Women in Archives: The Status of Women in the Academic Professions

By ELSIE FREEMAN FREIVOGEL

SINCE 1968 nearly forty women's caucuses and committees on the status of women have been organized in professional societies, including the historical and library professions. These caucuses have produced studies on the career patterns of women that, far from minimizing the differences between their education, work habits, and career expectations and those of men, have sought to document these patterns. To give shape to a similar examination of the career status of women in the archival profession, it would be useful to review the activities of these groups, twenty-three of whom the writer has corresponded with, to whom much of the credit must go for searching out and publicizing the gross educational and employment discrimination practiced against women by universities and academically related businesses and industries.[1]

From several excellent studies of academic and career women and from a mass of documentation available from government agencies and women's rights organizations, we can sketch a profile of the full-time academic woman and her more ubiquitous sister, the professional woman, which disproves many of our popular notions about women and work.

Most women, so the myth goes, marry, stay home, and rear children. The facts are otherwise, says the Department of Labor.

The author, assistant curator of manuscripts at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, was formerly head of the manuscript division at Washington University Libraries. Her "Lilly Martin Spencer: Feminist without Politics" is in the forthcoming *Archives of American Art Journal.* A member of the National Organization for Women and an organizer of the Maryland Women's Political Caucus, she read this paper at the 1972 annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Columbus, Ohio, where she was also elected to the Society's Council.

1 This number represents names of organizations reported to the American Association of University Professors, 1 Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C., from whom a list can be obtained. The American Association of University Women, 2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., maintains a similar list.

Women make up 40 percent of the work force, and of those women in that 40 percent who are of marriageable age, one-third are single. Ten percent of these working women head families, and more than half of the mothers in the labor force have children under eighteen. Furthermore, the more education a woman has, the more likely she is to work. Of women between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age who have four years of college, two out of five work. Of those with five years of college, two out of three work. As these well-educated women grow older, they are even more likely to draw salaries: eight out of ten women between the ages of forty-five and fifty-four with five years of college are employed. If our model woman holds a Ph.D. and teaches, says Helen Astin, the chances are nine out of ten that she was at work in her field eight years after she won the doctorate and eight out of ten that she did not once interrupt her career for any reason, including childbirth. Her rate of job change will be the same as, but no greater than, that of a male counterpart.

Neither is it true that baby has come a long way—quite the reverse. In 1920, women won about 15 percent of the country's doctorates; today they receive about 10 percent, though the total number of students has increased greatly. If our model woman holds the Ph.D., the evidence is good that to get into graduate school at all, she was academically superior to her male counterpart. Graduate admissions officers are frank to admit both the academic excellence of women who apply for graduate school admission and their own tendency to assess a woman's credentials more critically than a man's. Even more useful are figures offered by the Committee on the Status of Women in the American Political Science Association. One out of five women in graduate schools studied by the committee was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, but only one out of twelve men. One-third of the women graduate students in the field took their undergraduate degrees with honors, but only one-fourth of the men did so. Two-thirds of the men, on the other hand, graduated with no honors, compared with one-half of the women.

Along the way, she could have observed the attrition rate among women in graduate school, amounting to 20 percent in all fields. More immediately troubling to her was the absence of women at higher ranks whom she could seek out for counsel and sponsorship. In sociology, for example, 30 percent of the doctorates go to women, but only 1 percent of faculty in top graduate schools are women. In history 13 percent of recent doctorates are held by women, but women comprise about 1 percent of the faculties in major graduate

schools. In languages, 55 percent of doctoral candidates are women, but fewer than 10 percent are full professors. She might look anywhere in academe and find this curious disparity: at Stanford, 15 percent of 1969 graduate students but only 2 percent of the full professors are women, and at Columbia, which has had for many years a complement of 20 percent women in its graduate programs, 2 percent of the full professors are women. Later, looking back on this disproportionate reserve of women trained in graduate school but spurned at the hiring gate, she will respond with wonder verging on contempt to her department chairman's complaint that he cannot find qualified women for jobs.

