Girls Friday Want a New Day

Not the Old Roses Routine

It is noon and midtown streets are crowded with people lured outdoors by the lunch hour. People mill about, going for a sandwich, looking for the hot dog man. At the corner of 50th St. and Sixth Ave., the multitude is composed mainly of women.

Standing in the shadow of the Time-Life Building, they've gathered to discuss the hard time, the rough life of women office workers. "Women are treated like office wives and not regarded as professionals," complained Cassandra dra Wilson, an officer of WOW. "Because you're a woman, you're there to salve someone's bruised ego."

On the truck behind her, another sign read, "85 is 19 still a girl." Yet another poster on the vehicle, a mobile community gender truck volunteered by New York Telephone, declared, "We Mean Business."

"58 and Still a Girl"

"Women are treated like office wives and not regarded as professionals," complained Cassandra dra Wilson, an officer of WOW. "Because you're a woman, you're there to salve someone's bruised ego."

The rally's theme was keynoted by Councilman CaroP Greitzer, who, after noting the inequities heaped upon women office workers, enumerated WOW's goals. They included written job description, establishment of career ladders that would enable clericals to aspire to executive and supervisory roles and the posting of jobs for promotional opportunities. He continued. "But that's only because women have been denied the opportunities available to men.

Then, he fell to thinking about how his wife had called him a male chauvinist just the other day. "She should only hear me now," he said.

"We want real improvements in our working lives all year around."

The occasion was Women Office Workers Day, a time when bosses traditionally take their secretaries to lunch and give them gifts of roses.

"We don't want a day of token recognition like Mother's Day," Pat Fitzgerald of Women Office Workers (WOW) told a lunchtime rally outside the Time-Life Building, Sixth Av. and 50th St. "We want real improvements in our working lives all year around."

The rally—which included balloons, music, speeches, songs and skits by the Womanette Theater Ensemble—drew several hundred onlookers, many of them men.

WOW, which has filed age-discrimination complaints against various city employment agencies, also presented a Women Office Workers Bill of Rights, including the right to choose whether to do the personal work of their secretaries or to go and get coffee for their bosses, griped an angry secretary who was about to identify herself until prompted by an anonymity friend who feared the consequences she might suffer for her outspokenness.

"They're talking about clericals, but I have a wife who works as an institutional trader and earns $9,000 less than a man doing the same job," remarked a copper company sales-man as he polished off his ice cream pop.

"You might say men take more money and better jobs because they're better qualified," becontinued. "But that's only because women have been denied the opportunities available to men."

By LINDSY VAN GELDER

"I called him Mr. Sterling. But he called me Marge."

"I had a $25,000 education, but I made $85 a week."

"The boss told us to start wearing skirts to work because 'his girls' had such pretty legs."

"We had the same title. But I made the coffee and he made the money."

"We don't want a day of token recognition like Mother's Day," Pat Fitzgerald of Women Office Workers (WOW) told a lunchtime rally outside the Time-Life Building, Sixth Av. and 50th St. "We want real improvements in our working lives all year around."

The rally—which included balloons, music, speeches, songs and skits by the Womanette Theater Ensemble—drew several hundred onlookers, many of them men.

WOW, which has filed age-discrimination complaints against various city employment agencies, also presented a Women Office Workers Bill of Rights, including the right to choose whether to do the personal work of employer.

Stenos Give Some Dictation

"We don't want a day of token recognition like Mother's Day," Pat Fitzgerald of Women Office Workers (WOW) told a lunchtime rally outside the Time-Life Building, Sixth Av. and 50th St. "We want real improvements in our working lives all year around."

The rally—which included balloons, music, speeches, songs and skits by the Womanette Theater Ensemble—drew several hundred onlookers, many of them men.

WOW, which has filed age-discrimination complaints against various city employment agencies, also presented a Women Office Workers Bill of Rights, including the right to choose whether to do the personal work of employer.
WOW protests beauty-before-age pattern in job market

By PAULA BERNSTEIN

Getting older, not better?
A mature woman with 30 years at the typewriter gets fewer job offers than a "young chick" with only a few years on the job, according to Women Office Workers.


The first investigatory conference on the WOW complaints is scheduled for next Monday at the New York State Division of Human Rights, which received 41 age and sex discrimination complaints against employment agencies last year, according to Jeanine Dowling, a spokesperson.

