COORDINATOR'S MEMO

From: John Hostage

Action Council held a discussion with the four candidates for ALA President-Elect during the Midwinter meeting in Washington. They are Hannelore Rader, Irene Hoadley, Rebecca Bingham, and Richard Dougherty. Each made an opening statement and then responded to questions from the SRRT members present. Action Council later decided to endorse REBECCA BINGHAM for the office.

I had been invited, along with other heads of roundtables, to meet with Vice President/President-Elect Patricia Berger during Midwinter. She wanted input from us on what her President's Program should be about in 1990. After conferring with Action Council, it was agreed that SRRT would recommend a focus on the issue of racism in librarianship. Ms. Berger agreed to devote a segment of her program to this issue, and she will call on SRRT for help in developing the program.

At the Annual Conference in New Orleans, Action Council decided to make a Freedom of Information Act request to the FBI for any files it might have on SRRT. This was prompted by member Dan Tsang's finding that the Bureau held files on him, including articles that had appeared in Library Journal! The SRRT request turned up only two items: a letter written in 1971 by an unidentified member of ALA who was concerned that SRRT had donated $200 to the Angela Davis Defense Fund, and a reply from J. Edgar Hoover himself, saying that Davis was awaiting prosecution, and thus he could not comment.

Action Council voted to endorse the ALA Minority Internship/Fellowship Program proposed by the Office for Library Outreach Services (OLOS) Advisory Committee and recommended that it be extended beyond the proposed three years and that ALA fund the program if outside grants are not found.

Leslie Schotz of the South Huntington Public Library (New York) has been designated as the SRRT representative to the Library Education Assembly. Linda DeBeau-Melting of the University of Minnesota will fill the long-vacant position of state affiliate representative to SRRT, representing Minnesota SRRT. Jody Bush, who served as SRRT Treasurer last year, is giving up her Action Council seat early, so there will be four positions to fill in this year's election. We thank her for her dedicated service to SRRT and to social responsibilities.

ALA ELECTIONS

As John Hostage noted, SRRT Action Council endorsed Rebecca Bingham for ALA President-Elect. There are also several SRRT members running for ALA Council. Time constraints prevented printing the names of these candidates in this issue of the newsletter. However, Jackie Eubanks has been authorized by Action Council to send cards to all SRRT members before the election listing the names of SRRT candidates.
HELP FREE A SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIAN

Librarians are urged to write an appeal requesting the immediate and unconditional release of Thiswiliandi Rejoice Mabudafhasi, a 50-year-old librarian, widow, and mother of four children, who has been held without charge or trial in South Africa for two years.

She was detained in October 1986 under the nationwide state of emergency declared the previous June. She may be held for an indefinite period by order of the Minister of Law and Order, who is not required to state the reasons for detention.

At the time of her arrest, Mrs. Mabudafhasi was an active member of the United Democratic Front, a national coalition of groups opposed to apartheid, and of the Detainees’ Support Committee, which documents human rights violations and assists detainees and their families. Before her arrest, she was a librarian at the University of the North in the Transvaal.

Please send a polite letter, stating the basic facts of this case and urging her release, to: President P.W. Botha, State President’s Office, Private Bag X213, Pretoria 0001, South Africa. (Airmail postage is 45 cents)

— Steve Marquardt, University of Wisconsin/Eau Claire Library

LIBRARIANS’ URGENT ACTION NETWORK

There has been recent discussion in SRRT about starting a librarians’ Urgent Action Network. For those of you unfamiliar with these, Urgent Action Networks are programs set up by the international human rights organization Amnesty International to provide rapid response to cases of human rights abuses throughout the world. AI sends descriptions of the particular cases to those people who are part of the network, who in turn write letters or send telegrams to government officials and others in the countries where the abuses have occurred. If a librarians’ Urgent Action Network were set up, those people interested in being in it would receive about one appeal per month, asking them to write at least one letter as quickly as possible about the case. We would be part of a “specific interest” list and would be notified about writers, publishers, teachers, and librarians who have been detained, imprisoned, persecuted, or subjected to any similar sort of abuse because of their human rights activities. An agreement to write one letter per month isn’t a very heavy commitment of time, yet each person’s letter, combined with many others, can help save a life.

