"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose," might well be the best motto for SRRT. Although progress was made in the 1970's on the chief issues that the Social Responsibilities Round Table championed--extending library services to the previously unserved and democratizing ALA--the contemporary counterparts of those same issues have arisen again in the late 1980's, challenging SRRT activists to lead the fight once more for responsible social change.

In 1969 the Round Table on Social Responsibilities of Libraries (the original name) organized to bring library services to rural populations, to prison inmates and to neglected inner-city urban residents. With impetus from the Round Table and support from ALA, libraries with decent budgets in the early 1970's developed rural programs, some extended their services to prison populations in their areas, and many urban libraries improved their services in the inner-city neighborhoods, occasionally involving the lower income populations themselves in the planning. Now, at the tail end of the Reagan-dominated 1980's, with thin library budgets the norm, SRRT activists once again fight for extending library assistance to the underserved. These are now most often the immigrant populations needing assistance in their own languages--Cuban, Mexican or other Hispanic forms, Vietnamese, Khmer or other Asian languages--or gay and lesbian patrons, and sometimes the urban homeless needing so much more than traditional library service.

SRRT's early efforts were directed also to reorganizing the ALA structure, reducing the bureaucratic red tape and making the organization more responsive to members' needs. The 1972 reorganization of ALA reduced the size of Council, making councilors more visible and accountable. The fight against bureaucracy and for greater attention to individual professional needs, however, has been a continuing battle, taking new shape in the mid- and late 1980's as a conservative leadership has gradually regained its hold. ALA Council is again the preserve, in large part, of library administrators and technology buffs who contest every effort towards broadening library service or advancing librarian interests, always raising the threat of financial risk.

A major emphasis in the first decade of SRRT activity was on making fair and reasonable personnel standards for libraries a cornerstone of ALA policy, on the perhaps naive assumption that ALA standards would be pursued by libraries desiring professional recognition. It now appears that too many
COORDINATOR’S MEMO
FROM: JOHN HOSTAGE

Another Annual Conference is upon us, and though we’re having mid-April snow flurries here in Boston as I write this, I have a feeling the climate will be a little different “way down yonder in New Orleans.” As usual, the SRRT task forces will be serving up a diverse buffet of programs and meetings, which we hope SRRT members and many others will be able to attend. You are also encouraged to drop in on Action Council meetings and see what your elected representatives are doing and participate in the discussion of SRRT business. Among the program highlights are "Librarians as Colleagues across Racial Lines: Strategies for Action," co-sponsored by the Feminist Task Force; a debate between SRRT's Noel Peattie and John Swan of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table on two views of intellectual freedom; and the annual Coretta Scott King Award Breakfast. More details on these and other programs can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

ALA's Planning document: Goals and Strategies will likely be the focus of further discussion at ALA Council. A SRRT committee chaired by Linda Pierce has prepared detailed comments and suggestions for revisions of that document to reflect social responsibilities concerns.

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CORETTA SCOTT KING AWARD BREAKFAST

The Coretta Scott King Award Task Force will hold its annual award breakfast on Tuesday, July 12, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Tickets are $18 by advance reservation not later than June 30 (no refunds after June 30). Send your check or money order, payable to ALA/SRRT-CSK Award Breakfast, to: SRRT Coretta Scott King Award Breakfast, Office for Library Outreach Services, ALA Headquarters, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

NEW TASK FORCE ON CENTRAL AMERICA

A proposal to establish a Task Force on Central American Information Resources Networking (CAIRN), incorporating the Books for Nicaragua Project of the Alternatives in Print Task Force, will be presented to Action Council at Annual Conference in New Orleans. A meeting to organize the group and select a coordinator will be held Monday, July 11, 11:30-12:30, at the close of the AIP Task Force meeting.

All librarians interested in coordinating human services, information, and library and literacy projects for the Central American and Caribbean areas are welcome.

The Task Force on CAIRN will represent the first geographically focused activity in SRRT's history. Do join in!

--Jackie Eubanks

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DON'T FORGET!
to attend the Swan-Peattie debate.

