

For Biblical Research Committee  
by Leona G. Running

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THE ROLE AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
CHURCH

I should like to begin by quoting the postscript on the chairman's letter asking me to take this assignment:

P.S. It should be mentioned, in fairness, that there was a partial report submitted to the officers from a subcommittee three years ago, but there were tactical problems which hindered the functioning of the committee, and it was handicapped by having no lady contributors!

This is so typical of the way the men of our church operate that it is highly amusing. It reminds one of "taxation without representation" and what that led to!

Introduction

I had intended to begin my paper by referring to the careers of some of the women who in the early days of our movement held high positions and made outstanding contributions. However, in this respect I need only cite the excellent paper by a Seminary student, John G. Beach, "The Role of Women in Leadership Positions Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church," a copy of which your committee has. It was prepared for the class in History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church under Dr. C. Mervyn Maxwell, May 26, 1971. Another fine paper has just been completed in the first half of the summer session by a graduate student, Palma Hughes Simpson: "Outstanding Contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Women in the United States," prepared for the same course and same teacher, July 10, 1971. A

copy of this paper has also been sent to your committee. The question that remains to be raised concerning the former paper is: Were those women employed (solely) because they were qualified, or because they could be paid less than men would receive in those same positions? I do not have access to the records (if indeed they still exist anywhere), but as a result of my experience through more than thirty years of service I am certain that they were paid at a much lower rate than their male colleagues and received few, if any, of what fringe benefits might then have been in vogue for the male employees. Women workers are devoted and willing to sacrifice, but in this day of rising democratic awareness women feel that everyone should have an equal opportunity to sacrifice and to be generous, and not have a sacrificial role forced upon them more than upon other workers.

The committee doubtless has access to statistics as to how many of the workers in the church are women, and the proportion of women in general church membership. (A check of the 1970-71 Cast shows that of 272 faculty and staff members of Andrews University listed with photos, 80 are women, or 33.5 per cent.) The committee might learn, by surveying, how many women workers have working husbands, in and out of the church; how many have dependent children or parents to care for as sole support; how many are single women with no choice but to earn their own living.

The Lake Union Herald of July 6, 1971, included under "Newsline" an item headed "Third Woman Elected to G.C. Committee." Hooray! But three in comparison to "over 260 male members of the group"-- what is there to cheer about in that? And before my male audience

says, each to himself if not aloud, "We always pick the best-qualified--and practically all the time they are men!" let me point out that one good reason for such a situation is that women have not had equal opportunities to develop their potential and gain experience that would qualify them to sit on such boards and committees in equal numbers. Another reason is that those now qualified are being ignored. And women do not want to be included merely for tokenism, but because they have a real contribution to make, a worthwhile role to fill. The problem is similar to that of the Blacks, and just as large and involved; it needs to begin receiving at least an equal amount of serious attention. We are happy that this committee has received this assignment. (By the way, how many women are with you men right now as this paper is read to the group?)

Today one cannot pick up a magazine or a newspaper without reading such headlines as: "The Feminine Role Is Commemoration Day Topic" (Johns Hopkins Journal, Spring, 1971); "The Female Eunuch," condensed in McCall's of about March from a book by Germaine Greer, published in April, 1971, by McGraw Hill; "Hobgoblins That Hold Down Women," a Life review by Carol E. Rinzler of a book by Elizabeth Janeway, Man's World, Woman's Place, published by William Morrow & Co.; "From Adam's Rib to Women's Lib," by Kenneth L. Woodward, in McCall's, June, 1971; "Set Stage for New Equal Rights Battle" (the Equal Rights Amendment before Congress), by Sarah Booth Conroy, and "The Liberation of Betty Friedan," by Lyn Tornabene, both in McCall's for May; "Women Pressure Lansing for New Equal Pay Law" in The News-Palladium, Benton Harbor, Michigan,



June 29, 1971; and a new regular column in Ladies' Home Journal headed "The Working Woman, by Letty Cottin Pogrebin. Do not for a moment deceive yourselves into thinking that American Adventist women are not reading such articles (not to mention books) and thinking long thoughts. They are.

#### Ancient (?) History

Granted at the outset that the situation was greatly improved four years ago when the basis of the wage scale was altered, but many inequities still remain. To give you background for understanding why women, especially those who have been in denominational service for five or more years, feel as they do, I am going to rehearse briefly some ancient history from our Dark Ages.

