

SRRT Newsletter

A Publication of the Social Responsibilities Roundtable
of the American Library Association

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COORDINATOR'S MEMO

To: SRRT members

From: Doris Kirschbaum, Action Council
Coordinator

You don't have to be on Action Council to attend Action Council meetings. Everyone's opinions and suggestions are welcome (and sometimes adopted).

Some of the topics we will be discussing in Chicago are:

- SRRT's role in ALA's Strategic Long Range Planning (SLRP)
- SRRT's program for the New York Annual Conference in 1986
- Whether SRRT should appoint a representative to the Intellectual Freedom Roundtable

A number of members of the Planning Committee for a SRRT program at the New York conference met recently to focus on a topic that would be informative and provocative. Investigations are progressing and there will be a report and discussion in Chicago.

The SRRT membership meeting will be held on Monday, July 8, from 2-4 p.m. I will be asking task force representatives to be at the meeting to be available for questions from SRRT members and interested others. This will offer an opportunity to find out what is happening and to tell us what you think should be happening. Please try to arrive close

to 2:00, because membership meetings do not usually last the full two hours.

There will be many exciting programs presented by task forces, and in addition, SRRT is cosponsoring a GODORT program, "Whose Information Is It Anyway?: U.S. Government Information and the Marketplace," to be held on Saturday, July 6, from 2-4 p.m.

The three Action Council members whose terms expire this year are: Jeanne Kocsis, who did a wonderful job as treasurer and roommate (term as latter not expired); Joan Goddard, who, hearing duty's call, braved a raging blizzard and arrived in D.C. on time to moderate the 1985 presidential forum; and Dave Vespa, who made sense of conference arrangements and always said "Yes" to "Can you help?" and "Let's have dinner!" Thanks to all of you.

See you in Chicago.

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CORETTA SCOTT KING AWARD

The sixteenth annual SRRT/Coretta Scott King Award Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, July 9, at 7:30 a.m. in the Red Lacquer Room of the Palmer House. This year's award will honor Walter Dean Myers, author of *Motown and Didi* (Viking). Honorable Mention recipients are Virginia Hamilton, author of *A Little Love* (Philomel) and Candy Dawson

Boyd, author of *The Circle of Gold* (Apple Paperback/Scholastic). John H. Johnson, editor and publisher of Johnson Publishing Co., will also receive a special citation.

Tickets are \$15.00 by advance reservation not later than June 18; no refunds after that date. Send check or money order, payable to ALA SRRT/CSK Award Breakfast, to Violette Brooks, Chicago Transit Authority Library, Merchandise Mart Plaza, P.O. Box 3555, Chicago, IL 60654. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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FEMINIST TASK FORCE

The SRRT Feminist Task Force will present Dr. Marjorie Lansing in a program entitled "Gender Gap: Building on Our Successes for the Public Good" at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. Lansing, who is credited with originating the term "gender gap," will present an analysis of the successes of the 1984 election and will chart a course for future gains by women in politics. The program will be held Saturday, July 6, 8-10 p.m.

Feminist Task Force meetings at the Chicago conference will be held Saturday, July 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Monday, July 8, 4:30-5:30 p.m.; and Tuesday, July 9, 9:30-11:00 a.m. The Saturday meeting will be an open discussion of the issues of pornography legislation.

Interested in meeting other women interested in women's issues for a night out on the town? Plan to attend the Feminist Task Force "Women's Night Out in Chicago" on Monday night, July 8. For further information, contact Pat Lucas, North Suburban Library System, 5215 Oakton, Skokie, IL 60077, or come to the FTF meetings on July 6 and 8.

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LETTERS

I am sending this brief note to comment on the "Endorsement" section in the March 1985 newsletter. It truly pains me to see that SRRT will designate individuals as petition candidates, as though this is a lesser status. Many members of the Association have fought for a nominating procedure that enabled all members to have access to the election process on an equal basis. SRRT should be the last part of ALA to distinguish between candidates nominated by petition and nominated by the Committee. In the last several years, as some of our friends have become successful within the organization, this dichotomy between the "anointed" and the "unanointed" seems to have become more visible. At one point, Mr. Josey and I had to fight off an effort to make the petition process more difficult for the membership to utilize.

