

Report from the Committee on the Status of Women

Submitted by Pegg y DesAutels, Chair

The members of Committee on the Status of Women were deeply saddened to hear about the death of Sara Ruddick. There will be a number of upcoming CSW-sponsored sessions devoted to remembering her and her work. A session at the 2011 Eastern Division meeting is being organized by Kate Norlock, Margaret Walker, Hilde Lindemann, and Eva Kittay; a session at the 2012 Central Division meeting is being organized by Diana Meyer; and a session at the 2012 Pacific meeting is being organized by Amy Kind.

Laurie Paul has organized a session on implicit bias for the Eastern Division meetings in 2011.

The CSW has continued its efforts to improve data collection within the APA by coordinating with the APA Inclusiveness Committee and the Women in Philosophy Task Force. To this end the following letter was sent to the APA Executive Director (David Schrader) and the APA Board of Officers from The Women in Philosophy Task Force (WPHTF) Data Committee (Peggy DesAutels, Sally Haslanger, Linda Martin-Alcoff, Kate Norlock, Miriam Solomon), the APA Committee on the Status of Women (Chair: Peggy DesAutels), the APA Committee on Inclusiveness (Chair: Anita Silvers) on September 29, 2010:

We are writing to request **regular and systematic data collection** on the membership of the profession of philosophy in the USA by the National Office of the APA. The APA Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) has asked for this in the past, and the Women in Philosophy Task Force (WPHTF, established August 2009) identified this as a priority in its efforts to advance women in philosophy. Ongoing data on the demographics and employment of the APA membership is a prerequisite for identifying issues of concern and for assessing attempts to improve the status of women (such as the mentoring of junior scholars program that the WPHTF is beginning). Data collection is also vital for monitoring the status of other minority groups in philosophy, and we make our requests with these groups also in mind.

Most professional academic societies keep statistics on their membership (including humanities societies such as the Modern Language Association and the American Historical Association). These are of value for many professional initiatives and for the representation of the society's interests. Although the APA Executive Director (David Schrader) agreed in principle to supplying this information several years ago, the APA office has been unable to produce much information. We have been told that the main obstacle has been computer software problems. There is also some concern that APA members will not supply the requested information during e.g., membership renewals or job searches. We are aware of the recent *optional* link to supply demographic information that appears on the membership page of the APA website. We think that this is unlikely to yield adequate data because it is not an integrated part of the membership renewal process. The only area in which there has been progress is in the tracking of hiring in philosophy, and here the data has been incomplete and mostly not reported to the profession. (Miriam Solomon from CSW

collaborated with the APA to collect *JFP* employment data in 2007-8; this was published in *Proceedings* but no employment data has been officially disseminated since then.)

In order to assist the APA, we have a list of the **minimum** data that we would like to see collected on (1) the membership of the APA, annually, and (2) the job market, annually. We repeat this list (with a few modifications) below. We do not think that the obstacles to providing the data are weighty enough to justify delay. We ask that the Board of Officers direct the National Office to produce and disseminate this data regularly, granting the National Office any resources (staffing, tech support, statistical expertise) it may need to carry out this important work. We suggest October 1 as the annual date for receiving statistics (soon after membership renewals and well after the end of the job market for the previous year), beginning October 1, 2011.

Members should be clearly prompted to supply demographic and employment information before annual renewals. They can be informed that supplying the information is voluntary and that the information will be used only for the purpose of maintaining demographics on the profession. Suitable statements about data privacy are widely available (e.g., on the website of the American Sociological Association). We suggest that data collection be automated as much as possible. Demographic and educational information can be routinely requested of those registering for the job placement service. We also suggest not only contacting the advertising departments for follow up to *JFP* ads, but also checking on-line philosophy blogs which often post the outcome of searches. We ask that efforts begin right away so that any difficulties can be identified and addressed with time and experience.

1. Database of APA membership that includes, for each person (assigned a non-identifying number in the database):

- **Year of PhD**
- **Salary range** (from annual dues category)
- **Tenure/tenure-track/full time temporary, part time temporary/unemployed/employed outside of philosophy/graduate student/retired**
- **Rank** (adjunct, lecturer, assistant, associate, full, emeritus)
- **Gender** (male, female, other)
- **Race/ethnicity** (write-in)
- **Disability** (yes/no)

We recommend that the database be supplied to the Chairs of all APA Diversity Committees (so that any further statistical computations can be automated). It is desirable that some basic statistical results (e.g., % of women and minorities, stratified by rank) be already calculated.

2. Full job seeking database to include

• **For each job listed in *JFP* (Institution, Rank, tenure, tenure-track or temporary, AOS in ad and AOC in ad)**

• **Name of person(s) hired OR statement “no hire resulted”**

• PhD granting institution of person hired

• Date of PhD of person hired

• Tenure, tenure-track or temporary

• Rank of person hired

• Gender of person hired

• Race/ethnicity of person hired

• Disability status of person hired

• AOS of person hired

• AOC of person hired

• Number of applicants for the position and number of women and minority applicants

• **Database of those registering for the job placement service, including year of PhD, gender, race/ethnicity, disability status** (minimal data is in **bold**, all data is requested)

Again, this data should be supplied to the Chairs of all APA Diversity Committees

We would be happy to provide any assistance to the National Office that we can. Please let us know your response to this request.

Contact persons:

Miriam Solomon, Temple University msolomon@temple.edu

Peggy DesAutels, University of Dayton peggy.desautels@notes.dayton.edu

Anita Silvers, San Francisco State University asilvers@sfsu.edu
[end of letter]

Since sending this letter, Miriam Solomon has been coordinating with David Schrader in order to determine exactly what data will be collected and how it will be collected. The CSW remains optimistic that there will finally be some movement in the APA's collecting data essential to addressing diversity in the APA's membership.