As an academy student in the early Depression I heard a faculty wife explain to my parents why she was not teaching along with her husband, though she was well qualified: it would have made only \$5 a week difference in their income, and it meant more to him to have her not be worn out all the time. I began then to perceive the low opinion the church had of its women workers.

Another lady teacher told me that, on a continent where her family had long been missionaries, when she married and was continuing her same job of college teaching, her salary was cut to less than one-third of what it had been before the wedding. The same thing, not quite so drastically, is still being done today in the United States--in Michigan--on the Andrews University campus.

A woman of long service has told me more than once that when she and her husband were in the work together she never could understand why the younger women would say, "It's a man's world," and

complain about their treatment. Then her husband died, and she found out. She still had the same amount of furniture to house; she still had offspring to educate; but now she had to move into an attic or a basement to afford to house them and what they had. This was back when the basis of the wage scale was still supposed to be "a living wage" or "need." As a "mere secretary" she was made painfully aware of her change of status from that of a working faculty wife. Because of a thoughtful boss and loyal friends, her situation was cushioned more than it would have been in some other situations I could name, but it still hurt for a long time. By a combining of part-time work with another organization of the church, improvement was more recently made--50 percent rent subsidy was granted. But immediately the fringe benefits from her primary job were halved--and the benefits from both half-time work assignments do not add up to a single man's benefits, or probably even to a single woman's. She is a devoted worker and has become reconciled in spirit. But is there justification for any spirit of complacency on the part of those who are responsible for such financial discrimination?

In a certain situation where the policy is that one's "spouse" may have a certain amount of free tuition for classwork in the institution of higher education, a woman faculty member of long experience whose husband teaches in a nearby city school system took for granted that the policy applied both ways, only to find it did not; he had to pay the tuition. If their sex roles had been reversed, this would not have been true, even if the spouse had a job elsewhere. Furthermore, she receives less than the proper wages and benefits

for her rank because he is "head of the house." She does not even get what a single woman of her educational achievement and experience would receive. Equitable? Consider the many male workers whose wives work "outside" and earn more than their husbands. How can those husbands, sitting on finance committees, understand the situation of women, especially of those who are the sole earners for themselves and perhaps for their children or parents? It is not true today that women can live more cheaply than men; when they do so out of necessity, it is at a lower standard of living.

Another facet, speaking of academic women, is that women have been and are being kept in the lower ranks rather than promoted to associate and full professor in the same proportion and with the same speed as the men of the faculty. This is true of other colleges and universities as well as our own, and the Committee W, on the Status of Women in the Academic Profession, which has been reactivated a year ago after a 42-year dormancy, is moving to carry on a strong campaign, with the backing of the American Association of University Professors, its mother organization, to correct this discriminatory practice. Members of faculties in the SDA school system are eligible for help from these organizations, whether or not they are members of the AAUP (and many are members right now).

At the other end of the scale, the plight of women who are secretaries and stenographers needs to be given serious consideration. In many cases to my knowledge, they are kept on hour-time basis to avoid giving them the fringe benefits they should receive. Some of them have been left out of the current wage raise. These are not flighty girls just out of high school and business college; they



are mature, responsible, efficient and devoted women who have worked for years, in or out of the church. They are another example of insensitive and cruel treatment by the men as objects rather than as persons.

Committee W, referred to above, is also "going to bat" for the proper rank (as part-time teaching men receive it) for part-time teaching women in higher education who have as the other part of their work the care for their small children, rather than, as the men, research, teaching in a second institution, or government work. There must be a new understanding that as women's life-styles are changing, rearing a family, even if a woman chooses to do so, probably occupies no more than ten years of her productive career life. She needs to keep up with the progress of her profession during those years until the last child is in school, and she may need some refresher courses before stepping back into her profession, with a good thirty-year, or longer, career still ahead of her.

Modern educators more and more are expressing what Mrs. White said long ago--that the first few years of a child's life are all-important in determining his or her health, personality, and character; it is surely not necessary to document this. Therefore the women of the Adventist church are not advocating that mothers work outside the home during these formative years, unless it is necessary because they are the sole support of the children and must leave them to the care of others while they work. But to say any longer that "woman's place is in the home" for her whole lifetime is to hide one's head in the sand and refuse to recognize life as it is in the latter third of the twentieth century. See appended Xeroxed pages from the June,

1971, bulletin of the Michigan Association of Women Deans and Counselors.

