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Commission for Women

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Studies argue universities slow to hire women

Universities continue to lag behind in hiring women and other minorities for tenure track faculty jobs according to the results of two recent university studies. The studies were conducted in the University of California system and at the University of Virginia and report a disturbing lack of interest on the part of administrators in hiring women and minorities. The colleges examined believed they were not falling behind any other university system relative to hiring or promoting women, and were unwilling to make any marked changes to improve salaries and numbers.

The University of Virginia study reported that since the college opened all departments to women students in 1970, the proportion of full time, tenured faculty positions held by women rose only to 7.4%. The study found that to be particularly disturbing as the percentage of female students at the university stood at only 48 percent. Women's salaries also lagged behind men's by an average of $5,873. The university, in fact, had the fewest tenured women faculty and greatest pay discrepancies of any of the comparison schools used in the study.

By contrast, the California study found that women did relatively better than other major research institutions. Women made up about 10 percent of tenured faculty. Findings indicated, however that serious problems remained for women and minorities in the California complex. For example, most women faculty were concentrated at two and four year colleges rather than at the major research centers. Women faculty members are paid less than male professors at all ranks, rise up the academic ladder more slowly than men, and receive tenure at lower rates than men. Members of minority groups are also clustered at two and four year colleges, also most blacks tended to be at predominately black institutions, and most Hispanics were at Catholic institutions. They also tended to be in lower academic ranks and to be in social sciences and the humanities rather than the natural sciences.

Both reports concluded that quick action needed to occur to diversify the faculties. The University of Virginia appointed three women to senior administration positions and converted the women's studies directorship to a full time position. The California study called for "extraordinary efforts" for the next decades. The study also recommended that the institutions reward departments who recruit heavily among women and minorities.

The findings of these two reports echo similar statistics reported by the American Association of University Professors last spring in reference to the status of women faculty at UTK. According to the AAUP's findings, 7.6% of the 511 full professors at UTK are women who earn $6,000 per year less than their male counterparts. Of the 249 associate professors at UTK, 20.9% are women who earn $2,400 less per year. Slightly over 40% of the UTK assistant professors are women whose salary averages $3,100 behind male assistant professors.

The University of Virginia report is available from Prudence M. Thorner, McKim Hall, Box 503-2147, University of Virginia Medical Center, Charlottesville, Va. 22908.

Copies of the California report are available through the Office of the President, University of the President, University of California, Berkeley, Ca. 94720.

Kansas report argues that nontenured women publish less

Researchers at the University of Kansas have found that women without tenure work on and publish fewer scholarly papers than men without tenure and tend to be less satisfied with their jobs. As discussed in the September, 1986 issue of University Women, the report also noted that, non-tenured women tend to have more committee responsibilities, are often assigned more classes than non-tenured men, and consequently have less time to pursue their own research projects.

The study also found that both tenured and non-tenured women are more likely to rate the publication of papers as less important for career success then their male counterparts. According to the study, many women, in becoming "professionally socialized," either miss the message about the importance of publishing for achieving tenure or reject the idea.
Women and AIDS: What are the risks?

By Don Windham

Don Windham is assistant professor of psychology and human services at Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee. He is a founding member of the International Society for AIDS Education, and has taught classes on AIDS for Tennessee Wesleyan and other colleges.

AIDS has definitely been the disease most often in the news in 1987. Unfortunately, coupled with the new onslaught of news and feature stories about AIDS has been a hefty amount of misinformation and half truths. One of the best ways to protect yourself against the virus and the fears that surround any details about it is to know the facts. Since women are at risk from the virus, this article will focus on facts women need to know about AIDS, particularly about pregnancy and artificial insemination.

As you may know AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Essentially AIDS is spread by a virus, possibly the virus we know as HIV (human immuno deficiency virus, also called HTLV-3 or LAV), and attacks the body's immune system leaving it open to infection by many diseases, most often pneumocystis pneumonia and Kaposi's sarcoma. The virus first appeared in the United States in gay or bisexual men, probably because certain sexual behaviors are more likely to cause the infection to pass from one person to another.

Infection with the virus is not AIDS, however. People who test positive to antibodies for the virus are not AIDS positive. This does not mean that they have AIDS or that they will develop AIDS. AIDS researchers believe that 25 to 30% of HIV positives will eventually contract AIDS, but what makes the body turn the virus into a full-fledged case of AIDS is as yet unknown. Things like the presence of an active case of syphilis or heavy use of drugs, particularly amyl and butyl nitrates (poppers) may be implicated.

There is an intermediate stage of AIDS called ARC (AIDS Related Complex) that some people contract. They may have a low grade fever, fatigue, diarrhea, and night sweats, but they have none of the opportunistic infections that occur with a full blown case of AIDS.

In many cases, numbers of people with ARC and even those that are HIV positive are included in with the numbers of AIDS cases.

At this point, there have probably been between 37,000 and 45,000 cases of AIDS in the United States. About 60% of those people have died (the figure varies because the Centers for Disease Control and various state public health agencies count cases differently).

In New York, AIDS is the leading killer of women between 25 and 29. About 7% of people with AIDS (PWAs) are women and there have been over 500 pediatric cases so far. How do you know if you are at risk? All women need to know these facts, but you are most at risk if:

1. You use IV drugs and share needles and works. AIDS is a blood disease and can be passed blood to blood, sharing needles is the best way to pass the virus.
2. Women with sex partners who have used IV drugs.
3. Women with sex partners who have sex with people at high risk (bisexual or gay men).
4. Women who have received contaminated blood products.

One of the most important facts to note is that most women infected with the virus have acquired it through intravenous drug use. Drug use has always been dangerous, but never as much as now. Traces of blood in needles or cookers can pass the virus. As new cases in gay and bisexual men dwindle, IV drug users will begin to be the number one risk group.

