ALA Annual Overview

Saturday June 28

SRRT All Task Force Meeting
8:00-10:00am
Location: Disney’s Paradise Pier, Pacific C Room

SRRT Action Council I Meeting
10:30-12:30pm
Location: Disney’s Paradise Pier, San Diego Room

Community Building Through Libraries
1:30-3:30pm
Location: Disneyland Hotel, Dreams D Room

Introduction to Women’s Issues
1:30-3:30pm
Location: Hilton Anaheim, Palsades Room

MLK Jr. Holiday Multicultural Idea Exchange
1:30-3:30pm
Location: Anaheim Convention Center, Room 206A

Task Force on the Environment—Greening of the Presses

Sunday June 29

Implementing ALA’s Policy 61: Library Services to Poor People
8:00-10:00am
Location: Hilton Anaheim, Malibu Room

Earth Wind and Fire @ Your Library: Changing Climate and Changing Lives
10:30-12:00pm
Location: Anaheim Convention Center, Room 201D

Feminist Task Force Meeting
1:30-3:30pm
Location: Hyatt Regency Orange County, Granada Room

Monday June 30

Feminist Publishing: The Evolution of a Revolution
8:00-12:00pm
Location: Disney’s Paradise Pier, Pacific A Room

EPA Libraries Forum
8:00-9:30am
Location: Anaheim Convention Center, Room 203B

SRRT Action Council II and Membership Meeting
1:30-3:30pm
Location: Hilton Anaheim, El Capitan Room

Alternative Media Reception (formerly the Free Speech Buffet)
7:00-10:00pm
Location: Disney’s Grand Californian, Wisteria and Terrace Room

Check Task Force reports for more information.

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The Feminist Task Force is sponsoring or co-sponsoring some great programs at ALA Annual 2008.

**Feminists Night Out** is on Friday evening, June 27. The place and time are still a question. This information will be widely distributed through various ALA and library related discussion lists and wikis. Please look for the information because this is a great way to connect with old friends and meet new friends.

An important program about women’s groups in ALA is **Introduction to Women’s Issues** (Saturday, June 28, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., Hilton – Palisades). People attending will discuss care issues faced by librarians, particularly women librarians, and how this affects our professional lives. Information will also be made available about the SRRT Feminist Task Force (FTF), the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL), ACRL’s Women’s Studies Section (WSS), the LAMA Women Administrators Discussion Group and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) which include opportunities to participate in their current work. This is sponsored by COSWL and co-sponsored by ACRL WSS and FTF.

Sunday afternoon is **Caught in the Middle: The Affects of the Care Crisis on Libraries and Librarians** (Sunday, June 28, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., ACC 207 D). Many women are caught between their jobs and caring for children, grandchildren and aging parents, with the library field dominated by female employers; this is an issue that affects employers and librarians personally. Come join a discussion of the “sandwich generation” situation and possible solutions libraries can offer. This is a COSWL program being co-sponsored by FTF.

Sunday evening it the main FTF program, **Feminists’ Night at the Movies**, and it promises fun, relaxation, popcorn, and a bit of information (Sunday, June 28, 8:00 – 10:00 p.m., ACC 203 B). Please come and enjoy our Sunday night at the movies. Two movies will be shown. “**I Was a Teenage Feminist**” by Therese Shechter is a funny, moving and very personal journey into the heart of feminism, which begins as a quest to find out whether feminism can still be a source of personal and political power, and ultimately redefines the F-word for a new generation. “**The Noble Struggle of Amina Wadud**” by Elli Safari is a fascinating and powerful portrait of an African-American Muslim woman who first led a mixed-gender prayer congregation. Both movies are being provided by Women Make Movies (www.wmm.com).

To top it all off FTF is co-sponsoring the ACRL Women’s Studies Section program, **Feminist Publishing: The Evolution of a Revolution** (Monday, June 30, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., PIER, Pacific A). From pamphlets and flyers to blogs and webzines, feminist publishing has always existed at the margins of scholarly communication, even as it simultaneously enters and influences the mainstream. In honor of the 25th anniversary of the Women’s Studies Section, we will explore the dynamic nature of feminist publishing with panelists representing book, magazine, blog, and web publishing. The speakers are: Kristin Bender, Reporter/Writer, Women’s eNews and The Oakland Tribune; Kimberly Guinta, Acquisitions Editor, History, Routledge; Jennifer Nace, Assistant Librarian/Reference & Instruction Librarian, Penn State Worthington Scranton; Lisa Pierce, Editorial Database Manager, Greenwood Publishing Group; and Florence Howe, Emerita Publisher/Director, The Feminist Press at CUNY.

The Feminist Task Force also has two business meetings. The first is with the SRRT All-Task Force meeting on Saturday, June 28 from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., PIER, Pacific C. The second meeting is on Sunday, June 29 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., Hyatt, Granada.

By Dierdre Conkling
IRTF REPORT

The International Responsibilities Task Force will meet Saturday June 28 at 8AM in the Pacific Room of the Disney’s Paradise Pier. We will spend time coordinating our programming efforts for next year’s ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. If you are interested in getting involved with the IRTF, this would be a great opportunity to meet with us and learn what we are about. Also, if you are interested in serving as a co-coordinator for the IRTF, please let me know at the meeting as well. If you cannot attend the meeting, but are still interested in becoming a co-coordinator for IRTF, please email me at lpringle@plcmc.org.

At our midwinter meeting in Philadelphia, the IRTF in collaboration with the Task Force on the Environment (TFOE) agreed to co-host a program this year in Anaheim on climate change. The program, entitled “Earth Wind and Fire @ Your Library: Changing Climate and Changing Live, will examine the factors that are contributing to climate change and will present a call to action to outline what we can do to reduce the consequences of global warming in our homes, places of work, and recreation. We will have speakers from various constituencies addressing these issues. The program will take place Sunday, June 29 at 10:30AM, in the Anaheim Convention Center 201D.

Also, during our midwinter meeting, the IRTF endorsed resolutions on the crisis in Kenya and the confiscation of Iraqi documents from the Iraq National Library Archives. Both resolutions went through ALA council and were adopted.

By LaJuan Pringle, IFRT Coordinator

Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize Winner Announced

The Progressive Librarians Guild is pleased to announce the winner of the 2008 Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize. This year’s prize has been awarded to Miriam Rigby for her essay entitled “Just Throw It All Away! (and other thoughts I have had that may bar me from a career in archiving).” Ms. Rigby is currently enrolled in the MLIS program at the University of Washington’s Information School and plans to graduate in spring, 2008.

Essays were submitted by library and information science students from colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. Their papers considered such subjects as the USA Patriot Act, health literacy outreach, and humanism as critical librarianship. Ms. Rigby’s essay will be published in the forthcoming issue of Progressive Librarian, the journal published by the Progressive Librarians Guild. She will also receive a $300 stipend for attendance at the 2008 American Library Association’s annual meeting in Anaheim, CA, and an award certificate at the PLG annual dinner on June 29, 2008.

The Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize is awarded annually for the best essay written by a student of library/information science on an aspect of the social responsibilities of librarians, libraries or librarianship. The prize is named in honor of Miriam Braverman (1920-2002), an activist librarian who was a longstanding member of the Progressive Librarians Guild and a founder of the American Library Association’s Social Responsibilities Round Table. She was a strong proponent of the social responsibilities perspective within librarianship and an inspiration to younger librarians entering the field.

The Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) was founded in 1990 and is committed to supporting activist librarians and monitoring the professional ethics of librarianship from a perspective of social responsibility. For more information, visit the Guild’s website at: http://libr.org/PLG/###
MLK, JR. TASK FORCE REPORT

8TH MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY MULTICULTURAL IDEA EXCHANGE
FEATURING JOHN A. STOKES, AUTHOR
“TORCH BEARER FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
AND
THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT”

The program will include the author’s presentation along with a panel that will discuss their outstanding library programs for the King Holiday observance with emphasis on the activities involving their entire community to “Keep the Dream Alive.” Author John A. Stokes, Students On Strike, National Geographic, 2008 will discuss his book which reveals how he helped lead a strike over his high school’s poor conditions that led to a lawsuit. It was eventually consolidated on appeal with five other cases to become the milestone Brown v. Board of Education and ignite the Civil Rights Movement with Dr. King as its most prominent leader.

Andrew A. Venable, Director, Cleveland Public Library, Cleveland, OH will moderate the panel discussion and the representative panelists are: Vivian Fisher, Manager, African American Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; Johnnieque (Johnnie) B. Love, Personnel Programs, University of Maryland, College Park, MD; Carolyn R. Garnes, Library Consultant and African American Children’s Book Specialist – “Sharing Dr. King’s Dream with Elementary School Students,” Atlanta, GA; and Jim Kuhn, Head of Technical Services, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.

Roy Joynes, Branch Manager, Laurel Library, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System will serve as the moderator of the Audience Exchange in which all attendees are invited to give brief highlights of their highly lauded King Holiday library programs. Additionally, all attendees are encouraged to bring at least 25 copies of each handout to be shared during the Materials Exchange at the close of the event scheduled at 1:30-3:30 pm on Saturday, June 28 at the Anaheim Convention Center in room 206A.

