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Commission for Women

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Judy Webster resigns as chair of CFW

Judy Webster, chair of the UTK Commission for Women since April 1985, has resigned her post effective June 30.

Webster decided to step down in late March after being appointed Acting Collection Development Librarian. Aside from the responsibilities of her new job, Webster will continue as Head of the Monographs Department for the UTK Library.

Commenting on her resignation, Webster said, "I don't want my additional duties to result in the Commission losing direction or becoming a less effective body."

As Acting Collection Development Librarian, Webster will be responsible for the overall collection development plan, coordinating the selection of library materials for the UTK library and its branches as well as supervising the allocation of the library acquisition budget.

Webster, a member of the Commission since 1983, assumed the chair position on July 1, taking over for Judy Webster. Burton, who received her Ph.D. in English from UTK, has served as the Assistant Director of Personnel since November 1985.

Burton feels that "it is important for the Commission to have a good working relationship with the new director of Affirmative Action." With respect to women's issues in general, Burton feels strongly about women in the workplace. "Many people believe women are working for luxuries and could stay home. I don't think it matters why people work, but too often society doesn't understand why women work." Burton said she was looking forward to assuming her duties as chair and was happy to be elected.

"I think Judy has done a wonderful job and I hope the Commission will continue providing leadership for women on campus," concluded Burton.

Burton elected to head CFW

Dr. Linda Burton has been elected as the new chair of the Commission for Women. Burton, a member of the Commission since 1983, will assume the position on July 1, taking over for Judy Webster.

Burton feels that "it is important for the Commission to have a good working relationship with the new director of Affirmative Action."

Specifically, Burton would like to see the University continue to examine the need for child care. "The University's role in child care needs to be evaluated in light of the new program. Does the University need to expand its present facilities? I particularly think some work should be done toward assessing a program of infant care."

Finally, Webster wants the Commission to implement some type of orientation program for new women faculty and staff. Newly hired women need to be acquainted with the university in addition to any orientation program their department may offer. Ideally, this should be done for all women, faculty and support staff."

Burton commented, "I have specific goals in mind and think it is very important to keep women's issues in people's minds and raise people's awareness." Burton said she was looking forward to assuming her duties as chair and was happy to be elected.

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For UTK Women: Students, Faculty and Staff
Breast self exam vital to good health

Breast cancer will strike one in ten women in America at sometime during their lifetimes. In addition, one out of three women will experience breast lumps. Because of these facts, it is important that women act to prevent breast cancer. The American Cancer Society has indicated that when detected early, the five year survival rate from breast cancer approaches one hundred percent.

The first line of defense for most women under 35 is breast self examination (BSE). Despite the fact that it is easy to do, only about twenty-two percent of American women, according to the Gallup poll, examine their breasts once a month. The Knoxville Breast Center, established in 1983 as the first free standing breast center in the Knoxville area, provides some guidelines for BSE.

The first thing to remember is that normal breast tissue may have a lumpy feel. It is most lumpy, however, before and during menstruation, so the best time for BSE is after menstruation.

The right and left breast should have identical glandular tissue, although one breast may be slightly larger than the other. If during the examination you detect an abnormality in one breast that does not exist in the other, you should see a health care practitioner promptly. While eighty percent of lumps are not cancerous, only further testing can determine that status.

Asymptomatic women (women with no family history or personal history of breast problems) should have an initial mamogram between ages 35 and 40. Between ages 40 and 50 exams are advised every one to two years and should be scheduled annually after age 50. In addition, most women should be aware of risk factors that may contribute to the development of breast cancer. They are: no pregnancies, first child born after age 30, family history of breast cancer, onset of menopause after age 50, onset of menstruation before age 12, and previous breast cancer or other cancers.

Mammography is a procedure about which some misinformation exists so it is worthwhile to mention a few things about the procedure here. Mammography is a low dosage X-ray of the soft tissue of the breast. The radiation dosage is about the same as that of a dental X-ray. Major clinical studies show that early detection breast screening reduces mortality rate by 30%. In fact, by the time a lump is felt during self examination it could have been present as long as seven to nine years.

