

SRRT Newsletter - Issue 192, October 2015

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Letter from the Editor

by **Melissa I. Cardenas-Dow**



Greetings, SRRT Newsletter readers! Another fall season is upon us. For many of us, the fall brings a new operations calendar. As an academic librarian, to me the new season means a new academic calendar, the return of students to campus, and a change in the types of work that must be prioritized.

In the world of ALA divisions, roundtables, and affiliated groups, the fall season means members are thinking about ALA conferences and changes in various levels of membership and leadership. Fall 2015 is no exception. In this issue of the SRRT Newsletter, we bring to you information on the events that took place during the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, as well as upcoming events and plans for the days and months leading up to the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston and the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida.

This issue of the SRRT Newsletter provides readers with information to help us all look back at SRRT's accomplishments and to also look forward to the work we continue to have together.

All the best,
Melissa I. Cardenas-Dow
SRRT Newsletter Editor

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SRRT Coordinator's Column

by **Nikki Winslow, SRRT Coordinator, Branch Manager - Spring Valley Library**



The Pew Research Center released a new study called "Libraries at the Crossroads (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>)" in September. As the debate about the relevance of libraries in the future continues, this study emphasizes that not only will libraries be relevant, they are also considered essential. Currently 65% of Americans "ages 16 and older say that closing their local public library would have a major impact on their community." This percentage is even higher with low-income and minority groups, who depend on us for services they otherwise couldn't afford or have access to. I know we are all sick of the question "Are libraries still needed?" that we often hear from people and this study confirms that the public definitely thinks we are still essential.

I oversee a library branch in a diverse community in Las Vegas. Every day that I come to work I see a line of computer users at the door waiting for us to open; parents bringing their children to attend story time, receive free tutoring or help finding their next favorite book; and newly emigrated people looking for help learning English, workforce readiness or citizenship information. Although we continue to be thought of the "place that stores books," the reason people are coming to their local library has changed and given us an opportunity to reach even more people in our communities. I am so excited about the future of libraries because of these unique services we are developing and offering to our public, and believe in my heart that we will be even more relevant than ever before as a result.

I attended the Nevada State Library and Archives "Be a Catalyst for Change" Leadership Institute in September. We were fortunate to get to hear Rikvah Sass, Executive Director of Sacramento Public Library Authority, and Felton Thomas, Executive Director of Cleveland Public Library, both movers and shakers in this profession. They spoke about the importance of recognizing the need for change in libraries to continue to stay relevant to our communities. They also spoke of the need for leadership development in our graduating librarians to help us identify and implement these changes in the future. We were also fortunate to listen to presentations from librarians across Nevada about the innovative spaces and programming they are creating. I know I have taken some of their inspiring ideas back to my branch to implement with my patrons. I hope others that attended will do the same thing.

Collaboration and cooperation are so important to growing our services in the future. I encourage anyone who

is able to attend workshops, seminars, programming showcases, conferences, etc. to go and try to learn from the success of others. We don't have to reinvent the wheel every time we want to bring something new to our libraries and the more we share both in person and virtually, the stronger our professional network will be. I challenge anyone reading this column to reach out to another librarian in your community, city, state or another state to get information about something they did that impressed you, so you can bring it back to your branch. In my opinion, working together like this will keep us around for a long, long time.

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Councilor's Report from ALA Annual Conference 2015

by Al Kagan, SRRT Councilor, African Studies Bibliographer and Professor of Library Administration Emeritus - University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign



The San Francisco ALA Annual Conference was one of the more intense meetings of recent years. SRRT had mixed success. I will state the outcomes up-front and give the details below. We won a resolution denouncing systemic racism and another endorsing the Movement for Black Lives statement. The resolution on gun violence was significantly revised and passed. The revised Gaza resolution was overwhelmingly defeated again, and the mass surveillance resolution was debated for a long time and got some traction, but was finally referred back again to the Committee on Legislation and the Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Starting with our successes, our Resolution Denouncing the Systematic Racism that Motivated the South Carolina Shootings (2014-2015 CD#43 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_43_systemic_racism_resol_finaldocx.pdf)) was very slightly revised and passed unanimously at the ALA Membership Meeting and almost unanimously at the ALA Council. We did have to fend off a move to delete all mention of the South Carolina shootings and leave it as a general statement against systemic racism. When I spoke to that proposed amendment, I talked about how over the past several years, ALA Council had become averse to dealing with specific current events. In my shock that Council might actually approve the amendment, I used the metaphor that Council had contracted a kind of disease against addressing specific current events. This was perhaps not the best metaphor, and that language provoked a rebuke from the meeting chair, ALA President Courtney Young. Even though this wasn't the best use of language, I thought the chair's action was completely out-of-bounds. ALA Parliamentarian Eli Mina later apologized to me.

