

SRRT Newsletter

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COORDINATOR'S MEMO
FROM: JOHN HOSTAGE

It's time to offer our belated congratulations to Action Council member James Danky, who received the Bowker/Ulrich's Serials Librarianship Award from the Serials Section of the Resources and Technical Services Division at the Annual Conference in San Francisco. Jim is Newspaper and Periodicals Librarian at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison. He was cited in the award for his work in developing tools and information on serials by and about non-mainstream and alternative groups and ideas. He has contributed to the sharing of information through anthologies, articles, handbooks, and bibliographies. These have covered Native Americans, women, alternative publications, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans. He is also co-editor of Alternative Library Literature. Jim is now working on a revised edition of Alternative Materials in Libraries (Scarecrow, 1982), to appear in 1989.

The "We Are Not Pleased" manifesto, a draft of which was printed in the last issue of the SRRT Newsletter, has been attracting a lot of attention. There was a nearly full-page report on it in the August Library Journal, and word is that the statement has caused somewhat of a stir in ALA headquarters. There should be more meetings and discussions on it at the Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio, SRRT members are encouraged to join in the process, whether you, like some of the authors of the statement, are among the founding members of SRRT,

or have just joined with your own ideas about where ALA is going.

Action Council plans to invite the candidates for president of ALA to one of its meetings in San Antonio with an eye to possibly endorsing one of them. SRRT members are always welcome at Action Council meetings, but we would especially like to have you come with your questions for the candidates. A coalition of groups is sponsoring a candidates forum on Sunday evening, and ALA is considering some kind of general event on Saturday or Monday evening.

SRRT has been invited to send a representative to a preconference on recruitment to be held July 7-8, before the Annual Conference in New Orleans. It is being sponsored by the Advisory Committee to the ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources as part of its implementation of its 1987 World Book-ALA Goal Award. The preconference is supposed to "provide participants with ideas and strategic plans for recruitment programs at the state, local and institutional levels at home, and a network for sharing, support, and collective action." They are looking for "representatives who will be committed to carry through on recruitment efforts at the state and local level after the preconference." If anyone is interested, please contact me at the Harvard Law School Library, Langdell Hall, Cambridge, MA 02138 (tel. 617-495-4295), or come to Action Council at Midwinter. There is no registration fee for the preconference.

CIVIL RIGHTS TASK FORCE UPDATE

The Civil Rights Task Force has been at work on a manuscript, now nearing completion, of Essays on Equity and People's Issues: A Handbook on Social Responsibility for Librarians.

We decided in 1984 that it would be helpful to have a handbook on social responsibility that would consist of new essays on a selected group of issues. The project began while the late Brad Chambers was Task Force Coordinator, and it continued with the support of his successor, Kate Shackford.

Essay topics and contributors include women's rights (Sandra Bolton); multi-lingualism (Dr. Alfredo Benavides); literacy (Jean E. Coleman); access through subject headings (Dr. Doris H. Clack); affirmative action and minorities (Dr. Marva DeLoach); and children's issues (Donnarae MacCann).

The reason for commissioning a new set of studies has been twofold. In the first place, we felt that a re-articulation of SRRT-type concepts, as developed in the 1970s and extended in the 1980s, would be beneficial. And second, we wanted to approach these issues so as to provide a considerable amount of historical background and context. Our intention is to encourage a sustained focus on some of the most unyielding, problematic areas of librarianship--to re-examine ambiguities and controversies that impinge on human rights.

Further details about the manuscript and its prospects for publication may be available by Midwinter.

---Donnarae MacCann

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR



TO
OUR
READERS

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- * *

WORKSHOP ON RACISM--MIDWINTER

In San Antonio Friday, January 8, 1988, the Feminist Task Force is planning "A Workshop: White Women Working Together on Personal and Institutional Racism." This workshop stems from last summer's preconference, "Librarians as Colleagues: Working Together Across Racial Lines." The San Antonio workshop is intended to promote and provoke the continuing personal and professional change essential to our relationships with people of color.

To register, send \$30 to Polly Thistlethwaite, Bobst Library, 70 Washington Square South, New York University, New York, NY 10012. Make checks payable to: SRRT PRECONFERENCE ON WOMEN. Please register by December 30. For more information, call Polly at 212-998-2532. You needn't have attended the San Francisco preconference to attend this one--please join us!

