

NEWSLETTER

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VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1, SPRING 1992

FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Karen L. Whittlesey-First, new Female Co-Chair:

I met a few of you, far too few, in San Antonio this January. Now I am taking advantage of this column to introduce myself to more of you, figuring that a newsletter introduction is better than none at all, but also knowing that in San Francisco there will be an opportunity for many more personal introductions.

So, who am I? I am a lesbian librarian. Although my undergraduate degree and my first work outside the home were in journalism, it was while studying for a master's in pastoral theology that I found my identity professionally and personally. As a student, I worked in the Harvard library system. As I continued this work over several years, it became increasingly clear that I could and should make a professional career from the lifelong love affair I had with books, so after the M.A. I went to Simmons for the M.L.S. and was then hired by the Harvard Law School Library to be head of copy cataloging and database management. This is where I am now — and I love my work!

I am involved in a number of law and university library groups and committees and I also serve as the editor of ACRL's Law and Political Science Section newsletter and production editor of the ACRL New England Chapter newsletter. My ALA memberships include the Progressive Librarians Guild, the Feminist Task Force, and the Women's Studies Section, as well as technical services-related groups. I also am a member of the American Association of Law Libraries and Law Librarians of New England.

Not only my professional but also my personal life took shape while I was a pastoral theology student. I came gladly and excitedly to identify myself as a lesbian and to become involved in campus activities with gay men and lesbians and with feminists. This identity has enriched my life immeasurably.

I would like to have started these words to you by claiming, as did Daniel Boone, that I was born on a mountain top in Tennessee, but I suspect this romantic notion is fed primarily by my recent visit to the Alamo (and maybe by my early exposure to television). But no, I was born in a hospital in Erie, Pennsylvania. From that Pennsylvania birth through a New York City upbringing to a Massachusetts adulthood, I now find myself settled in committed relationships as both a lesbian and a librarian.

I'm proud of both identities, so it is especially gratifying to me to serve as co-chair of the GLTF. I take seriously the concerns of all librarians and of all lesbians and gay men. Our collective and individual concerns are my issues as co-chair. Because I serve you, I need to know what your concerns are, what your expectations and wishes are. Please feel free to contact me at the following numbers. They're for you to use.

Karen L. Whittlesey-First
Harvard Law School Library
434W Langdell Hall
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 495-4295 (w)
(617) 495-4449 (fax)

E-Mail:

Internet: WHITTLES@HULAW1.HARVARD.EDU
BITNET: WHITTLES@HULAW1.BITNET

I look forward to working with and for you — in fact, I'm just tickled — lavender!

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Roland Hansen, Male Co-Chair:

Here is a summary of what was finalized at Midwinter and what we will be working on at the Annual Conference in June.

- ▼ A schedule for GLTF meetings, programs, and social events at the Annual Conference was developed and submitted to ALA for the Annual Program. (See opposite column for the tentative schedule.)
- ▼ Karen Whittlesey-First became the new Female Co-Chair. Her first priority is the 1993 Annual Program. A basic committee was formed in San Antonio, with Terry Allison serving as chair. If anyone has suggestions for a program topic, contact Terry Allison, California State University Library, San Marcos, CA 92096, (619) 752-4358 or Karen Whittlesey-First (see p. 1 for numbers).
- ▼ The Annual Pre-Conference Program was finalized. The keynote speaker is Estelle Freedman, co-author of *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Harper-Row, 1988). Other speakers include Sherry Thomas of Spinster/Aunt Lute Book company. The Pre-Conference title is "When Sex is the Question: Who Asks, Who Answers."
- ▼ My first priority is working on budget matters with our ALA liaison, Mattye Nelson.
- ▼ A by-laws revision committee will be formed in San Francisco. Among the changes: Establish the Lifetime Achievement Award; Change the function of Secretary/Treasurer to Secretary only; Incorporate budgetary responsibility into Co-Chairs' job; Establish a Finance/Fundraising Committee.
- ▼ One portion of the Membership Meeting on June 29 will address newsletter issues; all book reviewers, editorial staff, and interested potential volunteers are welcome.
- ▼ The periodical indexing issue continues, with one possible approach getting someone on the RASD indexing committee. Polly Thistlewaite is following up on how to do this and/or getting herself on the board. Anyone with ideas, suggestions, etc., please contact Polly at Hunter College Library.
- ▼ The positions for Clearinghouse Coordinator and Feminist Task Force Liaison are still open.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

GLTF Tentative Schedule

Please note that changes may occur. The final conference schedule will contain the authoritative schedule.

SAN FRANCISCO
June 25 - July 2, 1992

Thursday, June 25

Pre-Conference Program:
When Sex is the Question:
Who Asks, Who Answers.
2 - 5:30 p.m.

(\$25 - ALA members, \$30 non-members
Register through ALA/OLOS)

Friday, June 26

Reception/Archives Tour:
Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern CA.
5 - 8 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting
8 - 10 p.m.

Saturday, June 27

Book Awards Committee : 9:30 - 11 a.m.
1993 Program Planning Committee: 9:30 - 11 a.m.
Annual Book Awards Presentation: 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Annual Program: Gay and Lesbian Media
After Mapplethorpe: 2 - 4 p.m.
ACRL ARTS co-sponsor
Speakers: R.J. Curry, Gay and Lesbian Press Assoc.
Michelle Wolf, San Francisco State University
John DeCecco, Editor, *Journal of Homosexuality*
Social: 6 - 9 p.m. at Eureka Valley Harvey Milk Memorial
Branch Library, 3555 16th St., San Francisco (415) 554-9445

Sunday, June 28

Gay Freedom Day Parade: 11 a.m.