But that is straying from my main point. I do hope that in the future, SRRT will give up labeling the candidates of its choice.

*Herbert Biblo
Bellport, NY*

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MEETINGS

Listed below are the SRRT meetings that had been scheduled at press time.

Friday, July 5
4:30-5:30 p.m. Peace Info. Exchange

Saturday, July 6
8:00-9:00 a.m. Peace Info. Exchange
9:30-11:00 a.m. Action Council
11:30am-12:30pm Alternatives in Print
Feminist Task Force
2:00-4:00 p.m. Library Union
PROGRAM
PROGRAM (cosponsored
by SRRT)
8:00-10:00 p.m. Feminist T.F. PROGRAM
Civil Rights Task Force
PROGRAM

Sunday, July 7
9:30-11:00 a.m. Intl. Human Rights
Alternatives in Print
Library Union Task
Force
11:30am-12:30pm Action Council
2:00-4:00 p.m. Action Council
4:30-5:30 p.m. Gay Task Force
Peace Info. Exchange
8:00-10:00 p.m. Peace Info. Exchange
PROGRAM

Monday, July 8
9:30-11:00 a.m. Library Union Task
Force
11:30am-12:30pm Intl. Human Rights
Alternatives in Print
2:00-4:00 p.m. SRRT membership meet-
ing
4:30-5:30 p.m. Feminist Task Force

Tuesday, July 9
8:00-9:00 a.m. Coretta Scott King
Award BREAKFAST
Library Union Task
Force
9:30-11:00 a.m. Planning Committee
Feminist Task Force
Alternatives in Print
11:30am-12:30pm Action Council
2:00-4:00 p.m. Gay Task Force

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CIVIL RIGHTS TASK FORCE

The Civil Rights Task Force is cosponsoring with the ALA Black Caucus a program on Third World and minority publishing on Saturday, July 6, from 8-10 p.m. The speaker will be the poet, essayist, and publisher of Third World Press, Haki Madhubuti (Don L. Lee). Professor Madhubuti teaches in the English Department at Chicago State University, and his many books include *Think Black, Black Pride, Don't Cry--Scream, We Walk the Way of the New World, Dynamite Voices: New Black Poets of the 1960s*, and *Enemies--the Clash of Races*. Third World Press began publishing books about Africans and black Americans in 1967, and has issued works by major black scholars, essayists, poets, and writers of fiction. Its list also includes children's books by such important literary figures as Gwendolyn Brooks, Sonia Sanchez, and Mari Evans.

Professor Madhubuti will discuss the topic "Why Minority Publishing Isn't Popular Anymore." He will also read some of his own poems.

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LIBRARY UNION TASK FORCE

Nicole Hollander, nationally syndicated cartoonist and creator of "Sylvia," Iowa City attorney Clara Oleson, who defended the woman firefighter who wished to continue nursing her child,

and Cathy Collette, Assistant Director of Women's Rights, AFSCME, will be speaking at a program entitled "Sexual Harassment--What It Is and What You Can Do About It." The program will be held on Saturday, July 6, from 2-4 p.m. and is sponsored by the Library Union Task Force, the Feminist Task Force, and the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship.

The Library Union Task Force will also hold a poster session on "Union Organizing and Staying Organized" on Saturday, July 6, from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Literature will be available and people will be on hand to answer questions.

Meetings of the task force will be held on Sunday, July 7, from 9:30-11:00 a.m. and on Tuesday, July 9, from 8-9 a.m.

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ALTERNATIVES IN PRINT

"The Alternative Press in the Second Reagan Regime: Thriving despite Repression?" is the theme of the Alternatives in Print Task Force program in Chicago on Sunday, July 7, from 9:30-11:00 a.m. Because of Brad Chambers' commitment to the alternative press, this session is marked as a "Brad Chambers Memorial."

