

LASSEN COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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30 July 1979

Zena Sutherland
Graduate Library School
University of Chicago
1100 E 57th Street
Chicago, IL 60637

Dear Ms. Sutherland:

It has taken me too long to express a written opinion about N/C dinners. However, the remarkable outburst of emotion on the subject at the ALSC membership meeting in Dallas prompts these musings.

If ALSC's major goal is to put on the dinner, as one speaker ("I adore the Newbery-Caldecott dinner" etc.) indicated, then the division has failed miserably in its greater service. The speaker misspoke herself, I believe. Maybe N-C is the social high for ALSC and maybe, just maybe, it overshadows our more important, quiet, on-going functions.

I keep wondering what would happen if we non-publishers had to take publishers to the dinner - and pay for a table. I also know that it would not thrill my heart to plunk out \$16 (or more) for a dinner unless I could be sure of a superb speech. Well, no one can guarantee that and having read every N-C speech I can say, that they were, by and large, pleasant in an auto-biographical sort of way.

There is also the matter of the younger librarian who a) really can't easily afford the price and b) usually isn't at ALA anyway since further education and convention-going is usually a perquisite of quite senior people.

The idea of a reception with the N-C speeches strikes me as a good one - something like the Dallas ALSC membership meeting for the speeches and a reception after. Actually the informal bash in Washington, D.C. was a pleasant model of what I'd like to see N-C become. The whole gala has gotten out of hand, demographically and economically. I also question how much time it takes from the Executive Secretary's other duties.

Newbery-Caldecott dinner is fun - but it's a high price for a meal and an evening, despite the excellent p.r. it generates.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Gordon

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