Jane Glasby had read the statement from the Movement for Black Lives to the ALA Membership Meeting, but there was no formal vote to endorse it there. Nevertheless, the ALA Council approved it almost unanimously and in record time (2014-2015 ALA CD#46 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_46_Statement%20on_Black%20Lives_finaldocx.pdf)). It was a very strong statement, and one wonders if the Council actually read it.

Our Resolution on Gun Violence was defeated in the ALA Membership Meeting by a vote of 44 to 53. Since

the vote was so close, Jane Glasby took it back to the Council Forum to get further reactions and see what might be done to make it passable. The feedback was that it was too broad; councilors were not ready to condemn gun violence in general, especially because many of them live in western states that revere the Second Amendment and have very few restrictions on guns. Some were clearly afraid of the NRA, but were also afraid for their own safety. It seemed that those who needed the resolution most were the ones who said that they could not support it. With the help of Jim Kuhn, we narrowed the resolution down to addressing only gun violence that affects libraries, and supporting legislation that prohibits carrying guns in or near libraries and educational institutions (2014-2015 CD#45 Revised (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org/aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_45_gun_violence_final_final.pdf)). Even that was too much for some councilors and before passage, the resolution was further narrowed to supporting legislation that "allows the prohibition of the carrying of guns in or near libraries and other educational institutions."

Our Resolution on Libraries and Schools Affected by the Conflict in Gaza and Israel in 2014 (2014-2015 ALA CD#40 rev (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org/aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_40_Res%20Libs_Schls_Gaza_Israel_final.pdf)) was overwhelmingly defeated. The SRRT International Responsibilities Task Force had first proposed a similar resolution at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting in Chicago. At that time, it caused quite an uproar in the Council forums and on the Council floor. We had given it to the International Relations Committee, but that body took no action. It was interesting to see how the mood shifted after the January IRC meeting. Councilors initially seemed open to learning more about what happened in Gaza last summer, but our opponents were very aggressive, and any support quickly evaporated. We were accused of proposing an unbalanced resolution because we did not include damage and destruction to Israeli institutions. Others said that the situation was just too complicated for ALA to take any position. Many implied that our information was not correct or incomplete. Michael Dowling, Director of the ALA International Relations Office, said that we ought to wait and read the forthcoming comprehensive UN Gaza report.

The UN did issue several relevant Gaza reports (<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports>) between Midwinter and Annual. The most comprehensive one was released just before the Annual meeting. There was nothing in that report that contradicted anything in our January resolution. In fact, the preliminary numbers that we had on the damage and destruction to Gaza schools and kindergartens were too low. The latest UN report did document 3 cases of vacant Gaza schools used for weapons storage and 2 of them were most likely used to fire weapons. The report also documented 3 cases where Israeli schools were damaged. However, this contrasts with 262 Gaza schools attacked, including 7 schools that were housing displaced civilians resulting in at least 42 killed and about 230 injured. 274 Gaza kindergartens were also damaged. So we added the information on the damage to Israeli schools to the resolution and updated the numbers. The IRC again took no action. These revisions had no effect, and our second resolution was supported by only a handful of councilors.

The most contentious debate centered around our Resolution Against Mass Surveillance of the American People (2014-2015 ALACD#42 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org/aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_42_Mass_Surveillance_62615_w-o.pdf)). Although we had already forwarded the resolution to the Intellectual Freedom Committee before the conference, the resolution was again forwarded to the IFC and also the Committee on Legislation at the first Council meeting. It was subsequently discussed at both Council Forums. The two committees brought back a substitute motion at the third Council meeting titled, Resolution on the Passage of the USA FREEDOM Act and Reaffirming ALA's Commitment to Surveillance Law Reform (2014-2015 ALA CD#20.3 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org/aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_20_2_col_rpt_62915_act.pdf)). The substitute reversed the intent of

our resolution by commending the passage of the USA FREEDOM Act, and stripping out all the specific provisions in our resolution. We had addressed all the amendments that were excluded from the final very weakened USA FREEDOM Act, as well as mass surveillance provisions of Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and Executive Order 12333 on US Intelligence Activities. However, several councilors would not go along this time. When the substitute was approved, they tried to amend it by adding back all our original resolved clauses. For a time, it actually looked like we would win our case, but a last minute referral back to the same committees ended the debate by a vote of 72-61. The referral was made on the grounds that there were inaccuracies in our text, but this was a vague assertion without any specific content. We have yet to receive anything specific on what might be incorrect. On a more optimistic note, after the conference we got a commitment that SRRT would be involved in the joint committee's discussions.

