

A Publication of Sacramento Women In the Media

TYPECAST

Vol. 1, No. 2 Summer 1975

♪ Dum . . . Dum . . . DaDum!

By Cheryl Clark

Get rid of them altogether or turn them into paid classified ads or hire someone to do them, pleaded a recent memo from the Sacramento Bee Women's Caucus.

But whatever you do, said the memo, stop using third and sixth year guild reporters to write clerical wedding and engagement notices.

Memos on the subject had been written before. They had carefully explained that publication of the nuptial notices was sexist and racist and boring.

Only the bride gets her picture in the paper, not the bridegroom, and black brides weren't encouraged to and do not submit their wedding notices.

Futhermore, cried the memos, weddings aren't news. They are vital statistics and should be run in agate type with the divorces, births and deaths.

But memos fell on deaf ears. Management said that wedding notices are a right of any young woman. The business office said it was a civic responsibility and the circulation department said readership depended on the notices.

Last month, the caucus tried once again to chisel the brick wall bastion of the bride page. This time, however, it used a tactic that management would be more likely to hear.

Publication of wedding and engagement notices costs a lot of money, the caucus said. Because of

nuptial notices, the Bee's Scene section loses more than 60 pages of potential advertising and news space a year, a value of \$128,147 in ad revenue. And with new pay scales, nearly \$4,000 is spent on labor.

And that doesn't include cost of composition, postage, materials, photo labor, printing and company benefits.

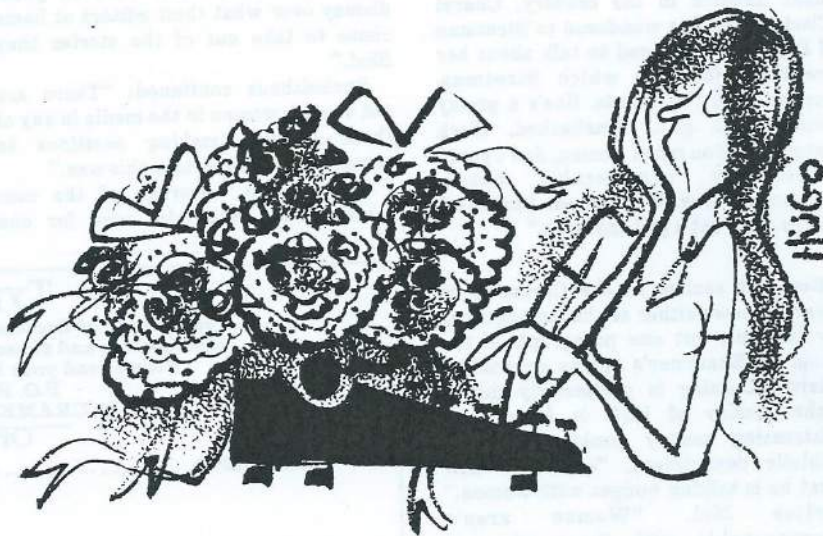
Bee Scene staffers informally polled said 25 per cent of the telephone inquires about the bride service began with the question, "How much does it cost to run my

wedding in the paper?"

In an eight page memo, later trimmed to a concise two pages, the caucus suggested that Bee management reevaluate its policy of running all seven inch bride and one and one half inch engagement notices.

By charging a small fee for them, like \$5 or \$8, a paper can justify removing the task from the feature section to the advertising department and would lose less money.

The caucus' suggestions have been sent to the Bee's policy makers and a decision is expected this fall.



UPDATE

•The Los Angeles Times congratulated itself for modernizing style regarding second reference to women by their last names instead of Miss., Mrs., or Ms. Hurrah! And so Jack McCurdy, conscientiously adopting his employer's new rule, wrote of the governor's sister and LA school board member, Kathleen Brown Rice:

Rice, 29, an attractive mother of three, beat Chambers resoundingly.

