Hello everyone and welcome to the January 2020 issue of The SRRT Newsletter! In this issue, you’ll find information related to meetings and programs at ALA Midwinter in Philadelphia, as well as reports, reviews, and an interview conducted by Vikki Terrile, a member of the Editorial Board of The SRRT Newsletter.

As co-editors of The SRRT Newsletter, we are committed to providing our readers with relevant and timely information, as well as support in these times of stressful political discord. I find comfort in knowing I am not alone, and I am grateful for my fellow activists as we continue to do the work that highlights and furthers the critical social justice work of libraries. So, thank you!

Julie Winkelstein

Welcome to 2020! And to the new look and feel of The SRRT Newsletter. Like Julie, I am heartened by the support and encouragement provided each other through this publication. May you, dear readers, find the same in these pages.

With this, we introduce to you the members of The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board. Below we provide a excerpts from biographies Julie and I asked each of them to write. Please meet a few wonderful people who make our newsletter happen!

Melissa Cardenas-Dow

Vikki Terrile, Queensborough Community College, City University of New York (CUNY), Assistant Professor/Public Services and Assessment Librarian.

I see SRRT and the Newsletter as cornerstones for the work libraries and library

Inside this issue

Editorial Board Members ..........2
SRRT@ALAMW2020.............2
Coordinator Report ..............3
Voices From the Past ............3
FTF News.........................4
IRTF News.......................4
HHPTF News.....................5
MLKTF News...................6
News Around Libraryland.......6
Interview: Celia Rabinowitz......9
Media Reviews..................11

Special points of interest

- Programs of interest at ALA Midwinter Meeting 2020 in Philadelphia, PA
- Update on “Resolution in Defense of the Free Speech of Supporters of the Movement for Palestinian Rights”
Introducing Members of *The SRRT Newsletter* Editorial Board

Continued from p. 1

workers are doing and have done to serve all of the members of our communities. SRRT keeps us honest and on-course, regardless of what’s happening in the profession and in the world. SRRT is a beacon and a reminder of our purpose.

---

**Laura Koltutsky**, University of Calgary, Calgary Canada, Social Sciences Liaison Librarian, MLIS 2001 University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

I was fortunate that I was introduced to SRRT while I was still a student. I actually wrote a paper on the SRRT listserv and the Cuban Libraries discussion in 2000. I believed then and I believe now that SRRT serves an important purpose within the American Library Association. It gives voice to concerns of its members whether they are considered library issues or not. Other groups have grown alongside SRRT to provide spaces and platforms for all voices within the larger association. *The SRRT Newsletter* keeps a record of this work and provides insights into current thoughts and concerns of SRRT membership.

---

**Miguel Juárez**, MLS, MA, PhD.

I see my role on the SRRT Newsletter as one where I can contribute ideas for stories, special issues, write articles, and work with others to create an important publication. I was attracted to serve on the SRRT Editorial Board because I feel it’s a great opportunity to work with a team of individuals who are committed to addressing social justice issues in the profession. I also feel the newsletter serves as an important historical time capsule.

---

“SRRT keeps us honest and on-course, regardless of what’s happening in the profession and in the world. SRRT is a beacon and a reminder of our purpose.”

---


I see SRRT and the newsletter serving to organize and amplify voices in the field around a variety of social, economic, and environmental justice issues - and representing those ideas in larger decision-making bodies within the profession, including ALA. The newsletter also provides an important space for sharing ideas about day-to-day practice, as well as addressing the larger profession and its priorities.

---

**Kyle Evans**, Reference Associate, The Library Station - Springfield, MO, M.A. Literature from Eastern Michigan University

I am a complete newb to SRRT and the Editorial Board. I became a member of SRRT when I applied to be on the Editorial Board. I was actively looking for fresh meaningful purposes in which to make an impact. Frankly, my research was over the moment I came across the SRRT website. SRRT is a perfect amalgamation of my professional and political interests reacting with my academic background in the humanities studying literature and philosophy. I knew I wanted to contribute to a group working to establish progressive and democratic values throughout the profession.
SRRT Coordinator Report

1. We look forward to seeing you at the 2020 American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia, PA. The ALA Midwinter online schedule is now available. We hope to see many of you at the SRRT events and meetings. All of our meetings are open. In the SRRT Action Council meetings, elected action council members will be considering a number of things, including ALA Council resolutions. Anyone in attendance can provide input, ask questions, make comments, and participate in these meetings. I will be sharing a draft SRRT Action Council agenda in mid-January 2020 before the meeting. Please see the SRRT@ALAMW20 for event and meeting highlights.

