ALSA PRIORITIES

SURVEY OF THE PRIORITIES OF MEMBERS OF ALA, a Summary Report by Mary Jo Lynch, Director, Office for Research (January 1980, 1979-80 ALA COUNCIL DOCUMENT #11) was reviewed at Planning Committee hearings on June 30 in New York City during the ALA Annual Conference. Pages V-1 and V-2 of the Document are reproduced below; and the SRRT Action Council statement on the Survey, submitted by James Dwyer, Action Council member, which was prepared in response to the document, follows.

V. Analysis
A. Official ALA Priorities.

One of the reasons why the Future Structures Committee recommended the survey of priorities was that the Committee questioned the validity of the six "official" priorities of the Association. These six had been adopted in 1970 when the ACONDA report was accepted. It seems logical, therefore, to examine the results of this survey in the light of those six priorities. They are stated in the current "ALA Policy Manual" as follows:

The Association's highest current priorities are recognized and officially established to be: Social Responsibilities, Personnel Resources; Intellectual Freedom; Legislation; Planning, Research and Development; Democratization and Reorganization of the Association.

Substantially increased amounts of the Association's budget shall be directed toward implementation of these priorities.
(continued on page 4)
on equal terms: THE CLASSICS

Affirmative action programs rest securely on the
realities of history. But the history of inequal-
ity is still waiting to be written. When librarys
examine their own evolution, will they be
able to conclude that literary classics have been
offered to the community on equal terms?

Literary classics have an unparalleled capacity to
satisfy, delight, rehabilitate, and instruct. They stretch the boundaries of their era,
while also being, in various degrees, bound by
convention and local prejudice. Given this
complexity, works of literature will inevitably be the subject of endless interpretations.
Libraries are serving the public unfairly if they
merely preserve the endlessly expanded interpretations.

And libraries compound the problem further if they
organize and label classic writings in race or
sex-biased categories. Literary historians are among those who see the need for reform in these
areas.

Feminist literary historians are gradually re-
dressing some long-standing imbalances in literary
criticism. But they face a four-sided problem,
as Professor Alison Sulloway, the speaker at the
Tools for Consciousness-Raising program, pointed out. First, the book world needs to understand
the existence of important socio-historical
classical Puritanism, theories of
seeming ubiquitous female diseases, and the
disenfranchisement of women, scholars of both
sexes still tend to deny this evidence.

Occasionally they go so far as to insist that even
so articulate a heroine as Elizabeth Bennett in Pride
and Prejudice was a quintessentially
trivial femine character. It was necessary
(too maintain) that her undisciplined mind
be kept in check by the stern masculine moral
world view in literary criticism, and she
referred to the many admirable features in
the works of these writers, as well as the
unconsciously biased aspects of their work. But
while the historical biases of an era can be
expected to affect writers living within those
eras, there is no justification for the endless
perpetuation of the same regional and period
biases in the many later works of literary
analysis and history.

In the case of Jane Austen especially, scholars
have failed to appreciate feminist influences
upon her novels. Whereas the plots, structures,
characters, dialogues, authorial comments, symbolic images
and tone all express Austen’s preoccupation with the
disenfranchisement of women, scholars of both
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SPACEAGE HARDWARE
STONEAGE DATA

by Sanford Berman, Hennepin County Library, Edina, Minn.

Information Access Corporation's widely-touted Magazine Index - produced in COM, print, and online formats - nicely demonstrates the Jekyll-and-Hyde character of much "new technology". MI operates in a truly impressive, high-tech way, but if its mechanics are distinctly advanced, its content is just as purely ancient.

To travel - by button - from A to Z on a ROM reader takes only moments. Included on that one, single-alphabet microfilm reel are subject and author entries for material published in 372 magazines since 1976, the whole package being updated monthly. How that's futuristic. However, not quite so far out is the fact that no entries appear under the subjects NUCLEAR POWER or SPACE SHUTTLES. Instead, they're tagged ATOMIC POWER and REUSABLE SPACE VEHICLES, terms hardly derived from Buck Rogers' vocabulary. Similarly, there's no descriptor for HOUSE PLANS, not even a "see" reference from that familiar phrase to MI's absolutely Byzantine rubric, ARCHITECTURE, DOMESTIC - DESIGNS AND PLANS. Further, nothing on buses, trucks, and truck drivers is directly findable under those current, commonplace words. For unknown reasons, this Wonderama product prefers such Baroque nomenclature as MOTOR-BUSES, MOTOR-TRUCKS, and MOTOR-TRUCK DRIVERS. And although at least one indexed periodical, The Futurist, has devoted much space to the topic of Appropriate Technology, MI apparently doesn't recognize that increasingly important subject. There's simply no heading for it.


