



Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter ALA

July 1982

ISSN 0065-9096

Number 64

ALTERNATIVE PRESS INDEX

By Betsy Getaz

In 1969, a group of radical librarians and anti-war activists started the Alternative Press Index at Carleton College, Minnesota. Among its other research purposes, it was to serve as a means by which activists could share information necessary during those tumultuous times. That kind of information is still necessary, and we, as publishers of the Index have maintained a commitment to promoting news and discussion from progressive, alternative perspectives. It is appropriate to note here that it was through the SRRT network that we were originally introduced to many of our over 400 subscribers. We appreciate your initial support and ask that you keep spreading the word. Let us know of librarians or others who might be interested in the Index. The Alternative Press Index was, and is, the only index to periodicals which cover, and in themselves, are a part of movements for social change.

In the current political and economic climate, public access to information is being threatened, and the scope of available information is narrowing. Many recent trends in our society alarm those of us who are interested in being a part of an unrestricted exchange of ideas. The discussion and decision-making of the Reagan Administration is more removed from public scrutiny, and government officials are less available to the press. Reports of CIA activities, even those allowed to be revealed in the public domain, cannot be reprinted. Changes in the Freedom of Information Act will severely restrict the flow of information necessary for widespread participation in forming

government policy. The Moral Majority poses a threat to intellectual freedom by seeking to limit the books and periodicals that will be available in public schools and libraries. To enforce these ideological restrictions, the budgets of social action groups, consumer information projects and libraries are being reduced. To the extent that information is power, these changes are intended to keep certain people powerless. After thirteen years, it is all too obvious that the purpose of the Alternative Press Index is still as vital as it ever was.

The Index is published quarterly by the Alternative Press Center in Baltimore. Since 1969, when it was called the Radical Research Center, the Center and the Index have changed, reflecting changes in the alternative press itself, and in the movements from which it comes. Of the 72 periodicals included in the first volume, over half were underground newspapers, with a focus primarily on local news. Less than 10 of the 170 periodicals included in Volume 13 (1981) could be described that way. Most periodicals currently indexed cover particular issues, such as housing, prisoners, animal liberation, medical self-care, the economy, environmental issues, or the development of social and political theory. The Alternative Press Index is the only index which includes periodicals published by the gay and lesbian movement, such as Gay Community News, Off Our Backs, Conditions and Heresies. The Index also includes periodicals, including WIN Magazine, which cover the increasingly powerful peace and disarmament movements. Also listed are news articles from papers such as the Guardian and

continued on p.6

TO FELLOW SRRT MEMBERS:

The Philadelphia Conference should be an exciting one for all of us. SRRT Task Forces are more active than ever and you will have a variety of programs to choose from. In addition, there are a number of programs throughout the conference that will be of interest to SRRT Members.

I am particularly enthusiastic about the Poster Board Sessions that have been developed by Dr. Elizabeth Stone as part of her year as President. We have for many years looked for ways for individualistic participation in ALA; this is the best opportunity I have seen for ALA members to develop their own mini-programs without going through Divisions, Round Tables, or Committees. Anyone with a good idea and the willingness to do the work should be able to have a voice to all of ALA via this route. I encourage all of SRRT to take the time to look and listen to these first presentations critically with an eye toward taking part yourself in the coming years.

There will be several major topics of interest to SRRT members coming up during the conference. ERA will still be a topic of concern to many of us and you can look forward to information on this both in Council and Membership meetings. The OPM Statement has been completed but so far there has been no word about the final resolution of this problem; it is expected that this will still be a "live" topic at the time we meet. And, of course, the Operating Agreement is still with us and will come before Council and Membership again this summer. Since this proved to be the most controversial/

The SRRT NEWSLETTER is published 4 times per year. Manuscripts and letters pertaining to editorial content should be sent to the editor at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, attention of Doris Kirschbaum, General Reference Dept. Other correspondence should be sent to SRRT/ALA, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

stimulating of the items taken up by Membership last summer, it will be interesting to see the opinions presented this year. Be sure your opinion is heard!