2. Welcome to 2020 ALA Emerging Leader Kayla Kuni, who is being sponsored by SRRT this year. The sponsorship consists of a $1000 award towards attendance at the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia and the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. As SRRT’s 2020 Emerging Leader, Kayla will attend ALA Midwinter to participate in a day-long leadership session with additional online training that will continue for six months. At the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, Kayla and her Emerging Leaders project team will present a poster session showcasing the results of their project. Kayla Kuni is a librarian at Pasco-Hernando State College where she teaches Modularized Developmental Reading and Writing and helps future business owners discover resources to grow their small businesses. She was named the 2017 Outstanding Public Servant by the West Pasco Chamber of Commerce for her work within the community. Kayla received her MLIS from the University of South Florida and is currently pursuing an MBA.

Kayla is SRRT’s second sponsored Emerging Leader. The Round Table sponsored Nicola Andrews in 2019.

3. As of October 2019, SRRT has increased membership by 1.78% compared to last year. Included below are other Round Tables which saw an increase in October:

   Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT), 1891, +1.78%
   Library Instruction Round Table (LIRT), 1783, +0.06%
   Sustainability Round Table (SUSTRT), 1170, +19.27%

   ALA has 57,038, -2.67%

4. If you would like to become more involved in SRRT, or specifically in any of its task forces, please let us know so we can direct you to a task force representative. The SRRT Task Forces are Feminist Task Force (FTF); Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF); International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF); and Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Task Force (MLKTF). Please click on the volunteer form used to serve on ALA. After logging in to access the volunteer form, select SRRT. This online form is used not only for volunteering for SRRT Task Forces, but for volunteering to serve on SRRT Action Council as well.

Hope you had a wonderful holiday season.

§§§

Charles E. Kratz, Jr.
SRRT Action Council Coordinator

Voices From the Past

Each issue, The SRRT Newsletter will feature relevant article excerpts from past issues, selected by the Editors.

This issue presents the following excerpt from The SRRT Newsletter, Issue #4, February 15, 1970. Please visit the SRRT Newsletter Archive to peruse past issues.

From Issue #4, p. 1:

In Search of Soul is the title of a two-day institute (Friday and Saturday, June 26-27) being planned by an SRRT Task Force to precede the Detroit Conference.

Fay Blake (University of the State of New York, State Education Dept., Albany, N.Y. 12224), coordinator of the TF, has tentatively outlined the program as follows:

Friday, June 26—An array of speakers who will give the participants an idea of the diversity in the Black community—diversity in ideas, in program, in philosophy, in appearance, in objectives, in everything. The speakers are not to be library-oriented (that comes on Saturday), but are to tell us how they want racist America to change.

....

Continues on p. 4
Voices From the Past

Continued from p. 3

Registrants will probably be limited to a hundred. The TF wants primarily to aim this institute at white librarians from urban and suburban public, academic, special libraries at library association and library staffs who are not engaged in “service to the disadvantaged.”

§§§

Call for Additional Editorial Board Members

Are you looking for a way to be more involved in the Social Responsibilities Round Table? Are you passionate about books, media, and their role in social responsibility? Do you have excellent writing and editing skills? Are you good at meeting deadlines and encouraging others to meet them as well? If so, membership to The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board might be just the volunteer position you’re looking for!

We are in need of more members who can serve on the Editorial Board after ALA Annual 2020. Editorial Board placements are determined by the SRRT Action Council.

The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board members must be a members of SRRT. The duties of members of The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board are to liaise with groups in the profession to solicit content and to collaborate with The SRRT Newsletter Co-Editors to layout, publish, and distribute issues of The SRRT Newsletter.

