



# Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter ALA

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## SRRT TASK FORCE NEWS

### ► CIVIL RIGHTS TASK FORCE

When the Tools for Consciousness-raising Task Force was established in 1978, one of its aims was to initiate and highlight anti-racist, anti-sexist programs and materials both within ALA and within communities. Another objective was to explore the areas of accommodation between cultural pluralism and intellectual freedom since they are inextricably joined in a free society. These goals have not been abandoned. However, as we now merge the work of the SRRT Ad Hoc Committee on the KKK with the Consciousness-raising Task Force, it seems appropriate to rechristen ourselves with a more precise title - CIVIL RIGHTS TASK FORCE - and to rephrase our immediate aims.

The term, "civil rights," has been applied historically to the struggle to implement two constitutional guarantees: equality and well-being. The civil rights movement requires some redefinition in each succeeding decade as power alignments in publicly-funded institutions shift. In librarianship, a civil rights commitment depends upon affirmative action, upon real power sharing. It means achieving greater participation (especially from Third World groups) in key activities such as book reviewing, awarding prizes, selecting materials, and evaluating personnel. Only with multi-cultural participation can ALA's "equal access" goal be realized--access unhindered by cultural barriers.

Given the inequities of history, well-

being is a right that comes easier to so-called mainstream groups. In no way is the concept more pronounced in librarianship than in the responsibility of a library toward a child's sense of self-worth. In adopting the name, Civil Rights Task Force, we are focusing attention on the legal foundation for non-racist policies in every type of public service. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act is the basic underpinning of the task force agenda: "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The corresponding law about sex discrimination (Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments) is equally pertinent. The First Amendment does not annul or supercede these laws. It does underscore the complexity of any genuine synthesis of free expression and free identity. Clearly the "equal access" concept is meaningless if all its terms and conditions are defined by a cultural monopoly -- if expression is contingent upon power.

The Black American librarian and poet, Arna Bontemps, described the conditions in the field of communication that any observer can verify, and that the renamed task force tries to ameliorate. He used

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To: SRRT Members

From: Linda Pierce, SRRT Coordinator

It appears to be time for the review of the annual conference. Virtually all of the Task Forces sponsored some type of program and were well received and attended. (See: Task Force News)

A fair amount of time was spent by many SRRT members attending Council meetings and attempting to keep track of what was happening. The development that was of the utmost concern to SRRT was the attempt by COPEs (Committee on Program Evaluation and Support) to change the method by which headquarters assess the Round Tables for overhead. COPEs introduced a resolution to Council which would have changed the way that overhead was determined. This would have resulted in SRRT having to pay double the amount it is currently paying. The fact that an increase in assessments was being proposed without the Round Tables being given adequate chance to comment on or help formulate the change was the main reason for introducing a resolution to membership which asked Council not to approve the document introduced by COPEs. The membership resolution was approved and Council did vote to refer the document back to COPEs for further consideration.

The effort to stop the increase was aided by SRRT members speaking out at the Membership meeting and at Council. The resolution was actively supported by virtually all the other Round Tables, thereby displaying a great deal of solidarity.

The SRRT NEWSLETTER is published 4 times per year. All correspondence should be sent to SRRT/ALA, 50 E. Huron St. Chicago, IL 60611. Manuscripts and letters pertaining to editorial content should be sent c/o editor at the above address.

Editor.....Doris Kirschbaum  
Editorial Board....Elizabeth Morrisett  
Linda Pierce  
John Sheridan

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Other membership resolutions introduced by SRRT members or Task Forces included ones on nuclear weapons and restrictions on the Freedom of Information Act.

Action Council had three meetings during the conference and a great deal was accomplished. The first item of discussion was the SRRT budget. It is clear that at our current rate of spending, with our current income level, we will run out of money in approximately two years. Obviously, we do not want to cut back on the funds given to Task Forces; the alternative is to increase revenue. We would welcome any ideas that anyone might have. We need to find more revenue sources to avoid cutting back on money provided to Task Forces.

