

Alice REPORTS

THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE ALICE B. TOKLAS MEMORIAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Issues of Gender

Randy Stallings

Fourteen members of Alice (11 men and 3 women) met at the August Issues meeting to discuss the relationship between the women and men of the club and what we might do to improve it. In a frank discussion that lasted 2 1/2 hours, frustrations were expressed by both genders.

Some men stated that they resent being labelled sexist when they disagree with a position of the women's caucus or a feminist issue brought up by other means. Some women felt that some men could better express themselves about their dissent on certain issues in order to avoid perceptions of sexism.

It was felt by all that more social events sponsored by Alice should occur within the women's community to attract new women members. It was also felt that more effort should be made to make new members of both sexes feel welcome at Alice meetings. Most of us are guilty of talking to our friends at these events and not making an effort to be friendly to new faces. Basically, the group felt that Alice needed more social interaction, both through organized events and informally.

A large part of the discussion centered on women's alienation from the male-dominated political process in general. It was pointed out that women as a rule have less money and consequently less political clout. In Alice, women have only recently achieved powerful positions, for example. It was pointed out that while Alice has a very strong record of endorsing feminist issues, it is more difficult to get the club committed to these issues with time and money.

In summary, the group felt that men and women working together for political change is essential. It was felt more outreach needs to be done to contact women, and that the women of Alice need to be more vocal when they perceive sexism in the club. Many men at the meeting felt that while they understood the oppression of women in a social milieu, they were cloudy regarding *specific* concerns as they relate to Alice. The men generally urged more communication.

It was clear that men and women do not have to wait for an organized meeting to communicate. There should be far more informal gatherings to discuss issues of concern. Maybe more dinner dates should be set between individual men and women in the club. Like the fabled birds of a feather, maybe some of us are "flocking together" a bit too much.

To change the subject, the next issues meeting will be **Tuesday, September 7** (note the different day) at 397 30th Street (at Sanchez). It will start at 7:30 and we will be discussing state and local propositions in order to recommend club endorsements for the November elections.

Presidents' Unanimous Message

Rarely have Alice's former Presidents agreed publicly on any single issue or candidate. It is therefore noteworthy that seven of them prepared a mailing on behalf of a candidate. Since this mailing did not go to Alice members, the editor has condensed it for your information:

"Over the last ten years Alice has consistently supported candidates we believe in. This year we have the opportunity to support one of our own -- Alice's current Vice President Sal Rosselli, a candidate for the Community College Board this November.

"At Alice's May meeting, with over 160 members in attendance, the club unanimously endorsed Sal's candidacy. In the early stages of his campaign Sal has won the support of a broad cross section of the City: Supervisors Silver, Walker, Renne, Molinari, Dolson, and Kopp, Sheriff Michael Hennessey, Congressman John Burton, School Board Members Jule Anderson and Libby Denenbiem, City Treasurer Mary Callanan, Public Defender Jeff Brown, State Assemblymen Lou Papan and John Vasconcellos, The Irish-American Democratic Club, over fifty labor leaders, and numerous educators, feminists, minority and business leaders.

"As former and present Alice Presidents, we want to make sure you are aware of Sal's candidacy and to urge you to help someone who obviously deserves our support."

Signed:
Connie O'Connor
Steve Walters
Frank Fitch

Jo Daly
Gary Miller
Bob Cramer
Jim Foster