

Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL)

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ALA 2005 Annual Conference Meeting Notes (6/24/05)

Present:

D. Davis (staff liaison)

C. Frazer

A. Gooden

S. Ladner

M. Richardson

S. Voeller

R. Wilkinson (incoming COSWL member)

S. Yeo

M.M. Brown

The initial discussion focused on having a committee member facilitate the June 25 11:30-12:30 program "Ways We Dis Each Other – Creating Successful Women's Solidarity;" the committee wanted the facilitator to explain the objective of the session, which was to discuss the ways women mistreat each other in the workplace

COSWL move to APA

M.M. Brown reported on a telephone conversation she had with Lorelle Swader on 6/23/05. The Committee on Organization proposed COSWL move from ALA to APA based on COSWL's association with pay/pay equity issues. M.M.Brown brought the following draft memo for ALA Council to the 6/25/05 meeting:

ALA's Committee on Organization has proposed COSWL move from ALA to APA. This proposal is related to COSWL's long history of advocacy about pay equity and increased pay for library personnel. I have written a draft of an information only report for ALA Council. My view is COSWL is not a pay equity only committee. Our work, especially in the past 2-4 years, has been to uncover, examine and discuss collectively the behavioral, cultural and social origins of negative female behavior, e.g., women not negotiating their salaries and asking other women not to negotiate so that they won't have an advantage. We disseminate information on these discussions through our website, our programs and in committee

Issues identified by Myra Michele Brown re: COSWL staying in ALA:

- the committee examines the emotional, psychological, cultural and social issues related to working

women, esp. women in librarianship

- the governing body of a feminized profession needs to have a committee charged with exploring the range of issues that impact women in the workplace
- putting COSWL in APA limits the direction and scope of its advocacy

COSWL members agreed unanimously that the committee remain in ALA, for the following reasons:

- COSWL addresses gender issues that go beyond pay/pay equity
- there are many other issues that affect women, not just pay/pay equity
- what are the advantages to COSWL of a move to APA?
- COSWL examines many issues, including diversity, the image of librarians, the lack of librarians of color
- COSWL looks at the many issues that affect women which are the result of a persistent patriarchal societal mindset

2006 Annual Conference program ideas:

1. "which woman are we talking about?" S. Yeo began this discussion, that COSWL ought to look at some of librarianship's underdiscussed professional issues, e.g., class differences; ethnicity, different cultural backgrounds, challenges faced by female librarians with young children. The younger librarian as parent is an issue for several current COSWL members.
2. it was suggested COSWL have a panel discussion in 2006 dealing with motherhood and class.
3. address the fashion (or lack thereof, depending on your viewpoint) of librarians, e.g., people's reactions to differently attired librarians; examine the social and psychological implications of dress.
4. diversity; are certain groups pushed into certain areas of the profession. This program would examine race and white privilege as it relates to librarianship.
5. domestic violence. Just a few weeks before the 2005 annual conference, a Cincinnati area public librarian was murdered by her husband. This program would look at the various issues related to domestic violence.

I have a note re: COSWL midwinter program, that the committee's choice was Friday (afternoon or evening). if anyone recalls the specifics, send that information to Lorelle Swader.

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