Censored, Ignored, Overlooked, Too Expensive? How to Get Gay Materials into Libraries. A Guide to Library Selection Policies for the Non-Librarian. 1979. This explains library selection policies in a general way and tells what an individual or group can do to get a library to buy more gay books and periodicals. Also, sections on what to do if your request is refused, on why gay books are not found where you have to ask for them, and on donating materials to the library. $1 prepaid (includes mailing); also bookstore/bulk rate.

Gay Materials Core Collection List Gay Teachers Resources A Short Lesbian Reading List Above lists: 2 copies, 25¢; 3-10 copies, 10¢ each; 15 or more, 75¢ each, prepaid (includes mailing). Also available: Gay Subjects, Special Formats: Books and Periodicals for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (list). Print edition, 75¢ prepaid. Audio cassette and Braille editions available from other suppliers; information on request or with list.

GAY TASK FORCE PUBLICATIONS

For all orders: Checks to "Barbara Gittings, Gay Task Force", Box 2953, Philadelphia, PA 19103


Censored, Ignored, Overlooked, Too Expensive? How to Get Gay Materials into Libraries. A Guide to Library Selection Policies for the Non-Librarian. 1979. This explains library selection policies in a general way and tells what an individual or group can do to get a library to buy more gay books and periodicals. Also, sections on what to do if your request is refused, on why gay books are not found where you have to ask for them, and on donating materials to the library. $1 prepaid (includes mailing); also bookstore/bulk rate.

Gay Materials Core Collection List Gay Teachers Resources A Short Lesbian Reading List Above lists: 2 copies, 25¢; 3-10 copies, 10¢ each; 15 or more, 75¢ each, prepaid (includes mailing). Also available: Gay Subjects, Special Formats: Books and Periodicals for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (list). Print edition, 75¢ prepaid. Audio cassette and Braille editions available from other suppliers; information on request or with list.

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For all orders: Checks to "Barbara Gittings, Gay Task Force", Box 2953, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Above lists: 2 copies, 25¢; 3-10 copies, 10¢ each; 15 or more, 75¢ each, prepaid (includes mailing). Also available: Gay Subjects, Special Formats: Books and Periodicals for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (list). Print edition, 75¢ prepaid. Audio cassette and Braille editions available from other suppliers; information on request or with list.
The meaning which this phrase should have for ALA was explicated in a “Report to the Executive Board” dated August 18, 1970 in which the ALA Executive Director presented the precise wording of any changes made by Council in the ACONDA report. According to that memo the Council intended to:

- Define the broad social responsibilities of ALA in terms of (1) the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or even solving the critical problems of society, (b) support for all efforts to help inform and educate the people of the United States on these problems and to encourage them to examine the many views on, and the facts regarding, each problem, and (c) the willingness of ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service clearly set forth in the position statement.

In connection with these social responsibilities the ACONDA report, as amended by Council, recommended that ALA establish an Office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged and Observed. The current office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged is a result of that recommendation. Table 8 shows the five questionnaire items which are directly related to the work of this office:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating as of primary importance</th>
<th>Rating as of little or no importance</th>
<th>Rank of score in listing of top 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27. Literacy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Physically disabled</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Ethnic/racial</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Economically disadvantaged</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Institutionalized</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly enough, the general question is included in IF while the specific items make up the bulk of the section. (Further methodological analysis supplied by Betty Turrock, Rutgers GSLIS, will be appended.)

On page VI-2 the Committee on Future Structures recommends that the survey be conducted again and then evaluated. The number and scope of “Important concerns not covered” suggested by respondents reveals the inadequacy of the original survey instrument. (Among those suggestions were a program dealing with unfair labor practices, promoting part-time professional jobs, library service to the Spanish speaking, etc., clearly issues). Decisions relating to funding, programming, etc., should not be based on the survey alone.

The report includes the key question “Who decides what is good for ALA?” Does one judge the health and interests of the patient by remote sensing such as a survey or by a variety of closer measures? We suggest that the Association’s priorities should be shaped by the activities of its members and by the needs of its nation’s citizens. We suggest the interest and participation in SRRT programs and those of SRRT-generated groups such as G0D0RT and the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship it is difficult to conclude that SR is actually a low priority of both ALA members and the citizens who are the beneficiaries, supporters, and reason for existence of publically supported libraries.
Availability of Selective Service Information in Libraries

Whereas the selective service registration is in effect, therefore, be it resolved that librarians should have this information on the full range of alternatives within and without the military services for those young persons who are facing the prospect of conscription.