Monday, June 29

Membership Meeting: 9:30 - 11 a.m.
Country Western Dance Night: 7:30 p.m. -
Location: Rawhide II, 280 7th St., San Francisco

Tuesday, June 30

Steering Committee: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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Clearinghouse News

GLTF's Clearinghouse received acknowledgement and some free publicity in the recently published 534-page *Big Gay Book: A Man's Survival Guide for the 90's* by John Preston (Plume, 1991). The book includes excerpts from the Clearinghouse's directories of gay/lesbian/feminist bookstores (pp. 170-176), gay/lesbian/feminist publishers (pp. 191-193), library collections of gay/lesbian materials (pp. 223-226 and pp. 231-233). Also reprinted is the list of all past recipients of ALA's annual Gay/Lesbian Book Award (pp. 182-183). Preston also mentions (p. 201) the availability of Clearinghouse guidelines on finding gay/lesbian plays.

The Clearinghouse was also included in *Alternative Publications: A Guide to Directories, Indexes, Bibliographies and Other Sources*, edited by Cathy Seitz Whitaker (McFarland, 1990). The book is the work of the ALA SRRT Task Force on Alternatives in Print. The GLTF Clearinghouse is included in Chapter VI, "Alternative Mail Order Outlets" (p. 71).

Member News

▼ ALA's Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) has selected GLTF member Cal Gough as one of two winners of the 1992 Blackwell North America Scholarship Award. Cal was nominated for "Key Issues in the Collecting of Gay/Lesbian Library Materials," the first chapter of *Gay and Lesbian Library Service* (McFarland, 1990) which he co-edited with former GLTF co-chair Ellen Greenblatt. The \$1,000 cash portion of the award goes to a library school to be used as a scholarship; Cal has designated Atlanta University as the recipient of the money.

▼ GLTF member Don Bell is updating the GLTF's 1986 bibliography of sources on gay/lesbian spirituality and religious issues. Please send items for inclusion on this list to Don Bell, Shelton State Community College Library, 202 Skyland Blvd., Tuscaloosa, AL 35404. The new list should be ready for distribution at the ALA Annual Conference in June.

▼ Bi-identified librarian wants to hear from others for purposes of bibliographic and political networking. Reply to: Mike Montgomery, General & Humanities Reference, Princeton University Libraries, One Washington Road, Princeton, NJ 08544-2098.

Library Journal Article

Censorship occurs when librarians deliberately remain uninformed about the full range of materials available and the variety of formats in which they are published and fail to provide a fair representation of these materials.

Cal Gough & Ellen Greenblatt
"Services to Gay and Lesbian Patrons"

Library Journal's January 1992 issue featured a 5-page article, "Services to Gay and Lesbian Patrons: Examining the Myths", authored by GLTF members Cal Gough and Ellen Greenblatt, editors of *Gay and Lesbian Library Service* (McFarland, 1990). Gough and Greenblatt targeted myths about gay and lesbian library service that create service barriers, and made a forceful argument for better service to gay and lesbian library users.

The article included a quiz, "Test Your Gay/Lesbian Service Quotient" which asked questions like:

How many newspapers, magazines, or journals for gays and lesbians does your library subscribe to?
How many sex education manuals for lesbians or gay men do you have in your collection?
How many gay or lesbian romance, sf, or detective novels do you have in your collection?

Companion articles included "Campaigning Against Invisibility" which addressed letter-writing and petition campaigns on cataloging and indexing of gay and lesbian materials and Bill Katz' "Magazines" column which reviewed 6 gay and lesbian newspapers and magazines.

The *Library Journal* articles sparked the following response by GLTF member Nicholas S. Thorndike:

"Coming Out At Work"

I prefer to be direct and honest when I can — that may mean "coming out" to co-workers. In the library setting, we may benefit from diversity programs or employee sensitivity training. But absent of that, it seems that coming out can take at least three stages. First, we come out at a community level. That is, friends or people that are outside the work environment. In many cases, the people we see after work may be our co-workers on the job. Or "outsiders" may help us prepare for what happens at work. Next, coming out at work can have a personal meaning. There are the Gay and Lesbian Task Force meetings to attend at Annual Conference. A professional group may exist locally. Finally, coming out may happen in the work environment through a sensitivity experience. Coming out is a personal decision that lets people know where one stands. It would be nice to collect stories related to how librarians come out at work. We are lucky to be in a profession that has benefited from the example of such leaders as Barbara Gittings.

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The *GLTF Newsletter* welcomes responses from readers to the *Library Journal* articles, "coming out at work" stories, and other related topics.

Gay and Lesbian Library Service received another highly positive review in *Women Library Workers Journal* 15:1/Spring 1992 which called it "a wonderful book" and "highly recommended".

And *Library Journal* is not the only national library magazine to highlight gay and lesbian service and materials recently. *Wilson Library Bulletin* featured gay/lesbian magazines in Gail Pool's "Magazines in Review" in the February 1992 issue. *Lambda Book Report*, *New York Queers (NYQ)*, *Genre* and *Deneuve* were profiled in a 3-page article.

Los Angeles Public Library

Last June, the Los Angeles Public Library stirred a storm of controversy by removing posters featuring Langston Hughes that were prepared for Lesbian and Gay History Month. City Librarian Elizabeth Martinez Smith said she withdrew the poster after staff members "felt there was an objection in the African-American community to Mr. Hughes being identified as gay" (*American Libraries*, July/Aug. 1991, p. 610-613). At the request of Gay and Lesbian United Employees (GLUE), as well as other parties in the dispute, the Los Angeles Human Relations Commission conducted a five-week inquiry into the matter. *American Libraries* then (February, 1992, p. 134,) reported that LAPL was "rebuked" in the Human Relations Commission report.

