SRRT Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter ALA

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Women's Task Force Questions Candidates

On Tuesday, January 24th, the SRRT Task Force on Women provided a forum for ALA's presidential candidates Thomas Galvin and GeraldShields. Both candidates gave introductory speeches, and then answered questions that Task Force coordinator, Diane Gordon Kadanoff asked on behalf of the Task Force, as well as several questions put to the candidates from the floor.

Introductory Remarks:

Galvin believes the field should be "open to talent", he wants ALA to begin a dialogue with the information industry, he has a strong commitment to restructuring ALA, sees the "democratizing" of Council as a mistakeand believes the effect was the opposite, wants ALA program and staff to be accountable to membership. Shields says that having worked there he understands the problems and politics of ALA headquarters. He would, if elected president, "emphasize issues, not tinkering with structure." He said the profession needs a unified voice and not the fragmentation that would result from certain restructuring proposals.

Q: What is your position regarding the delayed updating of the Library Billof Rights, that would make it conform with the sexism and racism awareness resolution?

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Betty-Carol Sellen
Michael O'Brien

Notes from Mid-winter

The President's Program, presenting a draft "toward a national information policy," received worse than mixed reviews in Chicago.

Shirley Echelman, President of the Special Libraries Association, found the language "inexact" and commented that librarians are "relatively unimportant in information." She criticized the emphasis in the draft on libraries, labeled the document "nothing but a manifesto for public libraries", and also suggested it be turned over to Edwin Newman for treatment of "linguistic disease."

Other critics included Audrey Grosch, President of the American Society for Information Science who complained that the draft is "an idealized statement that ignores real world problems."

Expect to hear more on this one leading up to the annual conference this summer. There is a battle brewing here and the ingredients include the information industry, library funding, and library services, free access and information systems. Big business.

Council...

Several resolutions were passed by Council during mid-winter week with little discussion or debate, and a couple bear noting for commitments of new responsibility on ALAs part:

In a resolution on South Africa, Council resolved that "the ALA delegation to the International Federation of Library Associations be instructed to introduce to that body a resolution censuring South Africa for violation(s) of human rights" in the case of closing dissident newspapers in October 1977.

Another resolution, regarding library services for youth, recognizes that censorship problems "consistently occur in connec-

CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL ENDORSED BY THE TASK FORCE ON WOMEN

Fay Blake	Diane Gordon Kadanoff
Sherrill Cheda	Joan K. Marshall
Miriam Crawford	Joan Newman
Sylvia Delgado-Espinosa	Mimi Penchansky
Elizabeth Futas	Patricia Bond
Penny Jeffrey	Patricia Tarin
E.J. Josey	

Shields/Galvin

(Continued from page 1)

Shields: User awareness is bogging down, however other areas are moving ahead. The conflict is a matter of interpretation of what the Library Bill of Rights is--it is concepts, not rules to follow.

Galvin: I believe that the report on implementation of the resolution is due at the 1978 annual conference. I was a voting member of Council that instructed the IFC to make the Bill of Rights compatible with the sexism and racism resolution. I am concerned that the IFC has been slow in responding.

Q: How have you implemented the sexism & racism awareness resolution at your library schools? What specific steps have you taken?

Galvin: There are two faculty members strongly concerned with women's issues, and two deeply concerned about Black issues. Additionally, sexism is dealt with in the children's literature courses.

Shields: An extensive effort has been made to implement the resolution, however no concen-

ship problems consistently occur in connection with sex-related information" and notes that "sexual exploration and pressure (exists) among children and adolescents". Council therefore "affirms the right of youth to comprehensive, sex-related education...and affirms the active role of libraries" in providing such information.

More on "The Speaker"

The "Speaker" occupied center stage for much of the week. The glare of publicity was present in the form of Dan Rather and a CBS crew for "Sixty Minutes" filming the continuing debate on the film and interviewing, among others, Judy Krug, Clara Jones, and Eric Moon. What will result on a Sunday night to come we don't know.