If you are interested, please send a copy of your resume/CV and a brief letter of inquiry outlining your qualifications and interest in the position to The SRRT Newsletter Co-Editors.

§§§

Feminist Task Force (FTF) News

Midwinter 2020

Anyone attending Midwinter 2020 who is interested in engaging with FTF should attend the SRRT All Task Forces Meeting on Friday, January 24, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Philadelphia Marriot. We’ll hear reports about ongoing projects, including the Amelia Bloomer List, and discuss ideas for new activities.

The Bloomer Committee will be meeting to make selections from January 25-27. These meetings are open if anyone is interested in learning more about the selection process. The 2019-2020 Committee members are Kelsey Keyes (co-chair), Boise State University, ID; Melissa Nemitz (co-chair), West Windsor Public Library, NJ; Natasha Forrester Campbell, Multnomah County Library, OR; Silvia Lin Hanick, LaGuardia Community College, NY; Leila Roy, Lyman Community Library, ME; Ally Watkins, Mississippi Library Commission, MS; Sara Saxton, Wasilla Public Library, AK; Tiffeni Fontno, Boston College, MA; Ariana Hussain; Alternate: Jean-Louise Zancanella, College of Western Idaho, ID.

Annual 2020

FTF’s program proposal, “Herstory through Activism: Women, Libraries, and Activism,” has been accepted for presentation at the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. April Sheppard, Assistant Library Director at Arkansas State University is program coordinator. Panelists are Emily Drabinski, Critical Pedagogy Librarian, CUNY; Dalena Hunter, Librarian/Archivist for Los Angeles Communities and Cultures, UCLA; and Teresa Neely, Professor of Librarianship and Assessment Librarian, University of New Mexico.

We offer the program in honor of the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage and the 50th anniversary of the Feminist Task Force. This panel presentation will look at the intersections and relationships between women, libraries, and activism. From early literary clubs to today’s radical feminists, libraries have always been a haven for both women and activists. Hear “herstory” from a diverse group of librarians and learn more about how this relationship developed and grew into today’s current activism.

Ending discussion will help shape the future direction of the Feminist Task Force and will help highlight areas where new activism is needed.

§§§

Submitted by Sherre Harrington, Feminist Task Force Coordinator

International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF) News

We have been organizing a discussion group for the upcoming 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting on the important topic “Libraries in Gaza: Between Hope and Despair.” The group will meet on Saturday, January 25, 2020 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC), Room 113-C. Our speaker will be Mosab Abu-Toha, the founder and director of the famed Edward Said Public Library in Gaza. He is also currently a visiting poet at Harvard’s Department of Comparative Literature; a visiting librarian at Harvard’s Houghton Library; a Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School; and a columnist for Arrowsmith Press.

Regarding the Edward Said Public Library, the linguist and philosopher Noam Chomsky has written, “The project merits strong support from everyone concerned with justice and basic human rights.” It has also been endorsed and promoted by the poet and essayist Katha Pollitt, as well as the filmmaker Michael Moore. Mosab will talk about the situation of libraries in Gaza—including limitations due to the occupation, the destruction of libraries by bombing, and efforts to rebuild, as well as his work on the Edward Said Public Library.

We have also been working on the SRRT-initiated “Resolution in Defense of the Free Speech of
The project merits strong support from everyone concerned with justice and basic human rights.

Supporters of the Movement for Palestinian Rights.” SRRT members may recall that the resolution was approved at the ALA membership meeting during the 2019 ALA Annual Conference. Subsequently, ALA Council voted to send it to a task force composed of representatives from the Committee on Legislation (COL), Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC), and International Relations Committee (IRC) for further consideration and possible revision. Ultimately, Tara Brady, our SRRT representative on ALA Council, and Tom Twiss, co-coordinator of SRRT IRTF, were added to the task force, along with one other member of ALA Council.

The task force has completed its work and has issued a report that has been distributed to all represented groups, including SRRT Action Council. The revised resolution and task force report will be discussed by each committee. The committees are expected to report back to ALA Council at Midwinter. When the new draft is released, people will see that the revised version is not substantially different from the original. Most of the amendments were designed to clarify the intent and significance of the resolution. Although neither Tara nor Tom believed the original was unclear, we agreed to, and suggested, various amendments to address potential misunderstandings. For the most part, our discussions on the task force were mutually respectful. However, significant differences in perspective remained at the end of the process.