She probably got her first job with a minimum of help from her department chairman or thesis advisor. Having landed on the anthill, she will not like the view. She is most likely to find herself at a junior college or undergraduate institution, teaching undergraduate subjects. She can expect to remain an instructor or assistant professor longer than her male colleagues, whether or not she is married, teaching in a so-called woman's field or woman's college, and publishing. Though she will spend more time in teaching than in research, compared with her male colleagues, she will publish. Helen Astin reports that the typical woman with a doctorate has published three or four articles; 75 percent have published at least one article; 13 percent have published eleven or more. In spite of their publication record, fewer than one-tenth of all women faculty members ever become full professors, though one-fourth of all men do so. In history, for example, 32 percent of 1969 women with doctorates started out as lecturers or instructors, though only 5 percent of males with doctorates began at this level. Seventy-seven percent of the men, on the other hand, but only 47 percent of the women, entered as assistant professors. If our model teaches languages and literature, she is four times more likely than her male colleague to be employed in a community college than on a graduate school faculty. A study by L. R. Harmon confirms this view of limited career opportunity. Among twenty-year veterans of academe who hold the Ph.D. in social sciences, says Harmon, nine out of ten men hold full professorships, but only five out of ten single women and four out of ten married women do so. It is not surprising that the academic woman is convinced that her sex, and not the special disabilities of marriage, estranges her from the career expectations of men.

Whatever her rank, she will make less money than her male counterpart. Differences in salary will vary within fields, but the fact remains constant: after ten years of professional experience, her

salary will be $1,500 less, whatever her rank, than that of a comparable man. The difference will widen, rather than narrow, as she ages; by the time she is forty the salary difference may be as much as $2,200.

Her rank and salary may be her most visible job disadvantages, but her isolation from the sources of information and influence in her department and profession affect her more profoundly. Though she will do her share of committee work and belong to at least one professional society, she is cut off, largely because she is a woman, from the camaraderie of male professionals—lunch, drinks, vocabulary included—a situation less a result of overt discrimination than of deep societal attitudes toward women as strangers. As a result, she is denied much of the professional information which comprises the conversation of her colleagues. It is not surprising, then, that a faculty woman is less likely to hold an influential committee post than a man, to be an officer or committeewoman in her professional society, or to be offered a temporary appointment at another campus, a joint appointment, a consulting position, or a review panel appointment. She is a victim of what sociologist Jessie Bernard calls the "stag effect," a phenomenon that limits not only her participation in professional gossip, but also her access to ideas, the very stuff of her field.

If our model woman is not an academic, but one of the 1 percent of women who are engineers, 3 percent who are lawyers, or 7 percent who are physicians, she shares with her academic sisters their low salary, limited promotion potential, and exclusion from those formal and social connections which make her mobile and influential. She is likely to find herself in some specialty designated by her profession as a woman's field: if in law, matrimonial law or trusts and estates; if in medicine, pediatrics or gynecology. She suspects, and rightly so, that the low prestige of these specialties results from their having been typed as women's fields. Whatever her profession, she is more likely to work with its housekeeping and service functions than to be in touch with its interagency or policy-making affairs. In her darker moments, she sees an analogy between the internal, domestic nature of her job and the notion that women run the house and men run the world.[2]

[2] The sources used for the statistics in this profile are among the basic studies of women in the work place done since the revival of the women's movement in the early 1960's. The studies are frequently cited, and their methodology is commonly used. They are Helen Astin, *The Woman Doctorate in America: Origins, Career, and Family* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969); Jessie Bernard, *Academic Women* (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Press, 1966); Carolyn Bird, *Born Female: The*

If our model woman finished college soon after the Korean War, when the national interest in hiring returned veterans and increasing domestic consumption dictated that women move out of the offices and classrooms into the suburbs and shopping centers, she may not perceive her present situation as one of sex discrimination, but may instead accept male judgments of her. She may think, for example, that she does not produce enough, that she is a deviant for being in her field at all, or, if she is married, that she is being justly punished for trying to combine family and an active career. She may hedge the issue: she'll tell you that she knows some women are discriminated against, but she is not, or that whatever brakes have been put on her career are the result of her own limitations, or that she has values other than career ones. The more active she is professionally, however, the more likely she is than her less active women colleagues to see her situation as the result of discrimination. In a dispassionate moment, she may echo the view of one woman, well placed in the educational system, that she hopes to see the day that a mediocre woman can get as far as a mediocre man.

The younger career woman, like the older woman, prefers to work under any circumstances, though she knows this willingness decreases her job negotiability. Married or not, she wants a career and is less likely than an older woman to assume that marriage should provide her a living. Her age makes her a product of the social science atmosphere of the universities; her associations may make her a feminist. In either case she views her situation in institutional, not personal, terms and may seek political solutions to what in an earlier dispensation she might have regarded as a personal problem.

It is this view—that society manipulates certain minorities, including women, to ends which are useful to some parts of society but inimical to many women—which characterizes the New Feminism. Its origins, historical as well as personal, are worth cataloging.