Dr. Kamilla Gitschiag, director of the Knoxville Breast Center has discovered that transillumination and ultrasound are additionally useful processes in detecting carcinoma. This process, called multimodality imaging is especially useful for unusually dense breasts and is more accurate in judging whether an abnormality should be biopsied.

Although lung cancer has now surpassed breast cancer as the number one cancer in women, breast cancer is still a significant and serious problem. BSE and awareness of other options are vital in keeping healthy.

Correction

The Fall, 1986 and Winter, 1987 issues of the Networker were printed with incorrect volume and number. The Fall, 1986 issue should have been Volume 5, number 1 and the Winter, 1987 issue should have been Volume 5, number 2.

The Networker is a newsletter for all women on the UTK campus. We try to include all news items and announcements that will be of interest to women on campus, but we do not always see, hear, or read everything. If you have any item of interest or know of a particular topic we should investigate, call Carol Guthrie at 974-4739. Also, we plan to do an issue this summer, so keep us informed if there are any programs or announcements that should be included in the Networker.
Webster offers year end report on accomplishments of Commission for Women

The Commission for Women's charge is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Chancellor concerning women's issues and to make recommendations on programming, policies, and procedures that affect women staff, faculty and students on the UTK campus. In order to pursue these goals, the Commission has held monthly meetings throughout the academic year.

We were involved in the Chancellor's decision to establish a child care center on campus, and subsequently have served in advisory capacity with representation on the Child Care Advisory Board.

We played a significant role in the search and interview process for the Director of Affirmative Action.

The selection of our second nominee to attend the month long administrative training program at Bryn Mawr this summer is announced elsewhere in this issue of the Networker.

During the period of time last Fall Quarter when assaults had become a visible problem on campus, the university administration used a lighting survey that had been done by the Commission several years ago as part of the decision-making process to increase lighting in the darker areas of our community. We will continue our work in advising the University of women's safety issues.

Publishing the Networker as a communication from us to all women on campus is a continuing accomplishment of the Commission. Our editor, Carol Guthrie, who is just completing her first year with us, has done an excellent job of selecting and writing informative articles and including relevant announcements. We commend her and are pleased to announce that she will continue as editor during the next academic year.

On July 1, 1987, Linda Burton, assistant director of UTK Personnel will become the next Chair of the Commission for Women. She has been a member of the Commission for four years and I am confident that she will serve us well as our leader and advocate.

This is my last annual report for the Commission, and I would like to take the opportunity to review some women's issues that are national in scope, but also of major concern to us at UTK.

Pay Equity: Whether viewed in terms of equal work for equal pay or, as in comparable worth, equal value, pay equity will remain at the top of our list for years to come. Economic discrimination against women has been illegal since the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was passed, yet it persists. Here at UTK, we have studied faculty salaries for more than ten years on an annual basis. We have made progress at times with equity adjustments, but then seem unintentionally to regress (as evidenced by the most recent report on faculty salaries).

Affirmative Action: This year's Supreme Court decisions have been heartening. For the present, Affirmative Action seems more secure. Most definitions of Affirmative Action include mention of plans to recruit minorities. We at UTK have just produced our first true Affirmative Action plan. Previous incarnations of the document were really only guidelines. Affirmative Action may also include programs that assist women in competing for jobs on an equal basis. We hope for an administrative commitment to fostering the careers of women, and we look forward to the arrival of a new director of Affirmative Action on campus. We have an opportunity to improve our record considerably.

Integration of work and family life: It has been said that what every working woman needs is a "wife," but then women would have to pay them, wouldn't they? How many would take the job? In the United States, our focus on the individual's rights and privileges has naturally led many women to believe they must bear children, care for them, and earn a living, all on an equal basis with men, who usually have fewer nurturing responsibilities. Considering that humanity as a whole reproduces itself, and while there are individual choices to be made, it is women who will bear society's children. Is it not possible, then, that they deserve additional support in the workplace? At UTK, we have already taken a step in this direction by funding a campus child care center for our faculty and staff. We hope for a serious look at maternity leave and infant care possibilities as further desired steps to be taken.