SRRT endorsed one other successful resolution, Resolution on Improving Access to Spanish, Bilingual, and Books in Various Languages for Children in Detention Centers (2014-2015 ALA CD#38 Revised-2 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_38_Resol_on_chldr_n_%20crisis_rev_63015_final.pdf)). SRRT Action Council member Mike Marlin was one of the two seconders on that resolution.

SRRT members had encouraged the new Sustainability Round Table to bring resolutions before the Council. That round table passed their Resolution on the Importance of Sustainable Libraries at the ALA Virtual Membership Meeting on June 4th. As a result of that action, it came to the Council in San Francisco, where it was approved unanimously (2014-2015 ALA CD#36 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_36_sustainable_libraries_resol_final.pdf)).

A new ALA strategic framework and plan (2014-2015 ALA CD#37 (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/cd_37_strategic_directions_final.pdf)) was approved. Thanks to SRRT Action Council member Julie Winkelstein, three amendments were adopted by the drafters and included in the document. "Housing status" was another criteria included in the section on Equitable Access to Information and Library Services. The sentence on how libraries reflect their communities was broadened to include the words, "as well as the world around them." And the sentence on learning outcome was changed to include the words in all caps here: The outcome of learning is KNOWLEDGE SUPPORTING POSITIVE individual and organizational change.

SRRT's Memorial Resolution for Zoia Horn (1918-2014) (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/Memorial_27_Zoia_Horn_FINAL.pdf) and the SRRT endorsed tribute recognizing the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2015_annual_council_documents/Tribute_7_ADA_63015_FINAL.pdf) were routinely approved.

Finally, one other surprising item came to the Council floor that could adversely affect SRRT. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee proposed what it called a housekeeping amendment to be put on the 2016 membership election ballot. The measure concerns ALA and ALA unit affiliates such as the Progressive Librarians Guild. The wording was confusing, and specified that affiliation needs Council approval. I and others said that it was not a housekeeping matter, but actually a change in policy. The measure was then referred back to the Committee for further study and clarification.

As usual, I will try to answer any questions.

This is my last report as SRRT Councilor and I want to take the opportunity to thank the SRRT members and the Action Council for electing me from 1999 to 2009, and 2011 to 2015. It has truly been a honor to represent

SRRT on the ALA Council, and although sometimes frustrating it was also rewarding to at least educate the councilors on all our various issues. And we did win quite a few battles. I think Laura Koltutsky will serve us well as the new SRRT Councilor, and I will be available to advise her about the complexities of the organization as needed.

Al Kagan

SRRT Councilor, 1999-2009, 2011-2015

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Minutes from Action Council I & II

submitted by Laura Koltutsky, SRRT Secretary

Social Responsibilities Round Table

Action Council I & II Meetings

ALA Annual Conference 2015, San Francisco, CA

SRRT Action Council I

Saturday, June 27

8:30-11:30 a.m.

In attendance: Laura Koltutsky (Secretary), Charles Kratz (Treasurer), Beth Bruch, Kenny Garcia (Member), Tom Twiss (Action Council Member), Al Kagan (SRRT Councilor), Jane Glasby (Member), Peter Warfield (Press), Julie Winkelstein (HHPTF), Aimee Ellis, LaJuan Pringle (Member), Diedre Conkling (Action Council Member), Mark Hudson (PLG Liaison)

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Review of Agenda

Garcia asked to have Resolution on Improving Access to Spanish and Bilingual Books for Children in Detention Centers (added to Resolutions and Motions section item i)

III. Resolutions and Motions

a. Mass Surveillance, submitted to COL and IFC for consideration. Will likely have a substitute resolution from COL at Council. Charles Kratz and Tom Twiss will attend the joint IFC/COL meeting Sunday morning. Further discussion. Al Kagan moved to endorse the Mass Surveillance Resolution, Laura Koltutsky seconded, motion passed.

