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Voices from the Past p. 13

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All SRRT members are encouraged to volunteer for groups in which they have an interest. Personal members may choose to join groups or form their own for specific purposes, in line with the goals of the Social Responsibilities Round Table. These groups may be Task Forces (usually long-term) or project groups (usually of a very short duration).

If you’re interested in being involved in an active task force, please feel free to contact the Task Force’s chair.

- **Feminist Task Force (FTF)**
  **Coordinator:** Katelyn Browne
  Provides feminist perspectives and initiates action on issues related to libraries, librarianship, information services, and ALA.
  Subscribe to the Feminist discussion list.

- **Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF)**
  **Co-Coordinators:** Lisa Gieskes and Julie Ann Winkelstein
  Fosters greater awareness of the dimensions, causes, and ways to end hunger, homelessness, and poverty.

- **International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF)**
  **Coordinators:** Al Kagan and Tom Twiss
  Advocates socially responsible positions on issues of international library concern.

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force (MLKTF)**
  **Chair:** Laluan Pringle
  Supports and advances the observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday as an American celebration.

Connect with SRRT

[https://connect.ala.org/srrt/home](https://connect.ala.org/srrt/home)  [https://www.facebook.com/SRRTALA](https://www.facebook.com/SRRTALA)  [https://twitter.com/srrt_ala](https://twitter.com/srrt_ala)
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Hello everyone and welcome to the SRRT September 2021 newsletter. This is the very first issue of the SRRT newsletter with Doreen Dixon as the co-editor and I so appreciate her expertise, thoroughness, responsiveness and enthusiasm. I look forward to continuing our work together.

In addition, I’m excited to have some great articles to offer you and I hope you find them to be insightful and thoughtful.

These are such difficult times. I hope each of you is able to find something that sustains you as we battle a pandemic, increasing barriers to voting, and a person’s right to choose what happens to their own body. As librarians, advocates and activists, I strongly believe we all have a role to play in being socially responsible and helping to make the world a more equitable, all-inclusive and kind place. Personally, I am sustained by those within and outside SRRT who exchange ideas, express opinions and are fearless in their commitment to social justice.

Thank you for being our readers and I hope you’ll reach out with your ideas and thoughts about SRRT, the newsletter, libraries and how you’re coping with these tumultuous times.

As the new co-editor of the SRRT Editorial Team, I would first like to say a big thank you to the SRRT Action Council for appointing me to the position. I am honored and proud to join a team that sees it necessary to focus on social responsibility and the significant need for it within our institutions.

I strongly believe that it is negligent for us, as information professionals, to pretend that our work does not intersect with many of our societal social issues. This is the reason for which it is pertinent to have platforms such as SRRT, with its Advocacy and Task Forces that highlight the need to address social issues. The current public health crisis that our country is experiencing, and political and social unrest, have brought to the surface many of the issues (social and economic inequities) that have been ignored for years. There is no better time than the present to do the work required to create more diverse, equitable, and inclusive spaces for today, and tomorrow.

I’m excited to start this new journey with the SRRT team. Also, I’m especially happy that I’m able to continue to work with Julie Ann Winkelstein, as we carry on with promoting the advocacy of human and economic rights, and showcase the work that is being done by information professionals and institutions that are continually striving to find solutions to our current social issues.

I look forward to contributing to making SRRT a continual space that facilitates the development of more diverse, equitable, and inclusive institutions, and communities.
Here’s hoping that when this issue of the SRRT Newsletter is published we’ll all be cheering that the ALA Executive Board agreed with SRRT’s declaration that holding an association-wide meeting in Texas does not align with our shared values, racial and social justice, and democracy. We’ll be engaged in finding ways to support the library community and social justice activists in Texas (and other states that pass laws that clash with SRRT’s role as the “social conscience” of ALA) and feeling grateful to be part of an organization that promotes social responsibility.

When we celebrated SRRT’s 50th anniversary in 2019, Coordinator Charles E. Kratz, Jr. gave us a mission statement for the next half century: “SRRT is more important than ever in our profession and in today’s society as we fight harder than ever for democratic principles and progressive priorities. Concern for human and economic rights was an important element in the founding of SRRT and remains an urgent concern today. Libraries and librarians must recognize and help solve social problems and inequities in order to carry out their mandate to work for the common good and bolster democracy.”

In 2020, induced to innovate by COVID-19, Coordinator April Sheppard introduced the first SRRT Afternoon of Social Justice, with sessions on Native American Treaty Rights, Democracy in the Time of COVID, and Herstory through Activism: Women, Libraries, and Activism that were officially sponsored by ALA but required neither registration fees nor even ALA membership. 2021’s second Afternoon of Social Justice followed the same model and, with continued monthly virtual meetings, a planned early 2022 mini-conference on homelessness, financial support for progressive library workers to attend ALA conferences, and a third Afternoon of Social Justice, we plan to continue to expand opportunities for the LIS community to come together to focus on social justice issues.