Sexual harassment: Frequently an individualized form of discrimination directed at one or several victims, sexual harassment is still a problem. At UTK, we need to publish our policies widely, develop procedures that allow complaints to be made in confidence, educate both male and female employees, and take swift and consistent action against those who are guilty.

These are only a few of the issues on our agenda. The work remaining to be done is overwhelming at times and discrimination is becoming more subtle. Much of the discrimination against women that occurs on our campus is unintentional. For example, whenever vacant positions are filled by promoting from within or realigning the responsibilities of individuals already on the payroll without advertising the opportunity widely, the chances of discrimination are great. When decisions like this are made, the positive reasons for realigning personnel are negated by the lost opportunities for women. It is true that a few women have benefitted from these administrative adjustments, but it is difficult to believe that a serious commitment to Affirmative Action exists when these kinds of decisions are routinely made without considering the consequences for women and other minorities.
Sexual harassment inhibits women’s equality

In June 1986, the United States Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision, Meritor Savings Bank FSB vs. Vinson. In this case, the court unanimously ruled that sexual harassment in the workplace which causes a hostile or offensive job environment is actionable under the 1964 Civil Rights Act even if it does not result in job or promotion loss.

Although the Vinson decision applies specifically to employment, it is important to examine the case’s implications for the campus setting.

According to a recent study done at Harvard University, a substantial number of women across the academic spectrum have experienced sexual harassment. Thirty-two percent of tenured female professors, 49 percent of those without tenure, 41 percent of female graduate students, and 34 percent of undergraduate women reported encountering sexual harassment in some form while at the university.

The figures from Harvard correspond with a number of other studies that report between 20 and 30 percent of graduate women and 30 to 40 percent of undergraduate women encounter some form of sexual harassment.

Clearly then sexual harassment is a problem of which the nation’s colleges and universities need to be aware. But, exactly what is sexual harassment? The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has established a guideline definition which UTK has also adopted.

Sexual harassment may be described as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where: 1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment; 2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or 3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Given that sexual harassment exists on campuses, what can be done about it? In its October 1986 Affirmative Action Plan, UTK set forth the following guidelines for employees and students who experience sexual harassment:

1. All UTK employees and supervisors are responsible for avoiding behavior which would be in violation of the above guideline. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against individuals found to have violated the UTK sexual harassment guideline.

2. Any employee or applicant for employment may file a complaint alleging violation of the policy with the Affirmative Action Director. The complainant may, at his/her discretion talk with a male or female member of the Personnel Office staff, rather than with the Affirmative Action Director, in submitting the complaint.

3. Students, whose educational progress and opportunities are affected by behavior of UTK employees, are protected against sexual harassment under the school’s sexual harassment definition and complaint process.

In a thorough report on sexual harassment on college campuses, the American Council on Education (ACE) provides guidelines which can help institutions not only develop a sexual harassment policy, but improve existing plans.

According to ACE, an effective campus program on sexual harassment should include several key elements affecting both policy and procedure. They are: 1. A basic definition of what constitutes sexual harassment; 2. A strong policy statement that sexual harassment will not be tolerated; 3. Effective communication channels implemented informing students, faculty, staff, and administrators about the campus policy against sexual harassment; 4. An accessible grievance procedure which provides alternative methods of initiating complaints and a procedure to ensure the rights of all parties are protected as much as possible.

In addition to these suggestions, ACE provides guidelines by which a college or university can develop or improve their sexual harassment policy. Some of their suggestions are listed below.

1. Develop a strong policy prohibiting sexual harassment. A formal policy should be in place that defines sexual harassment and includes a statement as to why it is important for the institution to prevent sexual harassment.

2. Develop a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, that allows first for informal resolution and then, if the process fails, for formal resolution.

3. Disseminate the policy to all faculty, staff, administrators, and students as well as to those who contract to do business on campus including those agencies, businesses, education groups, etc. that provide students with internships. The policy should be included in the student handbook; employee handbook; administrative, faculty and staff handbooks; institutional campus contracts; pamphlets; course catalogs; course timetables; and be incorporated into the academic governance code.