If you are interested in getting involved in this, or would simply like to have more information about Amnesty International, please contact:

Sallie Barringer
Maddux Library
Trinity University
715 Stadium Drive
San Antonio, TX 78284
(512)736-7343 (work)
(512)737-2604 (home)

REPORT OF THE PEACE INFORMATION EXCHANGE TASK FORCE, ALA MIDWINTER MEETING.

* Peace Award. The time period necessary to publicize the award means that no award will be given in Dallas. Deadline for nominations is the first day of the next Midwinter conference for possible presentation in Chicago 1990. Flyers were placed at the official literature distribution tables at the conference. They will be available at Dallas as well. Announcements are currently being sent out to various official ALA newsletters. There will be an advertisement on all ALA awards, including ours, in an upcoming issue of American Libraries.

* Our next mailing may contain flyers from Citizens Network for Common Security, a project of the Center for Religion, Ethics, and Social Policy. Address: Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.
* Dallas information: Meetings are scheduled as follows: business (Sun. 6/25, 8-9 a.m.; Tues. 6/27, 4:30-5:30 p.m.); program (Sunday 6/25, 8-10 p.m.). The program is tentatively scheduled to be an address by the incoming national president of Physicians for Social Responsibility. There will be a PIE table in the exhibit hall as usual, in addition to the SRRT booth. LNAC will be helping us staff the table during the exhibit hours. Volunteers (DESPERATELY NEEDED) to staff the table should contact me, as should anyone with anything to display and/or distribute. We will try to coordinate things so that our table adjoins that of ACCESS.

* Chicago information: The Law and Political Science Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries has asked us to co-sponsor a program panel discussion tentatively titled: Arms Control and Disarmament, Bibliographies and Sources. We have agreed.

— Stephen J. Stillwell, Jr.
   Center for Science and International Affairs
   Kennedy School of Government
   Harvard University
   Cambridge, MA 02138
   (617)495-1408 (w); (617)646-0253 (h)

Librarians for Nuclear Arms Control (LNAC), send $15.00 to:
Librarians for Nuclear Arms Control
P.O. Box 60552
Pasadena, CA 91106

LNAC Almanac subscriptions only may be obtained for $10.00.

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NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK IS APRIL 9-15, 1989

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SRRT BOOTH

If you'd like to volunteer some time to staff the SRRT booth at the ALA conference in Dallas in June, contact:

Elizabeth Morrissett
4101 University Dr., No. 546
Alaska Pacific University
Anchorage, AK 99508-4672
(907)564-6284 (w)
(907)563-3323 (h)

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NEW SRRT TASK FORCE TO FORM

Elizabeth Morrissett of Alaska Pacific University has received approval from Action Council to form an Environmental Information Task Force. According to Elizabeth, such a task force is long overdue within SRRT and ALA, especially given the current governmental situation in the U.S. She notes that a new online database produced by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Toxic Chemicals Release Inventory, makes the establishment of such a task force timely. The database will contain reports submitted by industries on toxic chemical releases, either intentional or accidental. (More information on the database is available on TOXNET.) Organizational meetings for the task force will be held at ALA Annual in Dallas—check the ALA program for times and locations.

PEACE ON EARTH
МИР НА ЗЕМЛЕ

ONE NUCLEAR BOMB CAN RUIN YOUR WHOLE DAY

Librarians for Nuclear Arms Control (LNAC) is a national organization with over 200 members. The LNAC Almanac, the LNAC newsletter, specializes in bibliographies and peace networking information.

To become a regular member of

SRRT Newsletter

March 1989
The American Library Association will sponsor a delegation to participate in the March for Women's Equality/Women's Lives on April 9, 1989 in Washington, D.C. The march is being coordinated by the National Organization for Women (NOW) and will involve a large number of organizations in a demonstration for women's rights. At the ALA Midwinter meeting in January, the ALA Council voted to support the march.

The ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL), chaired by Gail Warner, is coordinating the ALA delegation. Individuals who are interested in participating in the march should contact Cynthia Johnson, Library of Congress, MARC Editorial Division, Washington, D.C. 20540 (202) 707-5261. Further information on meeting time, very basic accommodations, and location will then be forwarded to participants.

NOW is also sponsoring a Congressional Lobby Day for women's rights on Monday, April 10. COSWL will obtain additional information on these efforts for those who might like to participate. ALA members may also wish to combine involvement in the above activities with the ALA Annual Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. on April 11.

CONFERENCE ON RACISM AND OTHER FORMS OF OPPRESSION

The Women Against Racism Committee at the University of Iowa Women's Resource and Action Center will present "Parallels and Intersections: A National Conference on Racism and Other Forms of Oppression" from April 6-9, 1989 in Iowa City. For more information contact:

Women's Resource and Action Center University of Iowa 130 N. Madison St. Iowa City, IA 52242 (319) 335-1486

A petition asking Sports Illustrated to eliminate its swimsuit issue and increase its coverage of women's sports has been initiated by Athletes for Equality, a group working to obtain equitable coverage for women's athletics. The group is also targeting SI's corporate sponsors with its appeal. For more information contact:

Beverly Smith 6805 Wood Hollow Drive #361 Austin, TX 78731

REPORT OF THE LIBRARY UNION TASK FORCE, ALA MIDWINTER MEETING

In response to Dun & Bradstreet's recent practice of restricting access to online databases for labor union subscribers, the task force adopted the following resolution at its Midwinter meeting:

"The Library Union Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table strongly protests the restriction of access to any databases for any individual or group in accordance with the ALA's Freedom to Read declaration. We particularly object to the restriction by Dun & Bradstreet limiting access to financial information by labor union subscribers. We also urge ALA to review sponsorship of any ALA awards supported by organizations who violate the Freedom to Read declaration."

The resolution was forwarded to the Reference and Adult Services Division (RASD), which has said it will reconsider accepting an award to be presented by Dun & Bradstreet to the RASD Business Reference and Services Section.

The task force also announced topics for upcoming programs. The program at the ACRL meeting in Cincinnati in April is entitled "Professional Time for Librarians." The topic of the program at the ALA Annual meeting in Dallas in June is "Why Librarians Unionize."
The 1989 Dallas program is titled "Our Best-Kept Secret: Creating, Collecting and Preserving Gay and Lesbian Materials," and will take place on June 26 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Speakers and details are in the works. Anyone willing to speak or help with the program should contact Leon Bey, 1362 Harvard Blvd., Dayton, OH 45406.

The Dallas conference will also include an evening of readings by the Task Force membership, tentatively scheduled for Sunday, June 25 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Anyone interested in reading from their own work or from published work should contact Roland Hansen, Secretary/Treasurer GLTF, 3824 N. Fremont, Chicago, IL 60613.

As usual, a social is planned for Saturday night. Volunteers are needed to help organize this event, especially in the Dallas metro area. Please contact Leon Bey if you would like to help out.

The Gay and Lesbian Task Force will celebrate its twentieth anniversary during the ALA annual conference in Chicago, 1990. Many activities are being planned. Needed are persons familiar with the history of the Task Force, suggestions for speakers, persons interested in oral history who might be willing to record personal histories, etc. Please contact Roland Hansen if you have any relevant information.

The Steering Committee appointed Adam Schiff as the new Gay/Lesbian Book Award Committee chair. The previous chair was forced to resign for personal reasons. At this point nominations are closed. The awards will be announced in March, in time to be included with the other ALA Awards announcements. The Book Award Committee will meet in Dallas. The 1988 Gay/Lesbian Book Award will be presented at the Dallas program on June 26 at 2:00 p.m.

