from the srrt coordinator:

From the Coordinator

I begin with an apology. As many of you know by now, I was unable to attend Midwinter this year, due to a bout of bronchitis. I feel horrible to have missed an ALA conference.... but I am grateful to the SRRT Action Council members who ran the SRRT meetings in my absence, and who kept me informed during the conference by phone.

Now, an update on what has been happening the last several months. Many of you remember SRRT's resolution on the Boy Scouts of America and ALA's relationship with them. Well, in a rather stunning development, ALA Council addressed the BSA issue at Midwinter, and passed a resolution urging that the BSA “reconsider their policy of discrimination in the areas of sexual orientation and religious belief and demonstrate a commitment to human rights, inclusiveness, and mutual respect.” ALA President Ann Symons will write a letter to the BSA, communicating the resolution. This is a huge, positive step forward for ALA, which has avoided this issue for years. SRRT members and supporters who worked on this issue are directly responsible for this development another fine example of the influence SRRT has.

The other big issue at Midwinter is that ALA Council failed to pass the strongest recommendations of the Outsourcing Task Force, of which I was a member. After months of intense work by the OTF, a lengthy report was produced shortly before Midwinter. This report took a strong stance against privatization and many forms of outsourcing. Alas, the strongest points we made (opposing privatization of core library services to for-profit corporations, for example) failed to pass ALA Council in resolutions. A profoundly depressing and disheartening development.

Another Midwinter development is a new SRRT Task Force! The National Library Involvement Committee for the Celebration of MLK, Jr. Holiday has become a probationary task force of SRRT. Committee chair Virginia Moore presented a petition with more than the required ten SRRT signatures, so the Committee now becomes a task force on probationary status. According to our Constitution, we will review the task force at the next two consecutive meetings before permanent status is granted.

CONTENTS

bylaws and protests...2
midwinter resolutions...3
task force reports...4 - 5
annual conference calendar...6
book reviews...7
half of the back page...8
Proposed Bylaws Changes Afoot

Proposed Amendment to SRRT Constitution, 4/18/99

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to include within SRRT's governance structure the newly created position of Round Table Councilor. Given the size of our membership, SRRT can now elect a representative to the ALA Council. In accordance with SRRT bylaws, any proposed amendments to the Constitution must be published in either the SRRT Newsletter or in American Libraries at least thirty days prior to Annual Conference. A vote on the amendment will be held at the SRRT Membership Meeting. A majority is needed to pass the amendment.

During the midwinter meetings in January/February 1999, members of Action Council engaged in lengthy discussions concerning the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications of the SRRT Councilor. It was decided that in regard to Action Council, the SRRT Councilor would have the same rights and responsibilities of the elected Action Council members (i.e., s/he can vote on budgets). The individual should have experience within SRRT and ALA. Elections for SRRT Councilor would be part of the regular ALA and SRRT election process. This proposal requires that a new article be added to the SRRT Constitution. If passed the language below would become a new Article V (with subsequent articles renumbered). The proposed amendment reads as follows:

Article V. SRRT Councilor

The SRRT Councilor is the elected SRRT representative to ALA Council. The Council is the governing body of ALA. It determines ALA policy and delegates to the divisions of the Association the authority to plan and carry out programs and activities in accord with established policy. Council generally meets three times during both midwinter and annual conferences. The SRRT Councilor:

* represents the interests of SRRT on ALA Council
* introduces SRRT-approved resolutions to ALA Council
* receives direction from SRRT Action Council on issues coming before ALA Council
* serves as a member of SRRT Action Council and attends Action Council meetings
* reports on Council activities at SRRT Action Council meetings
* writes a SRRT Councilor's report for the SRRT Newsletter

SRRT members will be asked to vote either "yes" or "no" to the amendment above at the upcoming SRRT Membership Meeting in New Orleans.

Anti-General Demonstration

SRRT is calling a demonstration against former General Colin Powell, ALA's keynote speaker at the Opening General Session of the New Orleans ALA Annual Meeting. This is scheduled for Saturday, June 26 at 5:30-7 PM. Powell fought the war against Iraq and was responsible for bombing the civilian infrastructure. This has resulted in more than half a million dead from lack of health care, clean water and the basic necessities of life. Iraq used to be a moderately rich country but most people now live in poverty that was unimaginable before the Gulf War.