To return to more "ancient" history--I know my own experience best of all, and it is fairly typical, I am sure. This seems to have been my year for unsought publicity--in addition to an article in the A.U. Student Movement, January 28, about "Dr. Running Seminary's Only Woman Professor," there was a feature article in A.U. Focus, March-April, "Leona Running: Portrait of a Scholar." I will not repeat any facts that are available from these sources, but will give a wee glimpse behind some of them. It is hard to forget that 25, 26, and 27 years ago I was trying to care for an invalid husband on \$126.75 or \$128.25 per month, with no rent subsidy, because "we couldn't start a precedent and give a woman a rent subsidy!" Only because the manager of the institution where I then worked happened to have known my parents before I was born, and happened to come to my office looking for me one day and found me in my closet crying because of my desperate situation, he then got the board to give me a \$15-per-month "medical allowance." This was less than half what the rent subsidy would have been if I had been a man doing my same work, not to mention the higher wages I would then have been receiving, plus some car-expense help. Immediately after the death of my beloved husband, I voluntarily relinquished the "medical allowance," which I had appreciated receiving, not allowing time for anyone to tell me they were discontinuing it. I well understood "my place," for I had been in denominational work over eight years by then. A few years later rent subsidies were extended to women as well; eventually the men who ruled our destinies found out that women even needed cars as well as places to live.



As I said, these stories are ancient history from our Dark Ages, and the situation is much improved in the last four years; but any woman who has worked for the denomination for 25 years can tell numerous such stories. The men should realize why the women feel that the time has come for across-the-board equality, both of wages and benefits, and of employment-and-career opportunities.

Another point: The women who by necessity or choice must enter the labor market in competition with men need opportunity for training. In our denomination this training is often discouraged. My experience again will illustrate that women's goals of education and service are not achieved without struggles and tears, against opposition. After a breakdown due partly to unresolved grief, partly to career frustration, my doctor gave me the starch in my spine to quit the job that had given me an ulcer and attend the Seminary full-time and do what I had the potential to accomplish. A personnel manager had thwarted me in taking classes part-time two years earlier. He felt that no secretary (I was also a copy editor) ought to do what all the other girls weren't doing and weren't even interested in doing. In his view that was the way to show impartiality: keep every girl in the same rut. So, even though I was willing to be docked in pay for time I lost attending one Seminary class, or was willing to make up that lost time (only four hours a week), and my immediate superior was also willing--no, that couldn't be done. If I had persisted beyond the two quarters I had already been taking one Hebrew class and making up the lost time, I would have been fired. After 14 years of denominational service!

When in 1955 I earned my M.A. in Biblical Languages at the

Seminary, which was then next door to the G.C., my good friends Drs. W. G. C. Murdoch, R. E. Loasby, and S. H. Horn got me a chance to teach the languages in the Seminary, but on probation, for two administrators thought "the men wouldn't come to the Seminary and take classes from a woman"! Within a few months one of the two administrators was convinced and won over, and brought the probationary period to a close by a motion in a board meeting; the other administrator didn't even realize, I think, that a demonstration had been made and a point proved. He had gone out of his way during the probationary period to make it explicitly clear to me in person that I was not invited to several faculty social events and was not to attend. I was well aware of my precarious status and had no intention of attending; was it necessary to twist the knife in the wound? All this was very good (?) for my peptic ulcer, which I was then still having to cope with. His attitude changed somewhat after I was put on regular status and soon on tenure. But some years later, while helping Drs. W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann with the manuscript of the Anchor Bible Matthew translation and commentary (scheduled for publication by Doubleday in August, 1971), I became aware through working on the Greek text that I was carrying an unchristian grudge against this former administrator for his cruel treatment of me. I wrote to him apologizing--and found he was totally unaware of any mental cruelty on his part in any contact with me in the past! I did not spell it out for him, because I have learned to some extent to pray the Lord's prayer, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Unconscious Assumptions by Men

The way Bible studies, articles in church papers, etc., keep talking about "man" and "men" all the time--can't one see that the spoken and written language of the denomination constantly gives women the feeling of sitting on the sidelines? Why not say "humanity," or "people," more of the time? Or "men and women"?