b. Gaza Libraries and Schools : Discussion, Al Kagan moved to endorse the Gaza resolution, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed.

c. Zoia Horn Memorial Resolution : tabled until ACII

d. Endorsement of Tribute to ADA : Charles Kratz moved to endorse, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed.

e. Gun Violence : for ALA Membership Meeting, Discussion, Al Kagan moved to endorse, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed.

f. Systematic Racism : for ALA Membership Meeting, Discussion, Motion to approve in principle moved by Charles Kratz, seconded by Tom Twiss, motion passed.

g. Endorsement of Statement on Police Spies in UK, Motion to table until ACII moved by Laura Koltutsky, seconded by Tom Twiss.

h. Endorsement of Statement of Black Lives Matter - Al Kagan moved to endorse, seconded by Laura Koltutsky. Further discussion with LaJuan Pringle, he indicated that he hadn't planned on making it a resolution, planned to take it to ALA Membership Meeting.

i. Resolution on Improving Access to Spanish and Bilingual Books for Children in Detention Centers : Discussion some suggestions for grammatical changes, Al Kagan moved to endorse, Charles Kratz seconded.

IV. Elections

Nominations made from the floor and through expression of interest on the SRRT-AC Listserv.

a. Coordinator : elect Diedre Conkling nominated, Laura Koltutsky moved, Charles Kratz seconded, motion passed.

b. Membership Committee Chair - Al Kagan nominated, Charles Kratz moved, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed.

c. Coordinator : Nikki Winslow is willing to serve one more year, Nikki Winslow nominated, moved by Al Kagan, seconded by Charles Kratz, motion passed.

d. Nominations Committee Chair : Laura Koltutsky nominated, Al Kagan moved, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed. Charles Kratz offered to serve on committee.

e. Secretary : Kenny Garcia nominated, Al Kagan moved, Tom Twiss seconded, motion passed.

f. Treasurer : Charles Kratz nominated, Al Kagan moved, Laura Koltutsky seconded, motion passed.

g. ALISE Liaison : Tabled until ACII, Julie Winkelstein had expressed interest. Another individual from the listserv.

h. EMERT Liaison : Kenny Garcia appointed.

i. NMRT Liaison : Tabled until ACII

j. FTRF Liaison : Mark Hudson nominated, Al Kagan moved, Tom Twiss seconded.

V. Reports

a. Treasurer : SRRT budget on track with surplus due to program cancellation. Charles Kratz suggested that SRRT might want to sponsor an Emerging Leader. Discussion.

b. Task Forces

i. Feminist Task Force

ii. Rainbow Project : authority for Rainbow Project given to LGBT Round Table, no longer a SRRT Task Force.

iii. MLK Jr. Holiday : Sunrise Celebration for Boston in process, program on race for Orlando. Task Force EDI update :complete work for Orlando 2016, make recommendations for diversity within the association. Discussion around graduated dues.

iv. International Relations Task Force IRTF : Four programs at Annual Palestinian Librarians panel

Film series Now Showing : The Great Book Robberies & Citizen Four

Glenn Greenwald program

Hope to bring in a Palestinian librarian in next year's program.

v. Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty Task Force : Book drive at conference for homeless shelters in San Francisco, 3 barrels located in the Convention Center. Coordinated with SFPL to deliver donated books. Good turnout at the All Task Force Meeting, increasing use of the Toolkit created by HHPTF and OLOS. Film being screened at Annual "The Homestretch".

Mark Hudson reminded meeting attendees about the SRRT Membership/PLG Social event at West Portal public library. PLG is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year.

Julie Winkelstein provided stickers for conference attendees for their badges indicating their preferred gender. LaJuan Pringle and Julie also regendered the washrooms in the Convention Center. ACI ended at 11:30AM.

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Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force News



Image caption: Image caption: Sorting out book donations from ALA members and conference attendees, 2015. SRRT members, L-R: Laura Koltutsky, LaJuan Pringle, Julie Winkelstein, and Lisa Gieskes.

The Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty Task Force is pleased to report back to SRRT that the ALA Annual Conference 2015 was a smashing success! We coordinated the first ever ALA book drive that benefited the local community, with over five Bay Area community organizations. Book donations were accepted from June 26-29 in specially-marked bins throughout the conference campus, at the DEMCO booth, and at the Diversity & Outreach Fair. We were able to take immediate action to serve people who go without such basics as

shelter, food, healthcare, and literacy support in the midst of San Francisco's striking prosperity by offering this book drive. Conference attendees were encouraged to bring one new book from the list of recommended titles found at www.ala.org/divfair (<http://www.ala.org/divfair>) for donation to designated Bay Area organizations providing shelters, support, and transitional housing for youth and families. The goal of the book drive was to collect a range of excellent titles that included books for diverse backgrounds and identities. The donations were collected in coordination with the San Francisco Public Library to benefit local organizations including Compass Family Shelter, the Providence Foundation of San Francisco, the Berkeley Food and Housing Project, YEAH! (Youth Engagement, Advocacy, and Housing), Homeless Prenatal Program, Westside Community Services, and Home Away from Homelessness.

Our partnership with the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) and local homeless shelter libraries garnered thousands of supporters and dozens of books for each local agency. It was great to work with the SFPL and see its commitment to the local community. SFPL was the host library for ALA Annual 2015 and offers model programs (<http://www.ala.org/offices/extending-our-reach-reducing-homelessness-through-library-engagement-6>) highlighted in our Office for Literacy and Outreach Services toolkit. Special thanks goes to the Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (<http://www.ala.org/offices/extending-our-reach-reducing-homelessness-through-library-engagement-6>).

HHPTF also offered a Now Showing @ALA Film program. HHPTF partnered with the Office for Literacy and Outreach Services as well as the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) and Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) to feature a new film about homeless youth. See: <http://www.homestretchdoc.com/> (<http://www.homestretchdoc.com/>).

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Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Task Force News and ALA Task Force for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (TF-EDI) News by LaJuan Pringle, Library Manager -- Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

The Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force is currently planning the next Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Sunrise Celebration in Boston. The Task Force is also making plans to host a program tied to equity, diversity, or inclusion for the Annual Conference in Orlando. As more information becomes available about both events, it will be shared with SRRT membership.

The King Holiday Task Force assisted the HHPTF with its first book drive. The book drive benefitted various homeless shelters throughout the Bay area. The King Holiday Task Force also participated in the OLOS Diversity Fair. Congratulations should be extended to Julie Winkelstein, whose display on "Public Libraries and LGBTQ Youth Experiencing Homelessness: An IMLS Project" was awarded second place!

TFEDI will also coordinate a program/event for the 2016 Annual Conference in Orlando that will feature a prominent speaker who will share their experiences as they relate to equity, diversity, and inclusion. More information will be coming soon. Thanks!

NOTE: ALA's Task Force for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion was formed earlier in 2014 when members of the Black Caucus (BCALA) raised serious concerns about the scheduling of ALA's 2016 Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida, a state where the implementation of Florida's Stand Your Ground law has been critically flawed. TFEDI's charge is to develop a plan and strategic actions to build more equity, diversity, and inclusion

among our members, the field of librarianship, and our communities. The most important TFEDI outcome is the public and honest conversation that will be generated by its plan and recommended actions. The final Task Force report will include recommendations for ensuring that a continuing focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion is embedded throughout the ALA organization. The term for TFEDI officially ends on June 30, 2016, during the Annual Conference in Orlando. While TFEDI works closely with the ALA Committee on Diversity, they are not the same. The ALA Committee on Diversity will continue its own work after the work of TFEDI has concluded.

LaJuan Pringle
Chair, Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force
SRRT Representative to ALA TFEDI

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Ethnic Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT) News

Submitted by Leslie Campbell Hime, EMIERT Chair

EMIERT's 2015 Distinguished Librarian Award was presented to Mark Puente at EMIERT's President's Program, "Collective Cultural Competency: Promoting a Dialogue about Diversity in an Academic Library" during ALA's Annual Conference in San Francisco. Puente, director of diversity and leadership programs at the Association of Research Libraries and a former Spectrum Scholar, was recognized for his work with the National Diversity in Libraries conference and the Spectrum Scholarship Initiative. Puente has also been instrumental in developing tools that librarians in all types of libraries can use to enhance their collections and services to underserved users.

EMIERT's Distinguished Librarian Award recognizes significant accomplishments in library services that are national or international in scope and include improving, spreading, and promoting multicultural librarianship. The award will be offered again in 2017.