4. Develop a method for informing new staff, faculty, students, and administrators about the policy and for including them in all education programs.

5. Create and keep current a campus-wide educational program designed to help all members of the campus community to understand, prevent and combat sexual harassment.

Persons interested in obtaining a copy of the ACE report on sexual harassment can send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ACE Office of Women in Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036-1193

WCC provides child care services

The Women’s Coordinating Council is now providing free child care services whenever they offer programming. Realizing that many students, faculty and staff would be unable to attend programs otherwise, the group began this service to encourage attendance at their functions.

Because the service is free, the WCC would like to request donations for small, preferably non-violent toys suitable for small children. If you have toys that you would like to donate, please contact the WCC at 974-1029.

Elliot selected as candidate

Dr. Nina Elliott has been selected as the Commission for Women’s candidate to the 1987 HERS Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration held at Bryn Mawr College.

Elliott, Assistant to Vice Provost Hardy Liston, must compete with women across the nation to be accepted into this competitive program.

If accepted, Elliott will be the second woman sponsored by the Commission for Women to attend the Institute.
Pornography: Does it oppress women...

by Bernadine Andrew

Many people consider pornography to be one of the most serious barriers to equality for women. The most outspoken and public advocate of this view is Andrea Dworkin. In an April 16 presentation titled "Pornography and Civil Rights," Dworkin addressed this volatile issue.

The subordination of women in our society, according to Dworkin, is perpetuated through the pornographic depiction of the female. "Millions and millions and millions of photographs (are) made of women in postures of submission and access in this country every year."

Dworkin identified the "rape, pain, and humiliation" of women as fundamental ingredients in all pornographic movies. Specifically, she outlined two scenarios that, according to her, form the plot of a pornographic movie. One, a woman (often a successful-looking woman) is sexually abused by a man (who is sometimes joined later by another man or woman) and at first resists the attack, but then discovers she enjoys the pain. Two, the woman does not even give the pretense of disdain, instead begging from the start to be hurt and humiliated.

A list of some particular genres of pornography discussed by Dworkin included amputee pornography, photos or films of women who have had body parts amputated. Dworkin also discussed "snuff movies," in which women are tortured and actually murdered on film while men derive sexual pleasure from these usually violent and bloody deaths.

Dworkin believes the legal system in the United States is of little help in controlling the production and distribution of pornographic material. According to her, poorly worded laws and convoluted interpretations of the First Amendment often lead judges and juries to let pornographers go free. "The legal protection of pornography is now (almost) absolute."

More than entertainment for men, Dworkin sees pornography as a form of psychological entrapment for women. "Pornography makes women know that we're second-class citizens...(it) tells women that we do not live on this earth in any kind of equality, dignity or integrity."

Or liberate them?

Andrea Dworkin's theories opposing pornography have gained a substantial press in the past four years, but a feminist group, the Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce (FACT), has tried to explore and identify what they believe are the assumptions and mistakes in Dworkin's argument. Unlike Dworkin, FACT maintains that pornography is a contradictory medium which provides a liberating effect on women.

In Caught Looking: Feminism, Pornography and Censorship, the FACT book committee maintains that the majority of pornography carries a very different message from Dworkin's "men hate women" thesis. They, with detailed photographs, point out that the vast majority of pornography carries a very different message—women like sex, and they like their own bodies.

Beginning with French postcards of the 19th century, the authors trace the history of pornography in order to illustrate positive images of women in erotic art. Women are shown in control and enjoying themselves far more often than they are shown being possessed by men. The authors contend that the vast majority of pornography shows a rather egalitarian pattern of intercourse and oral sex.

Historically, the book is quite thorough. Lisa Duggan provides a well-researched analysis of Andrea Dworkin and Catharine McKinnon's anti-pornography ordinance, which was declared unconstitutional in 1986. Nan D. Hunter examines the chronology of events surrounding feminist debate on sexuality.

Caught Looking is a thought provoking and useful refutation of many assumptions women usually make about pornography. Coupled with Dworkin's own Pornography, it allows a comprehensive and complete analysis of pornographic material and women's role in participating or opposing it.