High Cost of Keeping Women Down (New York: David McKay Co., 1970); Cynthia Epstein, *Woman's Place: Options and Limits in Professional Careers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Patricia A. Graham, "Women in Academe," *Science* 169 (September 1970): 1284; Alice S. Rossi, "Status of Women in Graduate Departments of Sociology, 1968–1969," *American Sociologist,* 5 (February 1970): 1; Michael A. LaSorte, "Academic Salaries: Equal Pay for Equal Work?" *Journal of Higher Education,* 42 (April 1971): 265; Beatrice Dinerman, "Sex Discrimination in Academia," *Journal of Higher Education,* 42 (April 1971): 253; publications of the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, 1969–71, available upon request; Philip E. and Jean M. Converse, "The Status of Women as Students and Professionals in Political Science," *Political Science,* 65 (Summer 1971): 328; and other reports of committees on the status of women, obtained by the writer through correspondence and cited elsewhere in this article.

The success of the recent women's rights movement in this country, and we must count it a success of some potential, is not entirely a matter of volition or even hard work. It has arisen within the context of the civil rights movement of the 1950's, the activism of the young as a political minority, revived interest in consumer rights, and support of the rights of the poor and disestablished. Particularly pertinent to the situation of women is the lowered birth rate and, even more important, the medical means for keeping it low. The writer, a convinced feminist, finds it hard but necessary to admit that the pressure in this country toward zero population growth represents an impulse outside the feminist movement which is indispensable to it. With fewer children to care for and increased access to vocational and professional training, women are more likely than ever before to become full-time careerists. Statistics mentioned earlier on the worklife of college educated women confirm this view. Less overt but in the end more pervasive is the changing attitude of Americans toward the quality of their lives, an attitude which ultimately adopts a more humane ideal: a greater concern with moral, aesthetic, and interpersonal aspects of life and a lessening of its competitive, aggressive, and violent aspects, more often identified with the masculine mystique and certainly with male careerism. Men need help too, say the feminists, in dealing with the departmentalization of their emotional and public lives which society has required of them.

Certainly the women's rights movement is full of stories of establishment values and competition. Nevertheless, any predictions about the future of the feminist movement must be seen in the larger view of our present national preoccupation with the human and environmental waste which has accompanied our longstanding ideas of individualism, progress, and order, all essentially masculine fictions. To the extent that we have a counterculture, it is "feminine" in outlook.

Academic women are active in two directions. The first deals with course and research content. Historians are reexamining the forces which in the past have shaped gender roles: the family, marriage, and medical and religious institutions, for example. Men and women in the social sciences are calling for new research into sex differences and the effect of male-dominated psychiatric practices upon women's self-image and expectations and for a revision of the traditional psychiatric view that women are defective men. Literary scholars are reanalyzing the relations between men and women as they are portrayed in literature.

The second stream is political. Women are documenting their

experiences in graduate school and at work, comparing this information with the policies and practices of their employers and professional societies, and taking their findings to court. Since 1968, for example, the Women's Equity Action League (WEAL) has filed complaints of sex discrimination under Executive Order 11246 (as amended) against more than three-hundred universities which are federal contractees. A coalition of federally employed women has filed suit against the Department of Labor to end sex discrimination under the federal counterpart of the executive order, and women in mathematics and the biological and physical sciences are taking legal steps to reverse the exclusionary policies of more than seven-hundred federal government committees which review research grants and contracts.

This activity had its origins in the now famous—or infamous—1968 Modern Language Association (MLA) business meeting which saw not only the election of an insurgent antiwar president from the Noam Chomsky camp and passage of an anti-Viet Nam resolution, but also a resolution creating a committee on the status of women, now annually funded and meeting four times yearly.[3] A more typical pattern, repeated in numerous groups, was that of the American Sociological Association (ASA), where Alice Rossi and a group of like-minded women convened at the 1969 annual meeting a caucus which subsequently became the Sociologists for Women in Society (SWIS). Rossi's method is worth describing, because it set the method and tone of subsequent work. For the session, she had prepared a paper on the status of women in selected graduate departments of sociology. Later used as a model for affirmative action analyses under Executive Order 11246, it demonstrated a pattern of discriminatory attitudes and practices toward women which effectively destroyed any long-range career expectations they might have had upon entering graduate school.

Women graduate students, Rossi said, had no women faculty at upper levels on whom to model their careers and suffered from "subtle disapproval or overt ridicule" from some male faculty.