I am sure it will be difficult for many of our members to get to Philadelphia this year. The economy is worsening and many of you will have less money than ever before. However, hard times are the times when SRRT members are needed more than ever. Your volunteer time and efforts in your community are very important gifts; you are in a better position to help those in need of assistance than many others. This is, after all, what SRRT is all about. If those of you who are working in community groups and have had successes with programs and ideas will take the time to write and share your stories with us, we will be happy to print them in the Newsletter. I have had several inquiries from librarians around the country interested in knowing what we are doing to help others in these times.

I have enjoyed being the SRRT Coordinator for the past two years. Although my term as Coordinator is up at the end of the Philadelphia Conference, I look forward to taking part in SRRT for many years to come. We will be electing a new Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, and Conference Arrangements Officer this summer, so I ask you to start thinking about working with them. Officers are chosen from the Action Council roster, so please contact those people you feel ought to be in the leadership positions of SRRT and offer them your support. It is important that all SRRT members be active and vocal in our group; we can be only as strong as you make us.

I thank you for your support and look forward to seeing each of you at our annual Membership meeting and at Action Council.

Barbara Pruett

MALE GENDER-ROLE STEREOTYPES IN THE NEW TEENAGE ROMANCE NOVEL

by Carl Hays

There is a new iteration of a big bucks book business based in several series of romance novels for teenagers and preteens. A recent issue of *INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN BULLETIN*¹ is devoted entirely to this phenomenon and is excellent reading for teachers, librarians, parents and any others who are concerned with the reactionary and sexist gender-role stereotypes which these materials glorify and, thereby, perpetuate.

Two of the series, *Wildfire* and *Wishing Star*, originally sold through the Scholastic Book Club, enjoyed access to an unscrutinizing mass market guaranteed by the long-standing trust that the Club selects only the best of literature for the young mind. Millions of copies have been snapped up, tens of titles have been

issued and other book clubs ride free with the tide. One series boasts upwards of two million copies sold, nearly 10% of the mind-boggling 180 million big sister Harlequin novels sold each year.

Surely, the overall effect of this pap left unchallenged would be to undo every worthwhile doing of the women's movement. The *BULLETIN*, mentioned above, will tell you how, why and what to do about it, and you are, therefore urged to read it. But the purpose here is to draw a bit more attention to one more facet of the teenage romance novel - the male gender-role stereotype.

For every gender-role stereotype by which these books entice the maiden to limit her reality, there is a male gender-role corollary.

Girl	Boy
1. The primary objective is happiness. Happiness for the girl is to get that boy, that one right boy.	Where it's really at is to be the boy, the one right boy, by whom it is some heroine's primary objective to be gotten.
2. Clothes, makeup and jewelry make the looks. Looks make the girl.	Look at the clothes, makeup and jewelry and you see the girl.
3. The woman's place is in the home baking brownies and waiting on the kids.	The man's place is getting out there earning that money, supporting that family and coming home only when too depleted to do anything more than eat the brownies and act like the kids so that he too gets waited on.
4. The right girl is one or two years younger than the boy.	The right boy is one or two years older than the girl.
5. Heroines are virgins. They may do everything but 'it.' 'It' comes later presumably when all the other requisites of the romance fantasy are being fulfilled.	Heroes are not necessarily virgins. Even if they are, it's best not to let it be known, especially by a heroine. If heroes are not virgins they respect a heroine too much to have gotten that way by her.
6. Boys don't communicate well.	Boy's expression of feelings is a sign of weakness.
7. Girls are manipulative.	Boys are manipulable.
8. Girls need boys to take care of them.	Some boy, if she can catch him, will take care of the girl.

¹INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN BULLETIN. Vol. 12, #4 & 5, 1981.

Male Gender-Role (Cont.)