The Human Relations Commission report itself became another controversy, with charges that the library attempted to censor it and force different conclusions from the original report, according to *The L.A. Reader* (December 27, 1991, p. 4). Human Relations Commission President Raul Garza stated in *The L. A. Reader* article that the final version contained only "minor changes" from the original, despite the library's alleged rewrite attempt.

The following is an excerpt of "A Report on the Controversy Regarding Allegations of Homophobia Within the Los Angeles City Public Library" (December 19, 1991) by the City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission.

Recommendation 1.

That the Los Angeles Public Library assure that posters, announcements, free publications, flyers, bulletins, calendars, etc. from and about the Gay and Lesbian community that are offered to central and branch libraries be utilized as a matter of routine.

Suggested time frame: Immediately.

The Commission noted with concern the decision by Library Administration to destroy the printed Lesbian and Gay History Month poster which contained a quote from noted author Langston Hughes. The destruction of posters and materials at a library creates extraordinary images of censorship and repression. Indeed, when a debate ensues over who "owns" any historical figure, the result is rarely resolved. More commonly, the controversy is over a quote rather than who said it and whether one community feels more akin to that person. The Commission suggests that the Library studiously avoid these discussions and instead let authenticated quotes stand for themselves for the public to ponder. Otherwise, there will be no end to this debate. A quote, for example, by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. discussing ageism and placed on a poster for Older Americans Month should not be censored because King was or was not old enough at the time to address the issue. The Commission further recommends:

2. That Library Administration reconsider the entire matter and that the original poster and appropriate materials for Lesbian and Gay History Month be reprinted, redistributed, and used by all libraries in the system.

Suggested time frame: 1992.

In July, 1991, GLTF addressed the issue in a letter to Los Angeles City Librarian Martinez Smith, after the Task Force discussed the matter at Steering Committee Meetings during the Annual Convention in Atlanta. No response was received to the letter.

The following brief excerpts were reprinted with permission from The LG (Librarians' Guild) Communicator, Vol. 24, Nos. 1-12. January-December, 1991.

The Potential of Gay and Lesbian History Month

By Cosmo Bua, Wilshire Branch, Los Angeles City Public Library

I'm going to attempt to convey what the Los Angeles Public Library's new Gay and Lesbian History Month means to many lesbians and gays...The request for History Month came out of our recent personal history and work experience. America's treatment of those of our people who have been ill or dying over the last decade finally taught many of us how deadly homophobia actually is...Until AIDS nationwide, dentists, doctors, hospitals and insurers refused to learn about how the infection was spread, and refused treatment to the ill. Communities refused to educate their young and their other members. Families disowned us, employers fired us, landlords evicted us, and religious and political leaders spoke against us...There have been tens of thousands of

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horror stories in a few short years. ..Individually, and institutionally, we must come to terms with the fact that, in our time, this has been our society's collective response. We are not discussing the persecution of homosexuals by Nazi Germany, or McCarthy's homohating America...The discussion we require concerns our collective consciousness of lesbians and gays now.

As a group, we LAPL employees mirror our culture. Library clerical workers have simply taken a test and gone to work for the library. Library school has not educated librarians on lesbian and gay concerns... However unawares, LAPL has been routinely contributing to the learning and the ongoing reinforcement of homophobia. Most branches have a lesbian or gay employee. Lesbians and gays reside in all branch communities. We are of every age and of every economic, racial, and ethnic background. Yet many branches are still enforcing the segregation of our news, our concerns, and our culture, as "special", out of "family neighborhoods."

Gay and lesbian materials are available in most branches in reverse proportion to their visibility; more unacknowledged than acknowledged fiction; less fiction than fiction; few paperbacks of any kind; no taped books; no music; no videos; no magazines; and no newspapers. There are no acknowledged images of lesbians or gays. All couples are heterosexual...It is not possible for the gay or lesbian child to get a reflection of him/herself, or a role model, or any guidance from most branch collections. Their pride is routinely denied them when the heroes and heroines they need (Susan B. Anthony, Florence Nightingale, James Baldwin, Alexander Hamilton, Aristotle) are displayed but not acknowledged... "Heterosexism" is institutionalized homophobia. Fear, hatred, and disgust made manifest, it is the unexamined, working assumption that being heterosexual is inherently better or more moral than being otherwise. Lesbian and gay employees are saying that this problem must be acknowledged at LAPL where it has led to a working environment that is denigrating for us. The heterosexual branch orientation must become a neutral one, where all are represented, and where all are welcome.

NEWS

Northern Illinois University Microfilming Midwest Gay/Lesbian Publications

Research into alternative communities and their publications has always been difficult, due to a wide variety of factors, including the reluctance of many

mainstream library collections to acquire and preserve this material. Nowhere has this problem been more intractable than in the case of the weekly, biweekly and monthly newspapers and publications which have served as the voices of the local gay and lesbian communities. With the exception of such specialized collections as state and local historical societies and the archives established within some gay communities, little effort has been expended to preserve this literature.

One region which faced a particularly acute problem in this regard was the Midwest, here defined as reaching from Minnesota and the Dakotas east to Rochester and from Duluth south to Cincinnati, St. Louis and Pittsburgh. While the existence of the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives in Chicago and the Quatrefoil collection in St. Paul made attempts to amass significant historical collections of gay and lesbian journalism and media, no research library anywhere in the region made the collection and preservation of these publications a part of its collection development strategy.

Beginning in 1986, Robert Marks Ridinger, creator of *The Advocate Index, 1967-1982* and Microfilm Project Coordinator of Northern Illinois University, began to build the present collection of the gay and lesbian press on microfilm from the initial four titles held (*The Advocate, The Body Politic, The Ladder* and the *Mattachine Review*). An acquisitions decision was made to concentrate collection and preservation efforts on the gay media of the Midwest, as it was felt that this region faced the greatest possibility of losing the printed record. Over the ten years since *The Advocate* was added to library holdings, some twenty-six titles have been amassed, with geographical coverage ranging from Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington to Seattle.