I’m grateful for the opportunity to have a part in leading SRRT for its second 50 years, and am especially appreciative of the support of an Action Council and a membership made up, as usual, of committed advocates for social justice. I’m looking forward to hearing from lots of SRRT folks about ideas and strategies and goals, and to doing all I can to effectively represent us within ALA.
Libraries Leaving No One Behind

Maria Lagasca, MLIS, Library Manager, Dauphin County Library System

In the past year and a half, I left a small-town library on the Gulf Coast and moved over 1000 miles north to pursue my dreams and have some sense of control amidst the pandemonium going on around me. My husband had also lost his eight-year-old job and we now had to survive with two kids, one being a newborn, and with my meager $19,000 salary. The solution: to stay positive and pursue the unconventional by leaving everything we knew for something we only thought, at the time, would be better. Having just received my MLIS, I was eager for more responsibilities and ripe to gamble. As I entered my new library home, my heart was expecting a similar occupation, education, and my costly amenities. As a librarian, I am often struggling with allowing this warmth to consume me while I know many people are more consumed with the notion of whether they can apply for jobs tomorrow, schedule a vaccine, read important emails, communicate with family, friends, and employers, whether they will be versed in tomorrow's school lesson, and whether they will find solace in their community. Like the virus, which swiftly changed and even uprooted many lives, the closing of libraries swiftly ended the race for equity and inclusion. While diverse solutions were created, concerns regarding equity and inclusion are up for display more than the past decade. Libraries serve as the stage and librarians are directors directing a drama titled, No One Left Behind, while we fight to keep our own delicate minds.

Before leaving the Gulf Coast and before the library partially opened again, I received many calls inquiring when we would open and whether we had a time limit for members utilizing the library. Many needed to file or check the status of their unemployment. Several needed to find work or communicate with their work, many of whom have used email to relay updates. Updates were something on everyone's mind, including my own, but I had internet and a computer at home. I feel a slight disgust admitting I could check my email from anywhere using my phone too. Not everyone, unfortunately, shares the same convenience. Most days I also received calls from parents requesting a computer and or internet service so their children can attend their class virtually and complete their assignments. My daughter’s classroom received laptops and she was able to keep up with classwork because I had the internet at home, but what good use is a laptop or tablet if there is no internet? Then there were calls about needing to check out items because they had read all their books at home. I was encouraged to offer our eBook platforms even though I knew many of these members had no access to the internet let alone a tablet. One time a week, I would receive a call asking about the truthfulness of a news heading they had seen, read, or received from a relative or neighbor. I was an agent of truth, an advantage and service I held due to my truthfulness of a news heading they had seen, read, modified. Must we end all creative accommodations many library minds have cultivated these past two years? No. We must reward those diligent minds as well. Curbside is a service which should continue long after this pandemic. Take home crafts build family time which instills appreciation for each other and the homes we often leave behind for life. The same goes for virtual story times and story walks, life slows down and nature and warmth consumes us.

As a librarian, I am often struggling with allowing this warmth to consume me while I know many people are more consumed with the notion of whether they can apply for jobs tomorrow, schedule a vaccine, read important emails, communicate with family, friends, and employers, whether they will be versed in tomorrow’s school lesson, and whether they will find solace in their community. Like the virus, which swiftly changed and even uprooted many lives, the closing of libraries swiftly ended the race for equity and inclusion. While diverse solutions were created, concerns regarding equity and inclusion are up for display more than the past decade. Libraries serve as the stage and librarians are directors directing a drama titled, No One Left Behind, while we fight to keep our own delicate minds.

Open libraries allow for people to keep up with the pace, especially during a pandemic and when income inequality is prevalent.

I was an agent of truth, an advantage and service I held due to my occupation, education, and my costly amenities. Now here I am as a manager texting staff about weather updates and realizing several staff do not receive text or have limited internet service at home to check their emails. I must remember, like I had to remember at my previous employment, everyone is trying to not get left behind. More so, many people have already been left behind and are just trying not to be in a place where they feel unmotivated or unable to reach the many running in a universal pace. Open libraries allow for people to keep up with the pace, especially during a pandemic and when income inequality is prevalent. Many people running behind are rarely rewarded by the universe for calling the library wanting to find a job or to access school emails and to cut the wounds more, many marginalized people are easily overlooked when lockdowns occur or when services are halted. The suffering suffers more when libraries are closed and access to the moving universe is discontinued and even

Lessons Learned

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Library Work in Challenging Times:

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Library Work in Challenging Times:

Lessons Learned

What have been the greatest challenges in meeting the needs of your library community in the last year and a half? What have you learned that will continue to inform your library work? What social justice issues have been highlighted or have emerged and how have you addressed them?
During the extended COVID-19 pandemic, the whole American society has stood together to fight against the invisible ripper. In contrast to their white neighbors only stuck in the struggle with the inhumane threat, Asian American people confronted another enemy in the warfare: racism. Probably fostered by some political leaders’ stigmatization of the disease as the “Chinese virus,” the proliferation of hate crimes aimed at Asian Americans struck the whole country.[i] Parallel to the exacerbation of racial relations during the pandemic, I encountered an annoying heading, “Asian Flu,” which refers to the H2B2 Influenza infection, in the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). I intend to illustrate the legacy of racism and anti-Asian sentiments in the library world.