Information on Disarmament and Conflict Solving

Whereas in a democracy, decision-making information is essential,

Executive Board direct the ALA offices to research and report all union contract and non-union beginning salaries for the membership of the ALA. Included in the resolution were directives to publish the information gathered before the 1981 annual meeting in survey form with union and non-union differences noted and to make the full data available from the ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources to individual members and to the ERIC Clearinghouse for Information Resources.

Whereas, the ALA membership meeting of June 30, 1980 narrowly defeated the motion from the Massachusetts Library Association recommending a minimum salary for beginning librarians, and whereas, the beginning salary of librarians in federal service at the GS-9 level is $11,025, and whereas, some other beginning librarians in other libraries start as low as $10,000, and whereas, the SRRT Library Union Task Force is concerned about fair and appropriate conditions and salaries for all workers in libraries, and whereas, the ALA is an educational association with interest in the high quality of service in libraries, therefore be it resolved that the ALA Executive Board direct the ALA offices to research and report all union contract and non-union agreements beginning salaries for the membership of the ALA, and be it further resolved, that this information be published in survey form before the 1981 annual meeting with union and non-union differences noted, and be it further resolved, that the full research data be made available to individual ALA members from the ALA CIPR and Headquarters Library, and sent to the ERIC Clearinghouse for Instructional Resources.

Joan Higbee, Chairperson, Staff Organization Roundtable
Sharon Adley, Chairperson, Staff Organization Roundtable
Feminist Task Force

At the 1980 Annual Meeting of the SRRT Feminist Task Force on Women became (officially) the SRRT Feminist Task Force. Members are pleased to be taking this new name because it is so much more an indicator of the direction which the Task Force has taken since the creation of the Status Committee, and the SF hopes that in the future it will bear this more radical path. The new steering committee members are:

Coordinator: Elizabeth Futas
Steering Committee:
  Diane Kadzianoff
  Susan LaBaron
  Carolle Lelio
  Diane Davenport
  Sheila Hess
  Barbara Schoele
  Sarah Pritchard
  Susan Searing

The pre-conference on the status of women brought several resolutions to the ALA Membership for votes; all passed, as did those brought to Council.

1980 ALA MEMBERSHIP DOCUMENT #6

Resolved, that the American Library Association support the world-wide Nestle boycott. (passed)

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #17

Resolved, that the American Library Association support the world-wide Nestle boycott. (passed)

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #15

Resolved, that the Council of the ALA direct the Committee on Accreditation to revise the 1972 Standards for Accreditation to include Affirmative Action reports with regard to faculty, staff, and students. (passed, membership & Council)

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #13

Resolved, that the phrase "(including discrimination and sexual harassment)" be inserted in Policy #54.13, Program of Action for Mediation, Arbitration, and Inquiry, of the ALA Policy Manual, line 6, following "fair employment practices". (passed membership & Council)

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #12

Resolved, that the Office for Intellectual Freedom and the ALA Washington Office work together to prevent the passage of the Family Protection Act. (passed membership & Council)

Ethnic Materials Task Force

"Serving Your Ethnic Community" was the topic of a multifaceted program (consisting of speakers, slides, films, and group participation) at the 99th annual ALA Conference, which was attended by more than 100 librarians, Prof. Aroldo Trel's (Arizona), Doris Scott (Chicago Public Library), Ruth Ann Thomas (Rutgers University), and Temple Public Library, Queens Borough Public Library, Tucson Public Library, Seattle Public Library, and the Canadian Public Library System and the West Coast (Oklahoma Public Library, Seattle Public Library, Tucson Public Library, Seattle Public Library, National City Public Library); the pre-conference on the status of women brought several resolutions to the ALA Membership for votes; all passed, as did those brought to Council.

The second part of the program, moderated by Natalia G. Davis, Director of El Centro Hispano de Informacion, Brooklyn Public Library, was devoted to a discussion of various projects and achievements by libraries from the East Coast (Norwalk Public Library, Queens Borough Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, Langston Hughes Library, Community Library and Cultural Center, South Bronx Provisions of the New York Public Library, and Temple University); the West Coast (Oklahoma Public Library, Seattle Public Library, Tucson Public Library, Seattle Public Library, National City Public Library); and the Canadian Public Library System and the University of Guam. During the program, appropriate literature -- pamphlets, fliers, posters, memos -- was distributed by participating speakers. A total of 25 programs was presented; the complete list is available on request.