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* Editorial Board...Elizabeth Morrissett*
* Linda Pierce *
* John Sheridan *
* *
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* *
********************************************************************************************
At the book's inception, Jeanne Vaughn wrote that she envisioned an anthology that would open a dialogue between parents and nonparents, lesbian and non-lesbian women to address the issues of how we raise our children and what our individual and collective responsibilities to our children, ourselves, each other, and the world are. Rich in diversity, the voices that consider these questions within the pages of Politics of the Heart eloquently reveal the truth of the old adage that our differences are our most valuable resource.

Before the civil rights, women's and gay liberation movements, lesbian mothers generally found themselves isolated from and condemned by society. Since that time, lesbians have begun to fight for their right to bear and raise children by challenging the courts and by demanding custody of their children. Despite the movement back toward the patriarchal family values advocated by the Reagan administration, the issues of lesbian parenting have expanded far beyond custody battles. Recently, lesbians have begun to openly create families that are radically different from the traditional nuclear family.

Politics of the Heart is a collection of essays, stories, journal entries, poems and interviews by and about lesbians confronting the issue of motherhood. The eight sections of the book proceed from the authors' confrontations with the external world to their internal experiences and growth as individual women. The contributors include women who have chosen to give up their children, women who have battled against all odds to keep their children, lesbian grandmothers, women who have utilized the latest reproductive technology to have children and women who have decided not to have children. Each of their accounts reveals the enormous range and depth of emotions surrounding their decisions.

In addition to personal narratives, Politics of the Heart offers numerous thoughtful and provocative essays on the political and social economy of motherhood. The authors question our basic assumptions about giving birth to and raising children. Why do we choose to parent or not parent? What are the implications of the choice to parent and what does it mean in the larger context of our society? Is lesbian parenting different or is it only a variation on an old theme? Can effective ways of dealing with racism and classism be included in these alternative parenting models?

The role of the coparent is examined closely from the viewpoint of the biological and nonbiological mother. There are few role models for the unique and complex relationships in these newly evolving families, and the difficulties of contending with a society that constantly questions the status of the nonbiological mother, in addition to the biological mother, are well documented. However, the creative energy and excitement that are derived from seeking to move beyond the narrow constraints of the traditional family often seem to transform that struggle and those individuals involved. Other pieces in the book discuss ways of viewing growth and separation in a family, how families can best address difficult issues with their children including society's and internalized homophobia, and how lesbian families impact on the lesbian community.

Throughout the anthology, I was struck by the raw honesty and rare courage exhibited by the authors. Beyond the endless battles waged with oppressive societal norms, these women raise many difficult questions regarding the nature of motherhood and society. They are painfully aware that the traditional nuclear family does not work for everyone. Their stories remind us that we have the opportunity to alter our conceptions of family and social organizations and thereby create a society that encourages everyone to develop the kinds of human bonds that they need.

--Barbara Morgan
welI-known reputable Iibraries igHore
certain of the standards adopt'ed as a
part of ALA's Library Personnel Policy,
Item No. 54 in the ALA Policy Manual.
For example, the skills of Iibrarj specialists are seldom as well rewarded
financially as those of administrators
(Policy 54.3), many academic librarjans
performing teaching and research func-
tions have not been granted faculty
status (Policy 54.5), and few indeed
are the part-time librarians who have
achieved pay and fringe benefits pro-
rated on a par with their full-time
colleagues (Policy 54.9). We now find
that our emphasis must shift to finding
ways to enforce such reasonable stan-
cards of administrat.ion, ethics and
personnel policy. Policies and stan-
dards promulgated by the national
association have significance only when
the great majority of institutions
affected follow those standards. Now
we need to determine what further
pressures are needed and feasible, to
move library administrators into prac-
tice consistent with fair standards.