In 1957, the first case of the H2B2 Influenza infection was believed to be found in Guangxi province of China. In following years, it had been found quickly affecting people in other parts of Asia, such as Hong Kong. Unlike communist China, which was contained by capitalist countries, several significant ports in those regions maintained intense commercial connection with the United States. As a consequence of the accelerated economic globalization in the postwar world, the virus got a “free ride” to impact counties on the other side of the Pacific. In the summer of 1957, “the first community epidemics in the United States occurred in early August in several southeastern states,” which swiftly “evolved” to a serious public health issue.[ii] In the remainder of that year, the infection of this disease got even worse. As the former Surgeon General Leroy E. Burney notes, “In the fall of 1957, the United States experienced the most extensive influenza epidemic in 40 years.”[iii] Reacting to the severe menace of the Influenza to the wellness and wealth of ordinary people in the United States, the public health authorities on both federal and state levels took immediate action to hinder its ramifications.

Resonating with the infection of the H2B2 Influenza affecting the whole world, the relevant metadata was integrated into the LCSH. According to its records, it was originally created as a new heading in the format of “Asiatic Flu” on Feb 11, 1986, and then transformed to the less offensive format of “Asian Flu” on January 22, 1993.[iv] The transition from the “Asiatic” to the “Asian” Flu indicates the improvement of racial relations in post-WWII American society. Although the significant progress of substituting “Asiatic” with “Asian” in the heading, the proximity of the “Asian” and “Flu” in the heading may remind readers and library workers of another prominent example of stigmatizing foreign countries and people in the LCSH: “Spanish Flu.” Nowadays, its relevant heading in the LCSH has undergone a change from the “Spanish Flu/Influenza Epidemics, 1918-1919” to “Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1919.”[v] In contrast to the entire neutralization of the format of that heading from which the nationality was removed, the current format of “Asian flu” still retains its original meaning. The divergence of the changing meaning of the two headings, featured by the format of relating a particular human group to the respective diseases, may reflect the steadfastly stereotyped and stigmatized impression of Asian people in the United States.

Nowadays, the Library of Congress indeed takes an active stand on renewing headings embodying discriminatory and offensive meanings in the LCSH. Their change represents the progress of social justice in its workplace culture. In March 2021, almost one century after the notoriously mass violence and racial assault aiming at the African American community and the “Black Wall Street” in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Library of Congress accepted the University of Oklahoma’s proposal and “agreed to update its subject heading from 'Tulsa Race Riot' to ‘Tulsa Race Massacre,’” thus changing how the massacre is listed in subject headings in library systems worldwide.”[vi] Its decision may resonate with President Biden’s speech on the 100th anniversary of the incident. “This was not a riot. This was a massacre among the worst in our history, but not the only one.”[vii] In light of the Library of Congress’s progressive attitudes to the social justice-relevant heading in 2021 respectively, the change in the past decade reflects its leadership’s expectation for abating racial discrimination in contemporary American society.

Situated in the trajectory of renewing headings in advocacy for social justice in American society in the past and present, the persistence of the heading “Asian Flu” in the LCSH, as emphasized throughout this essay, has probably profoundly impacted American people’s perception of the epidemic. As the prestigious library scholar Emily Drabinski addresses, “while we might wish that LC acknowledged White as a racial category and marker for domination, it does not. LC is rooted in historical structures of White supremacy; as such, the catalog presumes White to be the normative term.”[viii] In light of the dualism of the “Asian Flu” as a heading and a happening, its persistence and prominence in library catalogs may make perfect proof of Drabinski’s...
SRRT Statement on Meeting in Texas

SRRT calls on the ALA Executive Board to cancel LibLearnX as an in-person conference in Texas and instead host a virtual meeting.

The ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table calls on ALA leadership to take action in support of our shared values of social responsibilities, racial and social justice, and democracy, as well as safeguarding the health and safety of the ALA membership and LIS community by cancelling the in-person LibLearnX meeting in January 2022 in San Antonio, Texas.

The state of Texas has recently passed the historically most restrictive law concerning access to abortions, and the most restrictive voting rights law in the nation.

In May, Texas passed Senate Bill 8, restricting abortions after 6 weeks and actively incentivizing lawsuits against those who provide abortions. The United Nations Human Rights Council has declared that S.B. 8 “endangers women with unprecedented obstacles to safe abortion.” Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court Sonia Sotomayor has called the Texas law an “unconstitutional law engineered to prohibit women from exercising their constitutional rights.

In addition, Texas has passed S.B. 1, titled An Act Relating to Election Integrity and Security. This bill is widely recognized as a voting suppression measure. MOVE Texas has called this law “an undemocratic attack on the freedom to vote” while Texas Senator Carol Alvarado has called it a “threat to democracy everywhere.”

