

Stanford Librarian Wins

Discrimination Fight

By SANDY SPEIDEL

In an era that counts Jimmy Carter's election as a victory for the Left and political activism as something that "old timers" talk about, Lise Giraud's hard-fought victory against the "powers that be" at Stanford University is like a day in the Sierras -- refreshing and revitalizing.

Giraud is a Cataloguer Librarian III at Stanford's Main Library. On October 19, 25 months and a day after her initial grievance claim charged Stanford's library administration with political discrimination and sexism, Lise Giraud won her demands -- two years' back pay and an annual salary increase that brings her salary up to par with men doing comparable work. Coincidentally, all Stanford women librarians of comparable professional level were granted retroactive pay raises, the total reaching about \$50,000.

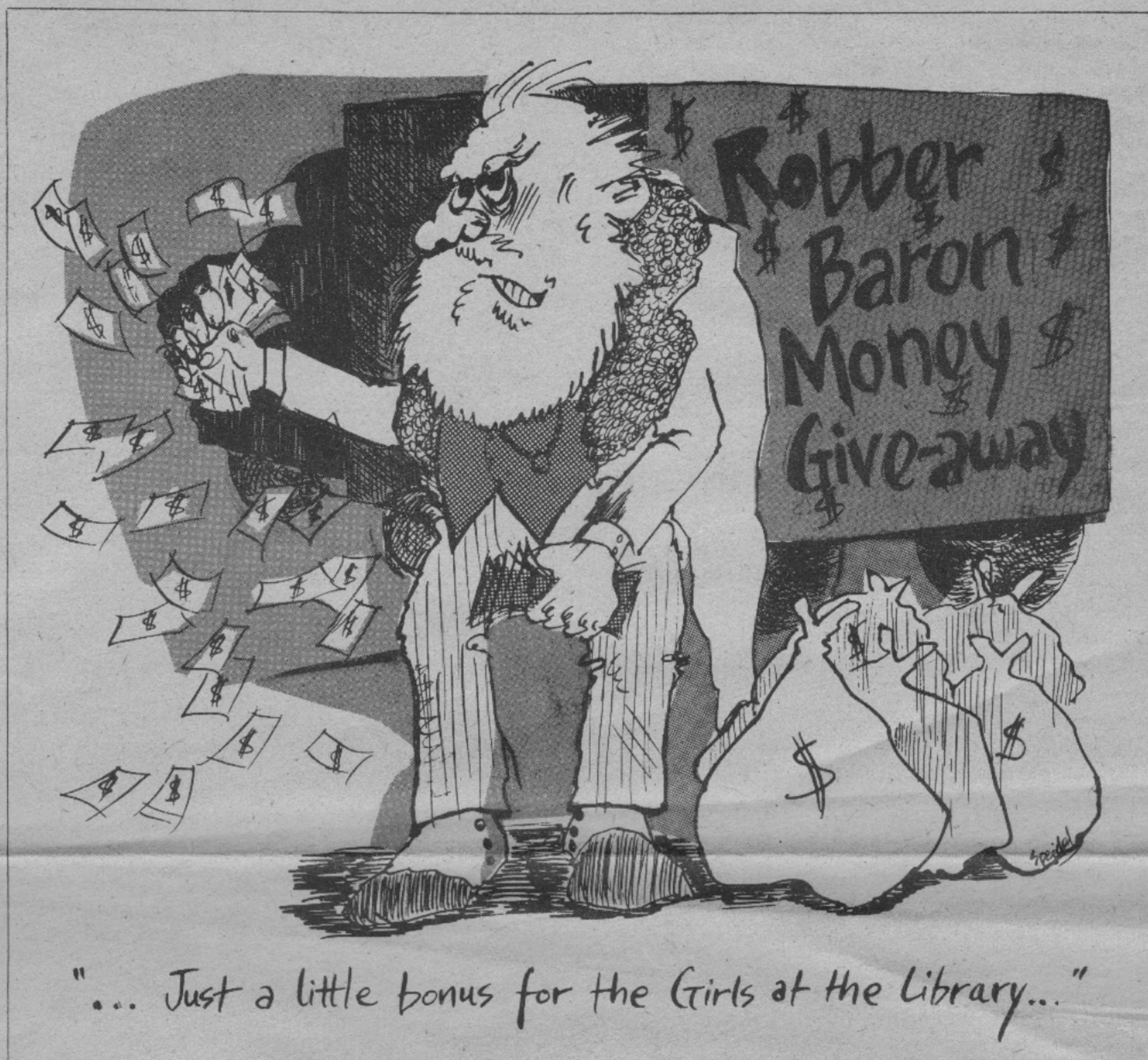
Giraud -- gray-haired, with an aristocratic air that she often uses to catch her adversaries off guard -- characterizes her case as "a dirty business." "I think the University would like to deep six this whole thing, which has implications for women all over," she says as she passes us tea and coffee, asks whether we are warm enough, and whisks the cat into the other room as it begins to chew away at my sweater.

