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Report from the Chair

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New York University

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REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The year 1992 proved to be an extraordinarily successful one for CLAGS. We mounted a series of exciting panels, conferences, and special events, and launched an ambitious program of grants and fellowships for scholars and students. A good portion of the credit for the success of these activities goes to CLAGS's hardworking Board of Directors which undertakes the myriad tasks required to plan and implement our various programs.

To stay flexible and avoid burnout, the Board voted to expand its size by appointing five additional members. While considering individuals to fill these seats, the Board sought men and women who reflect a wide range of intellectual interests and professional activities and who have served the lesbian and gay community through their activism, scholarship, or other contributions (See article on new members). The nomination process reflects the Board's continued commitment to multicultural representation and gender parity.

Most recently, the Board again had to address the issue of money, or rather our lack of it. Though remarkably successful for a new organization in incurring foundation support, most of that money has been specifically earmarked to fund our free public events and our series of fellowships, leaving little to spend on salaries, supplies, equipment, and other general operating expenses.

Recognizing that CLAGS must step up its efforts to raise funds, Board member Shepherd Raimi invited Michael C. P. Ryan and Vivian Shapiro to meet with the Board to help us formulate a strategy for raising funds from private donors. Ryan and Shapiro, who themselves regularly support a variety of lesbian and gay organizations and institutions both as donors and fundraisers, generously and frankly shared their experiences in the world of donor solicitation.

Among the issues raised at the meeting was finding ways to make CLAGS's purposes and goals more accessible to the world *outside* the academy; while, at the same time, maintaining our commitment to fighting for the acceptance and legitimacy of lesbian and gay studies *within* the academy. Discussions such as the one we shared with Ryan and Shapiro are very valuable in helping us to learn to recast our missions without compromising our principles. The Board is grateful to Ryan and Shapiro for taking the time to meet with us and sharing their knowledge and experience.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Cheryl Clarke, our outgoing Co-Chair, for her hard work, unflagging commitment, and humor (a quality essential to surviving CLAGS's first critical year as a Center at CUNY). Cheryl is leaving the Board in order to fulfill her expanded duties as the new Director of the Office of Diverse Community Affairs and Lesbian/Gay Concerns at Rutgers University. We congratulate Cheryl on her new appointment, though we will miss her lively presence on the Board.

... Esther Katz

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