Both of these laws are a threat to our democracy. By holding LLX in San Antonio in 2022, ALA will in effect endorse these anti-democratic laws. ALA has long been a proponent of women’s and voting rights, including the 1971 resolution on Equal Opportunity for Women in Librarianship, the 1974 resolution on Support for the Equal Rights Amendment, and the 2012 resolution against voter suppression in America. We note the precedent when ALA moved its 1979 Midwinter Meeting from Chicago to Washington, DC because Illinois had not ratified ERA.

Further, due to the current tragic wave of Covid-19, we advise that holding the in-person LibLearnX meeting unnecessarily risks the health and safety of conference attendees and ALA staff as well as the staff of the venues that support the in-person event.

We ask the ALA Executive Board to move expeditiously to convert the scheduled San Antonio 2022 LibLearnX meeting from in-person to virtual.

Passed by SRRT Action Council September 2, 2021

Endorsed by the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship September 2, 2021

SRRT Establishes the Herb Biblo Outstanding Leadership Award for Social Justice & Equality

The Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) of the American Library Association has established the Herb Biblo Outstanding Leadership Award for Social Justice & Equality. Herb Biblo was a long-time member and supporter of SRRT from the early days of SRRT in the 1970s until his death in 2018. He also served as ALA Treasurer from 1980 - 1984 and as ALA Councilor for many years alongside his wife Mary Biblo.

The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual for outstanding leadership in promoting social justice and/or equality within the library profession. Leadership can be demonstrated by accomplishments through the Social Responsibilities Round Table or other ALA bodies, socially responsible groups within state, provincial, regional, or city library organizations, and/or international library organizations. Preference will be given to persons who have had the widest impact, including influence on the greater society outside the library environment. To be eligible for this award, individuals must be members of SRRT or other library organizations or groups with similar goals and objectives.


Contact: Monica Chapman, Program Coordinator, Coretta Scott King Book Awards and ODLOS Round Tables, ODLOS 3122804297 · mlchapman@ala.org

Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF)

Submitted by Julie Ann Winkelstein, HHPTF co-coordinator

The HHPTF continues to work on resources and a book list for creating children’s and young adult library collections that provide accurate, respectful and meaningful books related to homelessness and poverty. We welcome any suggestions for titles or related resources.

We also encourage library staff to support and advocate for community members who are experiencing homelessness and poverty. Support can be as simple as being willing to engage and listen to your community members, both inside and outside the library. It can be easy to make assumptions about people based on where they shelter or how they look, and stereotypes abound when it comes to people who are unhoused. But without knowing a person’s story, these stereotypes only create barriers to respectful and responsive library services. Listening and not making assumptions are key aspects of serving all of your community members well.

For some insights into how cities, libraries and organizations are addressing homelessness and poverty, especially during these challenging times, please check out our blog at: https://hhptf.org/

And if your library is considering going fine-free, here’s an Urban Libraries Council map of libraries that have already done so: https://www.urbanlibraries.org/resources/fine-free-map

Finally, here’s a map and some extensive information from Whole Person Librarianship about libraries that are employing the skills of social workers, in a range of positions, from full-time social worker to peer navigator to social work interns: https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1YFKALP_A_JhbYkxb4fnCfKrw8II=4
What’s happening at SRRT and around ALA continues on p. 9

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and Dr. Renate Chancellor. Jason Reynolds, Cicely Lewis, Ibi Zoboi, Charlamagne the God, Tamika Mallory, Dr. Moreover, NCAAL 11 was blessed with a plethora of phenomenal speakers including Nikki Giovanni, and several others. Slay author Erica Armstrong Dunbar; Sharon Draper; Terry McMillan; renowned poet and poet Wole Soyinka; The Other Black Girl author Zakiya Dalia Harris; She Came to Dr. Keisha N. Blain and Dr. Ibram X. Kendi of Four Hundred Souls fame; Nigerian author In addition to the sessions, there were several author talks. Featured authors included

Other sessions focused on STEM, self-care, community outreach, DEI, digital collections, professional development, services to children and teens, graphic novels, Black films, health, and technology. In addition to the sessions, there were several author talks. Featured authors included Dr. Keisha N. Blain and Dr. Ibram X. Kendi of Four Hundred Souls fame; Nigerian author and poet Wole Soyinka; The Other Black Girl author Zakiya Dalia Harris; She Came to Slay author Erica Armstrong Dunbar; Sharon Draper; Terry McMillan; renowned poet Nikki Giovanni, and several others. Moreover, NCAAL 11 was blessed with a plethora of phenomenal speakers including Jason Reynolds, Cicely Lewis, Ibi Zoboi, Charlamagne the God, Tamika Mallory, Dr. Michael Eric Dyson. Closing speakers included Clifton Taulbert, Hannibal B. Johnson, and Dr. Renate Chancellor.

Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)

Submitted by Brenda Johnson-Perkins, Executive BCALA Secretary and Michele T. Fenton, Assistant BCALA Secretary

The Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA) held its 11th National Conference of African American Librarians (NCAAL) on July 27th-August 1st. The conference was originally scheduled for 2020 in Tulsa, Oklahoma but was postponed due to COVID-19. While the caucus hoped for an in-person conference this year, the ongoing pandemic prompted the decision to go virtual. “Sankofa” which is Akan for “go back and get it”, was a recurring motif doing the conference as well as part of its theme: Culture Keepers XI: Sankofa Experience: Inspired by Our Past, Ignoring Our Future.

Though virtual, NCAAL 11 was fantastic. During the social hour on the first day, attendees participated in a Black history knowledge bowl hosted by Jamaal Brown, the founder and CEO of Black365; and Twanna Hodge, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Librarian at the University of Florida and co-chair of the NCAAL 11 Programming Committee. Participants answered trivia questions on African Americans in entertainment, science, politics, the African Diaspora, and other subjects. It was an extremely joyous and fun-filled event, and a great way to end the first day of the conference.

NCAAL 11 featured a wide variety of exciting sessions for participants to choose from. Attendees learned the importance of heritage collections from Eddie Hughes’s “The Future of a Black Heritage Collection at a Historically Black College and University” and the history of Black librarianship from “Digging Up Our Past and Cultivating Our Future from the Seeds of Early Black Librarianship” by Tracy Crawford, Rhonda Evans, Mussa Jatta, and A.J. Muhammed; and from Dr. Shaundra Walker’s “Ann Allen Shockley: An Activist Librarian for Black Special Collections”.

Another highlight of the sessions was a panel discussion by Baltimore County Public Library staff members sharing their experiences creating and presenting virtual anti-racism storytimes – offered twice a month to introduce young children to the concepts of race, diversity and inclusion through picture books, crafts, rhymes, and songs. The goal is that parents would continue the conversation with their children to empower them to confront racism and to celebrate differences. Panelists provided framework for other library systems to start this initiative in their own communities.

Other sessions focused on STEM, self-care, community outreach, DEI, digital collections, professional development, services to children and teens, graphic novels, Black films, health, and technology.

In addition to the sessions, there were several author talks. Featured authors included Dr. Keisha N. Blain and Dr. Ibram X. Kendi of Four Hundred Souls fame; Nigerian author and poet Wole Soyinka; The Other Black Girl author Zakiya Dalia Harris; She Came to Slay author Erica Armstrong Dunbar; Sharon Draper; Terry McMillan; renowned poet Nikki Giovanni, and several others.

Moreover, NCAAL 11 was blessed with a plethora of phenomenal speakers including Jason Reynolds, Cicely Lewis, Ibi Zoboi, Charlamagne the God, Tamika Mallory, Dr. Michael Eric Dyson. Closing speakers included Clifton Taulbert, Hannibal B. Johnson, and Dr. Renate Chancellor.

During the NCAAL Awards Ceremony held on July 29th, several BCALA members were recognized for their outstanding contributions to librarianship, libraries, professional achievement, and to BCALA:

BCALA Advocacy Award -- Ida McGhee
BCALA Appreciation Award -- Carolyn L. Garnes & Brenda Johnson-Perkins
BCALA Professional Achievement Award -- Michele T. Fenton
BCALA Distinguished Service to the Profession Award -- Ida Williams Thompson
BCALA/Baker & Taylor Library Support Staff Award -- Anita Bass & Raeven McFadden
BCALA Trailblazer Award -- Shirley A. Coaston

Another highlight for BCALA this year is its upcoming book, The Black Librarian in America: Reflections, Resistance, and Reawakening. An update to previous volumes (The Black Librarian in America, The Black Librarian in America Revisited, and The 21st Century Black Librarian in America: Issues and Challenges), this new edition focuses on leadership, history, racism, recruitment, identity, and activism.

What is awesomely amazing about this latest edition is that it's edited by an all-woman editorial team: Shauntee Burns-Simpson, BCALA President; Nichelle M. Hayes, BCALA Vice-President; Dr. Shaundra Walker, Georgia College; and Dr. Ana Ndumu, University of Maryland.


Overall, 2021 has been a very triumphant and prosperous year for BCALA.

About BCALA

The Black Caucus of the American Library Association serves as an advocate for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services and resources to the nation’s African American community; and provides leadership for the recruitment and professional development of African American librarians.

BCALA Trailblazer Award -- Shirley A. Coaston

BCALA Distinguished Service to the Profession Award -- Ida Williams Thompson

BCALA Appreciation Award -- Carolyn L. Garnes & Brenda Johnson-Perkins

BCALA Advocacy Award -- Ida McGhee

BCALA Action Council Minutes

To view Action Council minutes please visit: https://www.ala.org/rt/srrt/minutes

CALANDAR

SRRT ACTION COUNCIL MEETINGS

SEPT. 28
1:00 p.m. Central (Tuesday)

OCT. 28
1:00 p.m. Central (Thursday)

NOV. 30
12:00 p.m. Central (Tuesday)

Interested in joining us? Have questions or comments? We’d love to hear from you!