Quite apart from the more usual explanations of family vs. career conflicts, this example suggests that the structure of a typical graduate department may itself exert a negative influence on both women students

[3] Letter from Carol Ohmann, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., May 22, 1972. Ohmann was at the time chairwoman of the MLA Commission on the Status of Women. References elsewhere in this article to women in languages and literature are taken from "The Status of Women in Modern Language Departments: A Report of the Modern Language Association Commission on the Status of Women in the Profession," *PMLA*, 86 (May 1971): 459.

and women faculty, leading to higher levels of career anxiety and attrition among women themselves, and among the women faculty a heavier burden of student counseling, a lower rate of publication, and more anxiety about job security and advancement.[4]

It made little difference, Rossi suggested, that women entered graduate school with better undergraduate records than their male peers and maintained this excellence through graduate school. If the disapproval and professional ostracism of male faculty did not discourage them, the status of the few women faculty in ranking positions surely would. However much these women published, counseled, taught, supervised, and chaired, they remained unsure of their situation, and as limited in their access to male policy-making and career avenues as the women graduate students with whom they worked. Nothing in their ability, their professional commitment, or their credentials would have predicted it, except their sex. More and more, institutional policy resembled the Calvinist God who took from women the means of salvation then punished them for not saving themselves.

In 1970 the ASA annual business meeting passed almost without opposition a resolution presented by the caucus. First, ASA was to establish a funded committee on the status of women. Second, it went on record against sex discrimination in graduate admissions and against policies on financial aid which discriminated against women because of their age or their marital or family status. The resolution came down hard on employment practices which discriminated against women in salary, tenure, and promotion. ASA approved part-time appointments with benefits counting toward tenure and promotion, flexible leave arrangements (so-called parental leave) for both men and women, and abolition of antinepotism rules. Elsewhere the resolution dealt with the content of sociology courses, urging that sociologists reexamine their assumptions about gender roles. Just as structural analysis later became the approved technique for studies of academic and professional agencies, so the ASA resolution became the model for subsequent political action by other professional groups.[5]

In February 1970 the American Historical Association (AHA) established an ad hoc committee on women, in response to pressure from a group called the coordinating Committee on Women in the Historical Profession who recognized the extent of women's exclu-

[4] Rossi, p. 11.

[5] ASA Women's Caucus *Newsletter*, 1 (October 1970): 1. The caucus later became an independent body called Sociologists for Women in Society. Its newsletter continues to be an excellent source on current research in family and gender roles, legal action, and feminist activity in other professions.

sion from the job market. The committee was charged with gathering facts on the numbers, positions, and treatment of women in the profession and making this information available, with appropriate recommendations, to the membership the following year. The singularly low-key, forty-two-page report which followed, available from the AHA office in Washington, gives a profile of women historians in a 1969–70 doctoral group and a pungent analysis of the misassumptions prevalent among their employers. Respondents were asked to indicate if and why they might have interrupted graduate school, their sources of financial assistance and of later job offers, and their perception of discriminatory treatment in graduate departments. The study confirmed the findings of other professions: though women comprised 13 percent of the sample group, they made up less than 2 percent of the history graduate faculty in ten major universities, a figure which has been declining since 1959. Prejudice toward women was strongest among male faculty who had been teaching from five to twenty years, a majority of the decision-making faculty. Far from leaving the field for domesticity, women in history stayed with their low, nontenured positions with extraordinary tenacity, making themselves, the reporters concluded, all the more vulnerable to exploitation.[6]

The report, which clearly demonstrated the extent of institutional discrimination against women, led to the establishment of a permanent group, the Committee on Women Historians. With a special assistant in the Washington office, the committee keeps surveillance on the training, hiring, and promotional practices of universities, recommends women for committee assignments and offices in AHA, and accepts accounts of specific discriminations, with a view to providing advice and support. Subsequent resolutions have been specific on the need for expanding recruitment of women, abolishing antinepotism rules, establishing child care centers in the university, assuring space in publications and at annual meetings for women's programs, and supporting research in women's history, an absence noted since the 1950's by Arthur Schlesinger, Charles and Mary Beard, David Potter, and others. One observer reports that the grievance procedure stumbled on the rock of the Lowenheim case, though other professional groups have persisted in collecting cases and developing procedures for dealing with them.[7]

[6] Report of the AHA Committee on Women Historians, Willie Lee Rose, Chairwoman, 1971; telephone conversation with Rose, March 13, 1972; letter from Karen M. Offen, Coordinating Committee for Women in the Historical Profession, Stanford, Calif., May 17, 1972.

[7] Letter from Patricia A. Graham, Chairwoman, AHA Committee on Women Historians, Barnard College, New York City, March 23, 1972.