Discrimination denied
Two of the six agencies named by WOW, Snelling and Snelling, and Cosmopolitan Girl, refused comment on the charges. The others denied any discrimination.

"I don't know who they spoke to," said Ed Elliot, manager of Key Employment, "It doesn't make sense to discriminate. We don't operate that way."

"I don't know who they spoke to," said Lynne Flora, president of Aavis, "I would have to fire the 70% of my staff over 35, including myself. We've placed many mature women. I don't have a discriminatory job offer."

Explain procedures
David Ford, director of public relations for the state labor department, explained that interviewers try to talk employers out of making discriminatory job offers but could not prevent discriminatory remarks over the phone.

"If we discriminated," said Lynne Flora, "we would have been told his job offer was illegal, but the information on age or sex was not put on a form or in a computer. Based on one telephone call and one interview, it's not a way to establish a pattern of discrimination."

The six agencies named in the WOW complaints were chosen "because they make the strongest case, their discrimination was so severe and so obvious," said Noreen Connell of the WOW staff.

"We want the really bad agencies not to operate that way," said Noreen Connell of the WOW staff. "We want the really bad agencies out of business, not just fined, but taken out of business, because they do so much damage."

"Age discrimination is not practiced here," maintained Walter Williams, president of the Happy Employment Agency, "It is immutable and illegal. A good percentage of the people I have employed are over 40. I've got 50 myself and I'm not likely to have anything against anyone who lived that long."

"If we discriminated," said Lynne Flora, "I would have to fire the 70% of my staff over 35, including myself. We've placed many mature women. I don't have a discriminatory job offer."

Explaining procedures
David Ford, director of public relations for the state labor department, explained that interviewers try to talk employers out of making discriminatory job offers but could not prevent discriminatory remarks over the phone.

"If we discriminated," said Lynne Flora, "we would have been told his job offer was illegal, but the information on age or sex was not put on a form or in a computer. Based on one telephone call and one interview, it's not a way to establish a pattern of discrimination."

The six agencies named in the WOW complaints were chosen "because they make the strongest case, their discrimination was so severe and so obvious," said Noreen Connell of the WOW staff.

"We want the really bad agencies not to operate that way," said Noreen Connell of the WOW staff. "We want the really bad agencies out of business, not just fined, but taken out of business, because they do so much damage."

"Age discrimination is not practiced here," maintained Walter Williams, president of the Happy Employment Agency, "It is immutable and illegal. A good percentage of the people I have employed are over 40. I've got 50 myself and I'm not likely to have anything against anyone who lived that long."

"If we discriminated," said Lynne Flora, "we would have to fire the 70% of my staff over 35, including myself. We've placed many mature women. I don't have a discriminatory job offer."

The WOW investigator was a young woman, matched in skills and education, with differing years of experience, and was called by 10 agencies during January and February to place a job offer for "a young chick under 25."

"I thought they would laugh when they heard it," he said. "Unfortunately, no one laughed. Sometimes I was asked if I cared what race the 'girl' was. It was almost as though I could order a 'girl' for work, a woman 20-often-considered the sexual political of singles here."

"I thought they would laugh when they heard it," he said. "Unfortunately, no one laughed. Sometimes I was asked if I cared what race the 'girl' was. It was almost as though I could order a 'girl' for work, a woman 20-often-considered the sexual political of singles here."

"Marge," 25, was sent out on jobs with good pay, bonuses and benefits. "I felt anger and shock when 'Dorothy' and 'Marge' (disguised so agencies could not change their records) and 'Paul' who made the phone calls offering jobs for younger women only."

Describing their experiences with employment agencies at a press conference at Rosloff's restaurant were, l to r: "Dorothy" and "Marge" (disguised so agencies could not change their records) and "Paul," who made the phone calls offering jobs for younger women only.

Miss Robinson, who said she was a "gal Friday," said WOW had several hundred clerical workers as members and was basing its charges on a phone survey among 100 employment agencies in the Metropolitan Area.

She said the survey results indicated that employers are seeking young, attractive women and that the agencies often promise "We won't get you a dog."

Miss Robinson said WOW has filed sex and age discrimination complaints with the state Division of Human Rights against several employment agencies.