•The same guy who's offering \$1,500 to any organization that will wave the flag and say "My country right or wrong," Tom Strotman, commits feminist faux pas every day, it seems. Peculiarly, he finds himself the public information officer for the only state department run by a woman. In arranging for an interview with Virginia Days, the only female state Veterans Affairs Department director in the country, Cheryl Clark of the Bee wondered to Strotman if Days was prepared to talk about her week-old job. To which Strotman replied, "Oh yes, she is. She's a pretty smart little girl." Unabashed, Clark retorted: "You mean woman, don't you?" Strotman, considerably muted, responded "Yea. Well I guess. She's 41. I guess she's not a girl anymore."

•Not that sexism at the Chron/Ex is ever any news, either are hiring practices or in print, but one paragraph in the Aug. 14 Examiner's sports column by Melvin Durslag is particularly dumb. John McKay of USC is faced with distressing money problems in his athletic department, "especially now that he is talking budget with women," writes Mel. "Women aren't unreasonable with those who understand them. All you have to do to run a female athletic program is give them a charge account at Saks, where they can pick up their sneakers and their shorts and get their hair done."

"And you need send them to Paris but once a year for the fall showings of basketball bras."

•Rooms With No View, a collage of frustration and commentary by women in, formerly in and would be in the media, is largely east coast oriented and fascinated, fascinating, albeit anonymously written. It's making money in most bookstores too. Does that give anybody on the west coast any ideas?

•Jill Ruckelshaus, presiding officer of the President's Commission for the Observance of International Women's Year and wife of former Environmental Protection Agency administrator William, went to the International Woman's Year conference in Mexico City this summer. She came home irritated at a catch 22 situation she noticed, not for the first time, in our media.

"The people who decide what is news are not as familiar as they should be with the impetus and widespread support that now exists for the women's movement." She labeled as "patronizing and sexist" a Washington D.C. newspaper editorial which said "the women were squabbling and having a big party in Mexico City." In addition, she said, "many of the women (reporters) who were there were in great dismay over what their editors at home chose to take out of the stories they filed."

Ruckelshaus continued: "There are not enough women in the media in any of those decision making positions to recognize how important this was."

At the Bee, coverage of the conference was negligible, save for one

front page story quoting wives of the Egyptian and Philippine presidents. The women said the women's movement is too demanding and anti-male and should not become a competition against men. "What they say might be news," argued Nancy Skelton and Sigrid Bathen for the Sacramento Newspaper Guild Women's Caucus, "but we question its place on the front page when so little coverage of any substance was given the whole conference."

•Good reading — and an eye-opener if you believe it all — is Sally Quinn's new expose on CBS, which wine and dined her away from the Washington Post to become a morning counterpart to Barbara Walters' NBC Today Show. Quinn failed, she claims, because nobody bothered to train her in television techniques. The book is called "We're Going To Make You A Star."

•Lee Smith, of the Bee, opened her Fact Finder mail one morning to find the following complaint: "I was unemployed and owned a house, wife and two children." Gee, wonder how much he paid for the little ones.

Typecast

is published quarterly by Sacramento Women In Media (SWIM)

Membership and subscription price is \$ 5 a year.

Please send your badly needed checks to:

P.O.Box 160134

Sacramento, CA 95816

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Sigrid Bathen
 VICE PRESIDENT Nancy Skelton
 RECORDER Amalia Fisher
 TREASURER Lee Smith

Board of Directors

Hilary Abramson Print Media
 Vi Kinney Public Information and Public Relations
 Pat Washburn Journalism Education
 Cheryl Clark Typecast Editor
 Betty Moulds Community
 Lujan Blueford Radio

COMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Liz Brady Membership Director
 Iris Yang Program Director
 Gene Cone Discussion Group Director
 Ann Reed, Susan Sward, Melissa Blanton Fundraising Directors
 Sigrid Bathen Legal Defense Director
 Nancy Skelton Scholarship and Awards Director

They Might Have Learned Something

By Sigrid Bathen

The cast was famous, the performance exciting and the subject powerfully urgent.