---Polly Thistlethwaite

REPORT FROM PEACE INFORMATION EXCHANGE
TASK FORCE

A very informative address by Executive Secretary of the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute, Ann Fagan Ginger, a prominent lawyer who has worked with human rights, civil rights, and peace law, was the high point of the Peace Information Exchange Task Force program at Annual Conference. It is highly recommended that you investigate her publications on peace law, compilations of laws which support peaceful action, and summaries of cases. Address: Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute, 1715 Francisco St., Berkeley, CA 94703.

A great deal more browsing was seen at the exhibits this year. At the SRRT booth as well as the International Human Rights and Peace Information Exchange tables, people stopped and looked, and took materials, and talked to those of us who staffed these exhibits. We need more and better materials for next summer. We need to put some energy into this outreach, since it is a spot where people can learn what SRRT and its task forces do and try to do, and find places to tie into the programs which exist plus uncover new needs and ways to fill them.

The request for a peace award for libraries or librarians was resisted by the Committee on ALA Awards--too many awards, they say. We met all the requirements, and Noel Peattie defended the value before the committee at hearings, but the committee has made up new rules, and continued unwilling. The task force will work on procedures to grant such an award independently.

People wishing to review books on peace sent to the task force, should write Elizabeth Morrissett, P.O. Box 604, Midtown Sta., Anchorage, AK 99534, with a short resume of interests and expertise.

--Elizabeth Morrissett

PRECONFERENCE ON RACISM--ANNUAL

63 participants convened at the U.C. Berkeley campus on June 24, 25 and 26 for the SRRT/Feminist Task Force's preconference on Librarians as Colleagues: Working Together Across Racial Lines. Highlights of this workshop included a rousing keynote address by Elizabeth Martinez-Smith, Director of the Orange County, California, Library; a panel of ethnic librarians from various groups sharing their experiences; and closing remarks by two former ALA presidents, E.J. Josey and Clara Stanton Jones.

Dr. Frances Kendall led discussions on Thursday and Friday to define racism and to help participants become sensitized to its manifestations in society, in librarianship, and within themselves. Strategy sessions resulted in the following efforts:

1. A commitment to direct ALA's attention toward dealing with racism.
2. A proposal to hold a conference within a conference on the issue of racism at next year's ALA convention.
3. Publication of more articles on this issue in major library journals, including Ms. Martinez-Smith's speech, reports on the preconference, and rating of library media according to their treatment of this issue with regard to ads, writers, subject matter, etc. by EMIERT.
4. Recommendations for better recruitment efforts of minority librarians into library schools and courses on this subject in library education.
5. To make it more attractive and possible for people of color in librarianship to participate equally and fully in ALA activities.

The impact of the preconference was felt throughout the subsequent ALA conference, resulting in a collective determination to confront racism profession-wide.

For copies of Elizabeth Martinez-Smith's speech, contact Jody Bush, Berkeley Public Library, 2090 Kittredge, Berkeley, CA 94704.

ALA divisions and groups interested in participating in the New Orleans Conference should contact Betty-Carol Sellen, Librarian, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY 11210.

--Susana Hinojosa

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Betty-Carol Sellen and Susan Vaughn are redesigning the SRRT brochure. Task Force coordinators who have not yet sent revised information on their groups, should do so immediately. Address your contribution to Betty-Carol or Susan at the Brooklyn College Library, Brooklyn, NY 11210.

**James P. Danky and Elliott Shore are planning a new edition of Alternative Materials in Libraries, originally published by Scarecrow Press in 1982. One chapter of the new guide will include an updated, expanded version of the directory of "Collections of Contemporary Alternative Materials in Libraries." If your library has a substantial collection of alternative contemporary social and political materials, particularly those with roots in the activist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and if you have not yet received a questionnaire for the directory, or if you know of similar collections that were not included in the first edition, please contact: Ellen E. Embardo, Special Collections, Homer Babbidge Library, University of Connecticut, U-5sc, Storrs, CT 06268.

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REPORT FROM AIP TASK FORCE

The Alternatives in Print Task Force presented a very successful program at ALA in San Francisco entitled "Sex in the Stacks: Providing Access!" The program was well-attended and served as a sounding-board for many librarians concerned over censorship attempts.

Speakers included Joanie Blank, writer and publisher of Down There Press; Susie Bright, editor of On Our Backs, a lesbian journal; David Steinberg, publisher of Red Alder Books; and our own Dan Tsang, editor of The Age Taboo.

The probable topic for the AIP program in New Orleans is small presses in the South. AIP welcomes suggestions from other SRRT members on possible program topics.

AIP is also considering initiating an annual award for the best in alternative/small press literature and media. Anyone interested in working on this idea should contact Cathy Seitz, King Library, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056.