One way of increasing revenues is to increase dues. That suggestion was brought up, debated, and will be presented to membership for approval. Next spring you will be asked to vote for a dues increase from \$5 to \$10 per year which would go into effect in 1985. The dues will not change for 1984 - they will remain at \$5.

In addition to possibly increasing dues, another solution to the monetary situation is to increase membership. We have a new Membership Chair, Barbara Levinson, and she would welcome your suggestions on how to accomplish that goal.

Action Council also decided that we should again attempt to sponsor a Presidential Forum between the candidates for ALA President, at the Midwinter Meeting. John Sheridan will be coordinating the event. (Continued on p. 4)

STATEMENT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE to  
SUPPORT THE COUNCIL ON INTERRACIAL  
BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

The culturally pluralistic press performs an important role in librarianship, unifying and educating the profession around the themes of racial, sexual, and personal diversity, including choices of politics, religion, and lifestyle. It points the profession toward a direction not always taken seriously.

Publications such as Interracial Books for Children Bulletin, the organ of the Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC) and many others, provide diversity of voice and access, and encourage cultural pluralism. Yet we hear voices which would discourage these tendencies.

We hold that the CIBC has, since 1966, been doing what teachers and librarians should have been doing for many years - namely, reaffirming the freedom, dignity, and quality of the individual citizen, on which our democratic government is based. While exposing the hidden biases against racial groups, women, people who are "different," as seen in books for children, CIBC has enlarged its scope to include discussions of militarism and homophobia, and has sponsored writers from targeted groups. In addition, CIBC has provided extremely useful bibliographies and guidelines for librarians interested in the positive aspects of peoples outside the American mainstream.

We have learned, each in our own ways, that discrimination pervades mainstream American culture, and that our institutions, including libraries, reflect this fact. We are not content with this discrimination, however, and call on librarians to examine their own preconceptions in these matters. Some of us have moved away from a position of bewilderment and anger at CIBC, through a self-criticism followed by a better understanding of the critical position taken by the Third World, feminist, gay, and disability rights activist contributors to the Bulletin's pages. As librarians, editors, writers, we have known the temptation to

believe we were intellectually "pure." But unlike Galileo's contemporaries who could not believe that there could be spots on the "pure" Sun, and therefore blamed the dirt in his telescope, we believe that even an uncomfortable truth is worth listening to.

If it were clearly understood that criticism that makes the hearer uncomfortable is not censorship, we might help, as librarians, to reduce the strangeness of Americans to each other, while giving each group its best chance to express its "right to be different," to borrow a phrase of Lillian Smith.

We call attention to positive discussions of the CIBC and Bulletin Editor, Bradford Chambers, in recent issues of Technicalities, the SRRT Newsletter, and Sipapu, and invite librarians to read these documents.

Above all, we resent the implication, wherever expressed, that criticism by the oppressed is simply another form of censorship. While many of us are "mainstream Americans," all of us have learned from criticism of this sort. We therefore call for a transformation of public values.

As practicing librarians committed alike to intellectual freedom and to social responsibilities, we denounce all smear attacks against CIBC. We express our support for its continuing efforts:

to sensitize teachers, librarians, writers, and publishers to racism, sexism, and other anti-human biases in children's media;

to promote truly multi-cultural unbiased literature; and

to produce resources on vital but widely neglected topics like militarism, the Ku Klux Klan, homophobia, and Central American oppression.

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STATEMENT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

(Continued from p. 3)

No other organization has done these things so well or so long as the Council on Interracial Books for Children. We invite the profession to give them support.

Noel Peattie, Winters CA  
Joan Goddard, San Jose CA  
Marlene England  
Marjorie Joramo  
Bonnie Jo Dopp, Washington DC  
Vincent Jennings  
Patricia Case, Philadelphia PA  
Zoia Horn, Berkeley CA  
R. Dean Galloway, Berkeley CA  
Elizabeth Morrisett, Butte MT  
Em Claire Knowles, Davis CA  
Sanford Berman, Hennepin County MN  
Janice M. DeSirey, Hennepin County MN  
Gretchen M. Wronka, Hennepin County MN  
Julia M. Morgan, Hennepin County MN  
Richard A. Scarlett, Hennepin County MN  
Emmett Davis, Hennepin County MN  
Nancy Hargrave, Hennepin County MN  
Donnarae MacCann, Iowa City IA  
Nancy Gruber, Greenwich CT  
Doris Kirschbaum, Arlington VA  
E.J. Josey, Albany NY  
Fay Blake, Berkeley CA  
James Danky, Madison WI

If you wish to add your name, write to Noel Peattie, Sipapu, Route 1, Box 216, Winters, CA 95694 OR to the editor of the SRRT Newsletter.