The United States Government has bombed four countries within the past year: Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Yugoslavia. At the time of writing, the US continues to bomb both Iraq and Yugoslavia. The bombing of Iraq not only kills people, but is also counterproductive in that all United Nations weapons monitoring was closed down. The US bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan was supposedly to retaliate against the terrorist attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. However, the US bombed a pharmaceutical plant that supplied at least half the medicine in Sudan. Even mainstream US news reporters have found no serious evidence that the factory had anything to do with claimed weapons manufacture. Seventy cruise

continued on page 3
Resolution Calling for a New Policy Towards Iraq

Whereas former U. N. Assistant Secretary General Denis Halliday has noted that eight years of economic sanctions have devastated the civilian population of Iraq causing the deterioration of the educational system, an increase in crime and domestic violence, and intense xenophobia and extremism among the younger generation;

And whereas UNICEF reports that over 5000 children are dying every month as a result of malnutrition and lack of health resources;

And whereas the economic sanctions have had little effect on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction;

And whereas the United States and the United Kingdom military attacks have gone well beyond United Nations resolutions and are carried out without approval of the U. N. Security Council;

And whereas U.S. policy has had a negative effect on relations with countries in Europe and the Middle East;

Therefore be it resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association advocates reversal of United States policy on economic sanctions on Iraq;

And resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table advocates that U.S. policy should promote disarmament, and a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in all the countries of the Middle East;

And resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table advocates the greater acquisition and promotion of resources reflecting the full spectrum of views relating to Middle East policy and disarmament;

And resolved that this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, members of Congress, and the library press.

adopted by SRRT Action Council, 2/1/99, Philadelphia

Resolution on the Libraries of the Gaza Strip / West Bank

Whereas public, school, academic and other libraries in the Gaza Strip / West Bank are in very poor condition; and

Whereas the Gaza Strip / West Bank has no agency responsible for research, library development, or the preservation of library materials; and

Whereas scholars, students, teachers and the residents of the Gaza Strip / West Bank have little or no access to any recent library materials; and

Whereas there are few trained library professionals and other support staff to provide adequate library service; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association offer assistance to the libraries and librarians of the Gaza Strip / West Bank in terms of resources, advice, expertise, and consultation as needed to assist in establishing good library services in the area, and that SRRT cooperate with initiatives from other countries in the region to develop both short-term and long-range plans for library development in the Gaza Strip / West Bank.

Adopted by SRRT Action Council, 2/1/99, Philadelphia

continued from page 2

missiles (costing $1 million each) bombed a desert camp in Afghanistan, killed a few people and destroyed a few houses but accomplished nothing but making Islamic fundamentalists even more angry at the United States. The infrastructure of Yugoslavia is being ruined at the time of writing, and the civilians there will likely end up in the same position as the people of Iraq.

We may differ on why the US has gone on a bombing spree, but I hope most of us will affirm that all this bombing is not in the interest of the people of the United States. We need to protest General Powell as a representative of the US military and foreign policy elite. Please bring signs and meet outside the Opening General Session auditorium half an hour before the speech. Please try to bring your friends so that we can make a strong showing.

For further information, contact
Al Kagan, akagan@uiuc.edu
The Task Force on the Environment

TFOE is going to be 10 Years Old this Year! We are planning two programs during the ALA: The first program in two parts.

Sunday, June 27, 1999
8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Environmental Resources for Public, School, and Academic Librarians

Part 1: Reaching Out: Making Environmental Information Relevant
Librarians serve a critical role as gatekeepers of environmental information for researchers, educators, students, policy makers, community leaders, and citizens. This program will provide descriptions of resources vital to public, school, and academic librarians. Materials describing ALA's Task Force on the Environment will be provided and handouts will be plentiful!

Part 2. Environmental Justice for the New Millennium
The past two decades have shown that many of our environmental problems disproportionately impacting minority and low-income populations. This program will examine the nature and growth of the Environmental Justice Movement.

The second program with cooperation LITA GIS Interest Group
Monday, 6/28 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m
GIS as a Tool for Collaborative Spatial Decision Making: Libraries' Perspective
Presentation of Collaborative Spatial Decision Making (CSDM) as an emerging field of applied decision support involving group-based problem structuring and problem solving using capabilities of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and decision models. Two case study problems will demonstrate how CSDM can be applied in everyday situations; one involving a selection of consensus-based environmental restoration plans, and the other the assignment of resources for state primary health care services.