For the girl, these messages are subtle enough, served in a mixture of sweetness and laughter where all the world is white, lives in single family homes with two parents, has plenty of money and no handicaps. For the boy, the message is insidious. It comes to him by inference through his female peers' expectations. Perhaps never knowing for certain what has come over him, he sets out to make her expectations a self-fulfilling prophesy. The reward for doing this skillfully is all too clear--he gets gotten by the best looking girl in the lot. He gets male peer recognition as well. There can be no doubt that if the boy wants the booty the shortest route for getting there is to fill the fantasy role model which the romance novel has helped the girl set for him. Never mind if it doesn't feel right; boys act out of their heads, not their feelings anyway.

A young man searching for the heroine's perfect fantasy model, should he be so dull as to not get the message from his female peers, need search no further than one of these novels to find the failure proof formula for how to be. Here it is - one hero described: muscles and a big chest; well proportioned; intelligent face; sensitive looking; shy; cute but not in a sweet way; more mature than the others; older; boyish, broad back; ruggedly handsome; an alluring profile; regal nose; high brow; dresses nicely; normal; and an infectious smile.

It is no less certain how to be the loser. Nearly every one of these formula heroines has a female sidekick. She, of course, has a boyfriend too. But it is this poor shmuck through whom it becomes clear how not to be.

Sadly, all too often it is the fulfillment of both the how to be and how not to be of the male gender-role models for the youngsters in these novels which is the source of the stress in adult relationships. How often is heard the lament: husbands don't communicate; husbands don't express their feelings; husbands give up marriages for women who are younger and who look better than the wives they left; husbands who lie when all else fails to enable them to meet expectations (fidelity) placed upon them; husbands expect to be waited on by

wives; husbands leave the parenting up to wives; husbands consider women to be manipulators; and husbands consider sex with a variety of partners to be better than monogamy. Perhaps just as often the exact reversal of the hero and the shmuck, the how to be and the how not to be, offers better bases for adult relationships.

Surely these books carry destructive and reactionary messages for girls about girls. They also perpetuate for girls rigid and narrow stereotypes about boys. Through girls' expectations they limit boys' stereotypes for boys. One element required for significant progress towards freedom from gender-role stereotypes for both men and women is the alternation of the image of males, especially the heroes, portrayed in these novels. This alternative is needed not only in the literature which is primarily for girls but that which is primarily for boys as well.

In and of themselves there is nothing wrong with strength, intelligence, achievement, prowess and other characteristics commonly ascribed to these heroes. The need, however, is for these characteristics to exist in concert with others which enable a male to be emotionally honest, accepting of his vulnerabilities along with his strengths, spiritually alive and generally prepared to take responsibility for his emotional and nurturing self.

**a word to
the wise**

Library

American Library
Association

SRRT/ALA Philadelphia 1982

PROGRAMS

The LIBRARY UNION TASK FORCE will present a two part program on Saturday, July 10.

Part I. 9 A.M. - 12 P.M.

"How and Why Do We Organize? Library Unions: A Movement Whose Time Has Come."

Part II. 8 - 10 P.M.

"The OPM Standards: What Happened?"

The FEMINIST TASK FORCE will present two programs.

Saturday, July 10 from 2 - 4 P.M.

"Introduction to Women's Groups and Activities with ALA."

Sunday, July 11 from 8 - 10 P.M.

Joanna Featherstone in "Not Without Laughter," a one-woman show of dramatic readings dealing with the Black experience.

The ETHNIC MATERIALS INFORMATION EXCHANGE TASK FORCE is cosponsoring a program on Monday, July 12, 9:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

"No Way But Up: Impacting Ethnic Communities." which will focus on the concept of outreach in multicultural/multilingual library services.

The CORETTA SCOTT KING TASK FORCE will present the Coretta Scott King author/illustrator awards at a Breakfast on Tuesday, July 13, 7:30 - 9:00 A.M. Tickets, \$11 by advance reservation not later than June 1; no refunds after June 18. Send check or money order, payable to American Library Assn., to SRRT CSK Award Breakfast, ALA Headquarters, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

The GAY TASK FORCE will present a program on Monday, July 12, 2 - 4 P.M. Topic not available at time of printing.