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LETTER FROM LINDA PIERCE

(Continued from p. 2)

It was also brought to the attention of Action Council, in various ways that it is extremely important for SRRT members to become involved in the functioning of ALA by being elected to Council, getting on various committees, etc. Any SRRT member should feel free to run for Council and he/she will get as much support as possible from the Round Table. It is imperative that SRRT members be represented on Council; it is the place

where decisions are made and the need for socially responsible people\* to make those decisions is evident.

A group of SRRT members also had a chance to meet with E.J. Josey, the new ALA President-elect. E.J. was very responsive to the need to appoint SRRT members to committees and we will be in contact this fall to discuss it further. If you are interested in getting involved with an ALA committee, please let me know what your background is, what your interests are, and what you would like to do.

Action Council discussed the need for keeping informed of what is happening on committees such as COPEs, COO, etc. Joan Goddard will be working on better communication efforts among SRRT members, committee members and Executive Board members.

New officers were elected to Action Council at Los Angeles. A list of current Action Council members are on p. 9 of this Newsletter. I would personally like to thank Barbara Pruett, who is going off Action Council this year, for all her help and guidance. I couldn't have made it though the past year without her. Jeanne Kocsis is turning over the job of treasurer and she deserves special thanks for taking on the hardest job on Action Council and doing it so well. Bonnie Jo Dopp who was membership chair last year has done a terrific job of putting together a new brochure for SRRT. It looks great and has updated information in it. Thanks to Barbara, Jeanne and Bonnie Jo and all the other people who worked so hard on Action Council this year.

As usual, I will end with my plea for mail. If anyone has anything that they think SRRT should be working on, or involved with, please let me or the other members of Action Council know. SRRT needs input from its members to truly function as it was meant to.

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# HELP NEEDED TO...

## ► Find new members

This is the year to bring new members to SRRT. Surely it is the last worthwhile bargain. The \$5.00 membership fee affords opportunities to meet other concerned librarians and to keep informed of timely topics through the worthwhile and interesting Newsletter. Now is the time to increase our membership. Let's each one of us get one new member this year. Have you seen the new brochures explaining the functions and concerns of SRRT?

If you have any ideas, comments or suggestions, please write to me. Sharing your ideas and previous successes will SRRTainly be appreciated.

Barbara Levinson  
Membership Chair, SRRT  
Box 423  
Pine Bush, NY 12566

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## ► Get library periodicals indexed

Several important library periodicals remain unindexed by Library Literature and so are much less accessible than they should be to librarians and library school students, among others. Experience dictates that the best way to get these titles indexed is to deluge Library Literature with letters. Please write;

The Editor  
Library Literature  
H.W. Wilson Company  
950 University Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10452

recommending that all (or any) of these magazines be indexed:

Sipapu

Technicalities

Librarians for Social Change

Interracial Books for Children Bulletin

Sanford Berman

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## ► Find ALA Committee appointees

Linda Pierce, SRRT Coordinator, is seeking those people interested in becoming more involved in ALA through working on committees. She will be discussing possible appointees with E.J. Josey this fall. Let her know if you are interested. Her address is on p. 9.

## ► Keep "Madness" Alive

As a reader of Madness Network News, I received the following letter recently. I am passing it along because I feel that MNN is vital to the psychiatric inmates liberation movement and an important part of the alternative press. It is indexed in Alternative Press Index. (See also: SRRT Newsletter, #62, Jan. 1982) DK

"During 11 years of continuous publication MNN has been the psychiatric inmates liberation movement's most effective voice. The struggle against psychiatric tyranny has intensified over the last year. In some areas we have made considerable progress, most notably with the Coalition to Stop Electroshock's anti-ECT campaign in Berkeley. There have been successful demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience in New York City and Syracuse, as well as in Berkeley.

