



# SRRT

Social Responsibilities  
Round Table

EST. 1969

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## Newsletter



# Hopes and Dreams for the New Year

# ADVOCACY & TASK FORCES

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All SRRT members are encouraged to join Task Forces that interest them.

If you're interested in being involved, please feel free to contact the Task Force's chair.

NEW

[Elder Justice Task Force \(EDJF\)](#)

**Coordinators:** [Joseph Winberry](#) and [Kristina Shiroma](#)

Seeks to partner with adults 65 and older, libraries, and communities to identify, understand, and address the needs of this growing and diverse population.

- [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 \(HHPTE\)](#)

**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:** [Mark Hudson](#) and [Mark Rosenzweig](#)

Advocates socially responsible positions on issues of international library concern.

- [Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force \(MLKTF\)](#)

**Chair:** [LaJuan Pringle](#)

Supports and advances the observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday as an American celebration.

Connect with SRRT

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## SRRT Action Council Coordinator

Olivia Blake

# Small Actions Help Make Big Dreams Come True



*Olivia Blake*

Last newsletter, I wrote about community, and showing up. I wrote about vulnerability. And let me tell you, like many of you, I'm feeling quite vulnerable as I write this, the day after the latest U.S. presidential inauguration. As we get knee-deep into 2025, the weight of uncertainty looms large, but so does the opportunity to make meaningful change. My hope is that this year will be one of unity—particularly among those of us who share a commitment to social justice.

The road ahead is not an easy one. We are facing challenges that only promise to proliferate: political turmoil, environmental crises, inequity and cruelty at every turn. But in the face of these dark days, I still believe the most powerful tool we have is our collective strength. When we come together, under the banner of a common vision for a fairer and more just world, we can begin to rise above the forces working so hard to divide us.

For 2025, my dream for SRRT is to see us grow our solidarity—activists and advocates, organizers, library workers, everyday people working hand-in-hand to dismantle systems of oppression. It's not easy, the work is often far from glorious, and it can be exhausting. But the stakes are higher than ever, and this work is more critical, especially for those of us in positions of systemic privilege and for whom the risks may be less consequential.

This year, my hope is that we can be relentless in our pursuit of justice for those who are marginalized, and resolute in our belief that we are stronger together. And I do believe we are stronger together! We are stronger when we invite one another in. We are stronger when we take the time to listen and learn from those with experience living under tangible and omnipresent oppressions. We are stronger when we cooperate and collaborate. And it can start right here at home, in SRRT.

They say, “dream big,” and I guess that's what I'm doing here. But it's often the small everyday actions we take that make those big dreams come true. With that in mind, I'll end here with a call to action: What's one small, concrete thing you'll do today to start making your big social justice dreams come true—and who will you invite to collaborate and make it happen?

For my part as SRRT coordinator, I'd like to invite the reader (that's you!) to [reach out to me](#) and tell me: how can SRRT help to better facilitate that work and amplify our most marginalized voices? I'll be listening.

Together, we can build a future where compassion triumphs over cruelty, and where equality is not a dream, but a reality. Even if we start small, let's make 2025 a year of transformation toward a more just tomorrow. I'll be looking for your responses through the end of February and I'll share what our potential next steps could be in the next newsletter.



# Hopes and Dreams for the New Year

Your social justice dreams for 2025

## Introducing the Services to Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons Subcommittee

Derek Wilmott, Co-Chair SRIDP, SRRT Treasurer, Acquisitions & Collection Management Librarian, University of Toledo

The [Services to Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons \(SRIDP\) subcommittee](#) held its regular online meeting two days after the 2024 U.S. Presidential election results. Despite the members' clear disappointment with the election outcome, there was a palpable determination to continue our work in welcoming immigrants and asylum seekers into our communities.