§§§

Submitted by Al Kagan and Tom Twiss, International Responsibilities Task Force Co-Coordinators

“The project merits strong support from everyone concerned with justice and basic human rights.”

Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF) News

The SRRT Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF) discusses and works on issues related to libraries, homelessness, and poverty. There are so many ways libraries can play a role in addressing homelessness and poverty across the U.S. And libraries are doing just that. From social workers to flexible library cards to providing services at local shelters to helping with the HUD Point in Time count—and many more ways—libraries are connecting to their unhoused community members.

One upcoming way libraries can be involved is through the 2020 Census. According to the United States Census 2020, “In 2020, the Census Bureau will devote three days to counting people who are experiencing homelessness across the country, with checks in place to ensure that people aren’t counted more than once. These days follow months of outreach and coordination with local census offices, partners, shelter directors, service providers, and others:

- **March 30, 2020:** Counting people who are in shelters.
- **March 31, 2020:** Counting people at soup kitchens [food centers] and mobile food vans.
- **April 1, 2020:** Counting people in non-sheltered, outdoor locations, such as tent encampments [tent communities] and on the streets.” (Information in brackets added.)

The “outreach and coordination” mentioned in this quotation may or may not involve local libraries, depending on the community and the state resources. An excellent example of tips for being actively involved in this aspect of the Census count are included in an October 1, 2019 article by Kate M. Kelly from Monarch Housing Associates. Kelly interviewed Paul Chen, from Advocates for Children of New Jersey, about making sure everyone is counted during the Census. The article

Continues on p. 6
Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF) News

Continued from p. 5

describes different ways unstably housed people can be counted, including how libraries play a role in the effort. As Kelly writes, “A person that has no home and wants to fill out their census form at a library or shelter will need to go through the non-ID process.” She goes on to quote Chen’s suggestions that anyone planning to help should make a plan: “Chen advises that anyone who serves individuals experiencing homelessness should think about a plan for Census 2020. What will your agency or organization do in March or April to encourage census participation among those experiencing homelessness? Once you determine those activities, you can work backwards to plan a timeline that leads up to your participation. What activities have to happen before March and April Census participation?”

If your library has a plan or is working on one, please let us know: Julie Winkelstein and Lisa Gieskes.

And if you’re attending Midwinter, please join us at the SRRT All Task Force meeting from 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Philadelphia Marriott, Liberty Room A. We’d love to see you there!

§§§

Submitted by Julie Winkelstein, Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force Coordinator

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Task Force (MLKTF) News

The Martin Luther King Jr. Sunrise Celebration will take place on Monday, January 27, 6:30 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, Terrace II Ballroom. The theme of this year’s program is “The Civil Rights Movement: ‘...tired of being segregated and humiliated; tired of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression.’” This year’s keynote will be delivered by Dr. Imani Perry, Hughes-Rogers Professor of African American Studies and faculty associate in the Program in Law and Public Affairs and Gender and Sexuality Studies at Princeton University. She is the author of several titles, including Looking for Lorraine: The Radiant and Radical Life of Lorraine Hansberry. Her latest, Breathe: A Letter to My Sons, was recently published by Beacon Press. ALA Immediate Past-President, Loida Garcia-Febo will deliver the Call-To-Action. We are looking forward to a great celebration this year.

The 2020 Celebration is sponsored by ALA’s Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table, the Black Caucus of the ALA, Inc., and OCLC. Dr. Perry’s participation is generously provided by Beacon Press.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Task Force will meet on Friday, January 24, 7:30 p.m. at Philadelphia Marriott, Liberty A. We will discuss ideas for programs at the upcoming ALA Annual Conferences.

§§§

Submitted by LaJuan S. Pringle, MLK Jr Holiday Task Force Chair
celebrate and honor this important day, on the
day itself or all year long. Please help
SustainRT crowsource 50 for 50 and submit
an action!

If you are heading to ALA Midwinter 2020 in
Philadelphia, join SustainRT for its Midwinter
member meeting on January 25, 2020 at 3:00
p.m. to find out what we’ve been working on.
The meeting is open to all current and
prospective members from any library type or
LIS school.