The Task Force's main project is to update and revise the Field Guide to Alternative Media: A Directory to Reference and Selection Tools Useful in Accessing Small and Alternative Press Publications and Independently Produced Media, originally compiled by Pat Case (ALA, 1984). The tentative completion date is fall 1988. In addition to bringing the publication up to date, prospective revisions include arrangement by subject (rather than alphabetically), inclusion of a title index, inclusion of international titles and sources, a list of alternative bookstores (U.S.), a change in the title proper to better reflect the directory nature of the book, and a different binding to allow for a wider spine and hence more visibility on the shelf. Again, AIP welcomes suggestions and offers of help from other interested SRRT members. Contact Chris Sokol, Holland Library, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-5610, or Dan Tsang, Library, P.O. Box 19557, University of California at Irvine, Irvine, CA 92713.

--Chris Sokol

BOOK REVIEWS

Brown, Cynthia Stokes. Ready from Within: Septima Clark and the Civil Rights Movement. Edited with an introduction by Cynthia Stokes Brown. Navarro, CA: Wild Trees Press, 1986. 134 p. illus. \$8.95 (Publisher's address: P.O. Box 378, Navarro, CA 95463)

This account of the Afro-American civil rights leader Septima Poinsette Clark (born 1898 in Charleston, S.C.) is in part told by, and interwoven with, a tale of self-discovery by a white woman who grew up in western Kentucky, and who gradually came to oppose segregation as she understood it. This editor, Cynthia Brown, describes how she got into contact with Septima Clark, how Septima Clark received her, and then withdraws to let Septima Clark describe first of all her Movement days, and then go back to tell of her childhood and finally of her retirement.

Septima Clark's work was not done on the historic battle-fronts of platforms, rallies, streets and courts. No, she did the necessary work that made the achievements of others such as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., possible. She worked with him long, knew him well, and quietly opposed his own brand of patriarchy.

Born in Charleston, Septima Poinsette graduated from Avery Institute, a private school in the city, in 1916, with hopes of becoming a teacher. The family could not afford to send her to Fisk University, so she went as a teacher to Johns Island, South Carolina, teaching children, then adults, how to read. This region was remote and primitive back in 1916. She took a gasoline launch and rode nine hours, going through creeks, to reach Promise Land School. Septima Clark's description of the people and their environment, where a black boy might not even smile and say hello to a white girl, and where both blacks and whites slept in houses wallpapered with newsprint, recalls the poorest parts of the Third World today. In the twenties Septima Clark taught in other schools in South

Carolina, and for many years she made her home in Columbia, the state capitol, teaching children and adults alike.

Dismissed from the public schools of Charleston in 1956 for refusing to disavow her membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Septima Clark was asked to become director of workshops at Highlander Folk School near Monteagle, Tennessee, fifty miles northeast of Chattanooga. She survived the state police raid there (July 31, 1959), and in 1961 began working with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). All over the South she organized Citizenship Schools, designed to teach Black adults to read and write and understand the Constitution, so that they could register and vote.

Voting in the South in those days was made as difficult as possible. Black people and poor people were asked questions, not only on the Constitution, but on irrelevant matters designed to humiliate, since only certain answers were acceptable. Septima Clark coached her people in the questions, showed them how to give dictionary definitions and resist the humiliating pseudo-answers, and organized them to demand their voting rights.

In travelling over the South, in living her quiet activist life, Septima Poinsette Clark survived violent white racism; she survived contempt from Stokely Carmichael and sexist put-downs from Martin Luther King; she survived an unsuccessful marriage, the birth of a fatally deformed child, the loss of another son in the Army, the birth of a brain-damaged grandchild. She managed to get a B.A. from Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., and an M.A. from Hampton University in 1946.

Retiring from her work with SCLC in 1970, Septima Clark became (1978-1983) the first Black woman on the Charleston school board. Honors and awards came to her—including the naming after her of a part of the local freeway!--and in 1979 she came to the White House to receive a Living Legacy award from President

Carter.

Septima Poinsette Clark's story is one of courage and belief in positive change. "I don't expect to ever see a utopia," she concludes. "No, I think there will always be something that you're going to have to work on. That's why, when people say, 'I'm scared. I'm scared. I'm concerned,' I say, 'Out of that will come something good.'"

--Noel Peattie

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Pirtle, Sarah. An Outbreak of Peace. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1987. 386 p. \$9.95

The summer following seventh grade finds Cassie Kaczinski feeling lonely, insecure and frightened. Her best friend is spending the summer on Cape Cod consumed by a budding relationship with her new boyfriend. The recent death of Cassie's favorite grandmother has left her with many regrets and questions about life. Cassie's parents are struggling financially to make their print business a success. To make matters worse, Cassie has a deep fear of nuclear war.