According to the Migration Policy Institute, nearly [46.2 million immigrants lived in the United States in 2022](#), the most in U.S. History; since 2021, approximately 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants have lived there. Libraries in the United States often view themselves as welcoming hubs for their communities, offering services, resources, and programs to broad and diverse populations. Many libraries are creating spaces that support immigrant and refugee communities and prospective and newly naturalized American citizens. This support often includes building collections focused on culture and language. Additionally, libraries are introducing English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, literacy programs, and citizenship preparation courses. Many libraries are also exploring partnerships with local, national, and international organizations to provide resources and services beyond what is available through the libraries alone. All of this is now jeopardized by the incoming presidential administration, which has taken a hard line against immigration to the United States. The possibility of mass deportations and other legal and legislative challenges to immigrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum in the United States, serves as a looming threat to current and future library services and resources to those communities.

**Libraries in the United States often view themselves as welcoming hubs for their communities, offering services, resources, and programs to broad and diverse populations.**

The SRIDP is a subcommittee that reports to the ALA's [Office for Diversity, Library and Outreach Services \(ODLOS\) Advisory Committee](#) and is charged with "supporting and promoting ALA, libraries, and communities to ensure that libraries provide the best possible services to support refugees, immigrants, and displaced persons." This subcommittee consists of 10 members appointed to serve 2-year staggered terms. Past affiliated groups have included REFORMA and the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA).

The subcommittee developed the [Libraries Respond: Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers](#) website, which collects ALA Resolutions and Statements supporting immigrant communities. The website features webinars, toolkits, white papers, LibGuides, and a useful list of how to respond to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. A notable resource from the list is the "[ALA What is a Sanctuary?](#)" guide while the information is a little dated, it is still a good starting point for defining a sanctuary space for libraries. Another resource is the [New Americans Library Project](#) featured in The White Paper, which explored public library programs and services that support new American populations.

The site is currently being updated with the latest information to serve as a guide for library workers and the community.

Recently, SRIDP is finalizing a draft for a [Welcoming Week Toolkit](#). This toolkit aims to provide all types of libraries with suggestions for the national [Welcoming Week](#) celebration held annually in September. It includes funding support opportunities from state and national organizations and local fundraising ideas. The toolkit also features a collection of case studies highlighting programs and activities at libraries during Welcoming Week celebrations.

*Continue on page 9*

# Letter from an Arkansas Library

Adam Webb, Executive Director, Garland County Library

**“Fairy tales do not tell children the dragons exist. Children already know that dragons exist. Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed.” – G.K. Chesterton**

**M**y hopes and dreams for 2025 are simple. I hope that we do not become discouraged. I mean that not in the “I got discouraged with my Dry January plans and bought a box of wine” sense of the word. I mean that in the sense of losing our courage. Courage has sustained us these last few years. It has become the lifeblood of librarianship in the 2020s, as important as any other skill that we hone in our practice. It constantly needs to be built up, replenished, and reinforced. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. referred to this as self-purification- the process of preparing yourself to suffer in the defense of justice and righteousness. Like many librarians, I feel that my schooling did not prepare me for this. A heads up would have been nice. I encourage library schools across the country to contract with the retired director of the Missoula Public Library, Honore Bray, and have her give her “this job isn’t for sissies” speech to anyone thinking about becoming a librarian. It needs to be said and prospective librarians need to hear it. This job is not easy.

The byproduct of cultivating courage is endurance. It is easy to forget that we are part of a profession that has persevered throughout the millennia. We were there in the Fertile Crescent five thousand years ago, writing, collecting, and organizing grain orders, mythologies, business transactions, religious texts, and scientific observations. Libraries are the dividing line between prehistory and history. Could you imagine if it all ended on our watch? That might sound like hyperbole, but it isn’t out of the realm of possibility. We owe it to all of the librarians who came before us and will come after us to carry on. That requires courage and endurance. In a time when librarians and libraries have become political targets for extremists, we must be courageous. Too many people count on us. American democracy depends on us. Engraved in the facade of the Boston Public Library are the words “The Commonwealth Requires the Education of the People as the Safeguard of Order and Liberty.” American democracy requires an informed and educated citizenry to survive. That’s where we come in.