By Virginia B. Moore

IRTF UPDATE

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By LaJuan Pringle
Task Force on the Environment Report (TFOE)

Nature Journaling and Library Program Ideas was the unofficial theme of a discussion group held by the SRRT Task Force on the Environment (TFOE) at last January's Midwinter Meeting. The program was a discussion about the use of nature journaling to enhance literacy, organized and moderated by Fred Stoss, TFOE Co-Chair.

Fred Stoss met the discussion group leaders, Andy Boyles, Mark Baldwin, and Doug Weschler, at the 2006 Writing from Nature: Blazing a Trail from Field Journal to Published Work 5-day writing workshop in Boyds Mill, Pennsylvania. These three were among the core instructors for the workshop and it was here Fred realized the potential for engaging librarians in a dynamic process for bring environmental literacy issues into play as reading literacy projects.

TFOE was thrilled with the response to this initial program addressing the two concerns of reading literacy and environmental literacy and pleased that more than 25 persons attended this late Monday afternoon program. A brief list of resources about nature journaling is as follows:

**Selected Readings on Nature Journaling**

- **Nature Journaling: Learning to Observe and Connect with the World Around You**
  Clare Walker Leslie and Charles Edmund Roth

- **Keeping a Nature Journal: Discover a Whole New Way of Seeing the World Around You**
  Clare Walker Leslie and Charles Edmund Roth

- **Spiritual Journaling: Writing Your Way to Independence**
  Julie Tallard Johnson

- **Into the field: A Guide to Locally Focused Teaching**
  Ann Zwinger, John Tallmadge, Clare Walker Leslie, and Tom Wessels

- **Leaf Dird Days & Firefly Nights: Personal Renewal through Nature Journaling**
  Beverly J Letchworth

- **Plants alive!: Revealing Plant Lives through Guided Nature Journaling**
  Charles Edmund Roth

- **The Alphabet of the Trees: A Guide to Nature Writing**
  Christian McEwen and Mark Statman

- **Nature Journaling @ your library**
  ecolibrarian
TFOE Report Continued

Ecolibrarian: http://www.ecolibrarian.org/
Electronic Green Journal: http://egj.lib.uidaho.edu
Visual Resources for Ornithology: (VIREO) http://vireo.acnatsci.org/
The Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History: www.rtpi.org
Electronic Naturalist: www.enaturalist.org

Highlights for Children
Nature and science articles from Highlights for Children magazine
www.highlightskids.com (Go to: Science in Action --> Story of the Week --> More Science Stories)

Boyds Mills Press
Nature and science books, including Frog Heaven by Doug Wechsler
www.boydsmillspress.com

TFOE Library Tip for Green Library Programs: Combining Literacy Activities with E-Literacy

Our speakers at the 2008 Midwinter Meeting on Monday afternoon, "Nature & the Environment @ your library," discussed the feasibility of nature study activities in urban settings. Children's book author and nature photographer, Doug Weschler, told of many places that have planted various flower gardens along the perimeter of their property, including golden rod, and other wild flowers. Many people use extensive herbicides and lawn mowers to eradicate their lawns of "weeds," while others can let these plants mature to attract butterflies, song birds, and other wildlife. Even if planted in large flower pots along the fringe of a parking lot can be great attractors of wildlife.

Think about making the planting of wild flowers along your urban or suburban library's parking lot or adjacent to the building. The resulting project of planting the wild flowers can then become an exciting adventure in watching what kinds of wildlife will be attracted to your newly created "wild flower habitat."

This could become an interesting activity for children to record in a Nature Journal the entire building of their habitat, recording the grow of their flowery habitats—their telling the story in words: poems or prose; in illustrations, and other notes the children will be encouraged to make.

Find some books and turn your project into a reading activity.

Other ideas will come your way as you discover how to combine literacy activities with an environmental literacy (E-literacy) component.

Fred Stoss, TFOE Co-Chair
Deep Cuts in National Agricultural Library

The National Agricultural Library (NAL), supported by the U.S. department of Agriculture is noted as the greatest agricultural library in the world. Its user base is as broad as is the agricultural community from the single-family farm to the corporate leaders of the Fortune 100 agro-business companies. The NAL budget has remained "flat-lined," but as the final paragraphs of this fourth edition are edited, NAL's budget is slated for drastic cuts in the Federal governments 2008 Fiscal Year, which began Oct. 1, 2008. The proposed cuts may "curtail acquisition of new printed works, endanger preservation of its special collections, halt document delivery and turn a national library into a local one." (Damrosch, 2008) The American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) sent a letter to the Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies, a part of the Committee on Appropriations, requesting necessary appropriations for the National Agricultural Library on March 20, 2008: http://www.woala.org/districtdispatch/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/letter_nalapprops.pdf.

In the Washington Post special feature article, staff writer, Barbara Damrosch provides a concise statement concerning the plight of both the EPA's National Library Network and the National Agricultural Library:

"A library is a lot like a seed bank, in which the germ plasm of the world's plant varieties is preserved for future generations. Without this rich diversity of old seeds to draw on, the breeding of new plants capable of meeting future challenges can't be guaranteed. In addition, the seeds must be grown out from time to time to test their viability and to keep them adaptable to present conditions. The same is true of books. If no one reads them, puts their contents through the paces of real life and uses them to cultivate knowledge, the future will see a poor harvest indeed."

(Damrosch, 2008)


More Data and Information Restrictions in EPA Fred Stoss, University at Buffalo TFOE Co-Chair

A new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) criticizes a White House policy that allows its budget office and other agencies to interfere with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's reviews of toxic chemicals. The summary page for the report, EPA's New Assessment Process Will Increase Challenges EPA Faces in Evaluating and Regulating Chemicals, with links to its full-text content is at: http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/abstract.php?rptno=GAO-08-743T.

Fred Stoss, TFOE Co-Chair
Liaison Report, Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF)

Submitted by Terry Epperson

As the SRRT liaison, I attended the FRTF Board Meeting on January 9, 2008. The morning session was devoted to discussion of legal developments while the afternoon session addressed general FTRF organizational issues. Although no major legal developments were reported since Annual, ongoing issues of particular interest to SRRT members include:

Comcast Must Die!
Anyone amongst us who has had cause to visit http://comcastmustdie.com/ or has worried about internet privacy should be heartened the recent (April 21, 2008) NJ Supreme Court decision in State of New Jersey v. Shirley Reid (A-105-06). The decision addresses the balance between the needs of criminal investigators and protection of Internet users’ personal privacy. In this instance a detective used a defective municipal court subpoena to obtain information from Comcast about a specific ISP customer. The NJ Supreme Court upheld a lower court decision to suppress the evidence because the defective subpoena violated the reasonable expectation of privacy under the state constitution. In the words of the NJ ACLU, this decision “strengthen[s] the right to read anonymously and to use the internet without surveillance. Moreover, it suggests that limits on government power do apply in cyberspace.” FTRF joined with the New Jersey Library Association and several other organizations in an amicus brief.

Women and Guns
The pending case of Sarah Bradburn et al v. the North Central Library District in the Eastern District of the US District Court in Washington highlights the interesting coalitions that can arise around First Amendment issues. The Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) and three library patrons, aided by the ACLU of Washington, have alleged that the library district has refused to disable internet filters that bar patron access to gun-related information, including the SAF magazine Women and Guns. Although not currently involved in the case (the organization typically does not participate until an issue reaches the appellate stage), FTRF recognizes the potential importance of the case as the first “as applied” challenge to CIPA (Children’s Internet Protection Act). FTRF is also monitoring anecdotal accounts of public libraries refusing to disable internet filters at the request of adult patrons. This trial is currently scheduled for June, 2008.

¡Vamos a Cuba!/A Visit to Cuba
Most SRRT members are already aware of the excellent July 24, 2006 Florida District Court decision in ACLU v. Miami-Dade County School Board (439 F.Supp.2d 1242). However, the school board has appealed the decision to the full Eleventh Circuit, where its fate is far from certain. Oral arguments were held on June 6, 2007 and a decision is pending. The 2006 District Court ruling overturned the school board decision to remove the 32-page children’s book ¡Vamos a Cuba! and its English counterpart A Visit to Cuba—as well as all other books in the “Let’s Go!” series—from every school library in the district. The removal was prompted by Cuban exiles who claimed that the book was factually inaccurate. One of their examples is that the book—written for four to six year olds—does not include the information that “high pregnancy rates in adolescence are a bi-product” of teenagers being sent to the countryside to perform unpaid agriculture labor.
FTRF CONTINUED

A more convincing explanation of the removals was provided by one of the Plaintiffs’ experts, Florida International University professor Lisandro Perez:

The real offense of *Vamos a Cuba* for many Cuban exiles is that it treats Cuba as if it were any other country. To present Cuba as a normal place is unacceptable to exiles because it negates the very reason for their exile and struggle. The adamant rejection of normalcy accounts for the strong desire to remove from the library shelves a book that treats Cuba as the same as any other country.