For the record, the NBC network's flagship station in New York editorialized against the film last summer. While the New York Times equated criticism of "the Speaker" with denying the real Dr. Shockley his right to speak--in a glib comment on the editorial page of February 19.

Around the country, many libraries are purchasing and using the "Speaker" in film programs. The Minneapolis Public Library had scheduled the film as a part of its calendar of events for Black History Month. Under criticism from the community and a local paper, the library withdrew the film as "inappropriate" as a Black History event. But the Twin Cities Courier was not dissuaded, asking in a subsequent editorial,

> "One wonders how under the sun a film 'unsuitable' in February suddenly becomes acceptable in another month on the calendar...Such insensitivity on the part of local and national libraries would be astounding if it were not quite so ordinary in the general course of race relations."

implement the resolution, however no concentrated effort has been made. Through an Office of Education funded institute a Women in Library Management Workshop has been held. Also, continuing education courses are offered on such topics as aggressive training in Library Management and upward mobility.

Q: Since the profession is dominated by women, will your committee appointments reflect this fact? What percentage of women will you appoint to committees?

Shields: I once again emphasize consistency. I am willing to listen, to seek out the "shakers and movers", get out of the pattern of always consulting the establishment.

Galvin: I am uncomfortable with percentages. I want the involvement of a broader number of people. There is inadequate survey data on women and minorities on ALA committees. It is also important to evaluate what committees need to have better representation from women. Women should be placed into the power structure. Talented people are needed in positions of authority to influence ALA policy.

Follow-up question: how to identify the "shakers and movers"?

Galvin: There are clearly recognized groups, the Task Force on Women is one, that are available for consultation. Ask these groups for recommendations for specific committees. A 'catch-22' exists with regard to conference attendance--many people don't come unless they are on committees, yet it is hard to obtain recognition unless one comes to conferences regularly.

Shields: My answer is very political. First one must assess what is needed, where change is required. Then 'older' members must move aside to allow 'newer' members to become active. "Political groups' should be consulted about appointments.

NUTRITION:

A Federal Food Program Primer

By Barbara Zang

Affording a nutritionally adequate diet is becoming more and more difficult for low-income Americans. In our "land of plenty", millions of citizens on fixed incomes watch with dread as their buying power shrinks. Middle-income families are "buying down" to cheaper foods. And the poor, who have been buying the cheapest foods all along, find their budgets devastated by soaring prices. They cannot buy down; they can only buy less.

But while food prices soar and the risks of malnutrition increase, federal food programs offering significant nutritional assistance remain woefully under-utilized or under-financed.

Eligible people do not take advantage of federal food programs for a variety of reasons. One frequent cause of non-participation is lack of information. People simply do not know that these food programs exist.

To illustrate the gaps in federal food program assistance here is a summary of December 1977 operations:

* Of the conservatively estimated 38 million persons eligible for food stamps, 17 million use the program--a gap of 21 million.

National Groups:

National Child Nutrition Project
46 Bayard Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Food Research and Action Center
2011 Eye Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Children's Foundation
1028 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 1112
Washington, D.C. 20036

Community Nutrition Institute
1146 19th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

State Groups:

PRAXIS
1620 South 37th
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

California Nutrition Action Committee
Forum Building, Room 1026
1107 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Emergency Food Services Project
2 Park Square
Room 608
Boston, MA 02111

Georgia Citizens Coalition on Hunger
201 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Food Law Project
c/o CALS
335 Broadway

program is reaching 1 million of the estimated 3.3 million persons who need its benefits.

* Of the 6 million senior citizens living near or below poverty, only 477,000 (8%) benefit from nutrition programs for the elderly.

* 690,000 needy children are still without school lunch programs.

* 2.2 million children are eating free or reduced price school breakfasts, compared to 12 million needy children participating in the school lunch program.

* Of those 12 million children, 78% are not reached by the summer food program for children.

* Only 537,350 children nationwide benefit from the child care food program.

For the library--and the socially responsible librarian--there is a growing literature on the various food programs. And there are groups at the national, regional, and state levels which are ideal information sources for food program activities. Many of these groups publish guides, fact sheets, and newsletters on food program advocacy. Some have produced non-print information about the federal food programs.