Intellectual freedom was another major
concern of social responsible library
activists in the 1970's. Progress was
made in strengthening the Library Bill
of Rights and by ostracizing libraries
that failed to support their staff
members' intellectual freedom efforts.
SRRT pressure moved ALA and its
offspring organizations, the Freedom to
Read Foundation and the LeRoy C.
Merritt Humanitarian Rund into direct,
active opposition to censorship, but
cooperation on intellectual freedom
did fall apart when basic differences arose
over the racist-skewed ALA film, "The
Speaker." The main disagreement--the
core of the racist issue in this
country--is still to be resolved,
hinging on whether any group's right to
fair treatment and representation takes
precedence over the right of others to
speak out and act in any harmful way
that they choose. A more recent weak-
ness in ALA's defense of the right to
know has been shown in the slow
reaction to the Reagan administration's
concerted attack on public access to
government information. Racism and
access to information now become the
key questions within the issue of
intellectual freedom to be addressed in
the coming period.

The tasks before us, so similar to the
earlier challenges, are in some ways
more critical than our early efforts
towards progress. The right-wing
resurgence of the 1980's, while now
being answered in many places, repres-
sents a serious threat to long-accepted
American liberties. Those liberties
have never been as universal nor as
guaranteed as the patriotic songs
imply, but they have provided a founda-
tion for stronger implementation and
for aggressive social advance.
Librarians now working for change
through the Social Responsibiliti-es
Round Table have the opportunity to
make both ALA and libraries more
effective tools for the American
people, and through those tools to
influence the forward movement of the
nation itself.

Our immediate tasks therefore are:
1) To keep ALA democratic and respon-
sive to its membership by electing a
strong contingent of socially respon-
sible librarians to the ALA Council, by
monitoring Council and headquarters
activities, and by working for
principled library and social values
rather than for financial standar-ds
alone; 2) To continue to support the
extension of library services in all
forms to the underserved, in this
period specifically to service gay and
lesbian information needs, to provide
information assistance to the new immi-
grants, which now requires opposing the
"English only" movements being fostered
on both the East and West Coast, and to
serve the information-related needs of
the homeless; 3) To develop methods for
the monitoring and enforcement of high
personnel and ethical standards for
libraries of all kinds; 4) To advance
all efforts to make government inform-
ation more accessible to the general
public, whether by controlling priva-
tization of public resources, providing
adequate government funding, removing
restrictions on access, or by other
methods as they may be necessary; and
5) To lead ALA in the urgent,
continuing struggle against the racism
which poisons our nation and surfaces periodically in our association.

[Editor's note: SRRT will observe the 20th anniversary of its founding in January, 1989. Action Council is planning a festive celebration for Midwinter, Washington. It seems appropriate also to take a serious look at SRRT's accomplishments and at tasks yet to be accomplished. Miriam Crawford is a long-time SRRT member. Thanks, Miriam, for sharing your perspective with Newsletter readers.]

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REPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TASK FORCE

Human rights continues to be a bubbling issue among librarians. The ALA International Relations Committee is investigating human rights violations in Malaysia referred to them from the ALA Freedom to Read Foundation. The formation of a human rights subcommittee of the IRC was to be discussed at San Antonio, but was postponed due to the illness of the Chair, E.J. Josey. Support for Hanna Mykhaylenko, Ukrainian teacher and librarian who has been in a Soviet psychiatric hospital since 1980, and other cases promoted by Amnesty International, were discussed but no action was taken. The SRRT/ IHRTF resolution on the "Abridgement of Human Rights in South Africa" has had its effect on ALA but the organization is still feeling its way.

"Librarians as Censors" was the heading on a Village Voice (January 26, 1988) article written by Nat Hentoff that focused on whether information is to be exempted from prohibitions to do business with South Africa. A resolution presented and defeated at San Francisco called for "free access to information," noting that such laws and ordinances put "libraries in conflict with the ALA resolution on the Abridgement... which urges libraries... 'to develop collections on South Africa that reflect the full diversity of viewpoints and experience in that country.'" Hentoff oversimplifies the issue as a First Amendment battle, making anyone who opposes the exemption of books to be a censor who would ban books in their own libraries.

Meanwhile, librarians in South Africa at the annual meeting of SAILIS (South African Institute of Library and Information Science) in September 1987 in Windhoek (of all unsuitable places) voted to create a standing committee on censorship. A news release in the Johannesburg Star (September 30, 1987) says the "committee will act as a watchdog on censorship and monitor its effect. It will also encourage the library to appeal against restrictions on publications to the Directorate of Publications." This is a step in the right direction, that will need watching as well as support.