Activity in the American Library Association (ALA) emanates from a task force established in June 1970 in the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT). Preliminary studies indicted libraries at every level for discriminating against women in salary, promotion, and benefits; *American Libraries* published an equally incriminating set of salary tables in April 1971. In its excellent September 1971 issue devoted to women, *Library Journal* reinforced this information: though 80 percent of librarians are women, more than 90 percent of library administrators are men. According to ALA studies, women librarians earn on the average $3,400 less than their male counterparts, a gap which widens to $4,000 at the doctorate level. In January 1971 the ALA council passed a resolution on fair employment practices, and the October 1971 issue of *American Libraries* reviewed the requirements of the law as it then stood, giving a number of practical suggestions for enforcing compliance in local libraries. Since then the SRRT Task Force has concentrated on amelioration of maternity leave restrictions, an issue supported by a recent Virginia court case, as well as on the expansion of part-time career work possibilities for both men and women, more equitable promotion procedures, and the bibliographic control of women's studies material. SRRT is currently recording and publicizing instances of discrimination and also urging librarians to organize their nonprofessional women employees, a step previously anathematic to them but one which their shared adversity may encourage.[8]

We can replicate this pattern in any of the caucuses and committees which were consulted in this survey. A point-by-point examination of the issues might be useful. Principal emphasis has come on jobs for women. Typical of the method that women are using to break into the market is that of the Committee on Women in Physics, which is compiling a roster of women in the field with information on their specialties and mobility. The secretary of the AHA's committee maintains a registry of women historians, available for both employers and members of AHA who seek candidates for posts in the professional society. Sociologists for Women in Society maintains a more informal job file, as do the Association for Women in Mathematics and the Women's Service Committee of the American Chemical Society. Implicit in this activity, which has a high prior-

8 In addition to the sources cited above are duplicated reports available from ALA, Chicago, including SRRT Task Force Report(s) on the Status of Women in Librarianship, December 28, 1970; February 10, 1971; and June 1971. Basic publications also include two articles by Anita Schiller, "The Widening Sex Gap," *Library Journal*, 94 (March 15, 1969): 1098, and "The Disadvantaged Majority," *American Libraries* 1 (April 1970): 345.

ity in each committee, is the belief that women as colleagues are invisible to the men in their profession and do not participate in the word-of-mouth advertising for jobs and professional appointments enjoyed by men at the upper levels of their profession. Comments by respondents to the physics survey reveal attitudes frequently encountered by professional women: "I spent 5.5 months looking for a job before getting an offer. . . . I had never experienced discrimination before and was shocked and angered that such remarks would be made to a Ph.D. from [naming a top-ranking university]," said one. Or another: "Why don't you take a year off—and—well—learn to cook? Why don't you become a housewife? Then you wouldn't have to worry about a job. After all, your husband has a good job. That's the most important thing. You may have noticed that the ad was in 'Help Wanted—Men.' They don't want a woman." [A teacher's employment agency, speaking for a small, private, coed junior college of no reputation.][9]

In a year when the general cry is that there are no jobs, these files are producing provocative results. AHA reported that its job registry received over ninety requests for women historians in its first two months, only eleven of which were listed with the longer-established professional registry.[10] Typical of the resistance to both information and change exhibited in institutions, however, is the contention of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare itself, which administers Executive Order 11246 prohibiting sex discrimination in universities, that it could not find "qualified women scientists" to serve on its influential grant-review panels. While HEW procrastinated, a coalition of women in the sciences and mathematics filed a complaint under the executive order, pressing the department to live up to its own guidelines, then compiled a roster of 8,000 distinguished women scientists, matching from two to forty-six names to each of HEW's advisory board vacancies.[11]

Under Executive Order 11246, agencies with federal contracts over $10,000—that is, most universities and their libraries—must disavow all forms of discrimination, including sex discrimination. Those with contracts of $50,000 and fifty or more employees must produce so-called affirmative action programs. For instance, a contractor must show how he plans to recruit women for jobs in his agency, promote them, and provide equal salary and benefits for

9 Report of the American Physical Society Committee on Women in Physics, Vera Kistiakowsky, Chairwoman, *Bulletin of the American Physics Society* II, 17 (June 1972): 740.

10 Graham, letter cited.

11 *Newsletter* of Sociologists for Women in Society, 2 (April 1972): 2.

them. Basic to these programs has been the assumption that compensatory action is needed. Employers, for example, can be required to provide a census of promotable women in the area and to state whether women are under-utilized, that is, trained in greater numbers by the department than hired by it. Though HEW, the administering agency, often drags its feet in enforcing the rules and has yet to rescind any contract money, the order embodies a form of government coercion most universities have been unable to ignore.