Dorothy L. Sayers was one of the first women students at Oxford University, graduating with honors in 1915, and became a scholar and author. In one of her two essays of some 30 or 35 years ago which are reprinted this spring, because they are so relevant, in a little paperback by Eerdmans entitled "Are Women Human?", she mentions the question of women's clothing and asks why men should pre-empt the comfortable (and modest) type of clothing, trousers, and then demand that women not wear anything similar.

The fact is that, for Homo, the garment is warm, convenient, and decent. But in the West (though not in Mohammedan countries or in China) Vir has made the trouser his prerogative, and has invested it and the skirt with a sexual significance for physiological reasons which are a little too plain for gentility to admit. . . . It is this obscure male resentment against interference with function that complicates the simple Homo issue of whether warmth, safety, and freedom of movement are desirable qualities in a garment for any creature with two legs. Naturally, under the circumstances, the trouser is also taken up into the whole Femina business of attraction, since Vir demands that a woman shall be Femina all the time, whether she is engaged in Homo activities or not. If, of course, Vir should take a fancy to the skirt, he will appropriate it without a scruple; he will wear the houpelande or the cassock if it suits him; he will stake out his claim to the kilt in Scotland or in Greece. If he chooses (as he once chose) to deck himself like a peacock in the mating season, that is Vir's right; if he prefers (as he does to-day [when she wrote, about thirty-three years ago]) to affront the eye with drab colour and ridiculous outline, that is Homo's convenience. Man dresses as he chooses, and Woman to please him; and if Woman says she ever does otherwise, he knows better, for she is not human, and may not give evidence on her own behalf. [See appended Xerox copy from Southwest Leader.]



Probably no man has ever troubled to imagine how strange his life would appear to himself if it were unrelentingly assessed in terms of his maleness; if everything he wore, said, or did had to be justified by reference to female approval; if he were compelled to regard himself, day in day out, not as a member of society, but merely (salva reverentia) as a virile member of society. If the centre of his dress-consciousness were the cod-piece, his education directed to making him a spirited lover and meek paterfamilias; his interests held to be natural only in so far as they were sexual. If from school and lecture-room, Press and pulpit, he heard the persistent outpouring of a shrill and scolding voice, bidding him remember his biological function. If he were vexed by continual advice how to add a rough male touch to his typing, how to be learned without losing his masculine appeal, how to combine chemical research with seduction, how to play bridge without incurring the suspicion of impotence. If, instead of allowing with a smile that "women prefer cave-men," he felt the unrelenting pressure of a whole social structure forcing him to order all his goings in conformity with that pronouncement. . . .

If, after a few centuries of this kind of treatment, the male was a little self-conscious, a little on the defensive, and a little bewildered about what was required of him, I should not blame him. If he traded a little upon his sex, I could forgive him. If he presented the world with a major social problem, I should scarcely be surprised. It would be more surprising if he retained any rag of sanity and self-respect. . . ." (Are Women Human?, pp. 38-42.)

Men's unconscious assumptions and attitudes show, more than they realize, even as Blacks tell us that Whites' attitudes show. We are not blaming the men for their unconscious absorption of cultural attitudes without having ever consciously evaluated them. We are happy they are now making this present study and thereby giving conscious thought in our church to what has long been unconsciously accepted.

Recently I was contacted by an organization of women in higher religious education and church life with a questionnaire on Women in Theology and an invitation to join a conference on the role of women in religion and theology. I declined to participate but did send in suggested topics for discussion and asked for a copy of any reports.

The preliminary report revealed how far-ranging are the interests of women in attaining equality as human beings in religious as well as business life. Examples of their "Suggested Areas of Investigation" follow:

a. The Status of the Single Woman

How do we face the problems of the single person in a society designed for couples? What does it mean to be a single, Christian, educated woman in society today? How does one build a life for oneself outside the structure of marriage? . . .

b. The Self-Image of Women

There are almost no affirming experiences of women as full human beings built into developmental stages, institutional experiences, or cultural encounters.

There is a real lack of images, models of whole human beings who are women, or descriptions of what such might be like.

How can women learn to be self-affirming out of feminine experience--learning how to trust their own experiencings, feeling, conceptualizations as a woman?

A fuller understanding of the meaning of grace is necessary to contribute to the development of woman's self-esteem.