Julie Ann Winkelstein: jwinkel@utk.edu & Lisa Gieskes: lisagieskes@yahoo.com

Updates continued from p. 8

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Denatured Dialectical Differences: Lessons Learned

Kevin Vickers, MLS, MAEd, NBCT-R, School Library Media Coordinator, Shiloh Valley Elementary School

One of my greatest challenges I had last year was that the Spanish Dual-Language immersion (DLI) teachers at my school requested materials written and/or illustrated by their country’s leading authors/illustrators. Finding trade books written in Spanish like Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown, The Diary of a Wimpy Kid series by Jeff Kinney, and The Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling is easy. However, having studied several years of Castilian Spanish (high school and university), I didn’t fully comprehend their request until I dove deeper in searching for materials. After all, I had been a School Library Media Coordinator (SLMC) for about 10 years with nearly every other language, but this was a new challenge for me.

For the past several years, I have been awarded an OMNOVA Foundation Grant to purchase Spanish materials for DLI classes and for our Hispanic students. The OMNOVA Foundation Grant strives to bring communities together nationwide, funding specific projects in: education, health and welfare, civic, and arts and culture. This is important because all of our Spanish literature materials account for less than one percent of the entire collection, so there is a definite need when considering that 33% of our student population is either Hispanic or in one of our DLI classes.

Destiny is our Online Public Catalogue and tracks statistical data that can include who has materials, materials that were put on hold, and inventory. On an average we have between 75-100 students in our 3rd through 5th grade DLI classes. The majority of these students are not native Spanish speakers. My school’s Spanish DLI teachers come from Spain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, etc. With the help of an American native speaker, they teach full Spanish immersion and English languages. The need to have authentic Hispanic literature is very real. Collier and Thomas (2012) found in their research that it takes five to seven years to master these skills in a language different from the home language.

To find resources, I used Boolean searches with keyword operators and/or modifiers that include AND, NOT, and OR. Searching operators included Spanish, library bound, materials found in each country like Colombia. Spanish library vendors include but are not limited to: Reforma, Barnes & Nobles, Lectorum, Follett, and PermaBound. The more I searched using English terms, the more frustrated I became because there were very few results.

My current school (formally Shiloh Elementary) earned US National Blue Ribbon School status by the US Department of Education in 1999 and 2013. Researching further, I contacted other Blue Ribbon schools that had high Hispanic populations in hopes of discovering what vendors and/or techniques they used to find Spanish resources. With several replies, nothing suggested more information than finding trade books already in the current market. Some DLI educators understood my plight and said that when they traveled home during a holiday they would “fill up” an empty suitcase with materials from their South American homes. While our Parent Teacher Association is phenomenal, they were not simply able to provide me with airplane tickets and hotel stay, so I could purchase library books.

Continuing my search, I asked DLI teachers in my school where they attended school. Almost all were privileged enough to attend some form of Catholic school. I shifted my research for resource materials these South American schools used. After emailing several schools in different countries, I quickly became frustrated because they had information they were not privy to share. I then asked Catholic Schools in the US for help and even reached out to the Archdiocese of New York because of their interest in Hispanic affairs with no luck.

Then one day while providing ready reference assistance in English for DLI teachers, I was struck with an epiphany! I asked the teachers whether their library books were purchased, borrowed, or purchased? I quickly realized that the answer was not simply able to provide me with airplane tickets and hotel stay, so I could purchase library books.

If it is important to teach children different Hispanic dialectical differences, shouldn’t vendors provide resources in America for purchase?

I had been encouraged to seek out only library bound materials because of reduced media center funding. A book needed to last; however, this was not a strict rule imposed by my district. It was one that I had established. Up until this point, I was also only searching using English keywords and not Spanish because I had felt that the search engine would automatically translate. This does not occur all the time. I was able to order 310 materials by shifting key words used; however, they are still in Castilian Spanish.

If I were in charge of purchasing these materials, I would have had to seek out materials in both Castilian and Latin Spanish. If a teacher asked for a book written in Spanish for their class, I would need to search for that particular language and not ask them to provide an English equivalent. The need for authentic materials for my Hispanic students is critical. Although my school is very fortunate to have a grant, the need for more is crucial.

OMNOVA’s OMNOVA Foundation Grant strives to bring communities together nationwide, funding specific projects in: education, health and welfare, civic, and arts and culture. This is important because all of our Spanish literature materials account for less than one percent of the entire collection, so there is a definite need when considering that 33% of our student population is either Hispanic or in one of our DLI classes.

Destiny is our Online Public Catalogue and tracks statistical data that can include who has materials, materials that were put on hold, and inventory. On an average we have between 75-100 students in our 3rd through 5th grade DLI classes. The majority of these students are not native Spanish speakers. My school’s Spanish DLI teachers come from Spain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, etc. With the help of an American native speaker, they teach full Spanish immersion and English languages. The need to have authentic Hispanic literature is very real. Collier and Thomas (2012) found in their research that it takes five to seven years to master these skills in a language different from the home language.