The executive order, however, is not a law. It is a series of regulations governing the behavior of agencies who want federal money. The strength of the law is embodied in the coverage of the Equal Employment Opportunities Act of 1972, amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which now covers employees in all public and private educational institutions (academic libraries) as well as state and local government employees (state and municipal archives and state historical societies, for example) and private institutions employing (by March 1973) fifteen or more people (private historical societies and church archives). Title VII, administered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), aims at many of the misassumptions employers make about women as workers. It forbids an employer to discriminate in recruiting, hiring, firing, paying, classifying, assigning, training, and promoting women employees; to treat maternity leave differently from other kinds of temporary disability; or to discriminate in providing other medical, retirement, or fringe benefits. An agency director may not specify the sex of an applicant unless he can prove that gender is a *bona fide* occupational qualification, very narrowly interpreted to mean, for example, actors and actresses; nor may he use state protective laws to deny employment or promotion to women. Thus an archival director may not refuse to hire a woman on the grounds that state law prohibits women from lifting thirty-five-pound records boxes nor refuse her a field job because women do not like to travel nor maintain that boards of trustees or donors do not want to deal with women. If your agency still uses such excuses or if you see a sign advertising "Man for Fieldwork Wanted" or "Woman for Curatorial Position," let your director know he is not only in bad taste, he breaks the law.

Filing a complaint with EEOC is a simple matter, requiring only a statement of the form of discrimination. Since March 1972, EEOC itself may bring suit against an uncooperative employer, union, or employment agency. The March revision embodies two other important features. First, it permits class actions, that is, suits filed on the basis of patterns of discrimination rather than single instances,

and second, it grants the aggrieved party the right to sue for damages.

Paralleling the broadening of Title VII has been an extension of the coverage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, passed in the last Congress in the Education Amendments of 1972. Protection of the Equal Pay Act now extends to executive, administrative, and professional employees, groups formerly excluded from it.

In addition there are equal rights laws, equal pay laws, and human rights codes at the state and county level. The American Civil Liberties Union, which has recently organized a women's rights division, WEAL, and the Women's Legal Defense Fund provide lawyers or referral for court cases. The Modern Language Association Women's Caucus has produced an excellent handbook on legal defenses against sex discrimination.[12] The Association of American Colleges in Washington, D.C., runs a project on the status of academic women headed by a former WEAL president; its free newsletter provides current information on the law and should be on every library shelf.

Noncoercive action is characterized by the work of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), Committee W, chaired by the ubiquitous Alice Rossi and recently reactivated in two hundred universities. The committee has focused on those university policies which deny women jobs because of their marital or family status, namely antinepotism rules, and those which deny promotion or tenure to women who work part-time.[13]

Underlying antinepotism rules has been the assumption that men are breadwinners and women secondary wage earners. Though these policies presumably have been neutral, in fact they deny faculty wives, not husbands, jobs. Since it is clear that academic men most frequently marry academic women, these rules have done considerable damage to the career expectations of trained women able to rear families and work simultaneously. It must be added that these women do work: a University of California study showed that they did so in cut-rate, temporary, or part-time employment, in volunteer service, or in unpaid and often uncredited research aid to their husbands in the same field. The situation illustrates well Rossi's contention that institutional policy, not marriage, creates problems for academic women.

12 Adrian Tinsley, comp., *Academic Women, Sex Discrimination and the Law: An Action Handbook* (New York: MLA, 1971). The booklet was published before passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Education Amendments of 1972, amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963, both of which are discussed in this article.

13 "Report of Committee W, 1971–1972," AAUP *Bulletin*, 58 (September 1972): 330.

The AAUP urged the abolition of antinepotism rules in June 1971, recognizing at the same time that to avoid conflicts of interest within departments it was necessary that faculty members step down in decisions affecting the tenure, promotion, and salary of their spouses. AAUP's decision has been reinforced by HEW's finding that antinepotism rules deny women equal opportunity. Though no courts have yet ruled on the issue, legal arguments contend that these restrictions violate recognized rights of privacy and represent undue interference from one's employer in matters not affecting one's work. Ohio State and Yale Universities, SUNY-Buffalo, and the Universities of Wisconsin, Michigan, New Mexico, Minnesota, Maryland, and Pennsylvania have joined a list of institutions which have abolished these rules within the year past.

Committee W's 1972 thrust has been to open senior faculty ranks to part-time faculty women, most of whom now serve only at the lower faculty levels, and to provide these women with prorated leave, promotion, and tenure benefits. Parenthetically, part-time careerism is a practice publicly deplored but privately practiced by many upper-level male faculty. Surveys in sociology and other fields have shown that such upper-level positions are filled by men, many of whom enjoy joint appointments.

Women also are seeking a new interpretation of maternity leave policy, which has in the past been treated differently from other temporary disabilities such as hernia or prostate operations. Women's groups are examining industrial and university health insurance policies, which often restrict or exclude maternity benefits to employees, though not to their spouses, and are insisting that such policies be extended to women students. Similarly, TIAA and similar plans have come under attack for differences in benefits and age of retirement between the sexes, differences which of course disadvantage married men as well as their working wives.