How have the varieties of religious experience affected woman's idea of herself?

c. Exploration of Myth, Symbol, and Rite

What are the images of God in popular conceptions and in theology? Do these reinforce sexual prejudice?

Some of the overriding motifs and images in Scripture lend themselves to the vision of women today. . . .

How does theological language perpetuate man's primacy over woman? What changes can be or ought to be made in the God-language in light of this problem?

Are there controlling images of what it means to be human that are operative in the theological process and that reflect only the male experience of what it means to be human? How do we change images? . . .

d. Spirituality

This question has been neglected in the past. There are

dimensions to the human personality that have never been explored in a scientific manner from the theological viewpoint. This exploration would require experience-oriented research rather than a rationalistic and argumentative approach.

What relation, if any, does the fact of sexuality play in the understanding we have of spirituality?

e. Other Concerns

. . .

How can we find ways to cross fertilize roles and disciplines within the church and society?

How can one speak to social ethics in such a manner as to address persons in their wholeness: the reality of their sex, class, culture, nation, religion, as all these realities intermingle both in their individual selfhoods and in their interpersonal involvements and history or tradition? (Alverno College, Research Center on Women, 1971.)

The fact is that our very religious training has come to us filtered through men's minds, and from a Holy Book written by men with prevailing cultural assumptions during millennia of male domination in the world. We sing hymns with lines such as "Strong men and maidens meek" (No. 17, Church Hymnal). We have been brainwashed by church and society all our lives; but we women of the church are beginning, along with women in secular life, to counteract this male-dominant religious and cultural brainwashing and to understand and claim an equal place under God in His world and His church. Even in the Biblical period a few women broke through those barriers: Deborah, Huldah, etc.

Speaking in Commemoration Day exercises for the 95th anniversary of the founding of Johns Hopkins University, Mrs. Patricia Roberts Harris, a Washington attorney and former U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg, said among other things:

Individual role models are better than nothing, but I believe that the massive assault upon the totality of prejudice and stereotypes interfering with the achievement by women of their



individual goals is essential if individual women are to be given the opportunity of self-realization. Only when men and women see women consistently and routinely filling all the roles that society needs for the conduct of its business, will women be able to resolve their dilemma in the search of self.

Adding that Women's Liberation came along just in time, she said:

Another decade without this movement of women to arouse in the consciousness of our time a real awareness of the insoluble dilemma of being female in this electronic age, and we women would have been mad--not angry--insane. (Johns Hopkins Journal, Spring, 1971, p. 8.)

Quoting from the Life book review by Carol E. Rinzler of Man's World, Woman's Place, by Elizabeth Janeway:

Solidly with her sisters, Mrs. Janeway argues ad feminem that beliefs about women's inferiority crumble in the glare of modern science. The myth that women belong at home, rooted to an ancient societal need to protect the childbearer, is irrelevant in a society where technology has made child-bearing an optional rather than a required feature of woman's role. . . . She postulates the existence of a social mythology, a body of persuasive, pervasive beliefs, erected by society to maintain the [male-dominant] status quo, perpetuate itself and justify its demands. Myths about women define their behavior, and there is immense comfort in such ready-made roles; myths like yin and yang, by explaining contradictions, help bring order to a confusing universe. . . . If women behave according to the demands of society today in determining their roles, then social mythology itself will change, and new myths will grow up to meet reality. (Life, July 2, 1971, p. 14.)

The Creation story in Genesis 1 culminates with the creation of both man and woman "in the image of God."

This is a radical affirmation of sexual equality, and a sharp contrast to the creation myths of the Hebrews' neighbors in the Near East. . . .

The feminist point of view, then, offers an understanding of the story of Eden that is close to the ancient Hebrews' own view. . . . As happens in all cultures, the ideals the Hebrews expressed in their literature did not always govern their social practices. The Hebrew woman, like her Greek or Egyptian sister, suffered under double moral standards imposed by a patriarchal society. . . .

There are those who believe that Jesus himself did or said nothing to liberate women. It all depends on the cultural bias

one brings to the study of Scripture. "Jesus was a radical feminist," says Dr. Leonard Swidler, a Catholic theologian at Temple University. "It is an overwhelming tribute to men's intellectual myopia that they have not recognized this over the past two thousand years."