Yet hardly anybody from the male-controlled Los Angeles news media came to cover the first hearing on the image of women in the media sponsored this summer by the California Commission on the Status of Women.

And it's too bad. News directors and city editors might have learned something about their products and their readership from intelligent — and newsworthy — testimony by newswomen, actresses, screenwriters and film directors.

Take, for example, the eloquent testimony of character actress Carmen Zapata—a regal, elegant woman with streaks of silver in her hair—who noted that the audience probably didn't recognize her without the bun at the nape of her neck and the winning, Spanish accent of the intimidated, shuffling Mexican women she portrays in film.

Or the arrogance of Universal studios, which refused to respond to repeated commission requests for testimony about its portrayal of women. Or CBS, which curtly refused to participate.

Or the avalanche of never-before-released statistics on the film industry compiled by the women's committee of the Screen Actors Guild, which detailed the systematic elimination of serious female participation in the screen product. For example:

- 40 programs with male orientation or male leads in 1975-76 network programming. Nine female-oriented, or with female leads.

- Nationally, a two per cent representation of women in the Directors Guild, appalling mistreatment and exclusion of women writers in films and portrayal of women as stupid in film roles.

Dispassionately, calmly—their rage contained in clear words—they testified, and the theme was much the same: women have been portrayed in the media as vapid idiots by men who have illegally refused to hire and promote them and who have frustrated and stultified their professional growth.

Testimony ran the gamut of media professions, with several contingents of women reporters represented.

Some—like the trio of reporters who testified nervously about sexism at the Los Angeles Times, where they are hampered and threatened by the lack of a newspaper guild—were clearly in the embryonic stages of organizing a viable women's caucus. Others—like the Women's Caucus of the Sacramento Newspaper Guild, Sacramento Women in the Media, women from the film industry and representatives of Women in

Communications—are clearly much further along.

The hearings are an indication of the commission's interest in media discrimination against women, and commission staff is presently compiling the volumes of testimony for wider public dissemination.

Perhaps a few editors, news directors and film producers can be persuaded to read it.

Bathen, a reporter for the Sacramento Bee, is a founder of Sacramento Women in Media and the Women's Caucus of the Sacramento Newspaper Guild, which financed her trip to Los Angeles. The following is excerpted from her remarks at the hearing:

"Our experiences in Sacramento have shown it is possible to eliminate discriminatory behavior through the concerted efforts of women within the offending media. Certainly the influence the commission could exert on media throughout California is considerable. . . .

"Newspaper editors and broadcast executives who are resistant to change in this area should be apprised of the considerable clout—legally, ethically and through community pressure—which can be wielded by a strong organization.

If news executives cannot be won over by appeals to sensible journalism, then they can be persuaded by the threat of expensive lawsuits, economic boycotts and public exposure.

"The portrayal of women by print and broadcast media as mindless fools whose interests are limited to eradicating bathtub rings and soothing male egos will continue so long as media and community women—by the tacit approval of inaction—allow it to continue. It is time we advised editors, news directors and advertising managers that the days of machismo journalism and its companion stereotype of the calloused, carousing newsman with a bottle of rye in his desk drawer and a tearful wife at home by the phone—it is time we advised them those days are over."

Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Rally

Tuesday, Aug. 26, 11 a.m.
on the West Capitol steps
Music and Speakers provided

Join Us to:

Reaffirm California's commitment to the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment,

Demonstrate support for women working toward ERA ratification in other states,

Assure California's continued leadership in the conformance of laws to the spirit of the ERA.

Answer The Phone, Gals

By Iris Yang

Sex discrimination, in a day when most media are beating the bushes to show how equally they can treat women, is sometimes too subtle to detect.

But not at KOVR Channel 13 television.

Rosa Kwong, a former producer-writer there, and now a reporter for the Fairfield Daily Republic, says that station is blatant about its bigotry.