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #11

Resolved, that the Executive Director of the Association find the funds for two members to be trained at the University of Washington's Career Development and Assessment center who will in turn train others to staff the ALA Placement Office at annual conferences and midwinter meetings. These people will give individual professional counseling to those seeking jobs. In lieu of payment for their services, these counselors would receive a stipend covering room and board. This program will be administered by OLPR.

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #19

Resolved, that the Council of the ALA direct the Committee on Accreditation to revise the 1972 Standards for Accreditation to include Affirmative Action reports with regard to faculty, staff, and students. (passed, membership & Council)

MEMBERSHIP DOC. #13

Resolved, that the phrase "(including discrimination and sexual harassment)" be inserted in Policy #54.13, Program of Action for Mediation, Arbitration, and Inquiry, of the ALA Policy Manual, line 6, following "fair employment practices". (passed membership & Council)
LIBRARIES AND THE SMALL PRESS

in the light of ALA Mid-winter, 1980.

By David Ferguson

In a crowd of acronyms, plentiful enough for aerospace to envy, it was fun to wear a set of generally unexpected letters, COSMEP Newsletter, Non-member, PRESS. Yet I felt at home, Small Press people are, after all, librarians of a sort, in that we exist to bring writers and readers together on a nonprofit or less basis. We select works we feel will be of interest to others regardless of how few in number those others turn out to be.

And we are both occasionally viewed by the general public, if we are viewed at all, as something of an oddity. A library administrator gave me an example of the attitude. At one conference he visited the bar with an undesignated lapel. The man drinking next to him put an arm on his shoulder and observed, "You know, there’re 20,000 librarians in this hotel. Isn't that creepy?"

As I talked with the administrator about the Small Press it occurred to him that there ought to be an ALA Task Force on the Small Press. It was such an obvious need that I could hardly believe such a Task Force didn't already exist. However, with the exception of Alternative In Print, there are no bridges designed specifically to connect libraries and the Small Press.

Alternatives In Print is a catalog of Small Press materials originally focused on political and alternative life-style publications. Jackie Baban, Mimi Penchasky and other members of the Alternatives In Print Task Force of ALA's Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT, pronounced to rhyme with alert) organized in 1969 to compile and produce this book. The current edition, just released by Neal-Schuman, Publishers, lists publications by author and title and includes 730 titles in foreign languages. The project that resulted in this expanded edition was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities co-ordinated by Elliot Shore, curator of the Small Press collection at Temple University. Alternatives In Print now sells for $39.95. (The remaining nickel will buy you a poem.)

The most heavily traveled bridge, one from the Small Press to the world at large, began fifteen editions ago: Len Fulton and Edna Ferber's International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses ($11.95 paper, $15.95 cloth). "In many ways it has made possible the growth of the Small Press that its size now reflects. Other source books under the Dustbooks imprint: The Small Press Record of Books in Print, The Directory of Small Magazine & Small Press Editors & Publishers as well as The Small Press Review."

Distribution is the major problem of the Small Press. COSMEP tried a Book Van project and the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines (CCLM) went through a $439,536 Ford Foundation grant for a Pilot Distribution Project, yet the problem is still very much with us. Even those publications that manage to survive through sheer will or grants or a combination of both have great difficulty in reaching an audience.

As selectors, editors and librarians have their work cut out. Many of us, who, as writers, have been passed over by the commercial elite do not relish the irony of having to become selectors. It is the most demanding part of the job. Who is to say this is good and that bad? Each Small Press has its own approach. A few no longer take unsolicited manuscripts. For myself, I believe judgments, however difficult, can be made in good conscience. (For one thing, there are so many of us that we need never fear becoming exclusive arbitors.) Letting the 1000 flowers bloom doesn't mean everything out of the ground is a flower.

Which brings me to the dilemma of librarians unable to read everything in the Small Press or the Big Press for that matter. Resources, such as reviews, though good, are scarce and it is hard for librarians to get a handle on the Small Press.

Libraries used to take Small Press works more as a matter of course. But budget cuts and the extraordinary proliferation of presses have recently made it more difficult for libraries to subscribe.

(Some Small Press people are themselves disturbed by this proliferation, fearing dilution. Felix Stefanile of Sparrow Press attributes this multiplication to the increased availability of grants, and the clamor for grants to COSMEP members, although COSMEP itself does not give grants. My own experience has been that active COSMEP members more often favor working toward publication independent of grants. CCLM, the single most powerful non-governmental dispenser of government grants to little magazines, was started by William Phillips, editor of the Partisan Review. CCLM has tended to fund most lavishly the larger, older and university connected magazines, although election by the Small Press community of three of the five grants committee members has modified the tendency.)