Jesus attitude toward women becomes truly radical only when measured against the customs of his society. At the great Temple in Jerusalem, women were restricted to an outer court, five steps below the court for men. And on the streets, it was considered beneath the dignity of a rabbi to speak to a woman--even his own wife or daughter. The basis of the Hebrew woman's second-class status was plainly sexual. . . . (Kenneth L. Woodward, "From Adam's Rib to Women's Lib," McCall's, June, 1971, p. 118.)

Ellen G. White made some enlightened statements as early as 1898 that have been well ignored:

Women who work in the cause of God should be given wages proportionate to the time they give to the work. God is a God of justice, and if the ministers receive a salary for their work, their wives, who devote themselves just as interestedly to the work as laborers together with God, should be paid in addition to the wages their husbands receive, notwithstanding that they may not ask this. As the devoted minister and his wife engage in the work, they should be paid wages proportionate to the wages of two distinct workers, that they may have means to use as they shall see fit in the cause of God. The Lord has put His Spirit upon them both. If the husband should die, and leave his wife, she is fitted to continue her work in the cause of God, and receive wages for the labor she performs. (Manuscript 43a, 1898; Manuscript Release #267 [emphasis added]. Cited in paper by John G. Beach.)

See also Chapter "Women to Be Gospel Workers," 6T (published in 1900), pp. 114-118; and especially the following quotation from 7T concerning equity in wages for women:

If a woman is appointed by the Lord to do a certain work, her work should be estimated according to its value. Some may think it good policy to allow persons to devote their time and labor to the work without compensation. But God does not sanction such arrangements. When self-denial is required because of a dearth of means, the burden is not to rest wholly upon a few persons. Let all unite in the sacrifice.

The Lord desires those entrusted with His goods to show kindness and liberality, not niggardliness. Let them not, in their deal, try to exact every cent possible. God looks with contempt on such methods. (7T, published in 1902, pp. 207-208.)

These quotations are only a drop in the bucket in relation to the number of good and pertinent quotations I could give from many more sources. I merely wish hereby to make the men of the committee aware of something of what is going on in the thinking of the women of the church as well as of the nation and the world. It seems a pity that our church organization never does the good, right and fair thing for its workers until forced to by the law of the land--as minimum-wage levels, equal-employment opportunities, etc. Someday probably the government will force us to give women across-the-board equality of remuneration and opportunities. Already in force is Executive Order 11246 as amended by Order 11375, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex by any agency holding federal contracts. For once let the church organization do the good and right thing before the government tells us we have to!

One word more about women as "head-of-family": The fact still remains that a woman cannot leave Sustentation benefits to an invalid husband or dependent children. That is not provided for in the current policy, which provides only for "widows and orphans," not mentioning "widowers," who might be invalids. We have come a long way since my own experience, cited above, in recognizing that in some circumstances a woman is "head of the family," but there is still improvement to be made.

The Review and Herald of July 8, as I write the rough draft of this paper (on the 11th), has a fine article by F. L. Bland entitled "Of One Blood." Many of its sentences can be read, substituting "sexism" for "racism" and from the point of view of equality of women instead of that of Blacks, and would thus bring new illumination into the situation. For instance, on p. 5:



Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, from New York, has stated in public on more than one occasion that she has suffered more discrimination as a woman than as a Black.

Carl Stokes, mayor of Cleveland (first Black mayor of an American city), was visited by a white lady mayor from another city, and he invited her to join in the city council meeting which was about to convene. She found herself the only woman present, and later chided him about having no women in his council. He replied, a little sheepishly, "We are tackling one minority at a time."

Many years ago I was talking with a college president, who made this astounding statement: "I do not have any prejudice against women--in fact, I prefer to hire them for my faculty; they cost less money!" I am happy not to be on his faculty. This attitude is still widespread in our church, though we recognize the real progress that has been made in recent years toward equality. The following statements are illuminating:

In the next to the last of her detective novels, *Gaudy Night*, Miss Sayers characterizes that attitude [against scholarly women] through one of her characters, who says, "All the men have been amazingly kind and sympathetic about the Women's Colleges [at Oxford]. . . . they are quite pleased to see us playing with our little toys." (Op. cit., p. 8, in Introduction by Mary McDermott Shideler, a scholar at Oxford.)