It is, however, in the Midwest that the collection has made its greatest impact. The first stage was aimed at stabilizing the two currently issued papers from Chicago, *Windy City Times* and *Chicago OUTLINES*. Once these titles were filmed, sources such as Robert Malinowsky's *International Directory of Gay and Lesbian Periodicals* (1987) were consulted to establish the sequence of publication in each major Midwestern community. Titles already filmed from the region were purchased, while complete sets were either commissioned for filming or gradually built up through correspondence with former editors and publishers or through notices in the current gay media of the target community, and filmed at Northern Illinois University.

The titles already have been fully cataloged into the ILLINET database, and have been entered into the OCLC nationwide system. At the present time, the following titles are held, with others in the

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process of being filmed, or being investigated and reassembled:

Partial List of Holdings

Chicago: Gay Life, Windy City Times, Chicago OUTLINES
Milwaukee: Wisconsin Light
Madison: OUT
Minneapolis: Equal Times
Iowa City: Ain't I A Woman
St. Louis: No Bad News, Gay News-Telegraph
Indianapolis: Heartland
Boston: Bay Windows, Gay Community News
New York City: New York Native
District of Columbia: Washington Blade
Nashville: Dare
Philadelphia: Philadelphia Gay News, Au Courant
Atlanta: Southern Voice
Los Angeles: Lesbian Tide, ONE Magazine, The Ladder
Seattle: Seattle Gay News

Two masters theses have already been written using the collection. Plans call for the gradual expansion of holdings over the next five years. Inquiries regarding reference questions or scheduling a title for filming are welcome. Contact R.B. Marks Ridinger, Microfilm Project Coordinator, 303 Founders Library, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115-2868. (815) 753-1367 (voice mail)

contributed by R.B. Marks Ridinger, Northern Illinois University

NEWS IN BRIEF

▼ *Christus Omnibus!* ("Christ for Everybody!") is a new bimonthly magazine for gay and lesbian Christians. Articles, interviews, scripture studies, news and reviews are featured as well as a Religious Resource Directory listing hundreds of churches which welcome gay and lesbian members. **GLTF members may receive a complimentary copy of the first issue** (out April 5th) by sending their name and address to: *Christus Omnibus!* 146 East Duarte Road, Suite 213, Arcadia, CA 91006. Tel: (818) 287-5744.

▼ "Sexual Perversion in the Library of Congress" was the eye-catching headline of an article in the February 14-February 28, 1992 issue of *Equal Time: A Newspaper for Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals*. The article explored the history of Library of Congress subject headings on gay and lesbian topics, beginning with the fact that until 1972, if you wanted to find books about gays and lesbians, you would look under the heading "sexual perversion" in addition to "homosexuality". Also featured in the article is

the groundbreaking work of Sanford Berman, head cataloger for the Hennepin County (MN) Library System, who has written extensively on the issue and who has been active in getting the Library of Congress to modify its existing headings and to add new ones.

▼ According to their literature, *The Expanded Academic Index* provides students and faculty with a broad interdisciplinary database covering the major humanities, social sciences, and non-technical general science subject areas." It is a product of Information Access Company (362 Lakeside Drive, Foster City, Ca 94404, telephone 800- 227-8431). It is updated monthly and beginning in January 1992 indexes about 1500 titles. Last year's list included the *Journal of Homosexuality*, but the January 1992 subject list of titles indexed includes a "Gay and Lesbian Studies" section with the *Journal of Homosexuality* joined by five other titles: *Advocate: the National Gay and Lesbian Newsmagazine*, *Christopher Street*, *Gay Community News*, *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*, and *Lambda Book Report*.

In addition, the CARL System, a computerized network of systems and services, includes gay and lesbian periodicals on CARL UnCover, a database of current article information taken from 10,000 multidisciplinary journals. Titles indexed include *European Gay Review*, *Out/Look*, *Tribe* and seven other periodicals.

contributed by Mike Montgomery, Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ

▼ "It is an insult to the religious, the sexually conservative and the sexually protective parents of this community to impose homosexual recruitment literature on school libraries." —Alaska Judge Andrew Kleinfeld in a 1984 memorandum to the Fairbanks school board. Kleinfeld wanted the board to ban from school libraries *A Way of Love*, *A Way of Life: A Young Person's Introduction to What It Means to Be Gay*. In May 1991, President Bush nominated Kleinfeld to the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Reported in *Christopher Street*, vol. 14, no. 6 (#162), p. 48

▼ Two new national gay and lesbian magazines are due in upcoming months. *Puhleeze!*, a humor magazine, will debut in May and *Out*, a general interest magazine, will appear in June. A recent *New York Times* article ties the new magazines to the growing outreach to the gay consumer by national advertisers and marketing researchers. *Puhleeze!*, to be issued bimonthly, is aiming for a circulation of 100,000. It will be distributed without charge, with revenues coming from advertising. *Out*, initially to be issued quarterly, plans an initial paid circulation of 150,000 and plans to become a monthly. *Out* will feature investigative profiles and articles on fashion,

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pop culture, theater, film and art. Both publications are being started by experienced publishers and editors.

A companion article detailed the results of a demographic survey on gay men and lesbians by a market research company, Overlooked Opinions, Inc. The survey showed that gay men had an average household income of \$51,325 and lesbians \$45,927, compared with the national average of \$36,520, creating an attractive market niche for advertisers. Surveys have also shown that gays and lesbians are avid readers, leading many book clubs to purchase mailing lists of names of gay men and lesbians.