Feminist Task Force

Feminist Authors Breakfast
WOMEN IN PLACE
Sunday June 27, 1999 8:30-11am


Tickets for this event are available from
Dorothy Granger
5 Westmorland Place
Pasadena, CA 91103

Price and Place information to follow.

International Responsibilities Task Force

The International Responsibilities Task Force will present a program on “Searching for the ‘Enemy’: Alternative Resources for U.S. Foreign Policy” on Saturday, June 26th, 2-4 PM in New Orleans. Most Americans do not have access to alternative sources of Information on U.S. foreign policy. The mainstream media often fail to provide views critical of U.S. policy in spite of the availability of such information. Although libraries are in a perfect position to rectify this imbalance, many fail to do so. The panelists will address current crises as well as US policy sources relating to all continents. Useful handouts for collection development will be distributed. The speakers will be: Chuck D'Adamo, Co-editor of the Alternative Press Index; Tom Fenton, Director of World Views [note this is one word with capital V]; and Martha Honey, Co-director of the Foreign Policy in Focus Project, a joint project of the Institute for Policy Studies and the Interhemispheric Resources Center.

For further information, contact Al Kagan, akagan@uiuc.edu or tel. 217-333-6519.

Alternatives In Print

AIP has two programs planned for the conference which we are very excited about. Both are on Sunday 6/27, in the morning and in the afternoon as follows:
The first is

Words on the Street: Newspapers from the Homeless

"Street newspapers, produced by homeless people and their advocates, are a feature in many cities in North America and Europe. The present group of publications has its roots in earlier titles such as HOBO NEWS from the 1920s. These newspapers are little collected by libraries or used by librarians in planning services to this most needy and challenging community. Three national experts will give us the context, remind us of our duty to serve the homeless, and talk about how it can be done."

Scheduled speakers:

"Homeless in Print: A brief history of street newspapers" Norma Fay Green, Columbia College, Chicago

[invited] Lee Stringer, author, _Grand Central Winter._

"Homeless in the Library: Street newspapers, their audience(s), and how libraries serve and fail to serve the homeless" Chris Dodge, Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, Minnesota

The second program is

The Alternative Press and Intellectual Freedom

"As academic institutions abandon liberal education and scholarly learning to become production centers for industrial recruiting and research, libraries follow their lead. As maximizing profits becomes media conglomerates' sole concern, the content of publications suffers. Most American libraries are not the "cornerstones of intellectual freedom" they would like to be. Instead they are often channels of distribution for a limited set of ideas that serve the interests of the same corporate entities that dominate publishing, marketing, and the production of selection tools. A panel will discuss alternative ideas and materials seldom found in school, public or academic libraries, as well as ways of finding and selecting them. Also featured: SRRT/AIP's Almost Banned Book Awards of 1999."

Scheduled speakers:

Nancy Kranich, "A Question of Balance: The Role of Libraries in Providing Alternatives to the Mainstream Media"

Byron Anderson, a paper on the alternative press in library education

Steven R. Harris, "Discourse and Censorship: Librarians and the Ideology of Freedom."

Charles Willett, "Ignored, Unfunded and Almost Banned: Systematic Rejection of Alternative Publications by Libraries."

Just before the Street Libraries Program we will also be awarding the 1999 Jackie Eubanks Memorial Award to Ed Weber and Julie Herrada, who curate the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan. http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/SpecColl.lib/labadie.html Ed and Julie have helped make it one of the world's foremost collections of anarchist and other social protest literature.

In your schedule you will see a "Book Awards Jury" meeting - that is a meeting Monday morning to gather volunteers interested in choosing next year's Eubanks Award winner or being jurists in the new "Almost Banned Book Awards." All interested people are invited to attend.

Interested SRRT members can also come to the All Task Force Meeting on Saturday morning to get involved in AIP activities.

Finally, on Monday night from 6 to 9pm we will be having the annual Free Speech Buffet at Croissant D'Or in the French Quarter, a beautiful, spacious, classic French pastry shop. The address is 617 Ursulines St. It is next to the corner of Chartres and Royal and next to the old Angelo Brocado's ice-cream store. The Free Speech Buffet features offerings from the alternative press in each conference city (and this year, French pastry as well). We hope to see you there!