I know words are cheap. It is easy to sit here in my comfy room with my warm socks on and my glass of whiskey and say “stay strong fellow librarians!” when it feels like you’re under siege. It is hard to carry on when you feel like the walls are closing in. I know. I’m down



Created with Adobe Firefly using the prompt: imagination swirling from book; child dressed as knight; fighting a dragon

here in the muck with you. In 2023, Arkansas passed one of the strictest censorship laws in the country that would have seen librarians arrested unless we restricted constitutionally protected speech. Being a person who is both 1) eager to fight and 2) too oblivious to realize when I’m in danger made me an ideal plaintiff in the inevitable lawsuit. For my sins, I was accused of all the greatest hits of the book banners- a child pornographer, a debaser of decency, a socialist, a sodomite (Arkansans talk like this sometimes), a pedophile, etc. Local law enforcement officers talked openly on social media about coming into the library and arresting me. A local Baptist church put out a survey for local candidates and the first five questions were about my participation in the lawsuit and what they would do about it if they were elected. I’m not going to lie and say none of that affected me (hence the whiskey). I was able to go on because of the support of the other plaintiffs and an outpouring of public support. But I knew that myself and the other 16 plaintiffs in the case were on a side even stronger than being right over wrong. We were correct. And we won. I defer to Dr. King again when I say one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.

I dream that in 2025, libraries and librarians close ranks, lock arms, and firmly and resolutely say ENOUGH. We can put an end to this, but we can’t do it alone. To paraphrase Rudyard Kipling, the business of the librarian is organizing and we do our business. Reach out to your colleagues. Help form a library alliance for the public. Join a group. Get people involved. Find your cheerleaders and advocates. If your state has separate associations for school libraries, public libraries, and academic libraries, find a way to join together. This moment affects us all. The best time to organize your supporters was yesterday. The second best time to do that is now. Tomorrow is too late.

# Hoping and Dreaming to Reconnect Patrons Living with Dementia with Books & Reading

Mary Beth Riedner, retired

Research has identified two factors that are important to finding the most appropriate books for those living with dementia – format and content. The most accessible books have a format with a large font, generous white space, colorful photographs and are relatively short in length. Content is also critical. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, “person-centered focus is the core of quality care” for those living with dementia (Alzheimer’s Association 2024). This means treating each person as an individual with their own life experiences, interests and preferences. Picking books of particular interest to each person is essential.

Taking all these factors under consideration, the Library Services for Dementia/Alzheimer’s Interest Group (LSDA), under the ODLDS Division of ALA, created a non-fiction reader’s advisory tool to assist patrons living with dementia find appropriate books of interest - <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/services-alzheimers>.

The form is addressed directly to the person, to help maintain their dignity, although they may desire the help of a care-partner to complete the form. The form asks questions to help librarians get to know each person as an individual so that they can retrieve books that are likely to be of interest to them. It consists of fifteen open-ended questions about such things as places the patron may have visited, previous occupations, past and current hobbies and interests, etc. Tips for using the form are included to help library staff choose the most appropriate books. Staff are encouraged to be creative in retrieving materials and to “mine” both the adult and children’s collections in their search. The goal is to find accessible materials that fit the person’s interests, regardless of their location in the library. Just as not all adult non-fiction books are suitable because of their dense text and length, not all children’s non-fiction books are appropriate because of childish illustrations or content. Pulling books from several “levels” and letting the person choose which ones they prefer may be the best answer.

The form is admittedly in its preliminary stages and LSDA hopes that libraries will experiment with the form and adapt it for their own community’s needs. Feedback to the LSDA leadership team members would be greatly appreciated so that the form can be continuously improved. Tips for using and marketing the form are included after the form itself on the LSDA webpage cited above.

The LSDA Interest Group hopes and dreams that this form may be a first step to putting books directly into the hands of these deserving, but often underserved, patrons! Please consider [joining the LSDA mailing list](#) to network and to share with other librarians of similar interests so that these efforts will continue to grow.

## Resources

Alzheimer’s Association. 2024. “Dementia Practice Care Recommendations.” Accessed December 18, 2024. [https://www.alz.org/professionals/professional-providers/dementia\\_care\\_practice\\_recommendations](https://www.alz.org/professionals/professional-providers/dementia_care_practice_recommendations).

Freudenheim, Milt. 2010. “Many Alzheimer’s Patients Find Comfort in Books”. *New York Times*, April 22, 2010. <https://archive.nytimes.com/newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/04/22/many-alzheimers-patients-find-comfort-in-books/>.