Judge Gold agreed, writing: “I conclude that the School Board's claim of “inaccuracies” is a guise and pretext for ‘political orthodoxy.’” Another element supporting the plaintiffs’ position was an *amicus* brief filed by REFORMA, arguing that the removals were particularly egregious because of the general paucity of Spanish-language books for this age group. A statement issued by Reforma on June 25, 2006 can be found at: http://www.reforma.org/BookBan.pdf.

**Miscellaneous**

The Gordon M. Conable Conference Scholarship has been established in honor of the late FTRF President. As of late April, the OIF/FTRF office reports that Executive Director Judith F. Krug is recovering well from recent major surgery. We all send our best wishes.

SRRTMEM is an unrestricted email list for announcements from American Library Association's Social Responsibilities Round Table. Announcements come from the SRRT Coordinator, Treasure, Newsletter Editor and the Director of OLOS. The purpose is to keep SRRT members and other interested people informed as to SRRT's activities and to provide information about how to get involved.

SRRTMEM is no longer just for SRRT members - now, anyone may subscribe. Feel free to distribute these instructions to any interested people.

To facilitate handling of SRRT business between conferences and to provide SRRT Members with a forum for discussion of activities, services, and issues related to SRRT, SRRTAC-L, SRRT’s discussion list, also exists on the ALA server. In keeping with the ALA open meeting policy, anyone wishing to follow discussions on the list may subscribe and read the list traffic, but only SRRT members are allowed to post.

To subscribe to either of these lists, please go to the ALA Mailing List Service interface, at http://lists.ala.org/.
SRRT Resolutions

SRRT Resolution on the Crisis in Kenya

WHEREAS, hundreds of people have been killed and injured, and thousands have been displaced by the current violence in Kenya generated by the controversy surrounding the December election results;

WHEREAS, the U.S. media plays up the ethnic or “tribal” aspects of the current crisis at the expense of the deep political and class aspects of the conflict;

WHEREAS, the Kenyan government has recently curtailed freedom of the press and broadcasting and the right to assemble and demonstrate peacefully and non-violently;

WHEREAS, the U.S. government has a close military relationship with the Kibaki Government, and has played a central role in building up Kenya’s military and internal security organizations;

WHEREAS, the American Library Association has endorsed Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (policy 58.4) which covers freedom of the press and freedom of expression - rights which the Kenyan government is now denying its citizens;

WHEREAS, the American Library Association opposes any governmental prerogatives that lead to the intimidation of individuals or groups and encourages resistance to such abuse of governmental power (Policy 53.4);

WHEREAS, the American Library Association recognizes the vital importance of free and open elections;

WHEREAS, the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars has issued a call for an end to (1) the widespread violence by the principal Kenyan political actors, (2) restrictions of the right to assemble and demonstrate peacefully and non-violently, and (3) recently declared restrictions on press freedoms;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association joins with the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars in calling for an end to the violence in Kenya, a return to press and broadcasting freedom, and the right to peacefully assemble for the people of Kenya.
SRRT Resolution on the confiscation of Iraqi documents from the Iraq National Library Archives

SRRT Action Council Meeting I
January 12, 2008

WHEREAS, The United States director of National Intelligence, John Negroponte, posted hundreds of Iraqi documents to the internet during the months of March 2006 through November 2006 for wider public distribution and dissemination; and

WHEREAS, Since November 2007, the director of the Iraq National Library and Archives, Dr. Saad Eskander, has publicly requested of the State Department and of the international community that the millions of Iraqi documents seized from the Archives by the United States and British forces after the fall of the Ba'ath regime be returned; and

WHEREAS, As of January 9, 2008, there is no evidence suggesting that seized Iraqi documents have been returned; and

WHEREAS, Historical documents unify a diverse population through the representation of a shared social and cultural memory; and

WHEREAS, Documents seized from the Iraq National Library and Archive represent Iraqi social memory and, as products of political and cultural institutions, had been preserved for longevity as cultural property in the Iraq National Library and Archive; and

WHEREAS, The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, Chapter I, Article 1, defines cultural property as "moveable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people"; and


RESOLVED, That ALA condemns the confiscation of documents from the Iraq National Library and Archive by the United States and British forces and strongly advocates the immediate return of all documents, and, be it further


[Mover: Al Kagan
Seconder: Jonathan Betz-Zall]
Passed ALA Council, January 16th, 2008
COORDINATOR’S REPORT

At Drexel University, where I teach, students are required to take a course called “Professional and Social Aspects of Information Services” which covers things like ethics, privacy, copyright, intellectual freedom, and other issues within librarianship. As one of their assignments, students are required to research and report upon two LIS professional organizations of their choice (including ALA divisions or round tables, but not ALA itself). I’m always excited when someone chooses SRRT as an organization they want to look into further!

However, I will admit that I’ve often been disappointed in the results. “I couldn’t find much about SRRT,” students will report. “They don’t seem very active.” “Not true!” I reply, as I start to list the many activities SRRT is involved in. Students searching deeply into our website often come up with useful information, but those searching the library literature databases do not. I finally put two and two together when our member Kathleen de la Pena McCook at the University of South Florida pointed out to me that the SRRT Newsletter is not indexed in any of the major library literature databases. She urged me to use my position as SRRT Coordinator to see if this could be rectified.

Taking her advice to heart, I visited the H.W. Wilson booth in the exhibits area at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia. Soon thereafter, I was in contact with Wilson’s Vice President for Indexing & Editorial Services. I was thrilled to hear they are very interested in providing access to the SRRT Newsletter in their Library Literature and Information Science Full Text product! Some very complimentary things were said about the newsletter, including the value of the task force reports, the book reviews, and the member profiles. Although this is not a “done deal” yet and will have to go through approval processes in both the SRRT Action Council and ALA administration, I can’t help feeling like we’re moving toward a major sea change in making SRRT and our activities much more visible within our profession! (Thanks, Kathleen!)

Speaking of visibility and activity, since becoming SRRT coordinator, I’m much more aware of some of the numbers related to our organization. We’re a very large round table – currently clocking in at over 2,400 members! However, out of that number, only about 10% are subscribed to our listserv and an even smaller number are actively involved in the work of our organization. I’ve asked SRRT leadership to think about ways that we can involve more SRRT members in our task forces and other activities. But, I’d also like to ask you, the members, if there are particular ways you can think of that might help you participate more fully in SRRT, especially those of you who can’t make it to conferences. Would a SRRT wiki or blog be of use, in addition to the listserv? Would you like greater support for creating local or regional SRRT affiliates? Let me know your thoughts and ideas!

And, for those of you who can make it, I look forward to seeing you at ALA Annual in Anaheim!

Alison Lewis
SRRT Coordinator
Alison.Lewis@ischool.drexel.edu
215-895-5959
SRRT MEMBER PROFILE: LA JUAN PRINGLE

1. Where did you get your MLS (or MLIS) and when? I received my MLIS from University of North Carolina – Greensboro in 2002.

2. What is your current library position? I’m an adult services librarian for the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County (Charlotte NC), University City Regional branch.

3. How long have you been involved with SRRT? I have been involved with SRRT since 2005. I’ve known about SRRT since my years in library school, but it wasn’t until a few years after graduating that I became a member. In what capacity? At my very first meeting I fell for the bait and became the coordinator of the International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF). Since then, I’ve become an At Large Action Council Member for SRRT too.

4. What are your proudest SRRT achievements? I’ve had a few since joining SRRT. But the programs that IRTF have hosted have been very significant for me as far as raising awareness on issues that I think libraries should promote. IRTF has done programs on the lack of international news stories in American media and the crisis in Darfur that have made me extremely proud.

5. How has your experience with SRRT helped you as a librarian? It’s helped me to realize that librarians can advocate for social justice issues without stepping too far outside of the limits of your job to do so. I’ve taken a couple of program ideas originated in SRRT and did them on the local level at my home location. I believe that hosting these programs has endeared my library to the public and they’ve facilitated partnerships that will keep going forward in the future.

6. Where would you like to see SRRT go? I would like to see SRRT go more electronic. I think we could expand our reach if we incorporated more of the present technologies (blogs, wikis, social networking sites, etc…) into our work. I think this would encourage more active participation within SRRT and could expand our membership base as well.

7. Do you have any advice for new SRRT members? Get involved! It’s a great way for anyone to satisfy any activist desires you may have and you meet a ton of good people in the process.
SRRT AC MINUTES

SRRT AC I

January 12, 2008

Philadelphia, PA

Present: Erik Estep, Fred Stoss, Nancy Garmer, Al Kagan, Mark Hudson, Monika Antonelli, Mike Marlin, Mary Biblo, Ginny Moore, Rory Litwin, Alison Lewis, Susan Dillinger, Elaine Harger, Diedre Conkling, LaJuan Pringle, Jim Kuhn, Sara Prahl, Tracy Nectoux.

Minutes from Annual not available

Regional affiliate reports

Oregon SRRT is having a program at their meeting

Washington State SRRT representative not present, but OLA Representative reports that their next conference is a joint conference with Washington, and both SRRTs will have programs.