EMIERT sponsored three programs at ALA Annual 2015. Collective Cultural Competency: Promoting a Dialogue about Diversity in an Academic Library provided an overview of an internal event hosted by Western Libraries in 2014 titled, "Understanding the 21st Century Library Patron." Attendees received recommendations and strategies for implementing a similar event and/or series of events at their own institutions.

Diversity in a Flash: A Lightning Showcase of Residency Diversity Initiatives provided attendees with a better understanding of diversity residency programs and strategies to promote ethnic and multicultural initiatives.

Librarians of Color: The Challenges of "Movin' On Up" (Part II) provided attendees with an opportunity to share their personal experiences and learn strategies to negotiate microaggressions in the workplace.

The David Cohen Award will be announced at ALA Midwinter in Boston. The David Cohen Award recognizes articles of significant new research and publications that increase understanding and promote multiculturalism in libraries in North America. Works published within the last two years preceding the award application deadline are eligible to receive the award. The publication should demonstrate advances in understanding multicultural issues in libraries. The deadline for submission is **December 31, 2015**.

EMIERT invites proposals for sponsorship for ALA's Annual Conference in Orlando that discuss key issues of ethnicity and librarianship or that provide programmatic or collection ideas.

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Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) News

Submitted by Peter Coyl, GLBTRT Chair

ALA Annual in San Francisco was an exciting time for members of the GLBTRT--just being in the city was awesome enough, but having the news break of the Supreme Court decision in Obergefell v. Hodges making marriage equality the law of the land added to it.

Our pre-conference (entitled "Rolling Out the Rainbow Carpet") on serving GLBT customers was well attended with nearly 40 attendees. We were thrilled to have librarians from all types of libraries address varying issues. We were also delighted to hear from award winning authors Marcus Ewart and David Levithan.

That evening members attended the opening session with Roberta Kaplan, the attorney who lead the fight in United States v. Windsor, the Supreme Court case which paved the way for Obergefell in defeating DOMA. Ms. Kaplan discussed her new book "Then Comes Marriage", highlighting the fact that just that morning she had to revise her remarks in light of the Supreme Court decision. The GLBTRT sponsored or cosponsored a number of well-attended programs: Curating Activism in LGBT History (<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28736>), The History and Evolving Acceptance of Collecting LGBT Materials in Libraries (<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28939>), and Transgender People at the Library - Moving from "Them" to "Us" (<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28859>).

Saturday evening, we broke with tradition and held our social a day early. GLBTRT members gathered at the Harvey Milk Branch of the San Francisco Public Library with the Spectrum Scholars and were privileged to have a brief talk on GLBT history and the Castro District from the GLBT Historical Society.

Sunday, the GLBTRT and staff of the San Francisco Public Library marched in the San Francisco Pride Parade. It was an exciting time--especially marching with Stonewall Book Award Winner Dr. Gayle Pitman, author of "This Day in June," a delightful picture book depicting a pride parade. (I highly recommend it!).

As always a highlight of Annual Conference was the Stonewall Book Awards program. New this year, instead of a ticketed brunch, the program was free to all attendees and received record breaking attendance: nearly 300 people! The Round Table plans to continue having the Stonewall Book Awards program as an open event.

Overall ALA in San Francisco was an extraordinary experience for many GLBTRT members and one that many of us will remember for years to come.

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Book Review: Insights: Africa's Future: Can Biosciences Contribute?

Brian Heap and David Bennett, Eds., \.Banson (Publishers)/B4FA (Biosciences for Farming in Africa).17f Sturton Street, Cambridge, UK CB1 2SN ISBN: 9780956338754 (pbk), 9780956338761 (hard), \$15.00 US (pbk), 136 pp. 2013.

Reviewed by Frederick W. Stoss, Associate Librarian, SUNY University at Buffalo



Africa is a continent that has been molded and shaped by external forces for more than a half a millennium. Today the countries comprising the continent are among the fastest-growing in the world. This growth is attributed to the rapid demand for resources from China's unprecedented economic growth. Estimates place the world's population at above nine billion by the year 2050. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates a worldwide increase in the demand of food production of seventy percent, and Africa is seen as a major contributor to meeting those demands.