The New York Times, Monday, March 2, 1992 A1, C9

▼ *The GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) Bulletin* which is issued to fight for "...fair, accurate & inclusive representations of lesbian and gay lives" alerts its readers to both positive and negative representations and encourages appropriate letters. The November/December 1991 issue profiled *Reader's Digest*, saying it "may be the most anti-gay general circulation magazine in America" and giving recent examples of anti-gay bias. For more information or to subscribe, contact GLAAD at 80 Varick Street, Suite 3E, New York, NY 10013, (212) 966-1700.

▼ The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS) at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, is seeking donors for a collection of gay/lesbian books. The gay/lesbian library collection, which will be housed at The Mina Rees Library of The Graduate School, CUNY, has already received donations of books from Ann Miller and The Columbia University Press. Individual gifts of books or funding, subscriptions, authors' donations of books or publications are welcome and may be sent to Joseph Wittreich, Treasurer of CLAGS, Box 510, The Graduate Center, CUNY 33 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036.

▼ *Our Own Voices: Directory To Lesbian and Gay Periodicals, 1890 - 1990*, compiled by Alan V. Miller, (Canadian Gay Archives publication; no. 12, 1991, ISBN 0-9690981-6-2) is available from the Canadian Gay Archives, P.O. Box 639, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1G2 (\$40 individuals, \$50 institutions, plus postage and handling). The directory includes over 7,200 titles and has an international scope with entries from 30 countries.

▼ Anyone who would like more information on the newly organized Society for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Studies should contact Kevin Kopelson, Department of English,

The University of Iowa, 308 English-Philosophy Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. The Society is soliciting CV's for consideration for Executive Board positions.

▼ ALA's SRRT Alternatives in Print Task Force (AIP) has planned a reception for Bay Area independent press during ALA's annual conference in San Francisco in June, 1992. Over 120 non-mainstream Bay Area publishers have been identified to date.

from Minnesota Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter, March 1992, p. 2.

▼ A gay/lesbian book fund has been created at the Minneapolis Public Library and Information Center by members of the Minnesota DFL Lesbian and Gay Caucus. Approximately \$600 was donated toward purchase of books on gay and lesbian issues that will be placed in general circulation holdings of the library. The Library Board recognized the contribution of the caucus and the establishment of the fund during a ceremony on November 6, 1991. Impetus for the fund came, in part, from the library participation in the local Pride Festival at an information booth. Contributions to the fund will be deposited with the stipulation that the principal not be expended and that interest accrue annually. Bookplates will be inserted in the materials identifying the Minnesota DFL Lesbian and Gay Caucus as the donor.

from Equal Time: A Newspaper for Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals, November 22-December 6, 1991, p. 7.

▼ As a result of two major donations to the Human Sexuality Collection, Cornell University's John M. Olin Library in Ithaca, NY, now holds a major collection of gay men's pulp novels and series fiction and has the beginnings of a collection of lesbian pulp novels dating from the 1950's. Gordon Martin, a retired librarian who had been building a personal collection of such paperbacks for years, donated some 1700 volumes in 1989. In 1990, the estate of George Fisher donated the entire inventory of his Elysian Fields Booksellers business in New York City. In operation for two decades, Elysian Fields had become the country's largest dealer in rare and out-of-print books relating to sexuality. For more information about the Lesbian and Gay Men's Popular Fiction Collections or other aspects of the Human Sexuality Collection, contact Brenda J. Marston, Human Sexuality Archivist, at (607) 255-3530.

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▼ The award-winning *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (Garland, 1990) will be available in Spring of 1994 in a scaled-down edition (650 pages instead of 1000 in the original book), under the title *The Concise Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*. Collier Books at Macmillan is publishing the work, in trade paperback. Editor-in Chief of *The Concise Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* Stephen Donaldson is looking for scholars interested in writing short pieces for the new work on areas in which they are or could become knowledgeable. The emphasis will be on basic facts, with some discussion of theories, but with a minimum of ideology and abstruse academic controversies; on language accessible to the average reader, and on topics of general rather than purely scholarly interest. Women, bisexuals, and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to contribute. If you are interested in submitting a new entry, or believe you can improve on any existing entry in the Garland volumes, contact Stephen Donaldson, Editor-In-Chief, CEOH, 3147 Broadway, #12A, New York, NY 10027 (212) 666-0344

▼ Metrolina Community Service Project is soliciting tax-deductible donations toward the publishing of the *Gay/Lesbian Periodicals Index* in 1992. The Index will cover some thirty leading gay and lesbian publications, including *The Advocate*, *The Bay Area Reporter*, *Gay Community News*, and *The Washington Blade*. For more information, contact MCSP, P.O. Box 11144, Charlotte, NC 28220, (704) 535-6277.

▼ *MACT (Men of All Colors Together) Information Bulletin*, a publication of MACT/New York, is "a multiracial organization of gay men committed to addressing and combatting racism and discrimination in the lesbian and gay male community." For subscription information, contact MACT, Box 1518, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023, (212) 222-9794.

from Minnesota Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter, December 1991, v. 4 #10.

▼ *Looking Forward*, "An Empowerment Newsletter By and About People Living With AIDS," is produced by the members and friends of the Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS of the Whitman Walker Clinic, 1407 S Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009 and produced by DIGNITY/Washington Committee on AIDS.

▼ The Lifetime cable television channel aired a program on March 3 focused on three gay-positive books embroiled in a curriculum dispute in New York City. *Heather Has Two Mommies* (GLTF Newsletter review 1/2:15, 90/91), *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*, and *Daddy's Roommate*. Community School Board 20, in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, voted to remove all three books from the list intended for the first grade curriculum, calling them "age inappropriate." Representatives of concerned parents and Judy Krug, director of the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, were featured on the show.

Library Hotline, 3/2/92, XXXI-9.