Here is a list of some of the more active anti-hunger groups in the country. The list is by no means complete; it is a selection of national and state groups from the various regions of the map. If you want to begin a collection of federal food program information in your library, write these organizations for a list of their publications and other materials. Many of the materials are free or low cost.

Indiana Nutrition Campaign
38 North Pennsylvania
Suite 312
Indianapolis, IN 46204

In addition, the Community Food and Nutrition Program operated by the Community Services Administration funds a variety of local groups in every state. To find out which organizations in your area have been funded to work on food program issues, contact:

Community Food and Nutrition Program
Community Services Administration
Room 318
1200 19th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20506

The other side of collection of information is its dissemination. The federal agency responsible for the majority of these food programs is the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. FNS produces mountains of material to be distributed to the masses. To claim your share contact:

Food and Nutrition Service
Public Information Office
USDA
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Ideally, a collection would include information about eligibity requirements for each program, the days and hours of operation of local programs as well as their addresses and phone numbers, and a summary of fair hearing procedures for each one.

Ignorance about available food resources means poor people have fewer choices about how to meet their food needs. We should not contribute to that situation.

On Equal Terms Is On Target

By Jim Dwyer

On equal terms is the latest and most comprehensive attempt to remove sexual and other social biases from the Library of Congress list of subject headings (LCSH) and other subject analysis tools. Since its able compiler, Joan Marshall, draws upon the efforts of Elizabeth Dickinson, Sanford Berman and SRRT's Committee on Sexism in Subject Headings, this publication might be viewed as the fruition of years of work by concerned librarians.

The thesaurus contains thousands of subject headings and cross references relating to people and peoples. It is arranged according to ANSI specifications, incorporating narrower, broader and related terms as well as use (see) references.

The format provides slightly more flexibility than that incorporated by LC but is similar enough to allow adoption of suggested changes by LC with relatively little additional effort. Scope notes and marginal comments explaining and criticizing current LC practice are used to great advantage.

While LC has shown some reaction to previous feminist/humanist critiques, changes in LCSH have taken place slowly and in piecemeal fashion until recently. This is at least partially because previous modifications have been responses to specific complaints rather than

In his forward, Sanford Berman points out the value of On equal terms:

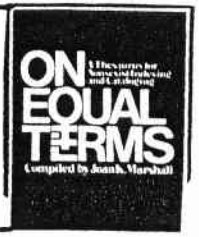
"It represents not merely 'another' subject-heading list, nor a sterile, irrelevant exercise, but rather a practical, truly authoritative, long-needed tool for making women-related books, pamphlets, magazines, films, tapes, kits, and records genuinely and immediately accessible to the people who want them." (p.v)

This immediate, practical value may be overshadowed, however, by its potential long-term impact on the larger society, not just the too-frequently isolated and insulated world of libraries:

"On equal terms is a conscious effort to provide an alternative to-and to change the vocabulary...with the expectation that such change will affect the mass mind--even if only a 'little and slowly.'" (p.4)

Critics of the women's and civil rights movements who accuse activists of semantic quibbling and "library pragmatists" who consider only budgetary expenses rather than the great social costs of racism and sexism are unlikely to greet this volume with open arms. They would do well to read Marshall's essay on sexism and language included in the introduction.

On Equal Terms A Thesaurus for Non-sexist Indexing and Cataloging. by Joan K. Marshall. $14.95 cloth, $9.50 paper; order direct from Neal-Schuman Publishers, Box 1687, FDR Station, NY, NY 10022 (add $1 for handling).



practices.

The aforementioned Committee on Sexism in Subject Headings did conduct such a review in 1974, however, and identified five problem areas:

"the Man/Woman generic problem, subsuming terminology, the modifier tactic, separate and unequal treatment, and omissions." (p.6. All quotations from On equal terms)

Interestingly enough, this reviewer is a white, heterosexual male from an American Christian home who finds himself utterly misserved by existing terminology which impedes effective subject retrieval and is sometimes personally repugnant. The current LC biases give credence to old misconceptions by maintaining the linguistic status quo.