The Steering Committee also approved a new publication for the Clearinghouse. Titled "Gays and Lesbians on Stage: How to Find Gay/Lesbian Plays," it was compiled by Cal Gough. Clearinghouse Coordinator. Also approved was the revision of "Gay Resources for Religious Study." Volunteers with expertise in this area are needed to help with the revision. Correspondence related to the Clearinghouse should be sent to Cal Gough, 491 Seminole Ave. #14, Atlanta, GA 30307.

The Steering Committee has announced three vacancies to be appointed at Dallas: Male Co-Chair; Clearinghouse Coordinator; Publicity Committee Chair. Anyone interested in "running" for office should contact Roland Hansen.

—Roland Hansen

SECOND INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL—NICARAGUA '89

The Nicaraguan Cultural Alliance will sponsor a U.S. delegation of publishers, editors, authors, librarians, and other interested individuals to the second International Book Festival Nicaragua '89, to be held in Managua in July. The individual registration fee of $10 ($50 for booth registration—payable to the N.C.A.) is due by May 20. The estimated cost for U.S. delegates is $500 (meals, lodging, transportation to and from fair, etc.), plus airfare. To be placed on the U.S. delegation mailing list, and to obtain additional information, contact:

Sue Goodwin
P.O. Box 53423
Washington, D.C. 20009

NEW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS OF INTEREST

Feminist theology
Lesbian teachers
Libraries and the homeless
Military-industrial complex
Selective conscientious objection
CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

SRRT member Ilene Rockman, editor of Reference Services Review, invites manuscripts (position pieces, annotated bibliographies) on contemporary social issues. Topics might include the role of libraries in combating literacy, resources for and about the homeless, core collections in international peace, etc. Recent RSR articles have focused on acid rain, the AIDS epidemic, and Augusto Cesar Sandino. For further information and publication guidelines, please contact:

Ilene Rockman
Cal Poly Library
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
(805)756-2273

BOOK REVIEWS


If you feel that you may truly expire or go careening over the edge if you are forced to read one more article on retrospective conversion in Library Journal or Public Library Quarterly, settle in with Sanford Berman’s and James Danky’s latest Alternative Library Literature instead for a refreshing change of pace. This collection of essays selected from sources as diverse as the UNIA*SF*ASHED Librarian, Tikkun and Hurricane Alice reveals that there is life and even inspiration beyond much of the mainstream library and library-related literature.

The editors have divided the book into 11 thematic sections: Work, Women, Nukes/Peace, Censorship, Alternatives, Service/Advocacy/Empowerment, Kids, A/V, Books and Reading, Just for Kids, and a special feature on the Central American/Nicaraguan connection. Among the selections are excellent articles on multiculturalism, literacy, small presses, gay and lesbian books for young adults, and community participation in minority services. Each section is exhaustively represented in Sandy Berman’s 20 page index. The fact that the authors included are poets, activists and law professors, as well as librarians, broadens and enriches the perspective on the issues addressed.

Although you may not read the entire collection or agree with every author, you will find Alternative Library Literature to be informative, thought-provoking, and highly entertaining. The Librarians Songbook is worth the price of the book alone.

— Barbara Morgan


The reality that knowledge is power and that access to information can be an essential factor to gaining control over one’s life has been recognized by librarians for many years. It has also become more and more apparent in recent years that an increasing number of people throughout this country and the world are losing out in the attempt to gain a share of the “information market.” These people are rapidly becoming the world’s “information poor.” Not surprisingly, they are comprised of the urban poor, the elderly, the Third World, the disabled, and women and children — all groups which suffer most from economic, political, and social disenfranchisement.

These papers, presented at a 1986 congress for librarians organized and sponsored by St. Johns University, seek to identify the special needs of the “information poor” and explore the role that agencies, particularly federal governments, can play in helping to alleviate the growing lack of “information justice.” Librarians and media special-
ists probe the obstacles to information access, the implications for libraries, and look at possible solutions to the problem. The need for legislation and adequate funding to effect remedies emerges clearly. Valuable appendices, a bibliography, and an index are provided.