A veteran "troublemaker," Giraud was an active member of the 1960's anti-war movement at Stanford and has been an outspoken critic of Library policy and practices. Previously, she won two other grievances against the Library. One was against the catalog department's practice of forcing professional employees to submit little blue slips to their supervisors for 30 minute absences. The other was a complaint against the head of the catalog department for depriving the 50 person department (mostly women) of all outgoing telephone lines except one, by the department head's door, to be used only in cases of emergency.

Though Stanford's official stand is that its decision to grant retroactive pay raises to other librarians was based on a study completely independent of the Giraud case, the parallels of content and timing are highly coincidental.

In September 1974 when Giraud first filed her grievance, she had access to two documents that clearly pointed to sex discrimination in the Stanford libraries. The first was a 5-page memo that Director of Libraries David Weber sent to Provost Miller, outlining affirmative action goals. The memo concludes: "The University Libraries is (sic) generally in a good position as to Affirmative Action." His long range goals were: "Over the coming ten years to raise the 2.6% that are at present Black to a minimum of 3%, to strive ... for at least 2% with a Spanish surname... There should also be no less than 25% of our department heads and at least 20% of the directorships occupied by women."

The second document was a statistical study that showed that in an occupation



"... Just a little bonus for the Girls at the Library..."

which is over 60% women, all Main Library directors were men, all Main Library department heads except one were men, and all heads of graduate school libraries except one were men. Of the staff librarians earning \$12,600 and less, only four were men and 27 women. Of those earning higher salaries, 20 were men and 16 women.

Giraud herself, after 16 years of service, was getting the bottom salary for her rank and experience, \$6050 per year for half time work. Try as she might, she could never get a performance appraisal high enough to raise her salary above the minimum. The first faint light of comprehension came when Giraud checked her personnel file and found there a note describing her as "a dissident element" who should be placed under surveillance. The author of the note, according to Giraud, was Director of Libraries David Weber, who had just a few months previously assured her that politics had never entered into his treatment of her. Ironically, this same man was subsequently appointed Giraud's grievance hearing officer.


Two interviews later, Weber said Giraud wasn't getting paid very much because she "wasn't very good." As a cataloguer, Giraud averages 1.2% error; the overall 3.8% error of the cataloguing department has been said to attest to its excellence.

Unsatisfied, Giraud carried the case in the summer of 1975 to outside arbitration.

By this time, she had elicited the help of United Stanford Employees' (USE) crack legal team, James Wolpman and his assistant Jane Burton. Against Giraud Stanford pitted the likes of Doug Barton, the University's chief negotiator, and lawyer Priscilla Wheeler, a woman who fought arduously to keep discrimination against women from coming to light.

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Librarian

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Giraud feels that she received "one hell of a return for my modest union dues." "I could never, but never, have won without the Union -- without its savvy, its counsel and its support. I know that by myself I often should not have known what to do at some grim turn or had the strength to do it."

Giraud's other mainstay of support, she is quick to relate, came from her husband, Ray, a tenured professor of French at Stanford, who never once asked her to "tone it down."

Giraud's case, however, never went to arbitration. Her arbitrator, Julius Getman, now a professor of Law at Stanford,

pleaded conflict of interest and left the case -- one week before the scheduled hearing and a year after his appointment as arbitrator. His desertion from the case coincided with USE's pressuring him to subpoena the library system's closely guarded figures on rank and salary distribution by sex.

At this point, weary but dauntless, Giraud submitted her grievance to Associate Provost Edward Shaw for administrative review, with the expressed intent of filing a Title VII suit should the review fail. Provost Shaw, characterized by Giraud as "a civilized man who is smart enough to see which way the wind is blowing," granted her demands.

Lise Giraud's salary is now 43% higher than it was two years ago. Most of her lump sum back pay went for taxes and her

half of the legal cost (USE paid the other half). The "dissident element" notation has been eliminated from her personnel file. Five women have been appointed to high library positions previously held by men. The catalog department head, the man who devised the little blue tardy slips, has been fired. Stanford librarians are now Academic Staff under the Provost's Office instead of under the Personnel Office. The catalog department has telephones, carpeting and no more tardy slips.

Yet, lower ranking librarians, almost entirely women, are still grossly underpaid. (There are so few males in the lower ranks of the library system that there is no comparative basis for a discrimination claim). And to many in the library, Giraud represents not only a troublemaker who keeps library lives in constant upheaval, but perhaps more fearfully what Giraud calls "the creeping specter of unionism."

Treading along in brown rubber boots, revived for November's first rains, she walked us to the door of her unpretentious Palo Alto home as she summed things up.

"Work is the last stronghold of Fascism," Giraud emphasizes. "People will put up with injustices in their work situations which they would not dream of submitting to in their political lives. There are certain basic rights that people take for granted in their political lives which they don't demand in their work."

A refugee of the Hitler regime, Giraud and her parents fled Austria in 1938. "You have to fight things wherever you encounter them," she finished. "You have to draw the line close to you because otherwise you never do."



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