▼ Hennepin (MN) County Library, under the direction of Head Cataloger Sanford Berman, has recently added the following subject headings: "Afro-American Gay Literature" and "Homophobia in Afro-Americans." The Library of Congress has recently adopted "Gay Communities" (*Cataloging Service Bulletin*, No. 55, Winter 1992).

▼ A Different Light, the gay and lesbian bookstore with four shops, in Los Angeles, West Hollywood, San Francisco and New York City, saw mail-order sales jump 210% in 1991 with the production of its second mail-order catalog. Roz Parr, editor of the catalog, says that "the bulk of customers are outside cities, often way out of the reach of any gay bookstore." The store is building its own mailing list, in part because, Parr says, "Gay and lesbian readers and buyers are even harder to find [than gay and lesbian consumers] because gay people are not homogeneous groups."

A recent survey conducted by Overlooked Opinions for Lambda Rising News revealed another picture of the gay and lesbian reader. Dean Maccubbin, owner of Lambda Rising, noted that the results showed "Our customers are spread out broadly demographically. They read five times as many books as straight people. They don't fit the stereotypes of gay people."

from Publishers Weekly, 2/10/92, p. 20

▼ An interesting chapter in the 1992 edition of the *National Directory of Bulletin Board Systems* (Meckler, 1992) is a single-spaced 3 1/2 page list (pp. 79-82) of free and fee-based gay-and lesbian-related BBS, including nine AIDS-related boards.

THANKS

to all those who contributed news items. If there is a local gay or lesbian-related library news item in your area, please send to: Kathy Anderson, GLTF Newsletter Editor, Atlantic County Library, 2 S. Farragut Avenue, Mays Landing, NJ 08330 (609) 646-8699 or Fax: (609) 625-8143. Send items anytime!

BOOK REVIEWS

NON-FICTION

Wanting Women: An Anthology of Erotic Lesbian Poetry. Jan Hardy, Editor. Sidewalk Revolution Press, 1990. Paper. \$9.95. (ISBN 0-961-74061-2)

Editor, publisher, and poet Jan Hardy states in her introduction to this collection of 70 poems by 43 U.S. and Canadian Poets that she hopes these poems "will expand our access to the power of eroticism." The book succeeds in this, with poetry ranging from humorous to pleasant to boundary-stretching. The quality of writing, despite the diversity of contributors, is high. "Stars" represented in this collection include Marilyn Hacker, Tee Corrine, Patricia Roth Schwarz, Joan Nestle, and Leslea Newman. Contributors include Black, Jewish, disabled, Latina lesbians, as well as a Wiccan priestess, though a deliberate effort to diversity doesn't seem apparent from the poems.

Beautiful images abound in these mostly accessible poems. Marie Cartier writes in "Breakfast in Bed": "Your eyes, golden brown as toast,/and darling, I am butter." Or Margaret Tongue's image of a double bed: "A place good for small talk, the line/ Down the middle like the one halving/ The blue Pacific; once you have truly/ Crossed, it is easy to lose or gain; A day, no matter what the calendar/ Or your watch or the turning world? Might say." The political is given rare attention in this collection; Rachel Behrendt writes: "in one hour between/ your succulent thighs/ this theoretical lesbian/ became/ a practicing dyke."

Leslea Newman could seduce any woman with her poems. Many poems do what poems do best: concisely link disparate images, bringing a flash of recognition to the reader.

The overall tone of the collection is positive (how could anything erotic and lesbian be otherwise?) If there is an omission, it is in the lack of representation of S/M sensibilities, despite a mild reference in "Come to Me Unbound" by Laura Rose Dancing Fire. Through mostly free verse, other styles are included: haiku, prose poems, smatterings of concrete poetry, and even an old-fashioned rhymers.

Because of the high literary quality, I recommend this book to libraries interested in contemporary poetry. They may want to consider too that "erotic" here guarantees sexually explicit language.

Kathy Ruffle
College of New Caledonia Library
Prince George, B.C.

Some of My Best Friends: Essays in Gay History and Biography. By "A. Nolder Gay." Union Park Press, 1990. Paper. \$9.95. (ISBN 0-9601570-1-8)

Because some of our best writers publish their work in local, unindexed gay and lesbian newspapers, they don't enjoy the wide readership they deserve. Anthologies of material originally published in our newspapers is therefore almost always a good thing for the gay and lesbian communities. When the writing is as well crafted as "A. Nolder Gay's" is, there is cause for general rejoicing that a new and wider audience will now be able to benefit from his intelligent observations.

Best Friends contains fifty brief essays that originally appeared in the Boston-based publications *Gay Community News*, *Esplanade*, *Integrity Forum*, and *Bay Windows*. The author of these essays, whoever he is, began writing his newspaper columns in 1973; the earliest items in this anthology date from 1974 and the most recent item included first appeared in 1987. The essays are all so good that many readers will want to track down another 43 of them published in the author's previous and equally excellent collection, *The View from the Closet: Essays on Gay Life and Liberation, 1973-1977* (Union Park Press, 1978). Only four of the essays from the earlier collection are reprinted in this one.

There are several reasons why this man's essays are so interesting. Most of them articulately and succinctly capture one man's thoughtful reactions to a person, place, moment, or issue that has been important to lesbians and/or gay men at one point or another over the past twenty years, or that always has and always will be important to us.

The author's style is conversational and light. His work is refreshingly free of the dogmatism many of us have come to expect from our periodicals, which too often seem to be written by mostly relatively young writers with little sense of history. This older writer's droll humor, his obvious compassion and humility, his love of travel, libraries, old bookstores, and a special interest in matters of the spirit—as well as his sheer native intelligence—shines through his work.

Finally, the short length of these essays makes them extraordinarily easy to digest. This is a book to dip into when you're in the mood for something intelligent, amusing, or surprising about gay and lesbian culture but not in the mood for a book-length treatise or the articulate agonies of, say Andrew Holleran or a Larry Kramer.