News photo by Frank Giorlando

Carrying posters that read "Pretty Legs Can't Type" and "Where Will I Be in 20 Years," about a dozen women picketed one of the city's major employment agencies today to dramatize charges of age discrimination.

Margaret Robinson, spokesman for Women Office Workers (WOW), said Snelling & Snelling at 45 E. 41st St. was targeted because it is a "repeated offender." Norma Shaw, manager of the office, said, "We don't care about age. We are interested in placing people and earning a fee for it."

Miss Robinson, who said she was a "gal Friday," said WOW had several hundred clerical workers as members and was basing its charges on a phone survey among 100 employment agencies in the Metropolitan Area.

She said the survey results indicated that employers are seeking young, attractive women and that the agencies often promise "We won't get you a dog."

Miss Robinson said WOW has filed sex and age discrimination complaints with the state Division of Human Rights against several employment agencies.

Carrying posters that read "Pretty Legs Can't Type" and "Where Will I Be in 20 Years," about a dozen women picketed one of the city's major employment agencies today to dramatize charges of age discrimination.

Margaret Robinson, spokesman for Women Office Workers (WOW), said Snelling & Snelling at 45 E. 41st St. was targeted because it is a "repeated offender." Norma Shaw, manager of the office, said, "We don't care about age. We are interested in placing people and earning a fee for it."

Miss Robinson, who said she was a "gal Friday," said WOW had several hundred clerical workers as members and was basing its charges on a phone survey among 100 employment agencies in the Metropolitan Area.

She said the survey results indicated that employers are seeking young, attractive women and that the agencies often promise "We won't get you a dog."

Miss Robinson said WOW has filed sex and age discrimination complaints with the state Division of Human Rights against several employment agencies.
Job Discrimination Charged by Women Workers

By NADINE BROZAN

An organization whose aims are to upgrade the role of women clerical workers announced yesterday that it had filed complaints of age and sex discrimination against five employment agencies and the New York State Employment Service.

The organization, Women Office Workers, said that the complaints had been filed with the State Division of Human Rights and that it had also asked the city's Department of Consumer Affairs and the State Attorney General's civil rights bureau to investigate.

Without the information, I can't answer questions. But I don't know we don't have one discriminating jobs on file, we just don't accept them.

A spokesman for the state employment agency denied the charges and asserted that age and sex specifications were never entered into its computers.

Despite the fact that women office workers are the bread and butter of most employment agencies, their civil rights are violated with seeming impunity," Noreen Connell, a WOW staff member and moderator of the news conference at Rosoff's Restaurant, said. She added that previous efforts by other organizations had failed to eradicate agency discrimination.

WOW enlisted three investigators - a man who telephoned 100 employment agencies and two women who visited 10 of them - who used pseudonyms.

What we asked for was you to stand what you're saying and was told there were no jobs, she said. I was sent to interivews for jobs with good paying, bonuses and benefits.

I felt anger and shock when Dorothy and I would compare notes, she added. "The contrast was really frightening, I asked myself where I would be in 20 years working as a secretary."

The New York Times
FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1976

By LINDSY VAN GELDER

What we wanted was "an attractive, young girl . . . a good-looking chick . . . with brown eyes and black hair."

At a press conference yesterday, WOW investigators posing as job applicants said that they were told there were no jobs in the agencies where their partner had been told there were no jobs.

"I won't send you any dogs," one agency allegedly promised. Another's reported response was: "I understand what you're saying and I can fit the bill—an air stewardess type."

The phone survey also elicited from some agencies: "You should have been a little more attractive, young girl . . . a good-looking chick . . . under 25."

"Invariably, while the young woman received the royal treatment, the 60-year-old was told there were no jobs, was sent to interviews for low-paying, dead-end jobs, was kept waiting by agency personnel and was told to change her personal appearance to "look younger."

"What I have a splitting headache from this . . . Are you going to write a big article against us?" asked a spokesperson for Avis. "Because not only is there nothing to these charges, but I think it's time that somebody gave us a little credit for finding jobs for people in this job market."

The agencies, according to Noreen Connell of WOW, were among 10 visited by two WOW investigators posing as job applicants. Although their skills were equal, one investigator was a pretty 25-year-old and the other was a matronly looking 50-year-old.