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Task Force

As always, the GLBTF has a full slate planned for New Orleans. Our elections committee is conducting the race for our elected officers, our Book Award Breakfast is highlighting a Pulitzer prize winner (Michael Cunningham for "The Hours") among others (Schulman, Sarah. "Stagestruck: Theater, AIDS, and the Marketing of Gay America"), and our Social has been moved to Sunday night so that we can all attend the President's event on Saturday evening. The Program Planning Committee has prepared a special treat in our program. In a death defying feat, they have coordinated "Daring to Save Our History: Gay and Lesbian Archives" with panel chair, Barbara Gittings. Finally, the GLBTF will hopefully present a successful petition to ALA Council for Round Table status. Please fill out the petition on the GLBTF www pages if you might consider yourself a potential member of the new body. the URL is http://isd.usc.edu/~trimmer/ala_hp.html

If you want to find us in NOLA, see our list of meetings and events in the issue.

Have a wonderful Annual Conference!

Michael J. Miller, Co-Chair, ALA/SRRT/GLBTF
more from the srrt coordinator:

No message from me would be complete without a word on the SRRT budget. At Midwinter, SRRT Treasurer Nel Ward and SRRT Secretary Elaine Harger worked diligently on the latest budget developments (namely, a much larger deficit, which we did not know about, and the ever-present problem of not getting monthly reports on time). They met with members of ALA’s Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) and SRRT liaison Satia Orange. I will spare you another litany about how frustrating this situation is. The only positive news I have is that BARC has appointed a task force to investigate the SRRT budget. Although that sounds like a negative development, we may, finally, have an audience who will listen to our concerns and realize that we have been working on this for years (decades, actually).

Since Midwinter, one of my top priorities has been working on SRRT membership. A call for volunteers on the SRRT listserv has resulted in the creation of a SRRT membership ‘committee’: Katia Roberts and Julie Miliman. Julie and Katia have agreed to receive the monthly membership updates from ALA and to attempt to contact new, renewing, and dropped members by email. New members will be sent a ‘welcome to SRRT’ message; renewed members will be thanked for renewing; and dropped members will be asked to check off the reason why they dropped their membership. (So far, this has led to a couple of dropped members rejoining SRRT!) I cannot stress enough how important this membership committee is. First, we need to acknowledge and welcome our new members, and get them involved with SRRT. Second, we need to keep our membership numbers up, and this effort will surely help. Third, it would be helpful to know why people leave SRRT. Thanks Katia and Julie for working on this!

Now, we look forward to ALA’s Annual Conference in New Orleans. As usual, we have our Saturday morning schedule on June 26: All Task Force meeting from 8:00-9:30am; followed immediately by SRRT Action Council I from 9:30-11:30am (note: the program will say this meeting ends at 12:30—we hope to finish before then.) If you are new to SRRT, the way this combined meeting works is as follows. At the All Task Force meeting, each of SRRT’s task forces has a table or two in one large room. SRRT members can attend the meetings of one task force, or ‘table hop’ and sit in on the meetings of several. At 9:30, we come together for SRRT’s first Action Council meeting. Action Council meetings are where SRRT conducts its business: discusses resolutions, hears updates on the budget and reports from task forces, etc.

On Monday, June 28, we will have a new, combined SRRT meeting: SRRT Membership Meeting from 1:00-2:00pm; followed immediately by SRRT Action Council II from 2:00-4:00pm. At the Membership Meeting, one of our top discussion items will be to approve the SRRT Constitution change for the new SRRT Councilor position (see inside this newsletter for the text to be approved.)

Other things to look forward to at Annual: we will, by then, know who our SRRT Councilor will be, and we will welcome new SRRT Action Council members. At the second Action Council meeting on Monday, we will also select new SRRT officers (Coordinator, Treasurer, and Secretary).

In closing, this is my last term as SRRT Coordinator and Action Council member. I have enjoyed working so closely with SRRT members over the last three years—this experience has been one of the most rewarding of my professional career. I look forward to helping the new SRRT leadership this summer!