While LCSH contins many subjects defending God (the right-wing, Christian variety), Motherhood (as the only "natural" role for women) and Apple Pie (we take your apples and sell you the pie), there are few if any terms connoting the desirability or even the possibility of positive social change.

LC's attempt to serve a mysterious, hypothetical reader is clearly an unrealistic intellectual exercise. Marshall suggests a more pluralistic approach because "we must keep all our readers in focus." (p.7)

This implies both a greater number of access points in the subject catalog as well as the use of neutral terms. But what if people go to the library expecting to find material on a given subject under a heading that is or was in fairly widespread use such as "Yellow peril?" The obvious solution is cross referencing, and, as Marshall observes:

"Libraries are also educational institutions. We do not disserve our readers if, in not meeting their expectations concerning access, we instruct them (and ourselves) in nonbiased terminology." (p.7)

and networking impede such actions? Will commercial and independent indexing firms be more likely to accept this challenge, or will they, too, pay more attention to dollar signs than to signs of the times?

Except in rare instances, social change does not and cannot happen by itself; commitment to long-term effort is the order of the day. The obstacles to instituting the reforms delineated in On equal terms are huge (involving bureaucratic inertia, tight money and institutional sexism), but the opportunities are nonetheless promising. We have a workable plan, the thesaurus itself, and the rising consciousness of librarians and readers in our favor. Here are some proposed tactics:

(1) Pressure your own library, network, and LC to adopt the new terminology, if not as established headings, at the very least as cross references.

(2) Establish a system of reader-generated cross references in your own library. By demonstrating that LC's average patron is a mythical creature, LCSH becomes less of a sacred cow and more vulnerable to modification.

(3) Apply for a grant for a demonstration project instituting On equal terms in your library or library system.

(4) Get political. (Who, me?) Lobby for library funding and change. A former library trustee and a self-professed "feminist" have moved into the white house and more women are being elected to public offices. Make library services more visible and valuable to the community. Present your case to women's and civil rights groups for their support and for inclusion of library issues into their lists of priorities.

(5) Write your representative in Congress urging her/his support of the Transfer Amendment which would cut excessive military spending and transfer the funds to educational and social programs, creating additional employment opportunities in the process .

CODES OF JUSTICE?

By Steve Seward

An item in the January issue of the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom reports on the proposed federal criminal code revision presently before the Congress. Let's be polite and call the item in the newsletter error by omission.

The news we're presented is that the bill now includes "last-minute changes" designed"to compromise with civil libertarians who have been strongly critical of the bill's impact on First Amendment freedoms." Senate Judiciary Committee revisions are described by relating three items--improvements in distribution of sexually explicit materials, repeal of the Smith Act, and new protections for reporters covering legal proceedings. All true, and no small accomplishment in the face of a bill critics have dubbed 'Son of S.1'.

But there's no hint in the article that the criminal code is still rampant with provisions Nat Hentoff calls "dangerously in contempt of the Bill of Rights." And the bill is now out of committee and has passed the Senate, 72-15. In February columns in the Village Voice (2/13,20,27), Hentoff has outlined the most flagrant abuses which remain very much a part of the bill. There are many, and we present a few low points as an antidote to the coverage of the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom. Consider these, and the journalistic effort it requires to unearth 'progress' in such horrendous legislative efforts.

1) Under S1437, it will be a new federal crime to be involved in "obstructing a government function by physical interference." The broad language of this section is designed to cover any picketing or demonstration at or near a federal facility.

2) "S1437 legitimizes preventive detention on a national scale" by allowing the denial of pre-trial release on bail to those accused of murder, rape, kidnapping, and major heroin trafficking.

3) "S1437 retains the conspiracy statutes so useful to ambitious prosecutors in the sixties, along with co-conspirator liability" provisions.

4) S1437 allows the circumventing of Miranda rulings by admitting a 'voluntary' confession even when the defendant did not get his constitutional warnings.