Additional natural and anthropogenic factors are wreaking havoc for developing nations' water and land resources, and that pressure poses serious challenges for the economies of African nations. Africa is also poised as the benefactor of many technologies, entrepreneurial acumen, increasing educational and research opportunities, and societal skills for linking agricultural technologies to economic drivers. Biosciences for Farming in Africa has taken steps to stimulate the youth of Africa in meeting the challenges presented by building a more robust agricultural basis for its economic development and future. The success of this stimulation is found in how well the enthusiasm, expertise, and management of that basis is maintained and grows.

In their preface to the book, the editors pose several questions that individual chapters address about the new technologies that might transform Africa into a world agricultural leader: how some African countries more readily adopted new agrobiotechnology technologies; how new agrobiotechnology industries and businesses responded to the demands; how business and public interests sought responses of mutual benefit; how interested parties and stakeholders develop and train the next generations of African agrobiotechnologists; why the youth of Africa are the potential successors and success stories in the continent's agrobiotechnology and farming economies; and how can fresh water be found and delivered to the places where it will be optimally used in farming.

The answers are found in eighteen chapters by a total of twenty-three authors who represent eight countries (Germany, Ghana, Kenya, The Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Major topics addressed include food as a vital component of human rights and justice, the role of small farms, the quality and distribution of seeds, education and training, the roles biotechnology might play in fortifying crop production, water resources and efficiencies of use, the role of GM (genetically modified crops) and the ethics of their use, private-sector investment in small farming, and issues resulting from food patents and food security.

An engaging and challenging postscript to this book outlines the various levels of cooperation and engagement among the stakeholders in local, national, and regional governance; public and private developers and sponsors of the research and application technologies; and the collaborators from the international NGO Communities in both scientific and policy areas.

This collection of essays is written from a perspective of the Era of the New Biology (genomics, metabolomics, proteomics, bioinformatics, etc.). Libraries supporting studies in agribusiness and agricultural biotechnology, plant genetics and biotechnology, international studies, emerging economies of Africa, and the role of food security as a component of human rights will find this work of interest.

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Call for Editorial Board Members

Are you looking for a way to be more involved in the Social Responsibilities Round Table? Are you passionate about books, media and their role in social responsibility? Do you have excellent writing and editing skills? Are you good at meeting deadlines and encouraging others to meet them as well? If so, membership to the SRRT Newsletter Editorial Board might be just the volunteer position you're looking for!

SRRT Newsletter needs to fill two openings on the Editorial Board. Editorial Board memberships are finalized by the SRRT Action Council.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the SRRT Editorial Board, please send a copy of your resume/CV, a brief letter of inquiry outlining your qualifications and interest in the position, and a writing sample and/or examples of previous work to Melissa Cardenas-Dow, SRRT Newsletter Editor, at [micd.srrt.newsletter \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:micd.srrt.newsletter[at]gmail.com).

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Call for Submissions

The SRRT newsletter is always looking for good articles, essays and letters to the editor. The next submission deadline is **November 20, 2015**.

Submissions to the SRRT Newsletter may be made by any current SRRT Member or SRRT affiliate. Please send your submissions electronically in one of the following formats: MS Word, RTF, PDF, or plain text pasted into the body of an e-mail. Submissions should be 500 to 1,000 words. 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 send original submissions and inquiries to SRRT Newsletter Editor Melissa I. Cardenas-Dow at [micd.srrt.newsletter \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:micd.srrt.newsletter[at]gmail.com), indicating "SRRT Newsletter" within the subject line of your e-mail. A confirmation of receipt will be sent in a timely manner.

Submissions for book or media reviews should be sent to Meaghan Hunt-Wilson, the SRRT Newsletter

Reviews Editor at [SRRTreviews \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:SRRTreviews@gmail.com), indicating "Reviews" in the subject line of your e-mail.

Reviews 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.

Special Call for Submissions: on ALA Offices for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) and Diversity (OFD)

There has been a considerable amount of discussion within and without SRRT concerning the merger of the ALA Offices for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) and for Diversity (OFD). Many feel that the Offices have different missions and fear the merger may weaken one or both. In addition, the reasons for the merger are not fully understood.

The SRRT Newsletter would welcome pieces on the merger, its implications, some historical retrospectives outlining the mission and goals of each office, for our September issue. Please let us know if you are willing to write such an article. Submission guidelines stated above apply.

Melissa Cardenas-Dow
SRRT Newsletter Editor

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of ALA/SRRT. The editors reserve the right to edit submitted material as necessary or as whimsy strikes.

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