Last May, she protested that she was occasionally assigned to relieve switchboard personnel during the receptionist's lunch hour. She told general manager Ramsey Elliott that her regular duties of putting out a money-making product were being severely hampered by this additional assignment.

In June, probably as a result of her complaint, program manager Bel Lange issued a memo which expanded "the list

of personnel for daily switchboard relief."

"The schedule," he wrote, "indicates each person will average approximately three (3) switchboard relief days every two months. Any substitutions of days in the schedule should be worked out individually or through department heads."

Kwong said only a few women had been assigned to switchboard relief before the memo was issued. But now, the list was expanded to include all 20 female employees at the station.

But not one male out of the 50 plus male employees at Channel 13.

The women held jobs ranging from secretarial, clerical, receptionist to producer-writer, salesperson and reporter. Males, she said, work in nearly all of those employment categories.

Asterisks beside five names explained at the bottom of the page: "Exclusions:

due to the nature of the work schedule—in and out of the building."

Three of the five belong to AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists), and it is a direct violation of union rules for management to consider them for lunch relief.

But the other two are not so protected.

Kwong said the list was compiled with "no regard as to the status, classification or workload of the individual. It should be emphasized that 'lunch relief duties' were in no way part of the job description prescribed to me when I was hired."

Kwong has filed a complaint of sexual discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against KOVR, and intends to pursue the matter. SWIM members voted in July to support her efforts by writing the station and, if necessary, by providing legal assistance.

Sex Byline Poll

OTTAWA—Are readers more likely to believe a story if it has a male byline rather than a female byline?

Three North Carolina journalism teachers tried to find out recently. They concluded that it appears a female byline "can flag some readers' perceptions almost as surely as a minishirt."

The Associated Press reported in mid August that Lynda Painter, Donald Lewis Shaw and Richard Cole of the University of North Carolina presented the results of a survey they conducted to the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism.

The teachers used four short news stories in their study. The stories dealt with the arrest of a confessed rapist, a report on a new female fashion, a men's golf tournament and a legal appeal of a conviction in a federal income tax evasion case.

Each story was printed with a male byline and a female byline and one copy of each story was distributed to 150 undergraduate students at the university.

The rape story bearing a male byline was judged "more accurate, more believable and more informed" than the same story carrying a female byline.

The fashion story with a female byline "was rated over-all more interesting and more clear" and the male-bylined sports story was judged more interesting, more dramatic and more active.

The teachers said there was no significant difference in the ratings of the income tax appeal story.

Meeting times: SWIM board meeting, first Thursday of the month. General meeting, Third Thursday of the month. Call 446-7943 or 446-7945, the Sacramento Newspaper Guild offices for meeting location.

No Comment

"Call The Man From Milano"



MARY ANN MARTINEZ
383-2577



PAT KESSEL
428-6777

Mary Ann Martinez and Pat Kessel, Milano Realty's "SALESMEN OF THE MONTH" for May, are able to service and manage all your Real Estate needs. If you're thinking of buying your first home or selling your present home, call the "professionals" from Milano Realty Company!

483-5171

2537 Fair Oaks Bl.

Milano
REALTY CO.

392-5220

1325 Florin Rd.

The Sacramento Bee

June, 1975

A Letter From Frustration

"At 45" she writes, "I find I no longer write as well or as prolifically as I once did. Part of this, perhaps, I can lay to the stresses of middle age and single parenthood.

"But niggling at the bottom of my feelings is a suspicion that what has really happened is that after 25 years in the newspaper business I have developed a sense of despair at what an ordinarily talented woman (as opposed to extraordinarily talented) can hope to accomplish in this business."

She is an accomplished reporter who has worked tirelessly in recent years to extend Newspaper Guild benefits to her coworkers, male and female. She has asked—for fear of retribution on the job—that her name not be used.

She works in a mid-sized California city for a respected newspaper. Her letter, written to SWIM in response to the first issue of TYPECAST, is grim testimony to the struggles of women and minorities in the news business and in the Guild. She originally asked that her comments not be published, but agreed to

publication if her identity and that of the newspaper where she works remain anonymous.