Finally, Africana librarians meeting at Boston University in April decided to mount a round table discussion on "South Africa and the Free Flow of Information: Dilemmas Facing the Librarian and Scholar." It will take place at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association in Chicago, October 27-31, 1988.

Thus for the IHRTF, it is a time of waiting as our major concerns sort themselves out. In New Orleans we should discuss the activities that librarians not on the IRC can best pursue to promote human rights. One possibility is an Urgent Action Network of Librarians working with Amnesty International as do similar networks of journalists, writers, and health professionals. Let me hear from you.

--Corinne Nyquist, SUNY/New Paltz, (914) 257-2139

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RECOMMENDED

The winter, 1987, issue of Reference Services Review (ISSN 0090-7324) features three articles by Edmund F. SantaVicca on the subject of AIDS information.
NEW ORLEANS PROGRAMS: A SAMPLING

A particularly rich array of stimulating programs sponsored and co-sponsored by Action Council, SRRT task forces and OLOS is in store. Here are some highlights:

**Saturday, July 9, 12:30 - 4:00 p.m.**

LIBRARIANS AS COLLEAGUES ACROSS RACIAL LINES: STRATEGIES FOR ACTION. This is an action-oriented program which will focus on strategies for combating racism in the profession. Prior registration is not required.

Keynote speakers are Aileen Hernández, former president of NOW, and Elizabeth Martinez-Smith, director of the Orange County (CA) Library System. Others on the program are Clara Stanton-Jones, E.J. Josey, Susan Hinojosa, and Betty-Carol Sellen. Vivian Sykes will lead discussion.

Sponsors are many, including the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, ALA Black Caucus, SRRT Action Council, and SRRT Feminist Task Force.

For further information, contact Betty-Carol Sellen, Gideonse Library, Brooklyn College, Avenue H & Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11210, tel. 718-780-5618.

**Sunday, July 10, 9:30-11:00 a.m.**

INTRODUCING WOMEN'S GROUPS IN ALA. Speakers will explain how to become involved in women's issues at ALA.

Speakers will be Ellen Broidy, Elizabeth Laney, Gail Warner, Sherry O'Brien, and Polly Thistlethwaite.

Sponsor: SRRT Feminist Task Force.

**Sunday, July 10, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.**

TWO VIEWS OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM. This program will be a debate between John Swan (Bennington College) and SRRT's own Noel Peattie (University of California/Davis). Noel's presentation is titled "Truth, libraries, and revolution." He will dissect the traditional defenses of intellectual freedom while offering a new one of his own, based on the union of freedom with dignity, respect, compassion, etc.

The moderator will be Kathleen Heim, Dean of the Library School at Louisiana State University and co-coordinator of local events.

Participants have agreed that the loser will take the winner and the moderator to dinner. A vote among the audience will determine the winner. Need we say more? Turn out for this one!

**Monday, July 11, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

EQUITY IN INFORMATION SERVICES: THE NATION’S MINORITIES AND THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE. Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III, Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Urban Education, Georgia State University, will identify key issues relating to the development of minority youth, and will discuss professional and political leadership challenges. A panel of concerned ALA representatives will discuss major issues related to the implementation of Equity at Issue and explore the strategies for the national library agenda.

Other speakers are Janice Beaudin, Marva DeLoach, Elizabeth Rodriguez Miller, Betty Tsai, Ken Yamashita, and Irene Yeh. Dr. Ann K. Randall will serve as moderator.

Cosponsors are American Indian Library Association, EMERIT, OLOS Advisory Committee, and several other groups.

**Monday, July 11, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

DEVELOPING MINORITY LEADERSHIP FOR THE 1990'S AND BEYOND. Donna M. Alvarado, director of Action, the federal domestic volunteer agency, will explore conditions affecting the development of leaders among the urban and rural poor, ethnic minority groups and the underserved.

A panel of library leaders will respond by discussing the recruitment and development of minority leadership in the field of librarianship. Panelists will be E.J. Josey, Elizabeth Martinez Smith, and Tamiye Fujibayashi Trejo. Monteria Hightower, Missouri State Library, will serve as moderator.