Alison Lewis read out loud the bylaws provisions for affiliate groups (which state that affiliates that do not meet or report regularly to SRRT will be disaffiliated), and reported that she has so far not been able to reach the leadership of the remaining affiliates (New York, Kansas, Illinois, and Oklahoma). She will continue to try to reach them, and if she can’t reach them by annual, she proposes that those SRRTs will be purged of their affiliate status. If she reaches members/leaders in states affiliates and they indicate that the group will be meeting soon in response to this, that should be good enough.

SRRT Service. Alison has tried to contact Mary Sue Brown (former Secretary) for information about prior meetings, etc., and has been unable to. Alison notes that there is a communication problem within SRRT, in that the group is not coordinating its activities at the SRRT level. We need to “regroup, reconfirm, and recommit” to SRRT membership and not just TF membership. More concrete discussion of solutions planned for AC II.

Treasurer’s report, Sue Dillinger. There has been a loss of $47,259.92 in SRRT funds in a funds transfer that has not been explained to us. There was expected revenue that has not appeared on the budget reports from ALA. Alison and Sue will meet with the BARC Representative Monday. Many other unanswered questions. Sue reiterated her call for budget requests from Task Forces.

Keith Michael Fiels visited the meeting and updated SRRT on a number of topics of interest to us. Socially responsible investing. ALA recently doubled the performance of its SR funds. ALA is beginning to work with more than just one SR fund, which is improving returns, and opening options to control the investments ourselves, which was a stumbling block. Corporate sponsorships. ALA approved 300 companies from lists that TIA Creft and Domini use to gauge social responsibility, focusing on their records on employment practices and diversity as opposed to commodity screens. The board will soon approve a full list of 1000 companies. ALA will terminate agreements with companies that fall off the list. Greener conferences. Keith received Fred Stoss’s list of “10 things you can do to make your conference greener” and supports a greening of ALA conferences. Graduated dues. The Graduated Dues Task Force did its study on what would be needed to go to a completely graduated dues structure. The study got proposals from companies that would accomplish the full study, and found that the study would cost $600,000. A difficulty is that at present ALA does not have demographic information. ALA is starting a voluntary, web-based demographic survey, but it will have reliability issues. A second issue is the coming wave of retirement and the impact this will have on ALA. Third issue is that it’s been difficult to get responses in a study of libraries to predict what is happening in the profession. ALA will do a member demographic survey (using Decision Demographics). This company will use ALA as test of their model for the impact of retirements on associations.

Resolution on Iraq Archives. “Proposed resolution on the confiscation of Iraqi documents from the Iraq National Library and Archives.” Discussion. Motion to accept the resolution as amended and send to Council with modifications as deemed appropriate by the SRRT Councilor. Motion carried unanimously.
SRRT AC Minutes Continued

Discussion on issues of nominating candidates for Action Council.
Meeting adjourned.
Respectfully submitted by Rory Litwin, SRRT Secretary

SRRT AC II

January 14, 2008
Philadelphia, PA


Visit from ALA Presidential Candidate J. Linda Williams

Discussion of communication issues:
Motion by Mark Hudson to set up a new listserv for action council that will be read-only for non-members of AC, for discussion between conferences. Seconded by Susan Dillinger. Motion carried.

Discussion about how to reach out to SRRT members. Newsletters were not mailed out. We will find out what the reason was. John Chrastra of Membership Development at ALA has offered to help with outreach support. Suggestion to see if they can get the SRRTMEM list functioning better. Nancy Garner will join Elaine Harger on the Membership Committee. Discussion of guidelines or codes of conduct for listserv. Laura Koltutsky volunteered to draft guidelines or a code of conduct for the list. Laura volunteered to be listserv manager. General reminder that meeting minutes and resolutions should be published in the newsletter.

Code of Ethics Proposed Revision, report from Diedre Conkling. There is a controversial issue in the proposed revision concerning intellectual property rights. The proposed revision adds a statement advocating balance between the rights between users and rights holders. SRRT endorsed the proposed change in language.

Treasurer’s report. Ending balance of $37,587.66. Discussion of unexplained intra-unit transfer that she mentioned at AC I and is in the process of investigating. Treasurer asked for information on A/V requests (non-requests, actually) for which hotels billed ALA. Motion to authorize Treasurer to submit a budget on SRRT’s behalf. Motion carries.

Visit from ALA Presidential Candidate Camila Alire

Resolution on the Crisis in Kenya. Elaine moved to accept the resolution; seconded by Nancy Garner. Motion carries. Al moved to bring it to Council for endorsement; seconded by Elaine. Motion carried.

SRRT Councilor’s report. Discussion of outcome of resolution that would have opened up all lists on a read-only basis.
IFRT liaison reports that IFRT endorsed the Iraqi archives resolution.
Meeting adjourned
Respectfully submitted by Rory Litwin, SRRT Secretary
ALACOUNCILREPORT

Report on ALA Council to SRRT, Midwinter 2008, Philadelphia

Although we did not get everything we advocated, SRRT’s initiatives and interventions in the work of ALA Council went quite well at Midwinter in Philadelphia. Our Resolution on the Confiscation of Iraqi Documents from the Iraq National Library and Archives was passed almost unanimously with very little debate (ALA Council Document #44). Our Resolution on the Crisis in Kenya was revised and passed by a vote of 67 to 65 (ALA Council Document #42). Unfortunately, the Council was not ready to acknowledge any shortcomings in the US media or the effects of the US Government’s close relationship with the past and current Kenyan Governments, and the two whereas clauses that dealt with these issues were deleted.

The draconian guidelines issued by the ALA Executive Board on campaigning for ALA offices upset many Councilors, especially the parts that prohibit ALA elected officials from endorsing candidates. The related issue of prohibiting ALA units from endorsing candidates was not debated as much as the previous issue, and it is unclear whether or not SRRT will have support for overturning these guidelines, which go against longstanding SRRT practice, and probably the practice of other ALA units. One wonders why candidates for ALA President always address the SRRT Action Council and other bodies if not to get some type of endorsement. Indeed both current candidates for President agreed that they would like endorsements. I moved and the Council agreed that the document be revisited by the ALA Executive Board with a report back to Council at the Annual Conference.

There seems to be a fair amount of support for finishing Council business on Tuesday instead of staying to Wednesday. This would be very difficult because some ALA bodies do not finish their business until Tuesday afternoon. In fact, the whole conference would have to be restructured to eliminate the Wednesday Council meeting. It might just shift everything back so that we would have to start on Thursday instead of Friday. In any case, ALA has contracts with hotels and conference centers for many years in the future, and these would all have to be renegotiated with probable great financial loss. For the first time, we successfully moved to refer this item to the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC), a tactic that is usually used against us.

The ongoing process concerning instituting a graduated dues structure seems to be more of a way to delay consideration rather than find a way to do it. The Presidential Task Force on the Graduated Dues Study distributed its report saying the necessary study would cost $624,351. Of course, nobody wants to spend this kind of money. Rather they will do a demographic study of the membership and rely on a current IMLS study to get further data in about 18 months. Then we will see what happens next. Especially since some SRRT members voted for a dues increase based on the promise of this study, I find these tactics more than annoying.

SRRT Action Council endorsed the change to Article IV of the ALA Code of Ethics, which now reads, “We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.” The previous version completely left out the rights of information users.

I would like to note three (of six) successful resolutions from the Committee on Legislation. The first advocates the inclusion of tribal libraries in the Federal Depository Program, the second opposes postal rate increases for small circulation publications, and the third commends Mr. Bassem Youssef, a high-ranking FBI agent who became a whistleblower. Mr. Youssef was reassigned after he criticized the FBI’s serious abuses of National Security Letters resulting in invasion of privacy. The resolution also calls on Congress to restore civil liberties, correct the misuse of National Security Letters, and protect the rights of whistleblowers against retaliation.

Other important resolutions passed include Resolution in Support of Women as Caregivers in the Workforce, Resolution on Providing Accessible Workstations and other Accommodations at American Library Association Meetings and Annual Conferences, and the creation of an Advocacy Committee to work with the new ALA Advocacy Office. The Resolution on [read only] Member Access to Electronic Lists of the American Library Association was referred to the Electronic Participation Task Force.

As usual, I will be happy to try to answer any questions. (Al Kagan, ALA Councilor akagan@uiuc.edu)
Activist Students at Indiana University

[Although this group isn’t formally affiliated with SRRT, it is important to highlight good work that supports SRRT principles—ed.]

The Indiana University ALA student chapter has had an active year participating in a variety of community-oriented and public awareness programs. The group started the year off spreading awareness among the IU SLIS students about the ALA resolution, initiated by SRRT, on the confiscation of Iraqi documents from the Iraq National Library and Archive. Complimenting the awareness drive, members of the chapter drafted examples letters chapter members could use to send to their representatives in support of the ALA resolution and advocating the transfer of the Iraqi documents to the Iraq National Library and Archive.

A little closer to home, our student chapter advocated support for the SKILLS (Strengthen Kids’ Interest in Learning and Libraries) Act as it entered the Senate. Scheduled the same week as Valentines Day, the chapter organized its main SKILLS Act Advocacy Activity around the childhood traditions associated with Valentines Day. 14 students met to create handmade valentines with messages urging members of the senate to support the SKILLS Act signed by this creative gathering and many other students unable to attend the meeting. The valentines, 40 in all, were then mailed off to members of the senate.