We at MNN regard the extensive coverage of these and other movement-related events as one of our most important tasks. At the same time we would like to increase the space devoted to personal accounts of psychiatric abuse, reviews, and theoretical writings.

We feel a great responsibility to continue our work. But we can do so only with your generous support. The Spring issue was our biggest ever (48 pages) - and also our most costly. In addition, government policies, inflation, and the deteriorating economic situation have all taken their toll. As a result, our income has not nearly kept pace with rising production and operating expenses. We still have unpaid bills from our last issue, and cannot publish another until we raise a good deal of money. SO YOUR  
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TASK FORCE NEWS (Continued from p. 1)

the parable of the captured goose who confidently (but naively) took the fox to court. As the goose looked around the courtroom it discovered that the sheriff was a fox and "the judge, he was a fox, and the attorneys, they were foxes, and all the jurymen /sic/, they were foxes too." In the realm of communication, the editor, as Bontemps noted, is apt to be a fox. "The publishers, like as not, could turn out to be a fox. The critics who review the book, the editors and publishers of the publications that carry the reviews, they're foxes." The sales people, booksellers, selection committees are often far too homogeneous to remember that the public is multiracial and multicultural.

Since the features that Bontemps describes are largely structural features in librarianship, they need not be viewed as inherently resistant to change. But the beliefs in both white superiority and male superiority are more pernicious and more difficult to challenge by means of programs. In The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir gives some insight into why social change can be so easily thwarted: "It is always difficult to describe a myth; it cannot be grasped or encompassed; it haunts the human consciousness without ever appearing before it in fixed form. The myth is so various, so contradictory, that at first its unity is not discerned...."

Despite the difficulties, the Civil Rights Task Force has this agenda: 1) highlighting well-researched materials on social history and thus counteracting misinformation; 2) educating professionals and non-professionals about stereotyping; 3) encouraging power sharing and multicultural input in book selection and evaluation.

Donnarae MacCann, Member  
Civil Rights Task Force

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► GAY TASK FORCE

The two Los Angeles meetings of the GTF were lively evidence of the continuing growth and strength of the group over the years, accomplished under the persuasively dynamic leadership of Barbara Gittings of Philadelphia. Barbara's relentless persistence has given all members pride in the GTF. A sense of personal support of an active and attractive program is accompanied by the joy members seem to have in working for change in their home library's or local association's attitudes or programs that concern a better and more realistic conception of homosexuality and its literature. Few groups in ALA have such a sense of charge, cohesiveness, and mutual support among their members!

This positive and constructive attitude was demonstrated in the spirited first meeting in Los Angeles when almost everyone present volunteered to take home batches of leaflets describing the activities of the two featured speakers, Adele and Larry Starr, founders and very active leaders of Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc. (You've seen them interviewed on tv.) The Starr's sensible presentation described how the Parents' group has effectively helped many, many perplexed or confused parent/child relationships at every age level and in every social condition. There was real drama in their sensitive description of how the Parents have helped to change fear, shame, rejection, and despair to attitudes of mutual support and understanding, with a growth of love between gay offspring and their parents. The spontaneous response of the audience, who asked many questions, was quite exciting because many of them had (or had not!) survived the trauma of their lives.

The second meeting of the Task Force did not evoke the same kind of emotions among attendees but it was, nevertheless, extremely interesting in its presentation of two library/archive representatives, one from each coast. First, Ms. Judith Schwarz, of Lesbian Herstory Archives (New York City), described the

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development of this very large collection of anything related to the study of lesbianism (especially in our times), including books, manuscripts, periodicals, paper ephemera, sound recordings and artifacts. As with most organizations of its kind, survival depends upon grants, contributions, and the dedication of a too-small group of active enthusiasts. The Archives will probably never die though because of the whetted enthusiasm of its members and staff, demonstrated by Ms. Schwarz's colorful talk.