MEETINGSFriday, July 9

Library Union TF
8 - 10 P.M.

Saturday, July 10

Peace Information Exchange TF
8 - 9 A.M.

SRRT Action Council
2 - 4 P.M.

Sunday, July 11

Peace Information Exchange TF
8 - 9 A.M.

Men's Issues TF
9:30 - 11 A.M.

Tools for Consciousness Raising TF
11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. (tentative)

SRRT Membership Meeting
2 - 4 P.M.

Library Union TF
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.

Peace Information Exchange TF
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.

Monday, July 12

Peace Information Exchange TF
8 - 9 A.M.

Men's Issues TF
9:30 - 11 A.M.

SRRT Action Council
11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Feminist TF
2 - 4 P.M.

Ethnic Materials Information Exchange TF
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.

Alternatives in Print TF
4:30 - 5:30 P.M.

Tuesday, July 13

Gay TF
9:30 - 11 A.M.

Feminist TF
11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Tools for Consciousness Raising TF
2 - 5:30 P.M. (tentative)

Alternatives in Print TF
2 - 5:30 P.M.

Ku Klux Klan Ad Hoc Committee
8 - 10 P.M. (tentative)

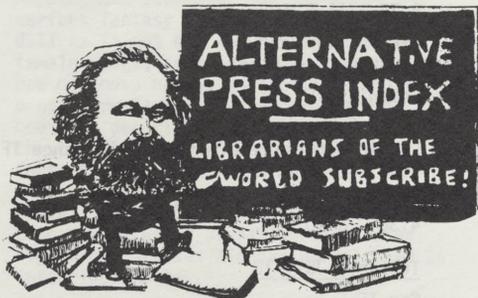
Wednesday, July 14

Coretta Scott King TF
2 - 4 P.M.

CONSULT YOUR PROGRAM AT ALA-PHILADELPHIA
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Alternative Press (cont. from p. 1)

In These Times, as well as from issue oriented newspapers like Akwasne Notes and Mountain Life and Work. A user of the Index could be referred to in-depth feature articles from the Nation, Mother Jones, Dissent or the Progressive, or to articles from a topical journal such as the Berkeley Journal of Sociology, New Left Socialist Review, Labor History or Co-Evolution Quarterly. Coverage of the movement for Black Liberation is included from Freedomways and the Black Scholar; and help in finding non-racist, non-sexist children's books can be found in articles in the Interracial Books for Children Bulletin. Since 1969, the Index has expanded to include the growing feminist press. Women: A Journal of Liberation and Feminist Studies are two of the fifteen women's periodicals included in the 1981 issues. The Index is a unique and crucial addition to any library or research center.



In contrast to many alternative projects, the Alternative Press Center has both a consistent publishing history and a positive, stable forecast for our future. The Center consists of two five-person collectives. The second collective was hired in January, 1982 to work solely on indexing for and producing Volumes 4 and 5 (covering 1972 and 1973.) These volumes had been skipped in a successful effort, started two years ago, to bring the Index up to date. This project will be completed by March, 1983. We are very excited at the thought of 14 consecutive years of the Alternative Press being at the fingertips of researchers and activists.

Another improvement for the researcher, at least for those who can get to Baltimore, is that we will be moving out of our rowhouse basement office into a spacious city library sometime this summer. We are buying the building with several other groups in the city. We look forward to being able to expand our library, and making it more accessible and pleasant for the serious researcher and the casual browser.

We are always looking for ways to improve the Center and the Index. (We hope that each of you has filled out and returned the questionnaire that we sent out in March.) We need feedback from those who use the Index; and ideas and encouragement from like-minded projects. We recently exhibited the Index at the New York Book Fair. We will also be at the Philadelphia ALA Conference in July. Of course, we hope that these efforts will lead to new subscribers. Obviously, our livelihood depends on it. But so does, we believe, any meaningful use of the term, "freedom of information."