— Lori Keenan


INFACT is best known for its role in organizing the Nestle boycott to protest that corporation’s infant formula marketing practices in developing countries. The boycott finally forced Nestle to negotiate a settlement with INFACT and its supporters. Continuing its struggle to “hold corporations directly accountable for their practices that endanger the health and survival of people all over the world,” the grassroots action organization turned its attention in 1984 to corporate involvement in nuclear weapons production. INFACT targeted the General Electric company, the third largest corporation in the U.S., as a focus of the nuclear weapons industry’s role in promoting nuclear weapons build-up and then reaping profits from weapons production. A nationwide boycott was called by INFACT in 1986 to exert economic pressure on GE—the same strategy used successfully on Nestle.

The INFACT staff has thoroughly researched and documented GE’s past and present involvement in influencing government decisions related to weapons production. GE’s diverse multi-national structure and profit history are fully described as well. A multitude of graphic statistics and illustrations enhance the well-organized narrative. Facts are well-documented in the endnotes. Those wishing to join in the boycott will find valuable the list of GE products and regional INFACT campaign centers, and the sample letter to the Chief Executive Officer of GE.

MSRRT BACKS GE BOYCOTT

Convinced that multinational nuclear weapons makers, such as General Electric, not only profit enormously from “nuke” production but also contribute directly to the spiraling nuclear arms race, the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the Minnesota Library Association has expressed its support for INFACT’s campaign to stop the production of nuclear weapons and break the influence of transnational weapons corporations in national and global security decisions. MSRRT also specifically endorsed INFACT’s boycott of all GE products as a means to end GE’s nuclear weapons work and urged other libraries, colleagues, and concerned groups to do the same.

— Sanford Berman

FROM THE EDITOR

It was announced in the last issue that the March issue would be devoted to the commemoration of SRRT’s 20th anniversary. However, the volume of news generated by Midwinter meetings has made it necessary to postpone the anniversary issue until June.

The SRRT Newsletter (ISSN 0749-1670) is published quarterly by the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. It is sent to members of SRRT as part of their membership and is available to others on subscription for $10.00 per year. Subscription is open to both members and non-members of ALA. Correspondence and manuscripts may be sent to SRRT/ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611, or directly to the editor at: Holland Library, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-5610 (BITNET: SOKOL@WSUVM1)

Editor: Chris Sokol
Editorial Board: Elizabeth Morrissett, Linda Pierce, John Sheridan

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: APRIL 26.
NEWS FROM OLOS ON MINORITY CONCERNS

* In November the ALA Office for Library Outreach Services (OLOS) Advisory Committee for the ALA Minority Fellowship Program began planning a project that would identify and recruit minority librarians who would each spend one year working with ALA headquarters staff. The program is a response to the changing demographics of American society, in which a rapidly growing minority base is expected to comprise one-third of the nation's population by 2000. The proposal calls for the project to run for three years, thus benefitting a total of 12 minority librarians.

* ALA's Minority Concerns Membership Survey Advisory Group met in December to plan an assessment of minority librarians' level of participation in ALA and the degree to which ALA is involved in minority-related programs and services. Through surveys and analyses of ALA policy documents, the Committee on Minority Concerns will obtain data on the role minority librarians play in determining ALA policy. Results will be used to develop a plan for broadening minority librarian involvement in ALA.

* In July ALA Council approved a public policy statement on minority concerns initiated by ALA's Council Committee on Minority Concerns. The policy brings together all of ALA's positions and public policy statements regarding the association's progressive history of opposing inequity and discrimination. The policy also formally declares ALA's position on important societal issues as they relate to people of color and information access. These include promoting the removal of language and economic barriers to information resources, such as fees for the use of electronic databases; educating, recruiting, and retaining minority librarians; promoting the development of ethnically diverse library collections; and affirming the library's long-standing role in providing equal access to information. For further information on the above activities, contact:

Sibyl E. Moses, ALA/OLOS
50 E. Huron St.
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 944-6780 or 1-800-545-2433