

## **Committee on the Status of Women and Minority Groups:**

### **Journals Report**

The Committee on the Status of Women and Minority Groups has traditionally been charged with collecting and analysing data on journal publication practices, with particular attention paid to gender and race. In this report we include the tables of statistics drawn up from the questionnaires returned by journal editors in the years 2007 and 2008 and make some brief observations about them. We have also taken this opportunity to reflect upon the usefulness of the survey as it is currently conducted, and to make some recommendations for change.

#### **2007 and 2008 Journals Survey**

The statistical material tabulated is reasonably easy to digest. There are some differences between the 2007 and 2008 surveys; in the 2007 survey 15 journals responded, whereas in 2008 16 did so; 2008 includes data from *Arethusa* and *Vergilius*, journals that are not represented in the 2007 survey, and *Illinois Classical Studies*, which is not published on a regular schedule, has provided data for 2007, but not 2008. As previous years' reports have emphasised, fluctuation in submission rates to journals from year to year and incomplete data mean that readers should be wary of drawing firm conclusions about individual journals from the data given. It is also the case that some of the questions on the questionnaire might not be soliciting the most helpful information. For example, the tables report the number of women referees employed, but not the number of women approached to act as referees (some of whom will have said no) which might be a more telling statistic about editorial practice. The figures show the ongoing challenge faced by the field in becoming more ethnically diverse; however in 2007 for the first time (according to patchy APA records) a journal editor-in-chief (*Illinois Classical Studies*) was a member of a minority group. In 2007, 6 out of 15 editors were women (plus one co-editor) and in 2008 7 out of 16 (plus one co-editor), figures that show little significant change from the last reported figures: in 2004-6, women made up 47% of editors in chief over a three year average. There is some disparity between journals in attracting submissions by women authors and in accepting them for publication but it is hard to know what conclusions to draw from these statistics.

#### **Recommendations for future practice in monitoring journals**

The journals survey was first introduced in the 1970s and its original purpose and origins are not recorded. However, it was first established at a time before anonymous refereeing was the norm (all but one of the journals currently surveyed require anonymous refereeing and most have done for many years; the one that does not require it strongly encourages it), when women editors were a rarity, and when deep divisions over what constituted 'real' scholarship were often perceived to have a gender-based component. Monitoring gender equity and fair practice in publication were therefore pressing concerns. Some of these ways of thinking have not entirely disappeared (as the panel on women in ancient history at the 2011 APA will address) but it may be that other equity issues concerning gender and race are more pressing and more demanding of CSWMG's attention, for example the very low percentage of tenured and tenure-positions

held by women (less than a third) and the lack of representation by minorities at all levels in the field. Moreover, other concerns about journals have been raised that are not primarily to do with gender and race, for example concerns about the time taken to respond to authors with a decision on their submitted work, and the impact this may have especially on assistant professors. The questionnaire itself needs updating to take into account these issues, as does the list of journals surveyed.

Consequently we recommend:

- 1) That the scope of an effective survey of editorial practice now exceeds the mandate of the CSWMG.
- 2) That the VP for Professional Matters appoint an ad hoc committee (consisting of four members, two from Professional Matters, one of whom will represent CSWMG and one each representing the divisions of Publications and Research) to solicit the views of editors, editorial boards, and members at large about whether journals should still be monitored, and, if so, what issues in journal publishing should be monitored, and whether or not some statement of ethics for editors, referees, and authors should be developed.

The authors of this report would like to thank Stephen Trzaskoma and James May for their input, along with the editors who agreed to be surveyed.

Respectfully submitted by

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