### Help us find the right non-fiction book for you!\*

\*This form can be filled out by you or a family member/friend

Please assist the library staff to help you find books that you might like to read or look at by answering a few questions. Your answers will help us learn more about you, so we can choose the best books for you. It is not necessary to answer all the questions, especially if you don’t want books on that topic. If you do answer, please be as specific as possible. Library staff will use your answers to pull some books for you to choose from to check out and take home:

1. Age range: Under 65 \_\_\_; 65-69 \_\_\_; 70-74 \_\_\_; 75-79 \_\_\_; 80-84 \_\_\_; 85+ \_\_\_
2. Preferred pronouns: He, him, his \_\_\_; She, her, hers \_\_\_; They, them, theirs \_\_\_; Other \_\_\_
3. Is there something that you would like to learn about?
4. Places where you have lived or visited:
5. Life and work experiences that you enjoyed or are memorable (your occupation, military service, membership in clubs and organizations, etc):
6. Past and current hobbies, special interests (photography, gardening, motorcycles, playing guitars, etc):
7. What sports do you like to play or watch? do you have any favorite sports teams?
8. Would you like books about pets and animals? If so, which kind?
9. What do you like to do for fun?
10. Which decade (1950's, 1960's, 1970's, etc) was the most fun for you:
11. Famous people you admired:
12. Favorite movies, tv shows, actors or singers:
13. Do you speak another language other than English:
14. Do you have special memories that you like to talk about:
15. Other topics not already mentions:



## Dionne Mack, MLS, From Librarian to City Manager

Miguel Juárez, SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board

On Wednesday, December 18, 2024, I had the opportunity to interview El Paso's new City Manager, Dionne Mack, the city's first African American City Manager. She began her professional career as a librarian. According to a September 15, 2024, article by Reyes Mata in El Paso Inc., Mack was "the first in her family to graduate from college and the first African American to lead a major public library system in New York, Mack will likewise be the first Black women to take the helm of the city of El Paso." She will supervise over 7,200 employees and a \$1.31 billion budget. Mack received her MLS from the University of Albany and began working at Brooklyn Public Library in 1996.



*Dionne Mack, City Manager, El Paso*

Miguel Juárez (MJ): When you were a librarian, did you ever see yourself becoming a city manager?

Dionne Mack (DM): Absolutely, not! When I started library school, I didn't see myself in management. I thought I would spend about two years in public libraries and then land in Academia. I fell in love with the work we do in communities, the diversity of issues, and the concerns and connections we could make. I didn't understand what a city manager did until I came to El Paso. I'm from New York and we had a mayor and a city council.

MJ: In some ways, libraries are like cities. There are budgets, personnel, and customers. Can you tell me about your experiences running a library system compared to working in city management? How different is managing libraries and managing the city?

DM: I think there are a lot of similarities and a lot of learning I took from my work in public libraries. Public libraries are the people's

**Public libraries are the people's university...there is a sense of equity in the services we provide to people**

university. It is the most democratic of spaces we have in our community and that's what we're trying to create for others. When we think about the work that we do. We want to make sure people have a voice, and that there is a sense of equity in the services we provide to people. I think libraries have been speaking that language for a long time. When we talk about building collections of intellectual freedom, it's about learning and having access. This translates into how I want to ensure our community can be part of the decision-making process and how they think about their community and the future. I was passionate about public librarianship.

MJ: You came to El Paso, after managing the Brooklyn Public Library System. What encouraged you to move to El Paso?

DM: At that point in my life, I knew it was time to make a change. I took a couple of months off, and I had never taken any time off from work. I was thinking about what I might do next. I missed the hustle and bustle of the work. I had applied for two places at the same time and El Paso was the first interview and I was here a month after. What was interesting about El Paso is that people often have opinions of neighborhoods and communities and about safety and pride. For me, El Paso is just so proud and loud, and I'm like, oh yeah, I'm about that. That is the type of attitude. We have our vision of who we are. We have a rich history. We don't make apologies for it.

MJ: In 1967, the Mexican American and African American communities were not at the table regarding the creation of Interstate 10 and other El Paso highways. Just like what occurred in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Black community was leveled when homeowners and businesses were impacted by the creation of the freeways. How can you as City Manager ensure that all groups are involved and can offer input to the process for the proposed Reimagine I-10 Project that seeks to widen the freeway from Executive Center to Copia Street and potentially create a traffic nightmare for El Paso's Central Black churches?