SRRT Newsletter June 1988
This program is sponsored by the OLOS Advisory Committee and cosponsored by several groups including SRRT Action Council.

**Monday, July 11, 2:00 - 5:30 p.m.**

THE CREATION OF PATRIARCHY: ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARIANSHIP. Dr. Gerda Lerner of the University of Wisconsin will discuss patriarchy's origins. Rebecca Bingham will draw implications for female school librarians, and Sharon Hogan for female academic librarians. Dr. Lerner is a feminist historian and the author of The Creation of Patriarchy. She has actively promoted women's history as an academic discipline.

Sponsor: Library History Round Table. Cosponsors: Several groups, including SRRT Feminist Task Force.

**Monday, July 11, 2:00 - 5:30 p.m.**

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: LIBRARY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES. Panel discussion of personal experiences with library employees about being lesbian or gay.

Sponsor: SRRT Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

**Tuesday, July 12, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

SOUTHERN VOICES: ALTERNATIVE LITERARY AND POLITICAL PUBLISHING IN THE SOUTH. Four speakers are scheduled to discuss the alternative and small press scene in the southern U.S. and its impact on American culture. Speakers include Andrei Codrescu, poet and commentator on National Public Radio; John Guidry, curator of Tulane's Political Ephemera Collection; Tom Dent, one of the founders of the Free Southern Theater, a black theater formed in the 1960s (he is now a poet); and Barry Jean Ancelet, a Cajun author and professor of French and Francophone Studies at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

Sponsor: Alternatives in Print Task Force.

NEWS FROM THE PEACE INFORMATION EXCHANGE TASK FORCE

The task force will have a table in the exhibits area at Annual Conference. Be sure to stop by for a small gift. If anyone can spend some time at the table, please let me know. You can contact me at my office at Harvard University by phone at (617) 495-1408. If you won't know until later, I’ll be staying at the Sheraton New Orleans.

The search for a corporate sponsor for our award is on. If anyone has any additional suggestions as to possible sponsors, let me know. We hope to have an encouraging word at New Orleans.

--Stephen Stillwell

**SCHEDULE OF SRRT BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**Friday, July 8, 1988**

4:30-5:30 pm Gay and Lesbian TF

**Saturday, July 9, 1988**

8:00-9:00 am Int'l. Human Rights TF
9:30-11:00 am Action Council
4:30-5:30 pm Gay and Lesbian TF

**Sunday, July 10, 1988**

8:00-9:00 am Alternatives in Print TF
9:00-11:00 am TF on the Homeless
11:30 am-12:30 pm Feminist TF
11:30 am-12:30 pm Int'l. HRTF
11:30 am-12:30 pm Library Union TF
2:00-4:00 pm Action Council
4:30-5:30 pm Gay and Lesbian TF
4:30-5:30 pm Peace Info Exchange TF

**Monday, July 11, 1988**

8:00-11:00 am Feminist TF
9:30 am-12:30 pm AIPTF
11:30 am-12:30 pm Library Union TF
4:30-5:30 pm Action Council
4:30-5:30 pm Peace Info Exchange TF

**Tuesday, July 12, 1988**

8:30-11:00 am TF on the Homeless
9:00-11:00 am Feminist TF
9:30-11:00 am CSK Award TF
2:00-4:00 pm Gay and Lesbian TF

Consult the official conference program for locations and schedule changes.
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SRRT BOOTH

If you forgot to send in the form printed in the March issue of the newsletter, here's another opportunity. As usual, SRRT will have a booth in the exhibits hall at Annual Conference, New Orleans. We need a few people to hang out for an hour or two at a time, to chat with potential SRRT'ers, non-SRRT'ers, etc. No, we won't have any colorful shopping bags, but we will have lots of examples of alternative literature, including copies of this publication.

Return to Nancy Gruber, 890 West End Ave., Apt. 6D, New York, NY 10025.

I would like to help staff the SRRT booth in New Orleans.

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
City: ____________________________
State: ___________ ZIP: ____________
Day(s) and time(s) available: ____________________________