Speakers on a panel to discuss the alternative press include: Haki R. Madhubuti, from *Black Books Bulletin* and Third World Press, speaking on the black press; Ellen Sawislak of New Society Publishers, speaking on how New Society is thriving despite repression; Chip Berlet, editor of *The Public Eye*, speaking on repression (e.g., from Lyndon LaRouche's libel suits), and Daniel Tsang, librarian and gay activist, speaking on the gay press and repression against gay bookstores in the U.S. and the U.K. On display will be alternative and small press titles, available for "hands-on" browsing.

Please join us at AIP task force meetings to discuss resurrecting *Alternatives in Print*. It's been over half a decade since the last edition. Come with your ideas! Meetings are scheduled for Saturday, 6 July, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Monday, 8 July, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and Tuesday, 9 July, 9:30-11:00 a.m.

If you can't get to Chicago, you can still get involved! We plan to divide up the work for the new edition of AIP among task force members, so write us at the address below. All help, especially from outside the U.S., is much appreciated.

Just published by Temple University Press is *The Alternative Press Annual, 1983*, edited by Pat Case with the assistance of other librarians and alternative press folks. It is a mammoth 405-page volume of selections from 66 alternative publications and deserves a place in your library. It sells for \$34.95.

Still available is the task force's 48-page *Field Guide to Alternative Media*, also compiled by Pat Case, our former coordinator. This excellent reference tool describes 164 sources that list, index, or review small or alternative press titles and independently produced media. The guide is available for \$6.00 from the Office of Outreach Services, ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Make checks payable to the American Library Association; proceeds go to the Alternatives in Print Task Force.

Since SRRT membership is not broken down by task force, it has often been difficult to notify our task force members of specific events of concern to AIP members. If you would like to get on the Alternatives in Print Task Force's own mailing list (to notify you of events, issues, etc.), please drop us a note. To contact the task force, write to Daniel Tsang, co-coordinator, P.O. Box 29627, Philadelphia, PA 19144; telephone (215) 849-4612 (evenings).

NUCLEAR FREEZE SURVEY

The proposed nuclear freeze has been an issue on the minds of many individuals and groups for the past several years. To call attention to the opposition that people feel to the nuclear arms buildup, many groups have passed resolutions calling for a nuclear freeze from both the U.S. and Soviet governments. Organizations such as Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Union of Concerned Scientists, Educators for Social Responsibility, the Children's Defense Fund, and many others have supported efforts to prevent the possibility of nuclear war and have called for a nuclear freeze.

In an effort to determine the level of discussion on nuclear freeze resolutions within state library associations, SRRT's Peace Information Exchange Task Force sent out a questionnaire to the 56 library associations listed in the ALA Handbook.

There were a total of 36 responses to this questionnaire and its follow-up for a response rate of 64%. The questionnaire attempted to determine whether the library association had passed a resolution calling for a nuclear freeze and, if not, where the association stood in terms of even discussing such a resolution. Five different responses could be checked: 1) the association was in the process of drafting a resolution, 2) it had discussed a resolution but no work had been done to draft one, 3) it had not yet discussed a freeze resolution, but such discussion was likely to come up within the next year, 4) it had not discussed a freeze resolution, and it was not likely that it would within the next two years, and 5) the majority of the association's members felt that a nuclear freeze resolution had no place on the agenda of a state library association. There was also a category marked "other."

Of the 36 library associations which responded to the questionnaire, seven

reported that they had already passed a nuclear freeze resolution. These were California, Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington.

One state association is in the process of drafting a freeze resolution, but it was not sure when the draft would be voted on.

Three associations reported that there might be discussion of a freeze resolution within the next year. Three reported that there definitely would be discussion of a nuclear freeze resolution within the year and one association stated that the freeze resolution was going to be a topic on the agenda for the next board meeting.

Six state associations reported that there had been no discussion of a freeze resolution, and that it was unlikely that it would come up on the agenda within the next two years.

Ten associations did not feel that a nuclear freeze resolution had a place on the agenda of a state library association. In three of these cases, this expression came from the board members. Another association which expressed this sentiment had also passed a statement resolving that its libraries and librarians had "an obligation to provide information and arguments from all points of view on the nuclear arms race."