Persons interested in acquiring a copy of Caught Looking can write to: Caught Looking Inc. 135 Rivington St., New York, N.Y. 10002.

WOMEN'S STUDIES SCHEDULE
FALL QUARTER

2010 Images of Women in Literature:
Biography and Autobiography
9:00-10:15 TR
Instructor: Clark

2120 Sex Roles and Marriage
10:30-11:45 TR
Instructor: White

3435 Philosophy of Feminism
11:05-11:55 MWF
Instructor: Osborne

4000 Special Topics: Women and Fairy Tale Literature
10:30-11:45 TR
Instructor: Lauckner

4110 Psychology of Sex Role Development
1:45-3:00 TR
Instructor: Staff

4830 Afro-American Women in American Society
10:30-11:45 TR
Instructor: Hartsell
Academia still “chilly” for women

Have times changed for women in academia? Certainly women do not face rejection into graduate and professional programs to the degree they once did. It is no longer unusual to find women in certain faculty and administrative positions, and a major university, The University of Chicago, has a woman president. A new report by the Project on the Status and Education of women suggests, however, that these gains may be illusory.

The Campus Climate Revisited: Chilly for Women, Faculty, Administrators, and Graduate Students maintains that there are subtle ways in which women are treated differently, and these ways communicate to women that they are not equal citizens in academia. The authors, Benice R. Sandler and Roberta M. Hall, suggest that these messages may be so subtle few women have noticed them.

Among the facts they point out: the higher the academic rank, the fewer the women; the more prestigious the school or department, the fewer the women; at every rank, in every field, at every type of institution, women still earn less than their male counterparts. Women also have been less likely to receive tenure than men: 47% of women faculty are tenured, 69% of men. The rate increase for tenured male faculty also has been greater than that of women. Between 1972 and 1981, the percentage of tenured male faculty increased by 17.7%, the percentage of tenured women faculty increased by 13.4%.

One interesting positive change is that women now constitute the majority of undergraduates and an increasing proportion of graduate and professional students. Women earn about half of the master’s degrees awarded in the United States, but only 32% of the doctorates.

In trying to assess the reasons for the failure of women to achieve full equality in academia, Sandler and Hall identify several problem areas they feel contribute to subtle forms of discrimination.

Because the number of women in academia is small, women faculty and staff often face unusual pressures associated with being a minority. The fewer the women, the greater the likelihood they will be considered tokens and be stereotyped accordingly. Also, these few women generally take on added duties and pressures because of their small numbers. Women often have heavy advising loads and committee duties.

Societal preconceptions about men and women’s behavior strongly (and often adversely) affect women in academia. Too often women are judged on their appearance or personal qualities rather than their professional abilities. For example, it is not uncommon for a woman faculty member who is not attentive to dress to be considered a sloppy worker, whereas a man’s lack of attention to appearance may be viewed as an indicator of his greater attention to work.

Women face equal difficulty in establishing collegiality with their male peers. Men talk less with women than with other men, and women faculty often find it difficult to break into or through this “old boy network.”

The authors point out that while many schools have developed official policy which prohibits discrimination, informal traditions and practices, rarely formalized, operating below the level of consciousness, often account for the chilly climate for women on campuses. Women are provided with fewer budgetary and other resources than men of the same rank, such as office space and secretarial support. Generically masculine language, which implicitly excludes women both in speaking and printed material, frequently is used.

The authors conclude with some recommendations for “warming up the climate.” They suggest intensive internal review for schools. If institutions regularly gather data by sex, race and age and publish annual reports on progress in regard to women on campus, the college or university staff, from administrators to graduate students, will be able to keep conscious of ways to improve the status of women on campus.

Specific departments or key administrators can play a critical role in upgrading the status of women by providing leadership, legitimizing women’s issues, and rewarding people who constructively handle women’s (and minority) concerns.

Female graduate students should be educated about the climate for women faculty and administrators through campus presentations, student-faculty meetings for individual women and men as to how to monitor their behavior and attitudes in given situations and circumstances in order to avoid discrimination.

If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy of Sandler and Hall’s report they can mail $5.00 to the Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges, 1818 R St, NW Washington, DE 20009.