A.D. Winans, editor/publisher/poet, long active in COSMEP and COSMEP/west, helped form a distribution co-op, Western Independent Publishers (WIP). One accomplishment of WIP...
was to bring Small Press to libraries. But the business of general distribution is less susceptible to informal organization than is the small, individual press. It's often hard enough for a commercial distributor to succeed, WIP, along with a number of other Small Press efforts at distribution, has gone out of business.

In the east, Alex Harvey, chairperson of COSMEP for 1979, initiated Small Press Racks In Libraries (SPRIL). SPRIL provided a workable method of acquainting librarians and public with the Small Press while giving librarians a chance to see what needs these publications met. Yet the NEA Literature Panel discontinued funding despite the contribution made by presses in giving their publications freely to the project. Perhaps a SRRT Task Force could look into ways librarians could help the Literature Panel recognize the value of such efforts.

Despite current discouraging circumstances libraries remain a most appropriate and logical place for Small Press to be made available to the public. In the 1950s, when Sparrow Press started, library subscriptions made presses possible. Sixty percent of Sparrow's subscribers came from libraries, schools and other institutions. "If it were not for the libraries, we should be hard put to explain our activities," says Stefanie.

Frederick Crews, in a New York Review of Books piece on the Partisan Review, described most other little magazines as 'mayaflies of the literary world,' a world composed, presumably, of more durable bugs. Lack of longevity, though not a dependable index of worth, is a problem for libraries. To some extent, it becomes a chicken and egg situation. If more libraries subscribed more magazines and presses would survive. The notion that the fittest literature will make it in the marketplace is optimistic, if not disingenuous. If larger and smaller Littles share any understanding is that immediate popularity and literary merit or political validity seldom coincide. Good work and hard thought do not drive shallowness from the marketplace. All commerce of the mind ultimately depends on accepted conventions of support, one way or another, and libraries seem to me one of the most important.

Regularity of publication is another virtue that has not been a conspicuous attribute of the Small Press. (Some years ago a publication called The Incredible Bureaucrat, avoided the problem squarely by conceding that it came out with alarming frequency.) An increased presence of Small Press in libraries would help some of us to publish more predictably, an understandably desirable objective from the librarian's point of view no less than ours. We are both dedicated to reaching people with the written word. Small Press editors work hard at no pay just to be in touch with a public. The more writers and readers have access to our publications in libraries the more we, as publishers, will be able to serve them. The library is a place where we keep in touch with each other.

Librarians are interested, many even anxious to include Small Press works. The 308 catalogs of the 1978 New York Book Fair that I took to Chicago were snapped up with enthusiasm. I could have taken 1000. From a number of random conversations and from what I heard at meetings I came to suspect that there is more happening in libraries concerning the Small Press than is generally perceived. But it happens locally and on an individual basis. For example, Jack Rittenhouse, a librarian in Albuquerque, is collecting works of authors in New Mexico, including Small Press publications. There are some 60 Small Press collections in libraries across the country. These collections are a good idea, but it would be even better if Small Press publications were more generally available. Librarians wanting to complete the record, especially of poetry, fiction and political thought, will have to become increasingly familiar with the Small Press.

The more I think about the possibilities of cooperation between ALA and COSMEP the more it makes sense. We could isolate some of the problems librarians have in dealing with the Small Press. Solutions could be worked out together. A Joint Committee or SRRT Task Force could facilitate exhibition of Small Presses at both Mid-winter and Annual Conferences.

COSMEP could also work with members of ALA in setting up poetry readings and other joint ventures. Certainly, any support from Small Press for libraries under attack by Proposition 13 thinking would be welcome. In fact, why not create a National Small Press In Libraries Project co-sponsored by COSMEP and ALA?

Novelist Frederick Busch, in an essay, "When People Publish!" (The Ohio Review, Spring/Summer, 1979) looks at the place of libraries in his life:

What is published is, more or less, what will sell. Perhaps it has always been the case, if to a lesser degree. But the library, anyway, was the place I went for what was written, not for what was selling. It was the dark continent; it was the place for discovery. I think this no longer is the case.

It is that continent of discovery that must survive. Those of us in libraries and the Small Press who work to enhance the availability of such public sharing, despite the prevalence of a commercialism, ostensibly democratic, that insists on making the least possible choice available to the largest number, might do well to work together.
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