

Committee on the Status of Women In Librarianship

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Meeting Notes

American Library Association

2006 Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA

June 2006

COSWL Meeting 1

COSWL Program: COSWL at 30 Years: Celebrating Our Roots and Visioning Our Future on Sunday, June 25, 2006 from 1:30 – 3:30 in Morial Convention Center room 346-347

83% female in librarianship Discussion of American Libraries article: Information Science: Not Just for Boys Anymore

Passed out *The ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship: An Examination of its History and Impact* a Master's paper from UNC-Ch by Ruth Ann Cranfield in 1993.

On Account of Sex... what contractual agreements made with Scarecrow? Can we consider electronic format?

Salary Survey: connection to ALA-APA is important because of salary issue. (Lower salary b/c of feminized profession) Can we include gender on salary surveys

FTF is looking into the issue of the male dominance of conference presentation.

Feminist group work breakdown:

COSWL as policy

ACRL with big arm of ACRL

FTF as grassroots with funding

One issue, how to tie the three together?

Part of our mission is to keep ALA and librarians informed of women's issues in librarianship. We do this through the website. We're going to start a blog.

- Also good for marketing to be on the leading edge/marketing
- Also good for creating our history
- Also good for institutional memory

- Also good for keeping our issues on the forefront.
 - We can include an RSS Feed.
 - We'd also like to digitize COSWL archives and put them on our site.
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COSWL Meeting 2

Teresa Tobin: Project to look at gender at conferences

FTF list ask why ALA program presenters are always full of men when ratio is more women

Suggested: research project to compile data on it

Six (6) people besides Deloris Feditian (she is a social scientist & librarian) have volunteered to work on it. We're looking to have it broadly between FTF, WSS, and COSWL

Need today from COSWL: a point person to go to on research project. Deborah and John can participate. ShinJoung will be point person and will participate start by initiating scope>

Sharyn said so glad that we're participating in research. She could tell from program yesterday that the decision to digitize is a good one. We've got to make this fugitive information available.

ALA-APA just announced they'll have a gender column on their salary survey. The annual ALA one does not look at gender. We need to look at gender and by type and by geography.

Another issue that came out: Issue of work/family balance

How do you create professional positions that are part time (with benefits and professional career development opportunities) for MLS people? Teresa Tobins had a job share position, 6 people have participated

Survey on this?

Collect antidotal evidence then decide what kind of study can be done on this?

Maybe not right now...a lot on our plate.

Scheduling meeting for next year

Won't propose program for annual, but may join up with other feminist group saturday and tuesday meets both annual and midwinter

publicity through emeans (blog, etc)

through publication (ex. ala-apa publication_

2008 join with fff, wss, and ala-apa on salary

Would focus solely on salary survey bring back argument to move COSWL to ALA-APA?

Talk about verbal abuse and domestic violence in a feminized profession

- Surely some of us are dealing with this
- Look to future and give women tools to deal with these issues

A lot of what we're looking at is looking at what we've done, not our future and present

- Sharyn work on institutional history project & timeline
- Follow up on salary survey timeline/see what ala is doing regarding looking at salary and gender
- A booth at ALA Annual?
 - at booth can find out about concerns people have
 - collect antidotal stories
 - have to look into budget information/can we get money
 - good case: dissemination of research, asking for information from people, saying we don't have a program

tools program, policy/standards

Blog: can everyone get a log in and access?

I'll post once a week to keep it rolling

send out the how-to email

Can we look into getting students to do some of these projects? practicum?

Look at what we've done. Should we reestablish any of these?

1. digitize
2. timeline

3. salary survey

4. bibliography

COSWL Program

COSWL at 30 Years: Celebrating Our Roots and Visioning Our Future

Sharyn Ladner, University of Miami, Chair, COSWL moderated.

- Drew attention to the COSWL Masters Paper: *The ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship: An Examination of its History and Impact* by Ruth Ann Canfield
- Discussed some of the history of feminism within ALA.
- Started with what is now FTF, then COSWL

- Read our charge
- Put out a plea for contribution of COSWL papers, memories, oral history to ALA archives
- We would like to digitize this and make it available on our website.

Kathleen de la Pena McCook, Distinguished University Professor, University of South Florida

- 1998 univ. of south florida became extremely partisan, union dismantled, who knows who is running the univ. in florida anymore. so McCook stepped down, joined the union, during that time appt. dist. prof. only one in the union. florida run by greed. republican colonies called the "villages". there are 36 dist. faculty & 6 women. male domination of systems leads to competition (for raises, etc)
- Represents the oldest COSWL chair here.
- Asked if we knew who Clara Jones is.
- First African American woman to become president of ALA
- Was president twice.
- Was president when COSWL first started.
- Wasn't part of COSWL, but was important to us as women and to women of color.

