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Information Services/Joan Shaw Relation

Joan Shaw

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TO: J R Allred
Pat Bean
Cliff Cahoon
John S. Flannery
Linda E. Keith
Cleon Kotter

DATE: November 25, 1975

FROM: Joan Shaw

SUBJECT: Information Services/Joan Shaw Relations

The attached anonymous letter came to me yesterday from a woman on campus who was upset by my editorial on the news coverage of the "Women Unlimited" conference. To answer such a specialized complaint in the Status of Women NEWS would take up too much valuable space. On the chance that it might come close to sentiments of your own, however, and since I consider you all to be good friends, I'd like to take a few minutes of your time to make an explanation.

I suppose I should mention first that my piece was intended to be an editorial--as were the back-page pieces on the two issues preceding this. I was not reporting on the conference; I was (obviously, I thought) grinding an axe. My point was that a lot of good things went on at the conference and very little of it came out in the news media except the most sensational and most unfortunate--the "Boy America" contest.

Nevertheless, I'm deeply sorry if I hurt anyone's feelings in the Information Service office by my criticism of the press; to be frank I never think of you as being part of that segment of the outer world, but as part of the university which must deal with it. I also don't consider the press to be an enemy of the women's movement, or a friend either. The news media is in business to sell news. If we make asses of ourselves one percent of the time, it would be selfless indeed of its people not to capitalize on the situation; we simply have to work that much harder to get good coverage of the other ninety-nine percent.

It may be of interest to you that many of us were taken to task by a newswoman at the conference for not complaining enough about news coverage of the women's movement. She exhorted us to complain loud, long, often, and by the most effective means possible if we wanted to see any change in media coverage. This woman, a TRIBUNE employee, works on the women's section which included excellent news on the conference (although the newspaper was roundly criticized because the piece appeared back with the recipes, fashions, and other "women's" news).

I hope you will all consider me open to differing viewpoints on the coverage of the women's movement, or arguments that I shouldn't criticize it if it's bad. In fact, I would welcome any critical comments you might make on my handling of the NEWS, since I stick my neck out--sometimes very far--every time it comes out. The only criticism that could possibly offend me would be that coming through the mail unsigned, because this type of criticism suffers no dialogue.

XC: Women's Center ✓
Janice Pearce
Jane Lott
Alison Thorne
Karen Morse
Mary Washington
Gwen Haws
Donna Falkenborg
Carole Edwards
Rosalena Sanders

WOMEN'S CENTER
University Center 304
Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84322

12-1-75

TO: STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

FROM: A FEMALE EMPLOYEE OF THE UNIVERSITY

I always enjoy getting a copy of the Status of Women News. I wholeheartedly support the aims of the Status of Women Committee, but I would like to express my opinion of the recent article on the "Women Unlimited" conference at the U.

I think that sometimes we of the women's movement are guilty of the faults we accuse others of--too biased, unobjective, narrow sighted, etc. For example, the article criticized the press coverage of the conference at the U for reporting "spottily", with sarcastic mention in the article of the contest for "Boy America" being "so well covered by our vigilant Utah Press", and that it seemed to be the "only thing that heppened at the conference".

The article in the Status of Women News covered the conference

S P O T T I L Y

WITH 75% OF THE ARTICLE EXPLAINING ABOUT THE "BOY AMERICA" CONTEST

LITTLE MENTION OF THE REAL MEAT ISSUES OTHER THAN
A BRIEF STATEMENT AS TO WHAT WAS COVERED.

This disappoints me -- do you see what I mean by being guilty of the same "sins" of the accused? You were following the example of the "vigilant, objective, Utah Press".

I enjoy and support the Status of Women News, but please don't be so biased and damned honory -- it is sensationalizing. How about a straight forward and honest look about what is happening without editorializing throughout the SW News. I believe that more USU staff members could read it seriously if that were the case. Please don't alienate those who may be our friends.

I am not signing this because I am afraid or embarrassed--but because I know and love you all too much to offend you.

COPIES TO WOMENS CENTER, JOAN SHAW, JANICE PEARCE.