5) Hentoff reports Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman's warning that "this so-called reform of the federal criminal code makes it a crime to advertise abortion services."

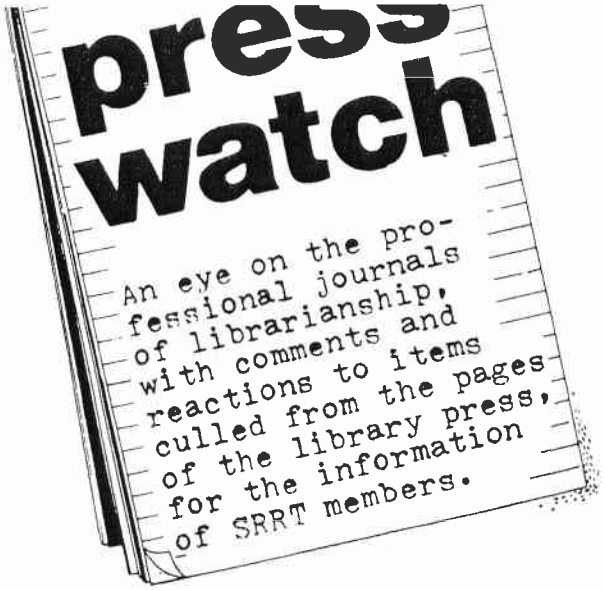
Hentoff blames the press for "largely ignoring this malignant bill." Curious how the IF Newsletter can justify this short 'good news' item and ignore so many salient facts about the bill? The closest to criticism they get is to call the measure "highly controversial." One paragraph later it's a "landmark bill." The code isn't law yet, but a lack of vigilance now will insure its movement through Congress without delay or more substantial revisions.

ON INTERRACIAL BOOKS...

In a recent issue of their Bulletin, the Council on Interracial Books for Children writes that "we hope it is understood that our function is not that of censors but to raise awareness of realities all too often ignored." We hope so, too. On the basis of the record some of the Councils problems are self-inflicted. But when they're good, they're awfully good. It's not difficult--but it may be scary--to imagine where we'd be without them. In a future issue, the SRRT Newsletter will probe some of the issues concerning the CIBC in an interview with Bulletin editor Bradford Chambers.

The CIBC devoted a double issue to handicapism--coverage of media and book portrayals of disabled people, the disability rights movement, classroom consciousness-raisers, and a useful compilation of facts and figures. A must for the vertical file--and this one's good enough to use often. It's available from the CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York,NY 10023 for $3. Subs are $10 for a year.

And in Number 8(they're undated, ours arrived in the middle of January) there is a short item of useful responses to "Star Wars"(p. 20), with ordering information for the paperback, and the large format comic set, along with awareness questions about the Galactic empire. To say that Star Wars is good entertainment is one thing. To say it carries a message laden with racism and sexism needn't destroy audience's fun. But it's a crucial message and a useful one. The Bulletin's questions are incisive and can prove of value to anyone who deals with people who've seen the movie (order vol. 8,no. 8).



Lest someone accuse presswatch of handing down an uncritical opinion: send for these issues, but don't let your awareness relax.

Under the headline "Chase Manhattan Has A Friend at ALA", the CIBC criticizes cooperation with the Advertising Council's campaign boosting the American economic system.

The CIBC asks "when was the Library Bill of Rights amended to permit ALA's fornicating with Madison Avenue?" That kind of question begs to know what is planned, as 10,000 libraries mount displays in the campaign, with all three major TV networks running public service announcements "urging viewers to descend on their local libraries to devour the enlightening materials." Now nobody believes that hordes will descend on their libraries in search of the materials as a result of some psa's at 2 in the morning and 10 am on Sundays. But the CIBC is upset at the prospect of library participation and I'm not.