- COSWL got a grant, did oral history of 10 women of color.
 - Transcripts sat in an office for about ten years. When Margaret Myers retired, transcripts were redeemed and Kathleen de la Pena McCook edited and cleaned up to publication speed.
 - Last big boundary project of COSWL
 - COSWL should rethink that. We don't get multicultural leadership we need across the board.

- COSWL should do better about preserving women's history
- Website should have pictures, etc, of firsts for women in librarianship

- Pointed out recent discussion of gender issues in ALA leadership
 - COSWL should keep this in the forefront because we're overarching.
 - A lot is happening in is ethnic caucuses.
 - Women are columnists in AL, but focus on feel-good/features, men do philosophy, future of profession, technology, etc.

- Anita Shiller
 - One of the great women of librarianship.
 - Pointed out problems of gender in librarianship

- Organized around issues of national concern
 - 1978 passed a resolution that could not meet in states that hadn't ratified the ERA
 - No ALA conferences in Chicago
 - created a plan to move ALA out of Illinois

- Connections to other associations
 - Consistent and strong relationships with other women's groups.
 - This is why it's so important for COSWL to make statements on current political issues (like nomination of Alito and Roberts)

- COSWL is more important than ever.

Sarah Watstein, Associate University Librarian for Research & Instructional Services, UCLA Library

- If she had to title this she'd call it one of these two:
 - Are You Girls Working This Corner
 - Someone asked her and a friend that here

- Because of Conflicts...

- Came though she had personal reasons not to come because came up through COSWL.
 - Colleagues said to come but said couldn't come because of conflict
 - In 2000 there was a core values task force in ALA looking at conceptual and philosophical issues.
 - Also Committee decided to launch a website, first ALA committee to have a website
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- Controversial decision: ALA didn't post salary ranges
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- 2001 Annual: Shadow Negotiating in Prof. Environment program
 - not well attended
 - people do not know about how to negotiate about salary and benefits
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- Really big thing wrestled with in 2000 was
 - A guy was on the committee (Ernie?) and said there is no problem for women in lib.
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- threw down the gauntlet and derailed agenda of committee and persisted
 - but in fact, COSWL was struggling with own visibility
 - hidden and inactivity led to the assumption that there was no problem
 - Ironic outcome: allied professional association was born
 - in same year nancy ? asked to review charge - All of this lead to enhanced visibility
 - Bibliography
 - part of challenge deals with a bibliographic record of gender and library issues
 - Started with SRRT

ShinJoung Yeo, Reference Librarian, Stanford University, and the incoming COSWL Chair

- Poster of CEOs thanked (Info field) mostly white men
 - who controls information, knowledge, library field?
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- There is some movement in a good direction, but not enough
 - Equality is still an issue

- Does our career liberate us?
- Work is patriarchal. Can a salary at a rural library afford to raise a family?

- Gender issues are compounded by racial problems.
 - Ask who is not in meetings, look at who is in what position in the workplace.

- In order to move our goal of equality forward need to work on issues shared by all women
 - Pointed out political state re: abortion

- How has shift of information technology changed women's role?
 - To shed feminized stereotype we embrace masculine technology.
 - Some of us call ourselves "knowledge broker" or "information specialist."
 - What job in librarianship devalued, and why, through technology shift?
 - As information more easily accessible, libraries loose status. We should be public advocates for everyone to have equal access
 - time to think where we go from here:
 - Educate women and men on women's issue and how it can affect their lives.
 - Continue to produce literature that points out inequality and put in public forum.
 - We need to reclaim vital role in librarianship to make information accessible to everyone.
 - We need to build collation within ALA with groups of similar issues and outside of ALA as well.
 - As long as women in general are not valued in society, librarianship's status won't improve. We need to work both in and out of librarianship.

Q&A

KdIPM: ALA officers frequently come up through council level committees, COSWL Chair might be more visible and boundary spanning than being president of a division

KdIPM first appt was COSWL chair

How do we put COSWL on the map of things people really want to do at ALA?

SW IFLA committee on status of women in librarianship and it was disbanded

Audience member: Indiana Lib. Fed div of women in Indiana libraries web team, posters at conference, link to other women's groups finding a lot of information is lost Andrea Morrison

Ded. Concl. pointed out. Marie Jones tracking down *Women in Libraries*.

Loranne Roy came in and pointed out that she was a former member of COSWL

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ALA American Library Association

50 E. Huron St. Chicago IL 60611 | 1.800.545.2433

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