The library associations of South Dakota and Wisconsin had placed nuclear freeze resolutions on the agenda during 1984. In both cases the resolution was voted down. Oklahoma referred its nuclear freeze resolution to its Social Responsibilities Roundtable. In Pennsylvania, a freeze resolution was introduced, but a point of order regarding rules was called and no further discussion took place.

To sum up, at this point only seven state library associations have passed nuclear freeze resolutions. Discussion of such resolutions will probably occur in

six more states within the next year. This is not a very strong statement from the library profession regarding an issue which has the potential of destroying all civilization.

The results of this survey will be on display at the Peace Information Exchange Task Force program at the ALA conference in Chicago.

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AWARENESS

In her book, *Just This Side of Madness* (Harold House Publishers, 1978), Carol Ann Morizot wrote:

If Virginia Woolf's psychiatric illness which was extreme and critical in nature for most of her life, could be managed by the care and concentration of one concerned, loving human being, then why must the rest of us demand exile or annihilation for similar people?

One can't help but ask why do we relegate millions of people in "developing" countries, or the thousands on our own urban streets, to fates of permanent poverty, neglect and starvation, until their conditions are as miserable and mindless as the mentally ill.

Why are censorship, "disappearances," torture, and massacres either condoned or carried out by governments in the name of "order" and "national security"?

Could it be that we simply do not want to be bothered, or is it true that we do not want to be shaken from our material security by anyone or anything that questions our moral or spiritual values or attempts

to prod us a little farther down the road toward human rights and human responsibility? Or if most of us are really well-intentioned people who have been rocked to sleep and had our innocence cloyed by a false sense of opulence and self-reliance, what will it take to wake us up, or what will happen to this world if we never do?

If librarians have any social responsibilities, a principal one is to make people AWARE. But awareness, too often, doesn't get turned on with the electronic name-changer, display-tuner or channel-tuner. People need to investigate, read, discuss and *think* for themselves about the condition of our global social environment; librarians need to do everything possible and necessary to make that happen. We need to remove barriers to the flow of information and facilitate, or establish, communication about all social issues as a fundamental prerequisite for true democracy.

If we don't, sooner or later, our own fates become enmeshed in the resulting ignorance. We all become hostages to blind allegiances, failed policies, and revenges against past evils. At our own peril we forget or ignore our traditions of freedom and human rights; in 1977, Cyrus Vance warned: "Our own well-being, and even our security are enhanced in a world that shares common freedoms and in which prosperity and economic justice create the conditions for peace. And let us remember, we always risk paying a serious price when we become identified with repression."

--Lee Regan
International Human Rights
Task Force

INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

If you want to know more about the *Interracial Books for Children Bulletin*, formerly edited by the late Brad Chambers, the subject of a number of memorials in recent issues of the *SRRT Newsletter*, see the article "Social Justice in Children's Materials: a Look at *Interracial Books for Children Bulletin*" by Ruth Charnes in the *Serials Librarian*, vol. 9, no. 1 (fall 1984).

WASHINGTON STATE SRRT

The Washington Library Association SRRT cosponsored a program called "Collecting Alternative Press Periodicals: Overcoming Censorship by Deletion, Distortion, and Trivialization" at the WLA conference in April. It featured James Donaldson and Dan Walters. There was also a display of over 100 alternative press periodicals.

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NEW MAGAZINE

Changing Work is a periodical which began publishing recently and whose editor hopes will be of interest to SRRT members and friends. Among its aims listed in the first issue are "to provide a forum for sustained dialogue on the goals and strategies of reconstructing work (e.g. on the issue of how worklife can be made not only more democratic but a source of joy and creativity); to help build solidarity among the often disconnected groups and others with allied goals, such as labor, ecological, and health care groups; and to develop collaboration on changing work across national boundaries. Moreover, these broad aims will be pursued concretely and with continuity, e.g. through our regular and staff-coordinated departments--Co-op Ed, European Scene, Resources, Corporate Watchdog, Health Care Work in Transition." A recent issue included a special section on economic conversion. Subscriptions are \$10.00 per year for individuals and \$15.00 per year for institutions. To subscribe or to get a sample issue, write to *Changing Work*, P.O. Box 5005, New Haven, CT 06525.

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