Miss Sayers says:

Take, for example, the very usual reproach that women nowadays always want to "copy what men do." In that reproach there is a great deal of truth and a great deal of sheer, unmitigated and indeed quite wicked nonsense. There are a number of jobs and pleasures which men have in times past cornered for themselves. At one time, for instance, men had a monopoly of classical education. When the pioneers of university training for women demanded that women should be admitted to the universities, the cry went up at once: "Why should women want to know about Aristotle?" The answer is NOT that all women would be the better for knowing about Aristotle--still less, as Lord Tennyson

seemed to think, that they would be more companionable wives for their husbands if they did know about Aristotle--but simply: "What women want as a class is irrelevant. I want to know about Aristotle [or Biblical languages!]. It is true that most women care nothing about him, and a great many male undergraduates turn pale and faint at the thought of him--but I, eccentric individual that I am, do want to know about Aristotle, and I submit that there is nothing in my shape or bodily functions which need prevent my knowing about him." (Ibid., pp. 20, 21.)

"The rights of woman," says Dr. Peck, "considered in the economic sphere, seem to involve her in competition with men in the struggle for jobs." It does seem so indeed, and this is hardly to be wondered at; for the competition began to appear when the men took over the women's jobs by transferring them from the home to the factory. The mediaeval woman had effective power and a measure of real (though not political) equality, for she had control of many industries--spinning, weaving, baking, brewing, distilling, perfumery, preserving, pickling--in which she worked with head as well as hands, in command of her own domestic staff. But now the control and direction--all the intelligent part--of those industries have gone to the men, and the women have been left, not with their "proper" work but with employment in those occupations. And at the same time, they are exhorted to be feminine and return to the home from which all intelligent occupation has been steadily removed. (Ibid., pp. 42, 43.)

Quoting once more from the introduction to Dorothy Sayers' essays, Prof. Mary Shideler states in her own words:

To be a person is to act, to work. In working we become our true selves and know ourselves and each other truly. Therefore work which is essentially trivial or shoddy, or consists of making things that are not worth making at all, diminishes the persons who engage in it at every level of production, exchange, and use. In contrast, they who love their work, and for love do it well, grow into the full measure of personhood. The gravest dangers our societies face today come as direct results of a pernicious philosophy that undervalues the work and therefore the persons who perform it. Or alternatively, it undervalues persons and therefore their work. . . . The concept of work that Miss Sayers has proposed is neither puritanical nor mediaeval, but Christian. It grows from the belief that in work which is creative, human nature most nearly approaches its Creator. And for Miss Sayers, creativity is not restricted to the so-called creative arts. Building a house, typing a business letter, helping in the manufacture of well-designed and well-constructed objects for good purposes, teaching and healing and settling disputes and repairing machines are all creative functions when through those activities, we participate in the processes which

create and sustain societies and persons. Or they can be means of destruction if the result is to inhibit the healthy exchanges of life, the product is worthless or harmful, or the craftsmanship is unsound. . . . We are known by our work, as God is known by His. (Ibid., pp. 14, 15.)

In Russia, whose society Americans tend to look down upon, women have equal opportunities for education and professional jobs. Over 60 per cent of the physicians are women; a high percentage of engineers, etc.,--and, admittedly, most of the street cleaners and road builders, also.

The question may be raised of ordaining women as ministers in the SDA church. Other denominations are doing this more and more. Sister White and other prominent early women workers surely deserved it and were qualified for it. Undoubtedly today there are women, both in this country and overseas, who deserve this recognition of God's call to work just as men work as ministers, pastors, evangelists, and administrators. If they have heard God's call in this way and have the qualifications in talents, training, and temperament, why should anyone stand in their way and forbid them? The fact that I personally have no such ambitions should in no way make me wish to withhold the opportunity from other women who have qualities and aspirations that I may lack. I know of women in other lands--I think particularly of an unassuming little lady who received the B.D. degree from the Seminary a few years ago and returned to her land in Northern Europe--who care for one or two churches exactly as a man would, preaching on Sabbath and in evangelistic meetings, and all the rest of pastoral work--and yet are paid as stenographers. That is base advantage being taken of them and their dedication to the cause! The male leadership of that field should be made to burn with shame at what they are doing to faithful and gifted coworkers.