AIDS is not spread by casual contact. No one has ever gotten AIDS by living with, touching or caring for a person with AIDS.

The only sure way to avoid AIDS from sexual intercourse is to abstain from penetration. Semen and vaginal fluids both contain HIV (vaginal fluids have it in very low concentration, however). Anal intercourse seems to be the most effective transmitter of the virus (hence its first appearance in gay and bisexual men), but vaginal intercourse can cause the virus to be transmitted as well.

If you do choose to have anal or vaginal intercourse, using a condom is the best way to keep from transmitting the virus. You can maximize the effectiveness of the condom by using nonoxynol-9 as a spermicide. It kills HIV on contact. Unfortunately many people have an allergic reaction to this spermicide. If you cannot use it, do try another spermicide. Always use a water based lubricant such as KY Jelly. Because condoms can come off or break, withdrawal before ejaculation is best.

Oral sex is a possibly safe activity. There has not been any documented case of AIDS acquired solely through oral sex. On the safe side, one should never allow semen to enter the mouth. One can use a condom or simply avoid the tip of the penis. No case of AIDS transmitted through vaginal fluids during oral sex has ever been documented. It is wise, however, to avoid oral sex during the menstrual period. Some people advise the use of a dental dam, a rubber sheet that fits over the vagina, to avoid exchange of vaginal fluids.

Infected women, even those without symptoms, can spread the virus to infants during pregnancy and delivery and possibly during breastfeeding. If a woman is HIV positive and considering pregnancy, she should know that pregnancy increases chances of developing AIDS since it naturally lowers the immune system. Women at risk

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WCC Announces fall schedule

The Women’s Coordinating Council has released their Fall 1987 calendar of events. In addition to their regular Open House, the calendar features a talk by noted attorney Catharine A. McKinnon, presentations revolving around Sexual Harassment Awareness Week and a seminar series on the psychology of lesbian women and gay men.

The first event is the Open House at the Women’s Center Room 305 University Center on October 5, from 1:00 to 4:00. Refreshments will be provided as well as information about the Women’s Center and upcoming fall presentations.

A series on the psychology of lesbians and gay men will be offered seven times during fall quarter. The series will feature such issues as Coming Out, Dealing with AIDS, Lesbian Separatism, and Gay Liberation. The speaker will be Don Windham, assistant professor of psychology and human services at Tennessee Wesleyan College. The dates for the lectures are October 12, 19, and 26 and November 2, 16, 23, and 30. All will be in the University Center, room 221.

Sexual Harassment Awareness Week runs from November 9 to the 13th and four presentations are planned. On November 8, at 7:30 in the University Center Auditorium, Billie Wright Dziech will present her lecture, “The Lecherous Professor: Sexual Harassment on campus.” Dziech is co-author (with Linda Weiner) of a book with the same name. The lecture will focus on identifying the typical lecherous professor, how he works, and the effect that he has on his victims. She will also offer some positive steps that students, parents, and administrators and faculty can take to prevent sexual harassment on campus. Children will be provided for in the Women’s Center (Room 301) and an interpreter for the hearing impaired will be provided.

On November 10, Mark Willmarth will present “Not for Women Only! A Rape Awareness Program for Men” in the UC Ballroom at 7:00. The presentation is for men only. Willmarth comments, “This program is intended to help men become more aware of the problem in order to create an environment more conducive to change.”

The third event in the series will feature Camille Hazeur, University of Tennessee’s new affirmative action director, addressing “Sexual Harassment at UT.” This will be a luncheon presentation at the University Center Ballroom on November 11 at 12:00 noon.

The final event will feature noted feminist attorney and activist Catharine MacKinnon talking about “Sexual Harassment: Politics and Law.” McKinnon invented sexual harassment as a legal claim for sex discrimination. She is best known as the co-author (with Andrea Dworkin) of the anti-pornography legislation that cited pornography as a civil rights violation. She is currently a visiting scholar at Stanford Law School and has taught law and politics at Yale, Harvard, University of Minnesota and UCLA. She will speak on November 12 at the University Center Auditorium at 7:30. Childcare will be provided (again at the Women’s Center) and an interpreter for the hearing impaired will be provided.

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.

List of Science jobs available

The Association for Women in Science publishes a Job Bulletin monthly. In it are listed jobs in a variety of academic and other settings in the U.S. and abroad. Listing categories include administration, biology, chemistry, computer science, economics, engineering, environment/ecology, geology, health services/nursing/medicine, mathematics, physics/astronomy, psychology/counseling, sociology/social work, and others. Write Association for Women in Science, 2401 Virginia Ave., NW, Suite 303, Washington, DC 20037.
Women and AIDS cont.

may wish to consider a test to see if they have been infected with the virus. One warning, however, alcoholism, birth control pills, several pregnancies, and other factors may cause a false positive. Be aware of this fact and seek more information if you test positive.

No cases of AIDS have been caused by artificial insemination, but semen from anyone carrying the virus can infect you. The safest choice is to use semen donors not at risk.

AIDS has caused people to make some lifestyle changes and it has caused an enormous amount of fear in people. If you have questions about AIDS, it is not always easy to get the facts. For more information, I recommend calling the National AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS. The Gay Men's Health Crisis out of New York provides a number of educational materials, many of them particularly relevant to women. Their address is: GMHC, Box 274, 132 W. 24th St., New York, N.Y. 10011. In some cases the hot line or the GMHC can recommend a nearby physician or counselor knowledgeable about AIDS, something that can be difficult to find. AIDS is the first epidemic in history that we can control through education. It is mandatory to get the facts.