In addition to supporting these advocacy issues at the national level, our student chapter continued its involvement in local community programs. Since 2004, members of ALA-SC have regularly volunteered their time at the local Pages to Prisoners program sponsored by the independently owned Bloomington bookstore Boxcar Books. While only a small core group of ALA members have been able to make volunteering for Pages to Prisoners part of their weekly schedule this year, their ranks have been supplemented by members participating in the program once a month. In April, the Indiana University student chapter of Progressive Librarians Guild hosted a book drive for Pages to Prisoners which netted two large boxes of books for our ALA volunteers to sort through and pack up for local inmates.

With the full experience of the bitter winters we experience here in central Indiana, the knitters of ALA-SC put their needles to work. Meeting once a week for conversation and coffee at the locally owned restaurant Runcible Spoon, they knit hats, scarves, and mittens that were all donated to local shelters. Their efforts were much appreciated this winter as temperatures fell well below freezing.

While the activities of IU’s ALA student chapter may be small gestures at the level of an individual group, we hope that other student chapters will also become increasingly involved in their community. With all of the student chapters actively participating in the world around us, these small gestures can, we hope, add up to meaningful action.

More information about the Indiana University ALA student chapter may be found on their website, http://iuala.org/.

By Lisa Hooper
RAINBOW PROJECT ANNOUNCES FIRST ANNUAL GLBTQ BOOK LIST

Philadelphia, PA, January 2008

Co-sponsored by the American Library Association’s Social Responsibility Round Table and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Round Table, the Rainbow Project proudly announces its first annual bibliography for young readers from birth through age 18. These 45 fictional and informational books that validate same-gender lifestyles and experiences were chosen for their high appeal to readers, quality writing and illustrations, and realistic portrayals of issues.

The titles in the inaugural list were originally copyrighted in the United States from 2005 through 2007. Four titles, all published in 2007, have been starred for excellence: Peter Cameron, Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You (FSG); Julie Anne Peters, grl2grl (Little/Megan Tingley); St. James, James, Freak Show (Dutton); and Lu Vickers, Breathing Underwater (Alyson).

An examination of over 200 books reveals that glbtq books are heavily weighted toward upper grade levels and that many glbtq characters in fiction take a peripheral position. Other concerns are public censorship and the lack of ready accessibility to these books. The members of the Rainbow Project encourage the publication of more books with characters validating same-gender lifestyles and cataloging with subject headings that describe these glbtq characters in children's and young adult fiction.

The Project wishes to thank the authors, illustrators, editors, and publishers who are willing to confront the challenges of censorship and look forward to their providing more quality books that portray glbtq characters in a realistic and prominent manner.

Future bibliographies will cover 18 months of publication, from July of the previous year through December of the current review year. Selection will be done at the ALA Midwinter Conference. The Book list is available at www.myspace.com/rainbow_list.

Project Members: Jane Cothron, Lincoln County Library District/Coastal Resources Sharing Network (OR); Helma Hawkins, Kansas City Public Library (MO); Arla Jones, Lawrence High School (KS); Natalie Kendall, Greeley Elementary School (IL); Sharon Senser McKellar, Oakland Public Library (CA); Victor Schill, Harris County Public Library (TX); Nel Ward (OR); and Christie Gibrich, Grand Prairie Public Library (TX).

ASRRT YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN ALA & SRRT
Member involvement is essential to the good health of both ALA and SRRT. Active members and new members give life to our organization with ideas, energy, time, commitment, enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

Be sure to take the opportunities provided at the upcoming ALA Annual Meeting in Anaheim for membership, involvement – and activism!

ALA Task Force meetings are a great place to start, they meet from 8 to 10 am, Saturday June 27 at Disney’s Paradise Pier, Pacific Room C. The Alternative Media, Feminist, Rainbow Project Provisional, Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday and International Responsibilities Task Forces will all be meeting as well as the Task Force on the Environment. So, there should be something there for everyone. See you in Anaheim!

ASRRT YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN ANAHEIM!
The Granma Bookmobile Project Update

The Granma Bookmobile Project--2008

We would like to update you about the bookmobile which is to accompany the Pastors for Peace this summer on its Travel Challenge to Cuba and is destined for Granma province. Dana Lubow and Cathrine Steel, retired Santa Cruz bookmobile librarian, left Los Angeles on July 9th, 2007 and drove to Phoenix, Arizona. The next day, unfortunately, when we headed towards the highway, the bookmobile brakes went out and it took several days for the Phoenix mechanic to find the necessary parts to fix it. We were fortunate that the breakdown happened in a metropolitan city and not on the open highway or even in Cuba where parts are harder to find. But, needless to say, we are disappointed that the bookmobile’s journey is delayed. We have our next year of work cut out for us! Our new plan is to send it with the 19th annual July 2008 Pastors for Peace Travel Challenge.

During the past year a lot has been accomplished towards sending the bookmobile to Cuba. This past September marks one year since we bought the bookmobile in order to send it to Cuba. It was a hot and sunny Labor Day weekend when Dana drove back from Missouri in the bookmobile she had purchased – only days earlier on e-Bay. In Southern California, the bookmobile was inspected and parts were replaced. It was decorated for the trip and we proudly joined the Travel Challenge to Cuba when the Pastors for Peace Caravan arrived in Los Angeles.

The bookmobile is beautiful! The volunteer student painters from LA Valley College did a fantastic job. The design for the bookmobile was created by Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five (http://freethefive.org/), political prisoners in US federal penitentiaries. Gerardo thinks it is stunning -- based on photos we sent him.

A grant was received from the Christopher Reynolds Foundation that helped purchase a wide variety of over 1000 Spanish language titles, including works by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Elena Poniatowska, children’s authors as well as dictionaries and encyclopedias and many more. Donations were received from several publishers adding to the collection. Individuals also purchased titles off the Wish List at Alibris.com – we especially enjoyed the variety of people who cared enough to do this! Thank you!

What we need from you next:

* Donations for incurred and future bookmobile expenses (includes repairs, gas to Tampico, Mexico). We still need to raise $10,000 this year to send the bookmobile. This is the MOST important need!

* Send us books (in Spanish primarily—the bookmobile will serve a public library clientele). We have room for 2000-4000 more volumes and especially need adult and children’s non-fiction in Spanish.

* Purchase book(s) on our Alibris.com wish list (http://www.alibris.org); enter “danalubow@hotmail.com” in search box under “Wish List.”

With best wishes and thank you for working with us to send this Bookmobile to Cuba!
Dana Lubow  
Bibliographic Instruction Librarian  
LA Valley College  
5800 Fulton Ave.  
Valley Glen, CA 91401  

Rhonda L. Neugebauer  
Bibliographer, Latin American Studies  
University of California-Riverside  
Riverside, CA 92508

Dana and Rhonda strike a pose in front of the bookmobile
Book Reviews


David Edward Gil’s novel, *The Expert on Everything*, is a bit of a problematic message thriller that deals in stock characters and stereotypes in order to focus the novel’s attention on the true main character, a piece of technology named Wallace. A company, Vector Systems, has created Wallace, a devise that can track any and all digital information in real time and relay this information to any owner of the Wallace device. This devise is wanted by various powerful groups for social engineering and political might but it falls into the hands of a nice young man, Charlie, who has no desire for political power, he just wants a steady job with decent pay.

The novel takes place in the future, but it is a future that doesn’t seem to be more than about ten years from now. There has been a second 9/11-type attack in the U.S. and the government is very interested in any technology that can help them maintain peace. Wallace, with its ability to track all information, can theoretically also track people, thereby allowing the government to easily keep an eye on almost all activities performed by any one of interest to them. The use of stock characters (the anal post-military employee, the mystical Indian, the Kennedy like politicians) and a future that feels familiar helps to create a heightened reality which can strain believability at times, but does manage to keep the focus on the implications of what might happen if a Wallace-type device did exist.

Gil manages to write a pretty good message thriller without falling into long didactic passages. Most of the characters’ conversations seem as if they would be actually said by the characters rather than the author imposing his view, and the use of stereotypes really does work well in this instance because he is able to move the plot along with little need for character development while nicely handling the slow reveal of what exactly Wallace is and the ways in which it will impact society. What is problematic about the novel is some of the conclusions that seem to be drawn concerning just where the line needs to be drawn between personal privacy and governmental need for information in order to maintain peace. This should provide a pleasant bit of debate for readers.

*The Expert on Everything* is a fun novel that I could see getting passed around a bit between librarians, especially those interested in information privacy, and I am sure that it will provide some lively discussions. One final observation, as I was reading the novel I couldn’t help but think, “What about the Amish?” The novel and many futurists seem to only be able to imagine a more technologically integrated society in the future, but I just can’t help thinking about those groups of individuals who aren’t interested in modern technology and therefore opt out. I find it comforting that no matter how much people or governments try to control everything, there are those who quietly and peacefully live as they would like. Perhaps if information Armageddon happens, I will just find a nice Amish community and learn how to farm.