Summary

Some of the many, many experiences of women who have been discriminated against by church workers and policies have been cited above. Not all of them are in the past; many inequities are current and according to present policy. The men pay lip service to Mrs. White and her inspired guidance, but have conveniently overlooked her plain statements that "women who work in the cause of God should be given wages proportionate to the time they give to the work. . . . As the devoted minister and his wife engage in the work, they should be paid wages proportionate to the wages of two distinct workers," establishing the principle (in 1898!) of separate and equal remuneration. "When self-denial is required because of a dearth of means, the burden is not to rest wholly upon a few persons. Let all unite in the sacrifice. The Lord desires those entrusted with His goods to show kindness and liberality, not niggardliness." This is said in the immediate context of women workers. On the preceding page stands this statement of a great principle:

Every worker in our institutions should receive fair compensation. If the workers receive suitable wages, they have the gratification of making donations to the cause. It is not right that some should receive a large amount, and others, who are doing essential and faithful work, very little. (7T, 207.)

The women workers of the church are asking only to be treated as worthwhile people. Their role? To use for God and humanity the talents He has given them, and to devote their energies to His cause. Their status? This should be absolutely equal with men's. Why should anyone attempt a definition of the "role," singular, of women any more than they define the "role," singular, of men? It is a matter of the infinitely varied wishes and capabilities of human beings.

Recommendations

1. The men of the church, in all contacts with the women, in board and faculty and committee meetings and in every relationship, should recognize women as fellow human beings in their own right, with talents to develop and use in God's work in every role for which they may be or become qualified, with full recognition and remuneration. They need to stop treating women as objects or as second-class citizens.

2. There must be recognition that men's and women's roles in society are changing, and our educational and indoctrinational systems must be broadened to allow for training for real partnership-equality in all phases of life; in marriage, for instance. The women of the church are not with the more extreme elements of Women's Lib that want to do away with marriage (but why should a woman have to lose her name when she marries?), but they do want the husbands they marry to have been conditioned to think of them as equal partners, and to be happy and unself-conscious about doing their share of the work in the home when both work outside the home, and to enjoy helping to care for their children rather than thinking of that as solely "women's work." Secular society is leading the way on these points.

3. There must be absolute across-the-board equality, "equal pay for equal work," with equal fringe benefits, with reference only to years of experience and rank (professorial) or responsibility levels. Provision for children can be made by tuition rebates, rather than in wage scale and basic allowances.

4. There must be equal opportunities for women to train for and compete for jobs that people wish to have because of their individual interests, talents, and training. As it is, a woman has to be three times as good--some say ten or twenty times as good --as a man to hold the same job, both in our church and in general society.

5. Women must be represented by women on committees that discuss their interests and that vote policies concerning them. As is generally accepted practice everywhere, the contributors of papers to this committee should present them in person and be allowed to defend them and enter into their discussion.

Over a dozen mature, responsible women of my colleagues have read this material critically, corroborating my statements and stories, sharpening a few points here and there, adding to the facts cited and the recommendations, and enthusiastically supporting the whole paper. Thus I am assured that I have not exaggerated anything, and that I am truly representing more than myself and my own ideas; I am speaking for a vast group of the church's workers.

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Abstract of paper by Leona G. Running, "The Role and Status of Women in the SDA Church"

The paper cites from our denominational "Dark Ages" a number of cases of financial and other discrimination against women workers, while recognizing that the situation has greatly improved in the last four years. However, inequities remain that should be eliminated. Recommendations may be summarized as follows:

1. The men of the church, in all contacts with the women, in board and faculty and committee meetings and in every relationship, should recognize women as fellow human beings in their own right, with talents to develop and use in God's work in every role for which they may be or become qualified, with full recognition and remuneration. They need to stop treating women as objects or as second-class citizens.

2. There must be recognition that men's and women's roles in society are changing, and our educational and indoctrinational systems must be broadened to allow for training for real partnership-equality in all phases of life; in marriage, for instance. The women of the church are not with the more extreme elements of Women's Lib that want to do away with marriage; but they do want the husbands they marry to have been conditioned to think of them as equal partners, . . .

3. There must be absolute across-the-board equality, "equal pay for equal work," with equal fringe benefits, with reference only to years of experience and rank (professorial) or responsibility levels. . . .

4. There must be equal opportunities for women to train for and compete for jobs that people wish to have because of their individual interests, talents, and training. . . .

5. Women must be represented by women on committees that discuss their interests and that vote policies concerning them. As is generally accepted practice everywhere, the contributors of papers to this committee should present them in person and be allowed to defend them and enter into their discussion.