To find resources, I used Boolean searches with keyword operators and/or modifiers that include AND, NOT, and OR. Searching operators included Spanish, library bound, materials found in each country like Colombia. Spanish library vendors include but are not limited to: Reforma, Barnes & Nobles, Lectorum, Follett, and PermaBound. The more I searched using English terms, the more frustrated I became because there were very few results.

My current school (formally Shiloh Elementary) earned US National Blue Ribbon School status by the US Department of Education in 1999 and 2013. Researching further, I contacted other Blue Ribbon schools that had high Hispanic populations in hopes of discovering what vendors and/or techniques they used to find Spanish resources. With several replies, nothing suggested more information than finding trade books already in the current market. Some DLI educators understood my plight and said that when they traveled home during a holiday they would “fill up” an empty suitcase with materials from their South American homes. While our Parent Teacher Association is phenomenal, they were not simply able to provide me with airplane tickets and hotel stay, so I could purchase library books.

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On August 2, 2021, in El Paso, a fabric wall titled "In Remembrance / En Recuerdo," was installed at Ascarate Park marking the two-year anniversary of the August 3rd, 2019 Walmart shooting. The fabric wall is intended to communicate messages to the families of the 23 people who were lost on that day.

The "In Remembrance / En Recuerdo" is located across the street from the El Paso County Healing Garden on the fence on the right hand side as you enter the park. Ramona Juárez, a retired teacher, came up with the idea for the fabric mural. She said she wanted to create it "to remind families from the tragedy that in the second year since the incident; that, we have not forgotten about them or the loved ones that they lost."

The massive message mural was created in five days. It took two days for six volunteers to sew it. Thereafter, during a three-day period, we took it to the El Paso Downtown Farmers and Art Market in front of the El Paso History Museum; the next day, it was at the YISD Central Office; and on Saturday, it was at Bassett Place (Center) in Central El Paso where people from all walks of life signed it.

The 70-foot fabric mural was created in conjunction with the opening of El Paso County Healing Garden, which is across the street from the fabric mural and West of the exit from Ascarate Park. The Healing Garden opened on August 3, 2021. The opening was televised on El Paso County’s YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2T-AibLCbA

For additional information, please contact Dr. Miguel Juárez at: 915-202-1649.

We would like to thank Linda Zavala and Anastacio Zavala for contributing to this project; as well as Erica Marin, Curator, at the El Paso History Museum; Ysleta Independent School District (Y.I.S.D.) District Affairs Director, Monica Bustillos and Associate Superintendent of Public Relations, Dan Martinez, as well as Marina Salazar-Morales, Public Relations; Ms. Alejandra Contreras, Bassett Place Mall Manager and her staff and security staff; as well as the volunteers who help set up the mural at Ascarate Park: El Paso County Parks and Recreation staff, Trish Winstead, Joseph Martinez and Yvette Hinojosa.
Libraries and archives acted swiftly to protect their staff and patrons as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the United States in March 2020. While their buildings were closed, institutions creatively employed other means of meeting patrons’ needs: contactless book pickups, bookmobiles, virtual programs, and online reference services filled in the gaps. Employers had no choice but to adopt video conferencing and work-from-home policies. Librarians, when able, dedicated their time to remote projects, built LibGuides, and worked on their backlogs.

And thankfully, many of us figured it out. The threats of loneliness, joblessness, and the desire to remain connected to our interests drove us all to use technologies we may not have chosen a year prior. As we continue the re-opening process, it benefits libraries to count on these newly tech-literate populations when planning virtual programming.

The Remaining Foundational Problems

The quick adaptation of technologies has not helped everyone, however. While we can celebrate the silver linings of this time of tumult, we must remember the millions of our patrons without high-speed internet. It may be tempting to restructure our priorities to meet the newly established virtual audiences, but we cannot leave behind 25% of seniors, 14% of people with no college education, 10% of the rural population, and 9% of Black Americans who do not currently use the internet.[i] I see three primary methods to meet the needs of this population: (1) continue in-person programming and outreach, to connect with the population in the means currently available or preferable to them; (2) advocate for affordable broadband service; and (3) continue to supply educational materials to teach people to use and find value in our new offerings.

That is easy enough to say, but of course, resources are scarce.

Remaining Advanced Problems

One of the best outcomes of the pandemic has been the adoption of new technologies by institutions that were previously reluctant to adopt them. It was too costly not to adopt previously cost-prohibitive technologies and hire new IT consultants. What is still undetermined is how important institutions will see these costs in non-emergency

Quick Adaptations: How the COVID-19 Pandemic Brought Users to the Internet, and the Problems It Exposed

Marilyn Creswell, MLIS
This issue is edited and produced by a new group of people, and there will be some changes to look for.

No one can be as in touch with SRRT concerns as Sandy Berman, the previous editor. He promises to continue to help, and has contributed to this issue what I think is a list of SRRT’s most urgent concerns:

1. Unionization/workplace democracy
   (See “how to recognize a union organizing attempt”...does your group have an “unusual social consciousness” or use a “strange vocabulary” in front of the boss?)