Although it is a commentary on the nature of the business and its treatment of women who speak out that her name cannot be revealed, her comments are applicable at far too many newspapers in far too many cities across the country. They are excerpted here as sadly representative of the state of the profession and its treatment of women and minorities:

"I feel so strongly that the fate of women, ethnic groups and the labor movement is intertwined and that discrimination is a very non-discriminating phenomenon—that where it exists against one category of human beings it is bound to exist against others.

"On (my newspaper), for instance, the women of NOW have as much problem getting a fair shake in the news columns as do the members of (an organization) for the Spanish-speaking. Both tend to be dismissed by our all-male contingent of supervisors—if gently—as 'rabble rousers.' And it is considerably more difficult for a

woman reporter to defend her news judgment than it is for a man. It is more difficult, not only because supervisors are men, but also because women, particularly those of us in the middle generation, despite worthy aspirations, have been so conditioned against questioning male judgements...

"There is little real appreciation of the struggles of minority people among our supervisors. At the same time, I know they would be horrified to learn this is my feeling....

"There are so many things I see which need changing. The effective Guild leadership is all-male. All our supervisors, including copy editors, are men.... There are no blacks, no Chicanos....

"While I am truly dedicated to the Guild and cannot visualize myself ever departing from that cause, I do not feel it takes the aspirations of women seriously.... I get awfully tired of the put-downs by men who are embarked on the same cause as I am."

SWIM Aids Valine Firing Case

By Marcia McQuern

Things were going well for Jessica Valine at Majestic Publishing Co. As manager of the Woodland-based printing firm's Sacramento branch, she liked her work and the boss, Douglas Tibbits, liked the way she did it. He reiterated his approval June 6 saying he hoped she would stay with the company.

So it was almost casually that Valine asked that same day to schedule her two-week vacation in mid-October because she would be having a child then.

Her boss's response was anything but casual, she reports. The father of six children didn't think she could handle her job while pregnant and by the next Monday he had hired a new manager—a man—who fired her two days later.

The blow was severe because Valine's husband had recently been temporarily disabled by an accident and her paycheck was their prime source of income.

The unpleasant surprises weren't over. When she filed for unemployment benefits, she discovered she wasn't going to receive them because her boss had reported she was fired for having difficulty with customers and for being so overwhelmed with personal problems she was never on the job.

Valine explained to her unemployment counselor that her time cards would show she had worked an average of 50 hours a week; a check of Majestic customers would reveal she got along unusually well with them, and her doctor had written that she could work until

delivery without problem. The counselor told Tibbits that one of them was lying and if it was him, she would have to file an Employer's False Statement report.

Tibbits immediately withdrew his earlier explanation of Valine's firing and she got her unemployment benefits.

Since both state and federal law treat as illegal sex discrimination the firing of a woman for pregnancy, Valine has filed complaints with the California Fair Employment Practices Commission and the federal Equal Economic Opportunity Commission. Action from them will take time.

In the meantime, SWIM has put Valine in contact with a private attorney, agreed to pay her initial legal fees and written Tibbits suggesting he save himself a lot of legal problems by rehiring her as manager with back pay.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**I would like to become a member of SWIM.
Enclosed is my \$5 annual membership fee.**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

I would like to become more involved in this organization.

Clip and mail to Sacramento Women in the Media, P.O. Box 16073. For further information, members of the Women's Caucus can be contacted through the offices of the Sacramento Newspaper Guild, 927 - 10th St., Sacramento, phone (916) 446-7943.

Spare A Fin?

Sacramento Women In Media keeps growing. And there are so many things we'd like to do. Like increasing the size of Typecast, and sponsoring more projects which will help the cause of women in the broadcast and print industries. But we need your money to do it. Not much, just \$5 for a year's subscription to Typecast and SWIM membership.

**SWIM
P.O. Box 16073
Sacramento, California 95816**