.00. This time someone will be covering German and Slavic publications. Also there will be different indexes to the bibliography including a geographical index. Expected publication date will be the end of 1998.

Update Advancing Library Leadership Task Force

Helga Borck indicated the Committee's desire to set up a preconference meeting at the next ALA Annual conference in Washington, D.C. in 1998. She asked Coleen what kind of support we could receive from ALA's Staff Liaison office. Coleen indicated that her office would assist with planning, time, location, and equipment needs. Naomi indicated that she would distribute any information that Coleen provided via e-mail and snail mail. Naomi also indicated that the current list of Task Force members was incorrect in the ALA Organization

Handbook.

A one day preconference on Advancing Women in Library Leadership is being set up for the Washington, D.C. ALA Annual conference in 1998. Catherine Dison and Maureen Sullivan from ARL are helping to organize this event. Claire Beck will contact Naomi regarding funding. Helga indicated that the preconference will differ from the ARL seminar for managers in that it will be distilled into a one day event. She said that many people could not get support for the original ARL 3-day seminar. Naomi asked what issues would be addressed. Helga indicated that the following issues would be covered: identifying leadership characteristics; identifying leadership stereotypes; identifying individual management styles; developing action plans and the power of networking. Helga stated that it was hoped that the preconference would draw a very broad audience. Sherrie stated that someone from the public libraries should be brought into the planning to make sure that the program is broad enough. Helga stated that the issue of cosponsorship should come to the full Committee for discussion at the annual conference. Naomi asked if sexual harassment in the workplace would be brought up as a topic at the preconference. Helga said that so far it hasn't been mentioned but she will bring it up. Naomi said that the Task Force has the Committee's support and thanks them for their work.

Honoring notable COSWL Committee Member(s) and Margaret Myers

Sherrie Bergman asked if anyone knew if Margaret had a tapeplayer in Africa so that an audiotape of the event could be sent to her. Susan Freiband suggested that someone read and record an acknowledgment from San Francisco. Sherrie asked if the Committee should do anything to honor Liz Fuetes. Naomi said that there is a committee that has been formed to give an award in honor of Liz Fuetes. Susan suggested that the Committee could invite a festschrift in her honor, inviting friends to write essays about what she accomplished. This might be a future publication. Sherrie noted that perhaps the proper way to proceed with this suggestion was to contact Pat Conway. Betsey Kruger said that a bibliography would be appropriate and that she would look into it. Naomi said that she would contact Pat Conway.

ALA/COSWL Homepage

Naomi asked the Committee if COSWL should have a presence on the ALA Homepage with international and national links for women. She indicated that Dan Lewis is currently the technical person for ALA's homepage. Cynthia Churchwell indicated that this would be a possibility, but we as a Committee would have to think about what we wanted the page to say. Naomi indicated that we could send HTML files to Dan and he would load them up. The Committee would not have webmaster responsibilities. Only one other ALA group has a presence on ALA's web site. Helga stated that to create a web page takes a certain amount of work, to maintain it takes a constant responsibility. Naomi said that individuals should be able to go to the web and learn about the Committee and the documents that we have produced. Trellis suggested that our site should also include other women's groups. Sherrie indicated that ALA should be pressured to supply staff support to create the Committee's web page. The Committee should be cautious about doing ALA's work and taking on too much responsibility. Naomi asked if the Committee wanted her to go back to ALA and express these concerns. Sherrie asked that the following concerns be addressed by ALA: What is ALA doing about transferring information onto the web? ; What will be the role of Committees in making recommendations and shaping the content of what appears on ALA's web site?

Funds for Americas Libraries

Kay Tavill will meet with COSWL on Sunday, February 16th to discuss funding. Naomi had asked if it was possible for the Committee to solicit funding from outside of the organization to set up the preconference.

Ask a Working Woman Program and Survey

Naomi said that Alegre Macmanus works with women's groups in Washington, D.C. and is knowledgeable

about this survey and would like to speak to the Committee tomorrow (Sunday).

Annual Program

Helga asked if there would be an annual program in San Francisco. Naomi indicated that the chair for the San Francisco program committee was not here. She had sent messages but had not received a response. Naomi indicated that the breakfast could be used as the annual program in lieu of something more formal.

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