Jesse Sharpe, Readers Service Librarian, Start-Kilgour Memorial Library, Simpson University
Book Reviews


*The Designer’s Atlas of Sustainability* is a worthy contribution to the literature on sustainability that is unique both in its style and content. Glossy (on recycled, acid-free paper, of course) and highly illustrated, the volume follows the general style of the traditional atlas and includes three “navigational features”: sidebars that reiterate the most important takeaways from the general text. These include Definitions (key terms), Landscape Features (main concepts) and Traveler’s Notes (design thoughts). Colorful charts and photographs (she includes a stunning picture of the Central Seattle Public Library building in her discussion of LEED ratings) further help to clarify the main concepts. Each chapter concludes with a “summary map of landscape features.”

Thorpe, currently with the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, focuses on three main landscapes in the map of sustainability: Ecology, Economy, and Culture, then interconnects them in a final section called Frontiers. In Ecology she “examines ways that design can help harmonize human and natural systems...learning to recognize seemingly invisible connections between nature and design and applying nature’s elegance, economy and sensitivity with materials and energy to human designs.” (18) She is at her most powerful when challenging designers to “see the ‘material trails’ in their work...to think about and artifact’s whole life, from raw material, through to waste material. Typically, designers have focused most on the construction and use of an artifact. Understanding that each artifact has a life cycle is a useful start” (38)

The second part, on Economic Sustainability covers a range of topics from the use of monetary wealth as a measure of success, to discussions of basic economic concepts like free markets, fair trade, and corporate responsibility, to the varied economic pressures designers face in working in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. On the whole the chapter is a lucid and engaging overview of the subject.

In the last main chapter on Culture, Thorpe presents “the key issue of understanding Cultural Sustainability in terms of human well-being and how design can support it.” (178) It encompasses needs theory, sensuality, and the need for speed in our society. In Frontiers Thorpe connects the dots between the three sustainabilities, suggests changes that can be made, and reminds designers that they’ll need to examine their personal belief systems before they can make professional decisions in regards to sustainability.

Each chapter provides a list for further reading and there are extensive endnotes. Though the book is meant for designers, it provides a nice overview on sustainability issues and its readability would make it a good addition to a public library or high school library. The companion web site at http://www.designers-atlas.net/ features a teaching guide and design activism blog.

Jane Ingold, Assistant Librarian, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
Book Reviews


The Farmacist Desk Reference Encyclopedia of Whole Food Medicine (The FDR) is a 2 volume, vastly illustrated (over 3,000) boxed set that contains information on any topic concerning whole foods and herbal medicine as it relates to the world today.

This is not a scholarly work, therefore don’t expect a bibliography or any citations. The author is up-front in stating that all the material in the book is his opinion—either from personal experience or from years of research in this field.

Having stated that disclaimer, this 2 volume set is still a cornucopia of information. Almost any question you can think of relating to natural or whole foods, homeopathic, or herbal medicine is covered in its 1,600+ pages.

The author covers a whole range of topics such as “Feeding Your Emotions,” “Healing Dreams,” “Vegan Lifestyle,” “Whole Foods vs. Supplements,” and much more. For the section, “Feeding Your Emotions”, Tolman covers the human body and what each body part signifies. For example, healthy feet are related to understanding, self-support, stability and motivation. Problems with your feet could indicate that this person is not grounded as well as other feelings or emotions.

Another component of this section is the color of food and its meaning. Green foods are part of a group of foods that are beneficial in the area of self-control. Foods in this category include apples, grapes, broccoli and endive.

On the whole the volumes contain a wide variety of topics and some of them are a bit more esoteric. Tolman’s writing style is down-to-earth and easy to understand and follow. It would be a valuable addition to your collection.

Diane Lekus, JIC Librarian, Queens Library

Your name could be here! Please contact Jane Ingold, Book Review Editor, jli4@psulias.psu.edu if you are interested in making a contribution. And you get to keep the book. What a deal!
Book Reviews


*Just a Dog* is an attempt to understand animal cruelty by studying those groups directly involved with cruelty, especially in relation to their larger social and cultural context. The author contends that we live in a society that is confused about the moral status of animals. An example of a contradictory attitude would be responsible pet owners who view animal experimentation as an acceptable treatment of animals.

The symbolic interactionist approach used in this study “sees the meanings of objects and events … as products of people’s interpretations of them”. People develop their own definitions of cruelty and use those definitions to take on identities which can lead to conflict with other groups who define cruelty differently. The five groups examined in this book are humane law enforcement agents, adolescent abusers, animal hoarders, shelter workers, and humane society marketers.

Society tends to consider humane law enforcement agents as doing low status or dirty work. Humane agents in turn may use various strategies to justify the value of their work and to actively create their own identity. They may take advantage of societies’ confusion of their role with respect to regular police in order to get negligent or abusive animal owners to comply with their requests. The public tends to confuse humane agents with dog catchers or sees them as political activists causing agents to become discouraged. Humane agents’ identities are affected by how American society relates to animals, which in turn affects how agents respond to cases of cruelty.

College students who admitted to abusing animals when they were adolescents were interviewed by the author. A missing component in previous attempts to understand acts of cruelty committed by adolescents is their social context and how they define the social meaning of their cruelty. Understanding the perspective of adolescent abusers requires more than a psychological approach, it is necessary to understand what role animal cruelty played in their lives. Some adolescents claim to have been “trying on” an adult identity when they abused animals. While some students were ashamed of their earlier abuse, others felt that their behavior was no more contradictory than societies’ behavior as a whole toward animals.

Animal hoarders also use cruelty to define themselves and to portray themselves as making great sacrifices in order to help animals which would have had horrible lives on the street or may have been taken to shelters and possibly euthanized. In spite of hoarders’ claims of being compassionate people, their animals usually show signs of extreme neglect and live in squalid conditions. Reports by the press present a confused picture to the public regarding hoarders in part because society is confused about hoarders. The public may become upset at shelter workers when the focus of press reports is on the outcome of animal hoarding which may be the euthanasia of a large number of animals at a local shelter.
Book Reviews

Workers at no-kill shelters and those at open admission shelters tend to see the other group’s behavior to animals as cruel. No-kill workers believe that every animal can be adopted if given enough time and effort. Open admission workers argue that no-kill shelters keep animals alive which should not be due to behavioral or health problems. No-kill workers create oppositional identities by depicting open admission workers as cruel because they perform euthanasia on their animals. Open admission workers may have to block their emotions when dealing with euthanasia.

Humane society marketers look for certain types of animal cruelty cases, so-called beautiful cases, to publicize. Beautiful cases should meet certain criteria such as a happy ending, abuse that is not extremely grotesque, and the animal should have recovered from the abuse and been adopted into a good home. Usually the judicial outcome of these cases is left out of the marketing campaign since the abuser may not have been found, the case did not make it to court, or no punishment was meted out. Ideally the marketers would like to have a happy ending but most abuse cases do not end happily since the animal may not have recovered from its abuse or may have been euthanized. Beautiful cases not only raise money and educate the public, they also allow humane workers to make sense out of tragedy and allow supporters to validate their identities by feeling that they are in a battle together.

The author says that he may be criticized for letting abusers give their perspectives of acts of cruelty but his role as a sociologist is to observe, not to judge. One of his aims in this study was to educate the public so that they could be better informed for policy debates about animal cruelty. *Just a Dog* is highly recommended for anyone interested in animal welfare and protection or the sociology of animal-human interaction.

Bob Sotak, Collection Manager for Life Sciences, North Carolina State University Libraries
Book Reviews


Jasbir K. Puar has written an important book for activists and scholars seeking openings in an increasingly repressive culture. Puar articulates a world comprised of assemblages, where identities cohere only briefly along lines of flight, happening both in speed and in time. It’s difficult conceptual work, but worth the difficult reading—Puar’s ideas are new, compelling, and important for contemporary radical thought and action.

Chapter one introduces and expands on the figure of the homonational, the homosexual body incorporated in and mobilized by the patriotic nation-state. The homonational then makes the case for the exceptional U.S. state, locating homophobia always elsewhere, in this case in the terrorist state of Iraq. The homonational in turn creates his opposite, the monster-terrorist-fag, a perverse and violent figure exemplified by the rhetorical presentation of the body of Osama bin Laden. Puar’s critique is not particularly new here—many queer and radical thinkers have critiqued normalization and assimilation. Her critical intervention is to implicate these same critics in the particular formation of the homonational in the context of the War on Terror. Puar’s archive is broad, drawing on texts from an episode of South Park to the GLBT tourist industry, demonstrating a nimble, deeply engaged intellect. This chapter makes a significant argument toward bringing sexuality into the broader discussion of terrorism.

Turning from the general theoretical construction of the homonational, Puar turns in chapter two to a reading of the torture scandal at Abu Ghraib. Again, she focuses her critique on the queer response to the event (while simultaneously critiquing the ‘event-ness’ of Abu Ghraib as something out of the ordinary, rather than constitutive of the war itself). She focuses on the mainstream interpretation of the photos as portraying a particular kind of evil in the Arab/Muslim context, an interpretation shared by GLBT voices from the Metropolitan Community Church and local gay presses. By articulating the abuses at Abu Ghraib as exceptionally awful due to the status of homosexuality in the Arab context, GLBT activist voices erase the real lives of queer Arabs while reinstalling a nationalized and racialized homosexuality in the U.S. Puar goes on to ask why the outcry against abuses at Abu Ghraib were so enormous while the deaths of Iraqis at the hands of U.S. forces persist without the same kind of focused outrage. This is an important question, and one that should underlie all our antiwar activism.