Luckily, a newcomer to the small western Massachusetts town of Larkspur shares many of Cassie's concerns. Zack is older and has done quite a bit of thinking about issues of peace. Together, they organize an art group, called the Tigers, who want to explore their feelings and reactions to a world that frequently solves problems by resorting to violence.

The experience of working in the art group illuminates for Cassie, Zack and their friends many of the difficulties that arise when people attempt to work together. The nature of friendships, differences of opinion, racism and sexism are all dealt with during this process. Although there are struggles along the way, the young people of Larkspur discover that through openness, sensitivity to others and talking through their worst fears many of their problems are resolved; they are able to value the diversity among themselves and

recognize it as a strength rather than a weakness.

Feeling empowered by their activity in the group, the Tigers mount an art show in the Town Hall. This catalyzes extensive debate about issues of war and peace among the townspeople, and many adults are supportive and encouraging. The positive energy and fervent desire for a world that is loving instead of filled with strife has created a new feeling of community among the adults in Larkspur. The story culminates with a vote at town meeting on a non-binding resolution which would commit each resident to contribute some special action for peace.

While Cassie's search for her own identity and ways to comprehend the formidable world around her in An Outbreak of Peace is not a new theme in young adult literature, the options available to her are decidedly different. The freedom with which Cassie and her friends express myriad emotions enhances a sensitive portrayal of the conflicts and confusions of youth. Their questions and doubts are confronted honestly by their parents and teachers in Larkspur. Together they address not only the problem of weapons made of metal, but also the underlying problem of the weapons that live inside our hearts.

Paradoxically, the story is, at times, weakened by a seemingly endless supply of wisdom, goodwill and unselfish behavior, a New Age "Father Knows Best" aura. But the overall balance of this book is realistic and inspiring. Sarah Pirtle has crafted a compassionate and compelling tale that young people, as well as adults, will find enlightening.

--Barbara Morgan

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To be reviewed in the next issue: Ian Hancock, The Pariah Syndrome, and other titles as space permits.

ACTION COUNCIL, TF CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS

Please note the following changes and additions to the information in the list of Action Council members and task force coordinators printed in the SRRT Newsletter no. 85:

Linda Pierce's phone number at work is (907) 261-2907.

Chris Sokol's ZIP code is 99164.

You can reach OLOS (and other ALA offices) by dialing 1-800-545-2433.

Civil Rights Task Force
Donnarae MacCann
715 Normandy Dr.
Iowa City, IA 52240

Library Union Task Force
Jeanene McNair
Collection Development Dept.
University Library
University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620
(813) 974-2047 (w)
(813) 961-6728 (h)

If you spot other errors or omissions, please notify the Editor.

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DEBATE ON "TASK FORCE"?

In a note to the Editor, Noel Peattie writes:

Is anyone else bothered by the term "task force"? The Supplement to the OED lists its first use (in Time, 29 June 1941) as in a military context, and while it has now been transferred to civilian uses, its primary implication or at least origin, is still military and naval. Is a "Peace Information Task Force" somehow self-contradictory? Should we be using "working group"? Or is the present language so habituated by use that it will seem merely trivial to try to change it?

Perhaps Noel's point can be extended to other military terms which have entered into common usage. Bring your thoughts to Midwinter!

GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE SCHEDULE

Dee Michel reports that the following events will take place at Midwinter in San Antonio:

Sat. Jan. 9
4:30-5:30 Membership meeting, including discussion of by-laws
6:00-10:00 Joint social with Feminist TF

Sun. Jan 10
9:30-12:30 Committees, including Gay and Lesbian Book Award

Mon. Jan. 11
2:00-4:00 Membership meeting

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ACTION COUNCIL AT MIDWINTER

Action Council is scheduled to meet at the following times during the Midwinter Conference at San Antonio:

Sat. Jan. 9: 9:30-11:00
Sun. Jan. 10: 2:00-4:00
Mon. Jan. 11: 4:30-5:30

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM

MARY LEE BUNDY

1927-1987

Prof. Mary Lee Bundy, of the College of Library and Information Services at the University of Maryland, died on August 8. Among her many publications were Alternatives to Traditional Library Services (1977); Helping People Take Control: The Public Library's Mission in a Democracy (1980); Anti-apartheid Resource Guide (1985); and Activism in American Librarianship, 1962-1973 (1987). In a statement read at a memorial service on September 23, Sanford Berman wrote that "a caring activism infused and directed most of Mary Lee Bundy's professional life."

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