DM: One of the things we work on is having a strategic partner like TxDOT make sure we're pushing information out to our neighborhood associations and others. Our elected officials do a good job at that. I see them as being that constituent advocate. They use their newsletters and community meetings to ensure people know what is happening. We push those to our elected officials to set up meetings for us. We go out and have dialogues and conversations to ensure people are aware.

We need to continue to figure out avenues by which people receive information. It's important how we push out information to people. We need to find more ways to meet people where they are, making sure we're not only relying on our 200 Neighborhood Associations, our Representatives, and our unofficial leaders in the community to push out that information and invite us to provide those types of presentations.

We can have council members do policy letters in terms of positions. The most we can do is make sure they're coming to council meetings and asking the questions to get it on the record. The voice of our community in those comment periods is so important. We see in a lot of these projects the same group of people at every meeting figuring out how we get people to understand their voices do matter in these situations in the comment period.

Know that one vote or one voice does make a difference. There's such apathy towards the government and elections and many people disconnect. If we have so many people doing that, then we don't have enough voices at the table to challenge some of these things that are being driven by the state or federal government. Our elected officials can't do it alone.

MJ: This is a unique moment in the city's history because we have El Paso's first Black Mayor Renard Johnson. You are also El Paso's first African American City Manager, so its history is significant. What do you think are the unique opportunities for the city? And what do you see as its challenges?

DM: It's heartwarming when I go out to tell people about El Paso as home. Having people who have moved here and had a successful life, raised their family, and have come to be a part of the community says something to people in a way that is telling you to come, that warm and welcoming could not have.

I can't speak for Mr. Johnson. We all have our stories, from different perspectives, and each of us shares a different picture of our community being warm and vibrant. People need to hear those

stories. I think storytelling is what helps transform people's opinions about a place. I saw him coming and his story is so different from mine. People can come and build their businesses here. It's going to be about how we lift our community, how we talk about value, and how I think the voters, city council, and others leaned into it. We appreciate people who care about this community and who are willing to live in it.

MJ: That's it, thank you!

*Thank you to Laura A. Cruz-Acosta, Strategic Communications Director and Martha P. Lozano, Assistant 1, City Manager's Office at City of El Paso, for scheduling the interview with El Paso City Manager Dionne Mack.*

Read the full interview at [https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/From Librarian to City Manager.pdf](https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/From_Librarian_to_City_Manager.pdf).

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SRIDP is one of many ALA committees, round tables, and affiliate organizations working to educate, build awareness, and advocate for equitable treatment, inclusion, and respect for diversity. This work cannot be done alone.

The catalysts for people leaving their countries of origin are many. The ultimate reason they choose the United States as their destination is for the hopes and dreams of a better life for themselves and their families. Our shared [core values](#) as library workers should guide us in our work by providing everyone in our communities access to resources and services; fostering equity by dismantling barriers and creating accessible, welcoming spaces for all; and serving as a public good to improve our society and protect the rights to education, literacy, and intellectual freedom.

Looking ahead, SRIDP seeks opportunities to collaborate with ALA divisions, round tables, committees, and affiliate organizations. SRIDP is open to suggestions and opportunities for collaboration, please visit the [SRIDP website](#) to contact us.



# Book Review: *Inclusive Cataloguing: Histories, Context, and Reparative Approaches*

Kaia MacLeod, Indigenous Cataloguing Librarian, University of Calgary

Biley, A., Nelson, E., and Uhl, R. eds. *Inclusive Cataloguing: Histories, Context, and Reparative Approaches*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2024.



*Inclusive Cataloguing: Histories, Context, and Reparative Approaches*.  
Cover taken from the [ALA Store](#).