2. Unemployment/job-sharing/reduced Library School intake (It might interest you to know that while N.Y.C. is laying off 1500 teachers, Philadelphia had hired 900 new teachers due to a three year old union contract specifying class size limits of 33 pupils.)

3. Greater, people-oriented access and service...much wider representation of little ‘alternative, non-conglomerate products in library collections; development of more survival-type info-delivery; popular cataloging, especially on the public library plane, involving less research/academic-gearered rubbish, like ISBD and “cm.” sizes as well as more analytics, catch-title entries, and contemporary 20th century subject terms (let’s use this newsletter to get these innovations out to the rest of the profession)

4. Overcome the elitism, classism, etc. endemic to the whole profession (amen.)

As the pandemic recedes and our resources are split between the physical and the digital, will we continue working on these issues? Will we build technological or analog fixes? Will libraries be innovators, early adopters, or left behind?

Library Work in Challenging Times: Lessons Learned

continued from pp. 7 & 10

Denatured Dialectical Differences: Lessons Learned

I learned that I was biased in thinking that all materials used in South American countries were at least hardback when this is not the case. I also was incorrect in thinking that using English phrases wouldn’t make a difference when it does.

As I reflect on this action research, it would be interesting to see, as a social justice issue, if there is any professional research conducted in this area due to the increasing Hispanic population across the country. Additional attention can focus on why materials are predominantly translated in Castilian Spanish and not focus on the richness of each country’s culture. If it is important to teach children different Hispanic dialectical differences, shouldn’t vendors provide resources in America for purchase?

Recent Library of Congress Subject Heading Change

Jane Cothron and SRRT Newsletter Team


This recent change, along with others that preceded it, provides evidence of the overwhelming need for the Library of Congress to address the issue of biased language used in its subject headings. An issue that was heralded by Sandford Berman in his 1971 monograph—Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People (P&A)—and echoed by the “Change the Subject” movement. Watch the 54-minute documentary film about the movement here: https://www.library.dartmouth.edu/digital/digital-collections/change-the-subject

Cataloging “Asian Flu” is Creating Racial Knowledge

It is expected that the transition of the “Asian Flu” from a racialized perception into a catalog heading could take his peers’ notice of the issue. Library workers should get rid of abusing the controversial heading in their everyday workflow. As the influential library scholar Hope Olson points out, “tools such as LCSH can be used to open up the exclusionary cultural supremacy of the mainstream patriarchal, Euro-settler culture… each individual librarian is responsible for LCSH in its standard form and, to an even greater degree, in its application.”[ix]

At this moment, Patricia “Patty” Wong was inaugurated as the first Asian American president of the American Library Association in 2021. Her inauguration represents the milestone achievement of Asian American librarians in promoting the cultural and racial diversity of the library profession and its leadership. However, the consistency of the heading “Asian Flu” may indicate it is still an endless enterprise to eradicate bias and injustice in the library world. I may paraphrase Karl Marx’s statement in The Communist Manifesto: Library workers of the world, unite, advance, and advocate for social justice in your workplace and workflow!


Call for Submissions

The SRRT Newsletter is always looking for good articles, essays, and letters to the editor. The next submission deadline is November 30, 2021.

The SRRT Newsletter invites submissions from library and information workers, students, educators, and all others who recognize the critical importance of libraries in addressing community and social issues. Please send your submissions electronically in one of the following formats: MS Word, RTF, PDF, or plain text pasted into the body of an email. Submissions should be 500 to 1,000 words and should include the article title, author’s name and title, and school or place of work (optional). Graphics are encouraged. If using images that are already on the Internet, the URL of the image and a caption or description may be added to the text of the submission.

Please email original submissions to SRRT Newsletter Co-Editors Julie Winkelstein and Doreen Dixon at srrt.newsletter.content@gmail.com, indicating “SRRT Newsletter” within the subject line of your email. A confirmation of receipt will be sent in a timely manner.

Submissions to SRRT Newsletter Reviews

Submissions for book or media reviews should be sent to Madeline Veitch, SRRT Newsletter Reviews Editor, indicating "Reviews" in the subject line of your email.

Submissions should be sent electronically in MS-Word format or a Word compatible format. Reviewers should keep their reviews to 300-500 words; any length much shorter or longer should be discussed with the reviews editor prior to submission. Reviewers should avoid conflicts of interest. Full disclosure should be made to the reviews editor when appropriate.

Submissions to SRRT Newsletter Letters to the Editors

The Newsletter invites readers to submit letters to the editors relating to social responsibilities and libraries. The letters should be respectful and thoughtful, either respond to specific content in the newsletter or include suggestions for topics of interest to SRRT members to be addressed in future issues. We will only publish letters of more than 200 words in exceptional circumstances.

Letters may be edited for length, grammar, and accuracy. You will be notified if your letter will be published.

Submit your letters to Laura Koltutsky. Please indicate "SRRT Newsletter Letter to Editors" in the subject line of your email. You may submit your letter as an attachment in one of these formats: .doc, docx; or in the body of your email message.

Letters must include your full name, address, a telephone number and email address if you have one. This is for us only -- we don't share this information.

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