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Although he has grouped his work into broad subject categories rather than arranging them chronologically, the essays stand alone and need not be read all at once or in sequence.

There's something here to interest or instruct anyone. As the writer admits, there's more here of interest to gay men than lesbians, and he does write from the dispassionate perspective of a relatively comfortable white gay male of a certain class. But he is aware of this limitation (insofar as it is one); if anything, he is often too self-effacing, although, fortunately, he usually expresses this in a delightfully amusing way.

In any case, "A. Nolder Gay" writes about everything: from his extensive world-wide travels to gay aspects of particular works of art, from opinions about specific books or authors to reflections on current events. His essays often focus on an ironic, and obscure, an under-examined, or under-appreciated aspect of gay or lesbian cultural life—but he writes so well about anything that many readers will find themselves investigating his treatment of topics they might otherwise skip over.

It's puzzling that the author continues to prefer to conceal his identity while at the same time strewing throughout the book so many clues to it. Many readers would probably like to thank "A. Nolder Gay" for consistently producing such readable and humane prose—some of it, like the essays on AIDS for example, written very beautifully and movingly. Regardless of what he's writing about, this man's essays are marked with a large-hearted, educated perspective missing from much gay and lesbian commentary today.

Recommended for all community operated gay/lesbian libraries, for larger public libraries, and for academic libraries with gay/lesbian collections.

Cal Gough
Atlanta-Fulton Public Library
Atlanta, Georgia

Homophobia and the Judeo-Christian Tradition. Michael L. Stemmler and J. Michael Clark, editors. Monument Press, 1991. Paper. \$20.00 (ISBN 0-930383-18-4)

This is volume I of two volumes of essays relating to gay men's issues in religious studies. It covers varied topics from the Leviticus 18:22, to the social policy of gays in Nazi Germany. It is a realistic look at the basis of homophobic attitudes which dominate both Christian and Jewish thought. It explores many of the misconceptions which prevail in biblical translations and their relationship

to the "homosexual act". Some of the viewpoints and conclusions drawn by the authors present a pessimistic outlook of changing established theological beliefs to accept homosexual love, but offer a tremendous amount of hope and need for the development of a "gay theology". (See review of volume II following.)

Hope is the strength and thrust of this volume as it seems to draw the reader to the conclusion that gays and lesbians must, to use John Fortunato's words, "embrace the exile" of being gay within a straight dominated world. By "coming out" as Christians and Jews, gays and lesbians can begin to develop their own liberated theology which can be a witness to their own spiritual paths. A good preparatory work for volume II.

Charles Whitlow,
AT&T Tax Librarian
Morristown, NJ

Constructing Gay Theology. Michael L. Stemmler and J. Michael Clark, editors. Monument Press, 1991. \$7.00. (ISBN 0-930383-19-2)

This is volume II of a collection of essays centering around gay men's issues in religion. Much of the thought exhibited in the Thurston, Clark and Gorman pieces are based on the premise that a gay theology is not only lacking in the gay culture, but is strongly needed to tie the emotional and spiritual needs of the community together.

Taking its roots in Segundo's Liberation Theology, Thurston presents a strong case for the need of developing a gay theology similar in nature to that of the feminist approach by Carter Heyward. His historical overview is easy to comprehend, even for the non-exegetical scholar. The overall argument is well defended by numerous, but essential references, that give a reader a concise bibliographical overview of current contributors in the field of liberation theology.

Clark sees the development of a gay theology as an anthropological movement, finding its roots in the development of the gay community. His belief centers around the idea that God is present in all acts within the gay culture.

Gorman defines the need for a gay theology in terms of its sociological development stemming from the Stonewall riots. He movingly ties in the AIDS quilting project as strong elements of religious development in the gay community, comparing it with the Torah.

John McNeill's response finds little fault with the general overall thinking of all the contributors, but does not agree in all cases with Clark.

This collection is a wonderful overview for any individual seeking an understanding of how gays must approach religion and the realities which exist within traditional theological thinking.

Charles Whitlow
AT&T Tax Libraries
Morristown, NJ

The Life of E.F. Benson. By Brian Masters. Chatto & Windus Ltd. Distributed by Trafalgar Square N. Pomfret, VT 05053. Hardcover. \$29.95. (ISBN 0-7011-3566-2)

Both fans of E.F. Benson and readers who are unfamiliar with his work will be delighted with this fascinating biography of the English writer. Benson, born in 1867 to a distinguished English family, was an amazingly prolific writer of biographies, novels, and essays, including the wonderfully comic Lucia novels which were produced for PBS.

The biography tells the extraordinary story of a family headed by a rigid father who served as the Archbishop of Canterbury and who proposed to his cousin Minnie when she was eleven. Minnie, who gave birth to four gifted, eccentric children, reserved her deepest intimacies for her women friends, even sharing a bed for many years with one companion after her husband's death.

The portrait of E.F. is complex and well-drawn. His biographer calls Benson, "a gregarious, hedonistic, clubbable man," and paints a picture of a man who found solace in London society life and romantic male friendships. Was Benson gay? Masters does not avoid the question. He dwells at length on Benson's intensely homoerotic writing in the autobiographical *David Blaize*; his preference for male company; his stays on Capri with gay writers including John Ellingham Brooks; his friendship with Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas. But Masters concludes that Benson was deeply afraid of sexual impulse and felt that love is traduced by carnal expression and so lived a life of sexual self-denial.

This is a terrific literary biography of interest to many types of readers — Anglophiles, feminists, writers, gay and lesbian readers, fans of the Lucia series, to name a few. Highly recommended for all types of libraries.