It would be foolish to suggest that this activity is without resistance or that it does not partake of that irony, sanctioned by our political institutions, which compels the less powerful to negotiate with the powerful for redress. Academe, like any other institution, knows how to fight dirty and to assume a consensus which approves such tactics. There may be such a consensus; in 1964 Logan Wilson suggested in *The Academic Man* that the lower-middle-class origins of academics make them reluctant to exhibit attitudes which might damage their improved status[14] and thus reluctant to challenge the

[14] Logan Wilson, *The Academic Man* (New York: Octagon Books, 1964), cited in Dinerman, p. 260.

male mystique which governs the policies of business and professional men. As one of the principal exploiters of the cheap labor of women, academe also knows how to get rid of them. Local women's caucuses report notices torn from bulletin boards by ranking faculty members, information on rank and salary scales disappearing from the budget offices and archives of public institutions, and reprisal in the name of budget-trimming aimed at throwing leading caucus women out of their jobs. So common has the last become that the Professional Women's Caucus, an independent group of professional women, is now soliciting cases of discriminatory dismissals and harassment in order to bring class action suits. To the extent that women are in the lowest-ranking positions, without tenure, they are the most vulnerable. Some redress comes; in addition to those institutions which have modified their antinepotism rules, a few, including Harvard and Princeton, now grant part-time faculty tenure; women at Stanford who give birth during the course of untenured appointments will have their jobs extended for one year, and a few universities, Maryland among them, have agreed to give back-pay. More striking than individual conciliation, however, is the very great number of decentralized, local, and regional women's groups organizing in the disciplines, sociology and history in particular. Where once we might have regarded such duplication of effort as inefficient, now we see that this standard of efficiency does not serve the needs of women. What is needed, and what these numerous self-generating groups provide, is community for a class of people who have been quite intentionally isolated from each other by those who benefit most from their lack of ideology and organization. Women need to understand viscerally that the limitations on their careers are frequently the result of institutional practice toward women as a group, not the result of their personal or professional inadequacies. These groups encourage such understanding. Moreover, they provide direct training for large numbers of women in the skills previously thought unsuitable to them unless exercised in "feminine" spheres: political initiative and opposition.

Having reviewed the activity in allied fields, let us look at ourselves. In 1915, addressing himself to the question of whether social work was a profession, Abraham Flexner identified the characteristics of a profession, among which he included the tendency of its members to organize themselves and to become increasingly altruistic in their motivation. Ralph Nader, serving recently on a television panel as moral gadfly to the engineering profession, expanded on Flexner's now fairly well-accepted characteristics of organization and altruism, putting them in the context of the professional

society itself. A professional society, said Nader, should provide its members with a separate ethical voice, independent of their daily work situations with their necessary but sometimes dubious loyalties. The professional society, he suggested, should serve both as peer group and advocate for its members, be willing to take stands on public issues as no single employing agency can do, and support dissenters as few of us can or will do individually. Admittedly, this aim has not been one encouraged in the Society of American Archivists prior to the report of the Committee for the 1970's, a failing partly attributable to our nervousness about controversy and our delicacy toward the union aspects of advocacy. But if we could outgrow our hesitation, to what questions should we, as a professional society, address ourselves?

It goes almost without saying that if salary inequity has a long and predictable history in the trades, industry, and professions in this country, dating from the early nineteenth century, then it must surely exist in our field. We can readily find this information, though it might be information delivered only at the level of complaint. What will be more useful is a study of the career patterns of men and women in this field, similar to that conducted by Frank B. Evans and Robert M. Warner, stressing their educational history, job-getting and -keeping patterns, promotional history, extramural professional activity, perception of discrimination, and the like.[15] Such a study should be repeated at regular intervals, for how else can we know what progress we have made?

We will find differences in the career patterns of men and women, as well as salary and situational inequities. The only real question is whether these differences should constitute obstacles to advancement, whether male career patterns are the only legitimate career patterns. If we decide that they are not, we should be prepared to provide guidelines to archival agencies respecting the recruitment, salary, promotion, work conditions, and career expectations of the women in their employ. This is no more than is now required by law of many universities under action but a great deal more than exists in many other institutions. Needless to say, the Society as an organization must apply these guidelines to its own operation before it can expect the cooperation of archival agencies.

For any who hesitate at the suggestion that we solicit individual cases of discrimination, it is useful to note that a precedent for doing so exists in virtually every study on the status of women the

[15] Frank B. Evans and Robert M. Warner, "American Archivists and Their Society: A Composite View," *American Archivist*, 34 (April 1971): 157.

writer has read, as well as in the law. While isolated cases may demonstrate no more than personal idiosyncrasy, a number of cases can produce a pattern difficult to ignore. What are we likely to find in such testimonies?