The book offers a perfect snapshot of the current cataloguing landscape, as well as an impressive history section to explain how we got here. It focuses on North American institutions and their concerns, with a strong focus on “Illegal aliens.” It starts strong with Belantara and Drabinski discussing the importance of metadata and description to the end user: “Making things legible and possible” creates a space for recognition and belonging.” (p. 8) The book is cut into two parts, one focusing on the history of inclusive cataloguing, and the other offering case studies with practical steps. The case study section was the highlight, with their condensed and easy-to-read projects. They had a section of lessons learned or pragmatic advice if you wanted to do something similar at your institution. In the case studies, authors often discussed how they tackled diversity audits to discover and fill in gaps for their users. The authors did a good job of giving enough background information on their institutions, without making their chapters too bulky. A variety of institutions were involved, from consortiums to ones with smaller collections, emphasizing how this work can be done at every level. Three main concerns repeatedly appeared, metadata related to BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and immigration. The book goes out of its way to show how the system is and is not working; and the workarounds that institutions had to use. With the book’s tight scope on inclusive cataloguing, it offers a new way to learn about the practice besides attending conferences on the topic. There are also realistic elements where many authors look at how the work will never be completed. One author discussing the removal of the subject heading “primitive” said: “Acceptable words used to describe people, culture, and art can change quickly, making it difficult for controlled vocabularies to keep up with our present values.” (p. 243)

The book highlights its practicality through screenshots, and tables that show how each institution is handling inclusive cataloguing. A valuable read for anyone in the cataloguing field, it offers a deep dive for newbies and old-timers alike.



## 2024 Rise: A Feminist Book Project for Ages 0-18

Katelyn Browne, Coordinator, Feminist Task Force

**R**ise: A Feminist Book Project for Ages 0-18 recommends well-written and well-illustrated books with significant feminist content for young readers. Books may be recommended by anyone through the field recommendation process, but books can only be officially nominated for the list by regular Rise committee members.

The bibliography is intended as a recommended reading list for children and teens. It may also be used by interested librarians, teachers, parents, and others who work with youth. The complete list can be found on the official [RISE blog](#) and [FTF's official website](#). The 2025 Rise: A Feminist Book Project committee selected the following titles, listed in alphabetical order by author's last name, as their Top Ten:

- *The Judgment of Yoyo Gold* by Isaac Blum
- *Plain Jane and the Mermaid* by Vera Brosgol
- *Bright Red Fruit* by Safia Elhillo
- *Ida B. Wells Marches for the Vote* by Dinah Johnson, illustrated by Jerry Jordan
- *The Beautiful Game* by Yamile Saied Méndez
- *Find Her* by Ginger Reno
- *The Race To Be Myself: Young Readers Edition* by Caster Semenya
- *The Unboxing of a Black Girl* by Angela Shanté
- *Black Girl You Are Atlas* by Renée Watson, illustrated by Ekua Holmes
- *Diary of a Confused Feminist* by Kate Weston



Members of the 2025 Rise: A Feminist Book Project committee are: Laura Simeon (co-chair), Kirkus Reviews, Redmond, WA; Vicki Pietrus (co-chair), Niles West High School, Skokie, IL; Suzan Alteri, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL; Raynela A. Calderon, Queens Public Library, Corona, NY; Kim Dare, Herndon High School, Herndon, VA; Lindsay J. Hall, Marietta City School District, Marietta, GA; Ari Nussbaum, Hayward Public Library, Hayward, CA; Shaunterria Owens, North Miami Public Library, North Miami, FL; Marta Monforte Perez, Hiba Academy Nantong, Nantong, China; and Sara Beth West, Chattanooga State Community College, Chattanooga, TN.



Members of the 2025 Rise: A Feminist Book Project Committee holding the top ten books.



## Celebrating ALA's 26th Annual Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at LibLearnX 2025

LaJuan Pringle, Co-Chair, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance and Sunrise Celebration

The Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force, Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Beacon Press, and the Office of Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services joined together for the 26th Annual King Holiday Observance and Sunrise Celebration. The celebration took place on Sunday, January 26, 6:30am at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown. This year's theme reflected on Dr. King's final published statement, [A Testament of Hope](#), written in 1968 and published posthumously in January 1969. Beacon Press author and law professor, [Gloria J. Browne-Marshall](#) delivered this year's keynote address. Her upcoming book, ["A Protest History of the United States"](#), which explores 400 years of resistance in US history will be released in April of 2025. We are thrilled that she was able to join us to discuss this timely topic as it relates to our collective history. Rodney Freeman Jr, an archivist at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and producer of the upcoming documentary, ["Are You a Librarian: The Untold Story of Black Librarians"](#), delivered this year's Call-to-Action. Tracie Hall, former ALA Executive Director, delivered a memorial tribute for Satia Marshall Orange, founder of the King Sunrise Celebration. In what may be our final live event, this year's program was a great one.