On Sunday, January 26, at 2:30 p.m., SustainRT
is hosting Theresa Schwerin, Vice President of
Education Programs for the Institute for Global
Environmental Strategies (IGES), for a discus-
sion on incorporating science and sustainabil-
ity programming into library activities.

Speaking of ALA Midwinter 2020, save half-a-
ton of carbon emissions from going into the
atmosphere by riding your bicycle from New
York to Philadelphia! This will be a 2-day ride,
will be totally fun, and will definitely be some-
thing to remember forever. Even if you are not
planning on attending ALA Midwinter you are
welcome to join us for the ride from NYC or
Princeton to Philly.

⇒ DAY 1: Leaving NYC — Thursday, January
23. 65 miles the first day to Princeton.
9:00 a.m. — will leave from Battery Park
City Library (175 North End Ave., New
York, NY 10282) and bike to Princeton
Public Library (65 miles). Staying over-
night—either at a hotel or a friendly
librarian’s house.

⇒ DAY 2: Leaving from Princeton, NJ—
Friday, January 24. 45 miles to Philadel-
phia. 9:30 a.m. — will leave from Albert
Einstein’s House and arrive in Philly at
3:30 p.m. to sign in for ALA Midwinter.

The objective of this ride is to collaboratively
raise awareness of carbon emissions as well as
SustainRT’s mission. Together on our bike ride
we will further develop SustainRT’s
community, forge bonds between members,
and make life-long friendships. We will docu-
ment the ride with video and social media
posts. We will also stop at sites along the
route and visit local libraries.

There will also be opportunities to train
together before the trip! There will also be
opportunities to learn about bike touring,
basic bike repair, and to get your bike in
touring shape before the ride.

Please sign up via our survey to participate.
We hope you can join us!

⇒∞∞∞

Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American
Library Materials (SALALM) News

SALALM LXV (2020) CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Deadline for Submission of Proposals:
February 3, 2020
Conference: Friday June 5-Monday June 8,
2020
Location: University of California, Davis

Buen provecho: Celebrating and Exploring the
Richness of Latin American, Caribbean, and
LatinX Food and Drink

SALALM LXV (2020) will explore all aspects of
the production, distribution, consumption, and
description of foods and beverages cultivated
and created in Latin America or in other
countries/regions with the involvement of
LatinX workers and distributors. Food and
beverages shape identities and hold important
cultural meaning for individuals and
communities, including friends and families,
regional and national communities,
(imm)igrants, nations, and global trade net-
works. The production, distribution, sale, and
consumption of food and beverages reveal
varied socioeconomic systems and are usually

“Food and beverages shape identities and hold important cultural meaning for
individuals and communities...”

Note: We will have free safety vests for the
first 7 riders to register. Bicycle ride is only
one-way. We are actively pursuing
sponsorship, but participants are still
responsible for any costs that arise, such as
ALA conference regis-tration, food, hotel,
bicycle repairs, and any possible health
expenses.

If you want to get involved in the work of
SustainRT, please sign up in the year ahead!

Submitted by Uta Hussong-Christian, SustainRT Coordinator

⇒∞∞∞

The structural and sociocultural causes
do not be

• The roles of food and beverages in
the processing/creation of consumable
food and beverage products;

• The ways in which socioeconomic and
political systems determine and are
shaped by agricultural production and
the processing/creation of consumable
food and beverage products;

• The role of food and beverages in
shaping particular cultures and collective

Continued on p. 8
News Around Libraryland

Continued from p. 7

identities;

- Workers’ experiences growing and harvesting agricultural yields; producing commercial food and beverage products; and marketing, selling, and distributing such products;

- Capturing, recording, and archiving agricultural labor and the production, distribution, consumption and sale of food and beverage;

- The history and changes over time of the production of food and beverages and the restaurant and beer, wine, and liquor industries;

Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)

Though we recognize that issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion will not change overnight, we have addressed several library systems and associations regarding EDI. We also realize that change requires a clear path forward, and that plans for transformation must be developed and implemented. With the latter in mind and the BCALA’s 50th anniversary upon us, some of our goals to move EDI work from optics and “feel-good” endeavors to substantive change are to:

- Strengthen professional development to include work that (1) connects racial theory to practice, (2) empowers Black librarians to take on leadership roles, and (3) centers Black history and identity in the LIS curriculum;

- Invite dynamic speakers to share their work on anti-racism, white fragility, counter storytelling, low morale among librarians of color, and more;

- Provide tools (grievance letter templates, guidelines for engagement, lists of experts, etc.) for rapid response to racial injustice in libraries;

- Continue to build allyship with library advocate groups, e.g., other ethnic caucuses, the Ethnic & Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT), and the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT).

Keep in mind that we have already engaged with organizations across the country. A small sample of this work includes:

- An open dialogue with the New York Library Association regarding The Nassau County Library System’s hiring, promotion, and retention of librarians of color;

- Addressed the Maryland Library Association regarding concerns of fairness and inclusion;

- Connected with the Philadelphia Free Library System and the Philadelphia City Council;

- Encouraged the development of the Pennsylvania Black Library Caucus to support Black librarians;

- Our members serve on many vital EDI Steering Committees—for example, that of the Delaware County Libraries; BCALA has representation on the Pennsylvania Library Association and helped to establish the first EDI Task Force;

- Realizing that there are many cross-sections of Black identity, our members are also leaders within groups dedicated to LGBTQ, immigration, physical ability, and other causes. We hope to amplify this work as well.

Finally, and most excitedly, we will establish an EDI Ad Hoc Committee effective immediately. I challenge everyone to get involved and take a part in fostering social justice, the common good, and diversity in libraries, library governing groups, and library associations. Our work is plentiful and pressing. Let us connect this conversation to action.

“ Our work is plentiful and pressing. Let us connect this conversation to action. ”

- Library and archival collections focused on food and beverages;

- The practice(s) of librarianship and archiving related to food and beverages.

Interested presenters and panel organizers should contact Sarah Buck Kachaluba, President of SALALM, 2019-2020, directly. Please include your name, institution, contact information, proposed title and an abstract of approximately 300 words. The deadline to submit presentation proposals is Monday, February 3, 2020. Additional SALALM LXV Conference details are also available on the SALALM website.

We look forward to your participation at SALALM LXV!

Submitted by Betsaida Reyes, SALALM Member-at-Large and Website Content Editor

"Our work is plentiful and pressing. Let us connect this conversation to action."
Interview: Celia Rabinowitz, Dean of Mason Library, Keene State College, New Hampshire

The following article provides an edited version of questions posed by Vikki Terrile, SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board Member.

Vikki Terrile (VT): Tell us a bit about your campus, students, and your library.

Celia Rabinowitz (CR): Keene State College is New Hampshire’s public liberal arts college located in southwestern New Hampshire in a city of about 23,000 people. We have about 3500 and just about 200 full-time faculty. Like many New England colleges, we are facing enrollment challenges. Our state ranks last in state support for higher education and first in accumulated student debt at graduation. Our library is open to the public and we see local community members every day, including many individuals struggling with housing insecurity and addiction.

This year, we have 59% first-generation students and slightly over 50% of our students are New Hampshire residents. Our student demographics mirror the state’s and is approximately 92% Caucasian. Many of our students work, about half live off campus and around 70% receive some form of financial aid.

VT: What prompted Keene State College to start thinking about supporting students’ basic needs?

CR: We were already focused on Open Education initiatives through our work with the University System of New Hampshire. In spring 2018, we brought Sara Goldrick-Rab to campus (author of *Paying the Price: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream*), which resulted in a student-led initiative to start a food pantry. Several faculty were already discussing this, but the student energy caught the attention of the administration and within two months we had a space, a name (the Hungry Owl — after the college mascot) and the beginnings of mechanisms to collect food.

Some of us were also reading Cathy Davidson’s *The New Education*, Kathleen Fitzpatrick’s *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University*, John Warner’s *Why They Can’t Write: Killing the Five-Paragraph Essay and Other Necessities*, and Ibram X. Kendi’s *How to Be an Antiracist* among other books and blogs.