Wendy Thomas, SRRT Coordinator
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LABOR HISTORY MONTH
BIBLIOGRAPHY AVAILABLE

As part of a joint project of Libraries for the Future and the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, I have done a labor studies bibliography for public libraries. Since May is Labor History Month, it’s a good time for public librarians to build on their (usually meager) collections of books about the labor movement and working class history and issues. Virtually all of the books and media on the list are in print and suitable for public library collections. There’s a special list for young people, a selection of videos and a short web bibliography in addition to books and periodicals. It’s on our library’s website at: http://www.enGLEwoodlibrary.org/newspecial.html
Comments and suggestions for next year’s revision are welcome! ---Ann Sparanese, sparanese@bccls.org
Librarians.
Ready, Dee.

In the short and pleasant book Librarians, Dee Ready describes the various responsibilities of professional librarians. She explains that librarians provide information, give story-times and work on bookmobiles. The reader learns that there are different kinds of librarians including school, public and medical.

Ready realistically describes the responsibilities of a librarian. She uses easy to read words, and she provides a glossary for the more difficult words. The photographs taken by various photographers are bright and colorful. The photos also break with typical librarian stereotypes and demonstrate diversity within the profession. The book provides instructions on how to have a story telling. It also includes a short list of Internet sites. A child working on a career project would find this book very useful.

Venta Silins
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Serving Latino Communities: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians
Alire, Camila and Archibeque, Orlando
Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

This is a thorough and invaluable resource for libraries wanting to provide library services to ethnic populations in their communities. Written mainly about public library issues and the Latino community, its examples and illustrations may also be used as stepping stones to begin to address library service issues for other ethnic populations. This book does an excellent job in outlining the steps in analyzing a community (e.g. its demographics, its needs) and also outlines the steps to develop, justify, and finance library services. Alire and Archibeque cover outreach and community relations, marketing, public relations, and collection development using very specific and pertinent examples. The writing style is succinct, yet extremely rich in information. One of the most interesting sections of this book is the chapter entitled “Partnerships” which illustrates and emphasizes cooperation between libraries and community groups (churches, art galleries and museums, police and fire departments, professional/business associations, community service clubs, friends of the library, daycare centers, athletic associations/teams) in developing mutual activities to benefit and serve the needs of the Latino community. It also gives a list of successful partnerships in libraries across the nation, from The Newark Public Library and Queens Public Library on the East Coast, to the Bensonville (Illinois) Community Public Library and Tucson-Pima Public Library (Arizona), to the East Los Angeles Public Library and Fullerton (California) Public Library.

Chock full of questionnaires, clarifications, and resources (including a helpful “Resource Directory” chapter), this book should be read by all public librarians interested in providing library services to their ethnic communities.

Carla J. Hopkins
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Reinvention of the Public Library for the 21st Century
Whitesides, William L. Sr. Editor.

William L. Whitesides couldn’t find a thorough, recent textbook about public library issues to use in his graduate class at The Catholic University School of Library and Information Science, so he had his class write one. The result, Reinvention of the Public Library for the 21st Century, is a well organized but unevenly written text whose authors summarize or enumerate issues more often than they analyze them.

An experienced librarian will find nothing new here. The overall theme of technology and change versus the public library as place is quite familiar. The authors have chosen worthwhile topics, including preservation, fundraising, and the effect on the public library of political, economical, and cultural environments. In addition to identifying key topics, each of the twelve chapters lists discussion questions and gives extensive bibliographies. The plodding pace and unsophisticated writing, however, may make this book most worthwhile as a jumping off point for one’s own exploration of public library issues.

On another level, Reinvention of the Public Library may be telling of the mediocre caliber of library student scholarship. In Chapter Six, for example, Lisa Payne introduces a discussion on user groups this way: “People make up a library, and people are the library’s reason for being. A public library is for the people and by the people. Even with today’s technology changing the world of the public library, the bottom line is still people.” Librarians may be used to wading through literary detritus to glean the gems of hidden information, but we should expect much more from the body of literature in our own field.

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Views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of ALA/SRRT. The editors reserve the right to edit submitted material as necessary or as whimsy strikes.
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http://www.jessamyn.com/srrt

SRRTAC-L
The SRRT listserv SRRTAC-L is open to all SRRT members and is a low-traffic [less than five messages a day unless there's a hot topic brewing] way of keeping up with SRRT’s issues and discussions in-between conferences. If you would like to join the SRRT listserv, send the following message to listproc@ala.org
subscribe SRRTAC-L [your first name] [your last name]