Kathy Anderson
Atlantic County Library System
Mays Landing, New Jersey

An Intimate Wilderness: Lesbian Writers on Sexuality. Judith Barrington, editor. The Eighth Mountain Press, 1991. Paper. \$14.95. (ISBN 0-933377-09-6) Hardcover. \$24.95. (ISBN 0-933377-10-X)

An Intimate Wilderness gathers in one place the thoughts of forty-five well known writers. Nearly all of the material is reprinted from earlier works with an additional handful of pieces written expressly for this anthology. This collection of essays, short fiction and poetry by lesbian women is on the subject of sexuality, specifically lesbians and lesbian sexuality. This is not a collection of erotic writing, although some of the pieces might be considered erotic. This anthology is a sampler of perspectives and musings on what "lesbian sexuality" means.

The essays look at various aspects of this issue. In "Lesbian Sexuality: Joining the Dots," Anna Livia writes about how lesbians write or don't write about sex. In "The Erotic Life of Fictional Characters," Barbara Wilson ponders whether or not lesbians should write about sex, and how graphic any such writing should be. Marilyn Frye in "Lesbian 'Sex'" wonders whether existing language is adequate or if a new vocabulary should be invented: "...it seems to me that the attempt to encode our lustiness and lustfulness, our passion and our vigorous carnality in the words 'sex', 'sexual', and 'sexuality' has backfired. Instead of losing their phallogentricity, the words have imported the phallogentric meaning into and onto experience which is not in any way phallogentric."

Other pieces pose similar questions and sometimes offer observations about ways that lesbians might discuss, or in fact, do discuss their sexuality. Intermingled with these theoretical discussions are many stories and poems which illustrate the range of erotic writing to be found in lesbian literature today.

An Intimate Wilderness gives a glimpse and an introduction to the work of each of these women writers. It is an excellent overview to the particular issue of lesbians who are writing and talking about lesbians and sex. Many other issues and concerns to lesbians and to the lesbian community are also presented in this collection.

Recommended for public and academic libraries.

Jo McClamroch
University of Minnesota, Duluth, Minnesota

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Soar and Her Sisters: The Bible, Homosexuality & Jesus Christ. By Arthur Frederick Ide. Minuteman Press, 1991. Paper. \$15.00. (ISBN 0-926899-02-3)

This book by Arthur Frederick Ide is really a treatise on sex and sexually related topics in the Bible. At times it seems a bit gossip-ridden in nature, using apocryphal references and materials to their fullest; but its matter-of-fact style makes a rather complex textual analysis appear easy to the reader. It is a good positive affirmation of man as a sexual being and God's will in all aspects of life.

Much of the eroticization of Jesus goes beyond Schonfield and Kazantzakis and will be considered blasphemous by fundamentalists and conservatives, but his conclusions about sex and its relationship to man and God are worth considering.

A good advanced reader for those who have already done previous studying and reading in theology and the Bible.

Charles Whitlow
AT&T Tax Libraries
Morristown, New Jersey

FICTION

Lark in the Morning. By Nancy Garden. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Hardcover. \$14.95. (ISBN 0-374-343338-1)

One of the fruits of so much gay literature "coming out of the closet" has been the substantial number of books in which the main character's gayness is simply part of the story, not the pivotal element. This is very much the case in *Lark*. This young-adult story is about 17-year-old Gillian and her meeting with two runaway children while she and her family are staying at their summer cabin on the lake.

The plot centers on Gillian's attempts to help the runaways, both of whom are victims of child abuse, and the older of whom, the Lark, is bright, sensitive, and suicidal. Gillian has some serious decisions: should she confide in her lover Suzanne? If she asks her parents for help, will they simply turn the kids over to authorities? Should she simply forget trying to help them, when she knows she doesn't have the skills? Or, should she press on, helping the kids because she cares for them? She also has to decide

about coming out to the boy her parents think is her boyfriend, which she does do, even though she is not yet out to her parents or to her older sister.

For a young adult, Gillian seems appropriately unsure of herself and anguished over her dilemmas and responsibilities, even though she is obviously clear-headed and mature in most areas of her life. She and Suzanne have already determined that their careers (forestry and art) demand that they go to separate colleges, and that Suzanne will join her in Oregon after finishing her two-year art program.

This is a tremendously positive and hopeful book—philosophical in a way, without being didactic. The supporting characters are well-drawn (her parents; Brad, the "boy next door"; her older sister and fiancé). The book is an excellent choice for any collection of young adult fiction.

Susan Sills
School of Fine Arts
University of California
Irvine, California

Alarming Heat. By Regine Sands. Lace Publications, 1991. Paper. \$7.95 (ISBN 1-55583-311-X)

Regine Sands, author of *Travels With Diane Hunter*, returns to our libraries, book shops, shelves, and more likely bedside tables with more erotic tales of sexual adventure. These nine stories have distinctly different characters and situations so all readers can find amusement in at least one of them. Characters come from all walks of life, from students to Kate Montgomery who "didn't have two Ph.D.'s for nothing" in a particularly vivid tale of a wrong number that turns into phone sex.

All of the stories are tinged with humor and delightful impropriety. Tales include sex under the projected stars of a planetarium, sex in moving cars, and even sex in a doctor's office.

Alarming Heat is recommended for libraries with collections of erotica or collections of gay and lesbian popular literature.

Lisa N. Johnston
Sweet Briar College
Sweet Briar, Virginia

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Reviews are a regular feature of the
GLTF Newsletter.

**REVIEWERS
URGENTLY NEEDED!**

If you would like to be a reviewer or
would like to receive reviewer
guidelines, contact the Reviews editor,
David Streeter, at the following
address:

David Streeter
GLTF Book Review Editor
Pomona Public Library
P.O. Box 2271
Pomona, CA 91769
(714) 620-2026 (w)
(714) 623-0850 (fax)