Satia Marshall Orange,  
founder of the King Sunrise Celebration.

## Progressive Library Organizations Update 2018-2023

By Alfred Kagan, African Studies Bibliographer and Professor of Library Administration Emeritus, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign

This is the second update article for my book, *Progressive Library Organizations: A Worldwide History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2015). The first update article was for 2013-2017 and was published in *Journal of Radical Librarianship* in volume 4 (2018). This second update includes all the organizations, or their successor organizations covered in the book except for Library and Information Workers Organization of South Africa (LIWO) which folded in 2000. The organizations covered are: Bibliotek i Samhälle (BiS) of Sweden (functioning at reduced capacity), AK Kritische Bibliothek (Kribiblio) of Germany (disbanded in 2022), Verein kritischer Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekare (KRIBIBI) of Austria (disbanded in 2022), Information for Social Change of the United Kingdom (in hiatus), Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association (SRRT) of the United States (functioning as usual), and Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) of the United States (in hiatus). This description and analysis is based on research done in 2024, and includes new interviews in Sweden, documents from websites, email correspondence, and much personal experience. I used Google Translate for documents in Swedish and German.

Read the full update at <https://journal.radicalibrarianship.org/index.php/journal/article/view/126/109>.

# VOICES FROM THE PAST

We offer excerpts from past newsletters in every issue. The following quotes are from the article, Liberation of Libraries Under Way, from the [August 1971 newsletter, issue 15](#). Here, gay liberation at the ALA Annual Conference in Dallas, TX, June 20-26, 1971 is celebrated. Activities included a Hug-a-Homosexual booth, evening lectures, book award, dance, and the passing of an anti-discrimination resolution. The SRRT Newsletter archive can be found at <https://www.ala.org/srrt/newsletter-archive>.



"We hope this will encourage people to be less afraid to express affection towards others of their own sex." Israel Fishman, librarian at Upsala College and coordinator of the gay group during its lively first year.

"Gay librarians must no longer be willing to hide their interpersonal orientation. We must demand protection by our professional organization against job discrimination." J. Michael McConnell.

"The current library classification and subject heading systems do not reflect the changing social attitudes. Fifteen million gay men and women in this country refuse to be called sexual aberrations." Steve Wolf, librarian at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

"It's time for gay artists to use our own lives as our subject and create a literature and other arts for ourselves...I hope gay artists will more and more stop withholding themselves from their work. I hope we will more and more look to our own lives and our friends' lives and to our great secret history for subjects and inspiration." Isabel Miller, author of A Place for Us.

"The American Library Association recognizes that there exist minorities for which are not ethnic in nature but which suffer oppression. The Association recommends that libraries and members strenuously combat discrimination in service to and employment of individuals for ALL minority groups whether the distinguishing characteristic of the minority be ethnic, sexual, religious, or any other kind, and this be established as a policy statement of the American Library Association." [Gay Liberation Resolution](#).

# Call for Submissions



**SRRT**  
Social Responsibilities  
Round Table EST. 1969



The SRRT Newsletter is always looking for good articles, essays, and letters to the editor. The next submission deadline is **March 15, 2025**. Our theme will be **protecting library workers**. How do we protect ourselves and our employees? What ways can we support each other while also protecting our own mental health and well-being? Share your ideas as well as initiatives your library or organization are currently taking or planning.

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. 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 to [banhatenotbooks@gmail.com](mailto:banhatenotbooks@gmail.com) and [srrt.newsletter.content@gmail.com](mailto: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 Laura Koltutsky, SRRT Newsletter Reviews Editor, at [lurakoltutsky@gmail.com](mailto:lurakoltutsky@gmail.com), 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 at [lurakoltutsky@gmail.com](mailto:lurakoltutsky@gmail.com). 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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