

BOMAR RECEIVES MARY PEACOCK DOUGLAS AWARD

Tribute by Margaret E. Kalp



Cora Paul Bomar

TWO YEARS AGO here in Durham at the last biennial work conference of the North Carolina Association of School Librarians, Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas was the first recipient of the Award which bears her name and which had been established to recognize outstanding contributions to North Carolina school libraries. Tonight I am grateful for the opportunity which has been given to me of presenting the Mary Peacock Douglas Award for the second time. In making this presentation I look back over 25 years of professional association and personal friendship, beginning with a summer session at Peabody Library School in Nashville, Tennessee, when World War II was drawing to a close. Those of you who have not had the experience, when you were still comparatively new to library school

teaching, of having Cora Paul Bomar as a student in your class really haven't lived. Even today I remember the notebook—her "Brain," as she called it—which she carried and which closed with a zipper. When the time approached for the end of class, if I showed a tendency to continue beyond the appointed hour, I would hear, rather than see, the zipping shut of that notebook. I could take the hint!

Before this group there is no need to go into detail concerning all of Cora Paul's activities. You know them well, for they have always been things which would advance the cause of school librarianship in North Carolina and in the country as a whole. First as State School Library Supervisor and later as Director of the Division of Educational Media in the Department of Public Instruction, she furnished leadership and guidance to the school libraries and educational media programs of the State. After 18 years of service in the Department of Public Instruction, she continues her contribution to the school libraries of North Carolina by bringing all of her experience and skill to the program for the professional education of school media personnel at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Miss Bomar has had a particular interest in legislation which would strengthen school libraries at the State and national level. Her testimony before Congressional committees in support of Federal legislation

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that any immediate influence will result in tightening (in over-reaction) the laws concerning pornographic materials, rather than lifting restrictions for adults, as recommended. As one source close to the Commission sadly commented: "The Commission majority is twenty years ahead of the rest of the nation."

H. L. Mencken seems to have provided a suitable epitaph for the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography: "Human beings never welcome the news that something they have long cherished is untrue; they almost always reply to that news by reviling its promulgator. Nevertheless, a minority of bold and energetic men keep plugging away, and as a result of their hard labors and resultant infamy, the sum of human knowledge gradually increases."

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concerned with library and media services has been expert and valuable.

Professional associations at the state, regional, national and international levels have had her active support. Elected to membership in Beta Phi Mu, the international library science honorary society, she served as its president in 1965-66. She has been president of the American Association of School Librarians, of the Library Education Division of the American Library Association and of the Southeastern Library Association. She served as chairman of the State School Library Supervisors group. In addition to Beta Phi Mu she has been elected to membership in other honor societies such as Delta Kappa Gamma and Pi Gamma Mu.

Birds and books, dogs, cats, rocks, music, and people—these are just some of Cora Paul Bomar's varied interests. Intensely aware of the world around her, she is constantly seeking new knowledge and new experiences. Wherever she goes, to institutes, conferences and workshops,

she spreads the word about good school media programs, and she has the happy ability to do more than talk. Of all the people I know, Cora Paul Bomar has the quality of being able to dream dreams, to see ahead, and at the same time she is able to translate dreams into reality and plans into action. The tremendous growth of school libraries in North Carolina which occurred under her leadership is clear evidence of this. The preservice and inservice school media specialists who now have the privilege of knowing her and working with her at the University at Greensboro are fortunate indeed, and through them Cora Paul's philosophy of service and high professional standards will spread in ever-widening circles, continuing her effective contributions to the school libraries of North Carolina.

On behalf of the members of the North Carolina Association of School Librarians, it is my privilege to present to you, Cora Paul Bomar, the Mary Peacock Douglas Award for outstanding contributions to North Carolina school libraries. ■