For more information

For comments, suggestions, questions

For our free list of over 200 alternative periodicals (with addresses and subscription information)

Write: Alternative Press Center
Box 7229

Baltimore, MD 21218

Or call: (301) 243-2471

Elizabeth Talbot, Councilor-At-Large 1981-85, said in her campaign flier, "I strongly feel that the concerns of youth, intellectual freedom, women's issues in Librarianship, and a commitment to political involvement all need an active voice on Council," and now would like to hear from you for guidance, ideas, and concerns. Let her know how she can best represent you.

4008 Loma Vista Avenue
Oakland, California 94619

Home phone: (415) 482-0717

I am interested in the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table on Men's Issues. Marked are those items which are true of me. I am a member of ALA. I am a member of SRRT. I plan to attend the ALA 1982 Summer Conference in Philadelphia. I am interested in attending an organizational meeting of the Task Force. I wish to be an active member of the Task Force. I wish to participate in the following: membership; secretary; organization; conference program; newsletter; publicity; bibliography compiling; book reviewing; liaison with an ALA group (specify) _____ other: _____ (specify) _____ I wish to be a mailing list member only. The men's issues in which I am the most interested in are: Legislative Reform; Par-enting; Draft Registration; Sex Discrimination in Hiring; Support Groups; Divorce and Separation; Health; Marriage Alternatives; Child Custody; Gay Rights; Male Feminism; Relationship Contract-ings; _____

Abortion; Visitation Rights; Career/Home Life Balance; Non-sexist Education; Non-sexist Children's Literature; Early Childhood Education; Property Rights; Homophobia; Rape; Resource Development; Estate Preservation; Fertility Rights; Anger; Other (Please Specify) _____

I need _____ information _____ other resources as follows: _____

Comments: _____

New Task Force on Men's Issues

No individual is completely free. Society imposes a multitude of legal and social limitations on its individual members. Many men are becoming increasingly aware that the limiting roles which they are expected to fulfill are assigned without regard to their individual abilities, interests, physical constitutions or emotional needs. Men face gender-based injustices under law; for example, the current U.S. military draft registration is for males only. Men suffer a statistically proven shorter life span in the U.S. than do women. Men in the U.S. incur a higher incidence of stress related disease, a higher probability of conviction of a crime and a higher incidence of deprivation of the warmth and emotional support of a stable family context than do women. Men incur heavy social and legal penalties for behaving in other than stereotypically acceptable ways.

There are men's rights and men's support groups forming throughout the U.S., but there is no comprehensive directory of them. There is a rapidly increasing body of literature of men's issues being published; but there is little significant

bibliography and no set of acceptable standard and relevant subject headings. There is a rapidly growing availability of workshops, courses within women's programs and Free University courses addressing men's gender-based issues. There are, however, no known formal men's studies programs. There are known to have been at least seven national conferences on men's gender-based issues held in the U.S. since 1975. From these have emerged a number of attempts to establish a viable and continuing national organization, none known to be wholly successful at this time.

It was in response to these conditions and to the professional and informational needs which they suggest that the establishment of a Task Force on Men's Issues within the Social Responsibilities Round Table of ALA was proposed and moved by SRRT at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver.

Anyone who is interested in the Task Force on Men's Issues either as an active member or a "mailing list" member is urged to complete the tear off interest survey above. Comments and suggestions for the Task Force are encouraged. Persons who return the survey will receive information about the organizational meeting prior to the ALA 1982 Summer Conference.

Carl Hays

TASK FORCE OF MEN'S ISSUES INTEREST SURVEY

FROM

NAME

last

others

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

zip

Return Mail to:

P.O. Box 740

College Park, Maryland 20740

SRRT MEMBERSHIP/NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION:

To join, subscribe, or renew, please send this coupon - with payment - to:
SRRT, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.
Please make checks payable to ALA/SRRT Clearinghouse.

Name _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

_____ \$5 (ALA Personal Member) _____ \$5 (Affiliate, non-ALA Member)

_____ \$20 (Institutions) Back issues are available at \$1 each (numbers _____)

Please request back issues from: SRRT/ALA, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

**AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
50 EAST HURON STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611**

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Permit No. 3226