(Continued on page 6)

TOURISM ALA STYLE:

ILLITERACY, CENSORSHIP, AND BOLIVIAN LIBRARIES

THE TIMES OF THE AMERICAS December 21, 1977

"There are three human rights: To see, hear, and be silent."
(Chumez, El Tiempo, Colombia)

The Presswatch irony award in the field of editorial responsibility will be awarded again, having spent the two months since our last issue at the H.W. Wilson Company. The designation winds up this time at R.R. Bowker's Library Journal, for mentioning that "catalogers were asked to man their terminals in the off hours when response time is faster." (LJ,Feb. 15th,p.415)

By Bonnie Isman

American Libraries editor Art Plotnik would have us believe that all is rosy for the future of Bolivian libraries in his "what I did on my vacation" report entitled "Born Again in the Andes" (AL 8:8, 409-12, Sept.'77). He makes no pretense at expertise in Latin American affairs. His description relates the impressions of a gringo tourist swept into the role of visiting dignitary. Plotnik may have been an innocent abroad, but his misleading, uncritical report ignores two of the crucial problems facing Third World libraries, namely illiteracy in multi-lingual cultures and government censorship of information.

Plotnik mentions that the national ministry of culture is reaching out to the two-thirds of Bolivians who are non-readers with their Banco del Libro program, but the situation is infinitely more complex. Three spoken languages represent the country's mixed heritage: Quechua, Aymara, and Spanish. Nearly half of the country's population speaks only the two Indian languages, and sixty per cent of Bolivia has been estimated to be illiterate in any language. Access to information automatically becomes an elite privilege. Libraries as information centers face tremendous human problems in what Plotnik calls "llamaland".

The government of President and Supreme Military Commander Hugo Banzer Suarez is known to watch all information activity very closely. Banzer was named to power after a coup in 1971 by the military. Since that

interracial books ..

(Continued from page 5)

10,000 is alot of libraries. And if you are not in one of them, we suggest you find out who is, to join the brief flurry of activity which the Ad Council explains is designed to "increase knowledge of the nation's economic system." The CIBC Bulletin presents all the necessary evidence to understand that the proposed program as it stands is an apologist for the status quo, capitalist variety. It certainly is if the sample is representative. One quote suffices:

> In (our) 'mixed' economy three groups play major decision-making roles: the consumers, who look for the best value in return for what they spend. Producers who seek the best income for what they offer. Governments, which promote the safety and welfare of the public. The key role that really makes everything work is played by you, in your role as a consumer. (Ad Council booklet)

It's not surprising, actually. I've seen the same message in red, white and blue on billboards, and I don't think they should remain standing unchallenged. But for this program we recommend participation. There would seem to be no reason libraries can't do better than the simplistic propaganda above. In any case, the campaign itself isn't going to go away, SRRT members have a contribution to make, and the economy could certainly use some close examination.

Do take part. Anything less is a denial of social responsibility.

S.S.

'undesirables' and journalists, and recently decreed a halt to all political activity until 1980. In May 1977, the Union of Bolivian journalists again demanded an amnesty for exiled writers and protested the continuing detention and disappearance of journalists. Newspapers, radio stations, publishing houses may be abruptly shut down for real or imagined subversive activities.

Under these conditions, what chance is there for professional library service? Freedom of information becomes a joke in bad taste. A censorship fight over the right to read Che Guevara's diaries would mean people's lives in the balance.

Speaking of censorship, Plotnik rated the U.S. Information Agency library in La Paz as having the best trained staff locally, with a nicely balanced and well organized collection. In my experience, USIA libraries are part of the US propaganda program, whose collections are heavily censored to represent in a positive manner the mainstream of US culture and politics.

Another point hiding between the lines of Plotnik's travelogue is the adversary relationship which has existed between the government and the universities. No mention is made of a research library at the University of San Andres in La Paz, and, notably, the new Bolivian research documentation center for scince and technology will be organized as a separate national information agency (easier to control that way?). Academic-military relations got so bad after a campaign for increased universtiy democracy in 1976 that the police occupied the University of San Andres wounding 200 students and arresting 275 others. Academic libraries and research cannot survive on such a battlefield, and the military government seems unlikely to allow a strong research center outside its grasp.

Next time Plotnik goes traveling I hope he reports a more thoughtful library tour.

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