VT: Describe how social justice has informed the work being done at KSC to support students.

CR: Our commitment to open education and open pedagogy practices are taking hold in a number of ways on campus. The library’s digital learning team is working on a no/low-cost initiative with some academic departments. We support a *Domain of One’s Own* initiative that provides students with space to create and curate course content.

We are always working to increase faculty and staff awareness of student needs and also to include students in conversations so we don’t presume to know what they need. We understand that social justice is about our responsibility in providing the right conditions for everyone, including meeting basic needs and acknowledging students’ agency in the classroom.

VT: How have the initiatives around open pedagogy changed students’ experiences at KSC?

CR: Students are creating study materials in open spaces with open licenses, are actively engaged in creating classroom policies around attendance, use of electronic devices, etc., and even learning outcomes. Other faculty have transitioned to low– or no-cost materials. We encourage faculty to find the open education space that fits their own interests or objectives so that we don’t create a “all in or not in” kind of approach.
Interview: Celia Rabinowitz, Dean of Mason Library, Keene State College, New Hampshire

Continued from p. 9

VT: What has the role of the library been in helping support students’ basic needs at KSC?

CR: Mason Library has 100 bikes in our circulation system, along with helmets and locks. Students can borrow bikes for two weeks or the full semester to get off-campus jobs, ride around campus, or relax out on the local trails.

VT: Have there been any challenges or barriers that you (or the campus community) have faced?

We were the first satellite site for the Hungry Owl when the pantry needed a way to expand beyond student volunteer hours. Originally, we offered pre-packaged bags at the Circulation Desk for pick-up. Now the library and several other buildings have open shelves in public areas where anyone can pick up food. We also have small travel toothpaste, soap, and feminine hygiene products and these often go more quickly than the food does.

A state grant allowed us to create a lactation space in the library, which also helps us support students with infants.

CR: Likely because it was student initiated, senior administration was supportive, helpful in finding a space, and not reluctant for news about the Hungry Owl to the public. There was some pushback from faculty who thought acknowledging this problem might somehow put the college in a negative light and that was some learning moment.

I think sustaining the effort with student leadership is a small challenge. We have tried to avoid asking faculty and staff for donations, but delivery of inventory is sometimes slow. A few of us would like to create an emergency fund that would be easier for students to access than the emergency money pool now in place.

VT: What advice would you give other academic librarians interested in supporting students’ basic needs on their campuses?

CR: I am a big proponent of including students. They will learn about their peers and about the pervasive challenges of housing and food insecurity on campuses.

“We understand that social justice is about our responsibility in providing the right conditions for everyone...”
Media Reviews:  *Social Justice and Activism in Libraries: Essays on Diversity and Change, Change the Subject, and Whole Person Librarianship: A Social Work Approach to Patron Services*


I was excited to have the chance to review this book based purely on the title. What I discovered was not what I had expected and initially I was disappointed with the book’s purpose and chapters. I was hoping for a more theoretical work that would address social justice and libraries in a larger sociocultural context. However, upon reflection, I realized that I was judging the book unfairly and that there are several excellent chapters that represent both practical approaches towards implementing social justice principles into library and archive settings and some more theoretical essays that explore issues in more depth. I enjoyed reading the narratives of librarians and archivists working to promote social justice within their own practice, as well as that of their institutions.

This collection of twenty-five essays address a cross section of library programs, partnerships, and outreach to underrepresented students and patrons. The essays are divided into seven sections: *Bringing Underrepresentation to the Forefront, Establishing Partnerships, Building Communities, Administering with Diversity, Supporting Activism, Generating Programming, and Expanding Teaching.* The majority of essays dealt with efforts in academic libraries but public library initiatives are also represented. Each essay deals with a specific focus whether it be the work of a librarian or the development of partnerships between academic libraries and relevant campus groups. *Part IV—Administering with Diversity* does take a broader approach in dealing with topics ranging from employees with disabilities, professionals.

The essays are generally quite short (7-10 pages) and may describe the site-specific details of the relevant programming, actions, or events. There is overall a thoughtful understanding of the context of these undertakings in the essays and they recognize that libraries, archivists, and librarians can and should represent more than their traditional roles in their communities. Collaborating and creating partnerships with diverse external groups have created stronger services, programs, and outreach in each case.

