

Social Responsibilities Round Table
Virtual meeting, March 30, 2021

Attending: Tom Twiss, Jane Cothron, Sherre Harrington, April Sheppard, Ginny Moore, Steven Phalen, Al Kagan, Mark Winston, LaJuan Pringle, Monica Chapman (ALA liaison), Julie Ann Winkelstein, Laurie Aycock, Renee A. Kiner, Tara Brady, Mark Winston, Miranda Wisor, Wendy Stephens, Lynda Reynolds, Stavroula Harissis, Lisa Eichholtz, Olivia Scully

I. Resolution to condemn white supremacy and fascism resolution passed at ALA Council 2021 Midwinter

Tom Twiss: most obvious problem was that the resolution was not clear about neutrality rhetoric and what that means, how it is implemented.

Reviewed issues around meeting room fiasco.

The resolution offers SRRT the opportunity to reassert our position on combatting fascism by communicating with the 2 working groups that are mandated in the resolution. SRRT could sponsor program on how best to fight white supremacy and fascism for SRRT Afternoon of Social Justice (big name speaker--Noam Chomsky, Henry Lewis Gates jr., Cornell West, etc.)

Tara Brady: SRRT needs to be careful not to seem to be undermining the resolution, would prefer SRRT not refocus the perspective on intellectual freedom on the intellectual freedom of hate groups because there are very real, active threats against marginalized people. Program on intellectual freedom needs not to be tone deaf. Point/counterpoint program would be tone deaf and taken badly.

Julie Ann Winkelstein: tired of ALA using language and not following up with action. Would like to see program that identifies actual action by groups that can be adopted by libraries as programs and focus points. People who are doing the work around addressing the outcomes should do the talking about seeing the connections and doing the work.

April Sheppard: 2 thoughts: we could co-sponsor with Black Caucus or we could have an afternoon of action

Stavroula Harissis: conversation on how we as a group believe should be a private conversation, not a public group.

Sherre Harrington: really like the theme of action for the afternoon of social justice, but wondered if this would conflict with existing decisions

April: Current programs: youth homelessness, MLK holiday exchange, Trita Parsi on Iran

AL Kagan: appoint liaisons to the working groups mentioned in the resolution, have internal discussions, have public programs after the working groups have done their work

Monica Chapman: can get a list of the members of the EC working groups? Working Group on Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice.

II. Steven Phalen/Freedom to Read Foundation:

document

working as liaison to get FRF to sign onto amicus briefs to respond to anti-BDS state laws

Tom Twiss: includes proof that anti-BDS laws have library implications, listing contracts

Al Kagan: SRRT is on the record already, no need to vote

III. Social media (Olivia Scully, Diedre Conkling, April Sheppard are posting on specific days and the increased activity is increasing the interest in SRRT social media) posting pieces from the history of SRRT

IV. SRRT webpages

Olivia Scully, April Sheppard, and Al Kagan have been doing a lot of work on SRRT resolutions, the history, whether they passed; not a complete list, so if anyone has information, please send it to Olivia Scully or April Sheppard.

Al Kagan: next up, working on the minutes

Olivia Scully: now have a style sheet to make the SRRT web pages consistent. Working on centralizing SRRT's history. Please check files for documents that might be missing; much of the 1980's is not represented. Taking a closer look at the website hierarchy and navigation; working on findability, accessibility. Please check the website and send responses to Olivia Scully (oscully@chboothlibrary.org)

V. Afternoon of Social Justice

Could have the theme of Action.

LaJuan Pringle: idea of revisiting sites of multicultural action; has three libraries revisiting MKL

Tom Twiss: Trita Parsi program might not have an action component

Ginny Moore: Thanks to LaJuan Pringle for helping us get back to the exchange of ideas on observance of MKL holiday; this is the kind of action that we can take to focus on inclusion of all types of libraries for all groups

VI. What can SRRT do combat health and disability discrimination (Sarah Prokop--not at meeting today)

Would like to have SRRT resolution speaking against racism and disability discrimination.

Julie Winkelstein: does not see enough discussion of these issues, would like to see what Sarah Prokop says

April Sheppard: Sarah is working on a resolution for Action Council review; SRRT needs to be sure to include health/disabilities in our documents and language when we talk about inequities.

April 29, 11:00 am Central time.