Within the past two years, I have heard instances of individual women, sufficiently mobile and willing to travel, applying for field jobs and being told that women do not make good field people because they will not travel; that the job is open but requires lifting boxes (it is an irony of the history of women that they have traditionally been allowed to lift thirty-five-pound children free but can be denied the chance to lift thirty-five-pound boxes at $3 an hour); that trustees prefer to talk with men; that married women are not dependable employees; that women are being promoted too fast. Even more subtle is the sex-typing of job levels. It is not uncommon for an older woman with ten or more years professional and administrative experience to be offered essentially her same job in different locations, often with women many years her junior; apparently the assumption is that women have no interest in moving up, whatever career pattern they may have demonstrated previously. It is difficult to imagine the same assumption being made of a man at any age.

Whatever the specific complaints about women as employees, the objections demonstrate a similar tendency, namely, the elevation of misassumption to the level of administrative policy. Inevitably these policies deadend the women who are subject to them. And not only are the policies unworthy of many of the archivists who make them, they are illegal.

It has been said that a profession quickly creates hierarchies, roughly divided among those who practice the skills of the profession and those who publish or promulgate them—priests and prophets. Nowhere has it been said that those who practice should be women and those who promulgate, men. Yet if we examine our job classifications, my guess is that we will find women in the curatorial and service positions and men in the promulgating positions or those which deal with the moneyed public and with extensions of the profession and its promotion. And the situation is self-maintaining; women in lower-level positions are seldom urged to publish or to seek out public-contact jobs and have little time to do so. They see few women in upper-level positions, rightly assess the cost of getting there, and decline to pay it. Other women in lower-level jobs may produce but find they are expected to produce more or better or differently. Administrators justify the situation on the grounds that there are few women at the top. With horrifying

circularity the situation prevails, not because it is right or even justifiable, but because it exists.

We also like to think that the M.A. plus apprenticeship and initiative will carry one far in this field; simultaneously we have deferred to the academic notion that the Ph.D. is the more desirable degree. The question here is not whether the Ph.D. substantially adds to one's ability as an archivist, *qua* archivist. Herman Kahn, in the January 1971 *American Archivist* publication of his presidential address, states the case very well for what is in the head as opposed to what is in the craw.[16] The question is, should having the degree certify one automatically for an administrative position requiring visible productivity and giving access to the same network of information shared by upper-level academics, namely, jobs, projects, grants, and content, leading in turn to higher productivity?

To the extent that we hire M.A.'s, only to jump higher-degree holders above them, we send out false signals. But since women are frequently cooled out of Ph.D. programs, urged into secondary-school teaching, and otherwise dismissed from the academic ladder, we are engaging in a kind of economic double jeopardy in which we take an already disadvantaged group and lock them permanently into lower-level jobs. Furthermore, if we find that our women Ph.D.'s go less far than our men with the same degree, we must ask whether it is our institutional practices, not the problems presumed to surround the domestic lives of women, which operate against them.

Some idea of our organizational pathology can be seen by examining SAA committee memberships. If more than one-third of our members are women, why did women make up only 17 percent of our committee membership and only 10 percent of our chairs in 1972? And if women are, as one might suppose in an unprejudiced situation, found at all levels of the profession, why are women concentrated on the committee on reference, access, and photoduplication policies, which reflects the concerns of curators, but absent from the two committees dealing with education and training and from the committees on data archives, publication, and terminology—all influential areas in laying claim to professionalism, as well as in creating reputations?[17] Have we no women who have run institutes

[16] Herman Kahn, "Some Comments on the Archival Vocation," *American Archivist* 34 (January 1971): 3.

[17] Women have been placed on at least two of these committees since this article was written. The proportion of women on all SAA committees, however, is still well below the percentage of women in the Society. The tokenism of women's participation in the formal activities of the Society is suggested by the composition of workshops and panels at the 1972 annual meeting. According to the printed program, women appeared on fourteen of the thirty-two sessions. But of the 127 participants in these sessions, only

or who teach in them? Have we none who are engaged in information retrieval and storage, none who have produced or supervised publications?

These questions are worth considering before we engage in one more doleful repine on whether or not we are a profession. Women have a chance in this issue, which affects us all, to decide the extent of their commitment to change. All of us, men and women, have a chance to measure our daily performance against the social facts of discrimination, which cannot be denied. Finding ourselves individually wanting, we may find that together, as a professional society, we can measure up.

23, or 19 percent, were women, and 9 of these 23 were on the panels on the status of women and black history.

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