Of personal interest was an essay by Celeste Bocchicchio-Chaudhri, *Bringing Critical Race Theory to the Library Bill of Rights: From the Past to the Future* that was grouped into the Supporting Activism section. In a concise piece of writing, she describes the tension between intellectual freedom and neutrality as defined within the Library Bill of Rights and social justice communities within the American Library Association (ALA). She notes, “...we have to recognize that the Office for Intellectual Freedom is only one of the ALA’s fifteen offices. The ALA also has an Office for Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach Services that includes in its mission a commitment to ‘decenter power and privilege by facilitating conversations around access and identity as they impact the profession and those we serve.’” Like many before her, she recognizes that this tension is not productive in creating change within the organization. Bocchicchio-Chaudhri then suggests, “Instead I propose that we change the terms of the debate.” She applies a Critical Race Theory lens to the issue and proposes looking back to Brown vs. Board of Education for this purpose.

The majority of essays succeed in showing how library and archival practice should take a role in promoting social justice.

“Whether it be internal processes or external partnership building, librarians, archivists, and library workers can use social justice principles to extend themselves to their communities.”

Whether it be internal processes or external partnership building, librarians, archivists, and library workers can use social justice principles to extend themselves to their communities. This book will be of interest to librarians, archivists, LIS faculty, and, hopefully, a few library administrators.

Reviewed by Laura Koltatsky, The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board member; Social Sciences Liaison Librarian, University of Calgary

---

*Change the Subject.* Documentary film. Dartmouth College. 2019. 54 minutes. Produced by Jill Baron, Óscar Rubén Cornejo Cásares, Melissa Padilla. Contact information for film and screenings.

This documentary chronicles the work of student activists, faculty, and librarians to change the Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) “illegal aliens,” a project that began with a group of Dartmouth
"It also shines a rare spotlight on the ongoing need for change in the language of access and description of library materials..."
“sister professions” (p. 1). A librarian quote at the beginning of Chapter One sets the stage for an approach to this work that is an excellent way of framing these relationships and the role of libraries:

Public libraries are connectors in the community. What if what a patron needs is a connection to the community organization or anything else the community has to provide? We can be the expert in that, too. And that’s a hundred percent our role just as much as finding physical or digital materials for someone.

(Chapter One, p. 11)

The book then moves on to describe various aspects of these partnerships: what the social workers do, social work students, full-time social workers, advocating, "sustainable practice," and future directions. The chapters are designed so they can be read independently or in sequence, depending on what is needed. Are you thinking about starting a program like this and looking for information and support? Wondering what a social worker in the library program looks like? Worried library staff will have to act as social workers? Do you want to better understand social workers and the training they receive? Are you interested in creating partnerships but not sure how to do that and who would be good partners? These questions and more are covered.

To provide additional support and information, Whole Person Librarianship also includes online resources, which further expand on the text of the book. In addition, the book’s appendices offer guidance for taking concrete actions, such as looking at ways libraries can help or doing a community needs assessment. They also offer a contract template and an example of a staff survey.

Addressing social needs through libraries is something we, as library staff, have always done. What these needs look like and how we address them depends on the community, the library’s staff, the funding, the stakeholders, and potential partners.

Whole Person Librarianship provides guidance through a social worker lens, and Zettervall and Nienow bring to the table their own experiences, as well as a wealth of information from both social workers and library staff, library administrators, and library school educators. Books like this are rare. They are works that help us understand the power of a community library, steering us away from stereotypes and assumptions that are frequently made about the work we do and guiding us into positive and informed action.

Reviewed by Julie A. Winkelstein, The SRRT Newsletter Co-Editor

Interview:
Celia Rabinowitz, Dean of Mason Library, Keene State College, New Hampshire

Think about where the needs are for your campus. Perhaps opening earlier would address challenges students have in accessing printers or finding a place to rest before class if they worked overnight. Consider secure areas for student to leave materials during the day. Any of those might make a bigger difference on your campus than a food pantry. Small acts can make a big difference!

Vikki Terrile, The SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board Member