In chapter three, Puar analyzes the *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas* decision. This landmark 2003 Supreme Court case overturned state bans on sodomy on the basis of a privacy right that attends the homosexual subject. This decision was, in Puar’s analysis, rightly hailed by GLBT advocacy. Puar, reading the decision against the figure of the homonational, argues that the decision produced a narrowly acceptable GLBT subject, both white and heteronormative. In its attention to the domestic sphere, the case re-installs the domestic realm as the realm both of privacy and of sexuality. She looks at what this move does to sexualities that lay outside of this heteronormative ideal, as well as how it impacts domestic spheres that are not protected by the state. Puar contrasts the treatment of these affective relationships with that given the families of men disappeared under the auspices of counterterrorism.

Chapter four reads the turban as another site of construction of sexual and terrorist identities. Puar describes the problem of the turban for Sikhs in the U.S. context, where it functions as a bodily sign of the terrorist. Sikhs, seeking to avoid the violence done both by individuals and by the state in response, disavow connections to Arab and Muslim populations and seek to align themselves with the state, articulating patriotic identities. Again, Puar’s analysis points up the challenges posed by racialized and sexualized subjects constructed against the U.S. national state.

This is a challenging book. Puar uses highly specialized vocabulary and draws on complex theoretical work by Agamben, Butler, Spivak, Foucault, Ahmed, Delueze, and Negri among others. Her central arguments, about the limits of intersectional analyses and the risks of affective politics, and her insistent critique of the homonational are important calls to contemporary queer and antiracist political movements.

Emily Drabinski, Reference Librarian, Sarah Lawrence College
When I look at other academic professions, it seems that most practitioners have a good sense of their own history. For instance, even undergraduate physics majors seem able to speak knowledgeably about Bohr, Curie, Einstein, Fermi and dozens of others who have made notable contributions to the field... but how many of us know as much about our intellectual predecessors as physicists do about theirs? How would you do on a quiz about Cutter, Dewey, Lubetzky, Otlet, Panizzi, Ranganathan, and Verona?

In March of 2008, Brett Bonfield, Director of the Collingswood (NJ) Public Library, posed this question on ACRLog, a recently developed blog from the Association of College and Research Libraries. Although the content of the full post focuses on leadership in academic libraries in particular, the more general question remains relevant regardless of our area of specialization: How well do we, as librarians, know our own history?

Bonfield suggests there are very few, recent, works published in the last twenty-five years that are general studies of American librarianship. It is timely and apropos, then, that an anthology of works aiming to serve as a brief overview of American public library history should now be available.

Library Daylight is a collection of thirty-six selections arranged chronologically from 1874-1922 and is a valuable resource for learning about the origins, challenges, and vicissitudes of librarianship in America. Dr. Suzanne Stauffer, Assistant Professor for the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University, introduces the collection with a short essay. In it, she traces the development of librarianship from its roots in voluntary social clubs through its parallel emergence with the rise of the professional middle class. Her essay includes numerous examples and concrete data and serves as an informative and lucid depiction of the climate in which modern public librarianship originates.

In 1860, for example, the census listed 750,000 people in the ‘professional’ category. By 1910, that number had reached 4,420,000. Members of this new category founded associations and established schools for their training and development (6). Librarians were among them and founded both a professional association (the American Library Association founded in 1876) and a school of library science (Columbia College in 1887) (7).

The individual writings in Library Daylight address a variety of topics. They describe, for example, library staff concerns regarding the reading habits of young adults (they read too much fiction), the life of a book from its delivery to its availability for public use, discussions of amendments to copyright law, the need for rapid communication vis-à-vis the print telegraph, a call for the library to be a center of social as well as educational activity, and the distribution of cooperative printed catalog cards from the Library of Congress. The sources of these writings include familiar periodical titles such as The Nation, The Atlantic Monthly, The San Francisco Examiner and Library Journal, but also include national and state conference addresses, proceedings, and presentations. The length of each selection varies from a single paragraph to nearly twenty pages. The authors, likewise, are equally variable but include some familiar figures like Dewey and Dana. It is interesting to note, from a historical perspective that is, that although women comprised nearly 90% of all librarians by 1920, only 3 of the 36 selections are authored by women.

Although this publication would benefit from the inclusion of a bibliography, Library Daylight is still a refreshing reminder of our professional heritage and is valuable reading for historians of librarianship, new students, and experienced practitioners.

Megan Z Perez, Librarian in Residence, University of Arkansas

If you want to start a ruckus at the next professional conference you attend, ask your peers what they think about the future of traditional cataloging. Depending on whether you’re speaking to administrators, reference librarians, or actual catalogers, you’re likely to get a variety of responses, ranging from preemptory and dismissive to colorful and unprintable. David Bade firmly believes that the art of cataloging, and the professionals who practice it, are still vital to library operations, and he defends his arguments with passionate, yet solid rhetoric in the Library Juice edition of his previously published papers on the topic. Read collectively, they provide a cogent argument for the retention of the human element in scholarly cataloging, and raise challenging questions for those of us who are neither scholars nor catalogers.

Bade, a Senior Librarian for the University of Chicago’s Regenstein Library, claims that scholarly materials deserve better cataloging than they currently get, and spells out his criteria for responsible librarianship in this regard, which can be summarized as follows:

“…it is possible for libraries to actually serve their users and freely choose to adopt or refrain from adopting the structures, standards, technologies and commitments at our disposal because *it is the human intelligence which goes into the creation of a database that makes it intelligible and useful*” (xiv, emphasis mine).

Precipitated by the Library of Congress’s decision to stop creating authority records for series, Bade’s first paper discusses quality and standards, and argues that a library’s first responsibility is to define those concepts in terms of its mission and its users’ needs. For academic institutions, he claims, a higher level of critical thinking and human involvement is required to accurately describe, catalog, and organize materials that have been produced to suit the scholarly needs of the most discriminating users. Or, to put it another way, because information is created by humans, it must be classified and described by humans: automated solutions, while speedy, cannot replicate the meaning-making functions of the human brain. Because information always springs from a social context, its organization must always be subject to human input. The letter to Autocat which follows summarizes and restates these arguments, and is an excellent study in how a good scholar alters his/her rhetoric to suit the needs of his/her audience. Bade’s final document, an appendix/handout, gives specific examples of what he considers sub-par catalog records, with a detailed examination of their faults.

Although the specifics of Bade’s cause pertain to scholarly standards appropriate for one subset of libraries, users, and materials, his theoretical discussions of information have serious implications for anyone who creates information, or who manages the information that others create. If critical thinking about organization and classification is removed from descriptive cataloging at the highest academic level, why have standards at all? Despite the positive qualities of technological advances such as Google searches and tagging, they are not, Bade claims, suitable solutions for every problem; in other words, we should fear a library world in which all of our tools are hammers, and every information packet is treated like a nail.

Readers willing to engage with Bade’s theories and ponder their practical implications will find this volume well worth their time, whether or not they agree with all of the author’s arguments. Recommended for academic libraries, particularly those that support library science curricula.

Leigh Anne Vrabel, Senior Librarian, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Book Reviews


It is never pleasurable to negatively critique someone, especially one who has lived through conflict and wants to help others who are experiencing the same. Aurea McGarry’s *I Won’t Survive . . . I’ll Thrive!* is a book meant to help those suffering domestic abuse or struggling with serious illness, particularly cancer. It is clear that McGarry is sincere in her desire to do this; unfortunately, she falls far short. She has, instead, written a book that is 90% self-congratulatory memoir and 10% self-help, all with an off-putting dose of cloying Christian proselytizing.

McGarry means well, and it is clear that she thinks she is doing Good Work. But the outcome of her effort is merely a short biography (with chapters sometimes only two pages long) that is replete with platitudes and McGarry’s own obvious pride in herself as she overcomes the trials that Fate throws her way, be it a jealous sister, bigoted co-workers who “persecute” her for her Christian beliefs (39), illness, domestic abuse, or loss of loved ones. There is not a moment, sentence, or hint of self-reflection, but rather a glut of self-satisfaction, boasting, self-aggrandizing, and finger-pointing toward everyone else.

The book’s purported purpose of helping others get through difficult times is never actualized due to its lack of practical advice and McGarry’s own inability to focus on her stated goal. For example, in a stunning lack of empathy for the abuse or cancer victims who may be reading her book, McGarry devotes an entire chapter to the purchase of an exotic kangaroo for a domestic pet. It is not until the final 20-odd pages that McGarry’s book attempts to do what it advertises as its main focus. Moreover, what little advice the book contains is directed only to Christians. Indeed, McGarry’s book is written with the assumption that the reader is a Christian. Consequently, anyone who is of another faith or a non-believer will feel shunned.

It is also important to state that, though McGarry does not try to talk her readers out of seeking care from doctors, she does promote the so-called Power of Prayer as a cure. McGarry believes in faith-healing, and recounts that while suffering from a slipped disk as a young woman, someone prayed over her, and she felt “instantly better; the pain was gone” (40). Indeed, in her list of 10 ways to escape abuse, 13 mention the Christian God or prayer, which is problematic because it presents an exclusive environment to those who need help and are reading her book, but are not believers in Jesus Christ (or believers at all).

Moreover, McGarry does not acknowledge that she was able to “escape” her abusive husband because she was in the privileged and extremely fortunate position of having a mother and step-father who were able and willing to travel from New York to Florida to help her and her daughter, pay for a “five-star hotel” (51), give them the financial support they needed, and even give McGarry the start-up money she needed to begin working for Mary Kay. It is wonderful that she had this kind of support, but what is missing in her story is a recognition that many women and men in abusive situations lack the financial cushion that McGarry had. Therefore, there is little-to-no practical advice for those living below middle-class. She does encourage people to seek counseling and shelters, and says that the Internet is helpful, but wouldn’t everyone already know this?

It is clear that Aurea McGarry sincerely desires to help those who are going through the real and heartbreaking struggles that she has survived. While she is to be applauded for attempting to do so, her book never achieves this honorable goal. Its advice is condescending, banal, dismissive to those who do not practice Christianity, and useless for those living in a different class from its author. Perhaps not as important, but worth mentioning, is the fact that the book contains numerous grammatical errors and is written on a seventh-grade level, which will be off-putting to those readers used to a more elevated style.

With respect for Aurea McGarry’s earnest effort, *I Won’t Survive . . . I’ll Thrive!* is recommended only for Christian/evangelical libraries and public libraries that serve such patrons.

Tracy Marie Nectoux, Cataloger, Illinois Newspaper Project, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Book Reviews continued


The new publishing enterprise by former SRRT Coordinator, Rory Litwin, “Library Juice Press,” strives to publish materials dealing with “theoretical and practical issues in librarianship from a critical perspective, for an audience of professional librarians and students of library science.” This small (92 pages) monograph sheds light on the professional life of Filomena Magavero, an academic librarian with a 50+ year career at the SUNY Maritime college library. It intertwines the author’s 10-year working relationship with “Mrs. Magavero” – as she was always known at work – and an oral history done at the Story Corps booth in Grand Central Station in 2005 (http://www.storycorps.net/about). It focuses on the role of women librarians in academic libraries before the 1970’s, when women’s issues erupted into the library world (as everywhere else.)

It advances Litwin’s interest in bringing forward library history hitherto unexamined.

Fitzpatrick interviewed “Fil” Magavero first as part of an oral history class she was taking at CUNY (included in its entirety at the end of the book), later expanding it with research into the particular milieu in which Filomena Magavero chose to at the Stephen B. Luce Library at the SUNY Maritime College and into the literature of women in librarianship, focusing on women in academic libraries. To the contrary of what might be expected by the title, *Mrs. Magavero* is not the story of a ground-breaking or activist librarian; indeed Fil pretty much accepted all the sexist stereotypes, limitations, lack of respect and denial of advancement that battered women in academia until the feminist period. Magavero’s library career began in 1949 and even after she retired, she continued to volunteer until 2003. Her oral history reveals some of the obstacles and indignities she endured in order to work in an environment she loved – to the extent that she had to walk a block outside the building to access a women’s bathroom. She was denied advancement, while men with less education got better positions. She never demanded more and wonders, retrospectively, if she should have. But she enjoyed her work and her relationship with students. Mrs. Magavero was no hero, but in her career we experience the reality of many women librarians during the years of her working life.

*Mrs. Magavero* was originally written as a master’s dissertation, though later revised for publication as a book. This probably accounts for its dryness, and makes it primarily of interest to academic collections in library or women’s studies. What begins to be lively is the interview with Mrs. Magavero, but that is tantalizingly short and relatively shallow. Perhaps “Fil” wasn’t the most forthcoming interviewee or did not feel comfortable revealing too much about herself. With such a long career to work with, surely the interview could have plumbed greater depths.

Still, the library history and bibliography are very valuable to anyone interested in the history of women in librarianship.

We Social Responsibilities Round Table members should all be cognizant and proud of the role played by SRRT in raising the feminist agenda to the eye level of ALA which showed as little interest in the status of women as it did racial segregation in US libraries – until SRRT burst on the scene and occupied center stage. For example, “The annual salary surveys published in LJ did not include data by sex until 1972. *This came about as a direct result of a request for the Social Responsibilities Round Table Task Force on Women.* (p. 35, emphasis mine). In 1974 ALA actually endorsed the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution (which would fail to get the requisite number of states behind its passage), and by 1976 the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship would be established. SRRT’s Feminist Task Force has a long and illustrious history.

On several occasions, Filomena Magavero looks back on her career and wonders if she did the profession a “disservice” because she did not demand more and accepted the borders of gender discrimination. Fitzpatrick absolves her over and over, perhaps a little *too* often. Like most people, Magavero was not a “legend in her own time but the story of her career does shed light on women’s history in our profession and that, after all is the point. That Mrs. Magavero found deep and lasting satisfaction in her work reflects the contemporary finding that we librarians generally report tremendous job satisfaction even without the salary, perks and recognition we may deserve. This speaks eloquently about our profession, as well as to the direction that we still need to go.

Ann Sparanese

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Film Review

¡Salud! Directed by Connie Field. Produced by Connie Field and Gail Reed
Run time: 93 minutes+ www.saludthefilm.net $35.00 for elementary, high school and public libraries

These days, the necessity for national universal health insurance is resonating among the U.S. people, as well as the Democratic candidates for president. ¡Salud! (Health!), a film about the Cuban approach to public health and the role of Cuban doctors abroad, will be a stimulating addition to your DVD collection -- right there along with Sicko. In the interest of full disclosure, I must reveal that the film’s American producer, Gail Reed, is an old friend of mine. But I doubt that she has friends on ALA’s Notable Videos for Adults Committee, which named ¡Salud! an ALA 2008 Notable Video for Adults. Only 15 films made the list.

¡Salud! posits a global health care system, community-based, and envisioned as a human right rather than a market commodity. It examines by what means this can be achieved, by even the world’s poorest nations. Ironically, Cuba’s ability to export medical services, as well as train indigenous health practitioners plays an important role in the island’s sustainability in a world of increasing privatization of public services and resources. In the case of Venezuela, reciprocity is expressed in more favorable rates for oil, which has been a boon to the Cuban economy.

It might surprise some Americans to know that health care is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Article 25, Sec. 1. http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm). This is not an unrepresented idea even in the capitalist countries of Europe, as anyone who viewed Sicko knows. But the Cuban doctors serving around the world in underdeveloped countries have raised the discussion to another level: upwards of 40,000 Cuban health professionals staff public health facilities in some of the world’s poorest countries. The first segment of the film focuses on The Gambia, South Africa, Honduras and Venezuela, exploring, respectively, four different issues of global health: government public health campaigns and how they might be implemented; the “brain drain” of health professionals from the poorer to the richer nations; responses to disasters; and the role of health care in a nation undergoing profound social change.

So, Cuban doctors serve in many countries. But Cuban doctors cannot stay away from home forever, and the only realistic goal is for nations to have sufficient medical personnel and facilities to serve the health needs of the population on a community-based and preventive care basis. How can this be done? This is the subject of another segment of the film. Cuban health professionals, backed by the government, are helping to set up medical schools in poor countries so that new doctors can be educated for practice in their own countries. These schools, now established in South Africa, The Gambia, and Venezuela, are based on the exemplary Latin American Medical School (ELAM) in Havana -- now the largest the medical school in the world. At ELAM students from underdeveloped countries study for free— including more than 100 low-income young people from the United States who attend on full scholarship. When they become doctors after their six-year program, hopefully all will – including those selected from the U.S. – fulfill their commitment to serve in underserved communities of their homelands.

For a documentary, this is a long film but don’t let the length scare you. Like Sicko, it never drags. Academy award nominee Connie Field, who directed The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter (1980) and the civil rights landmark film, Freedom on My Mind (1994), has done an equally arresting job with ¡Salud! As your library users think about the role of our government in assuring healthcare for all, this film will widen the debate to what it would take to make this a reality worldwide on our increasingly health-threatened planet.

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SRRTAC-L - The SRRT discussion group SRRTAC-L is open to all SRRT members and is a relatively low-traffic (less than five messages a day unless there is a hot topic brewing) way of keeping up with SRRT’s issues and discussions in-between conferences. Help decide SRRT’s future direction and join in some lively debates. If you would like to join the SRRT discussion group, send the following message in the body of the email, to listproc@ala.org: subscribe SRRTAC-L/[your first name] [your last name] To unsubscribe: unsubscribe SRRTAC-L

SRRTMEM - SRRTMEM is an unrestricted email list for announcements from the American Library Association’s SocialResponsibilities Round Table. Announcements come from the SRRT Coordinator, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor and the Director of OLOS. The purpose is to keep SRRT members and other interested people informed as to SRRT’s activities and to provide information about how to get involved. To subscribe to SRRTMEM, send the following email to:

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