The second program speaker was the congenial Jim Kepner whose personal collection, with the addition of many other contributors', is the basis of the National Gay Archives in California. Mr. Kepner offered recollections of "how it was in olden times" that many can still remember (of the 30s and 40s anyway), and how the literature of the subject has grown and changed. Some good storytelling here, spiced with a little gossip about personalities and groups. If these two and other library-archive organizations like them - and there are several throughout the country - can get support and publicity, a vast, little-known, and important literature can be made available for researchers and the common cause. The GTF is doing its part to spread the word about these resources.

In addition to the speakers at the second meeting, the audience was treated to a very competent local singer, LeRoy Dysart, who demonstrated the power of "The Troubador as Archivist," accompanying himself at the piano. Six or eight of his own songs moved his listeners through several moods - humor to pathos - and everyone received his memorable contribution, "We Are Everywhere," billed with good reason as "the theme song for gay and lesbian people," as a likely anthem for recognition in the new society.

The "Business" part of the meeting included reports on the successes of activist members in helping to overcome some public library and school censor-

ship of serious gay books; on the GTF's Committee on Encyclopedia Articles' continuing efforts for consideration of better, more factual, unprejudiced revisions of articles on sexual preferences; and, on an explanation that the Annual Gay Book Award was not given this year because the Committee's vote indicated no consensus.

In all, the GTF has grown, shows unanimity of purpose, and with programs of broad scope representative of members' different interests, seriously - but with light-hearted friendliness - promotes increasing purpose and activity.

Lee Ash  
Library Consultant  
Bethany CT

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► INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TASK FORCE

New York. On June 15, a small group of librarians and bibliographers concerned with promoting human rights documentation met at the Center for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University to share knowledge about current work and future needs in the field. This discussion group, which included IHRTF members Diana Vincent-Daviss, Richard Greenfield and Lee Regan, named an ad hoc subcommittee to study the feasibility of establishing an active human rights bibliographical database and information network. A follow-up meeting, open to all interested persons, will meet again at an IHRTF meeting at ALA mid-winter conference.

Information shared in New York, included a sample 360 item print-out on "human rights" from the UN Dag Hammarskjold Library, and A Research Guide to Human Rights Documentation of Intergovernmental Organizations, edited by Asbjorn Eide and Diana Vincent-Daviss (to be published by International Peace Research Institute and Institute of Public Law, Oslo).

Another new document in the field, consisting of the working documents of a

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UNESCO Meeting of experts held in Strasbourg, France, July 26-30, 1982, has been published as a special issue: "Research and Teaching of Human Rights," of the Bulletin of Peace Proposals, vol.14, #1, 1983. Also IHRTF member Corinne Nyquist has completed "Research Problems and Library Resources on Human Rights in Africa," a revised version of a presentation at a conference at SUNY Buffalo, May 7-8, 1982. (Available upon request to IHRTF.)

Los Angeles. SRRT's Task Force on Alternatives-in-Print provided a forum for a stimulating presentation by Carl Jensen, Director of Project Censored, Sonoma State University. Project Censored researches and prepares an annual "10 Best Censored Stories" List. Mr. Jensen discussed the operant factors which produce "junk-food journalism" in the United States. One factor, for example, editorial fear of costly legal actions, is discussed in "Self-censorship Threatens U.S. Press Freedom," by Robert G. Picard, Index on Censorship, May 1982. Mr. Jensen recommends a larger diet of alternative literature for "health-food news" and other antidotal information, such as The Media Monopoly, by Ben H. Bagdikian (Beacon Press, 1983).

On another platform, IHRTF member, Lee Reagan, reacted to presentations by four speakers at a jointly sponsored ACRL Asian and African Section/International Relations Round Table panel discussion on "Intellectual freedom in Asia, Africa and the Middle East." The speakers provided personal accounts of the status of intellectual freedom ("Does it exist?") in Kenya, China and Iran. Librarians were then encouraged to make their collections more representative of the human rights conditions of writers and journalists (and others) by having in their libraries, the publications of such organizations as Amnesty International, Human Rights Internet, and the International Commission of Jurists; and by subscribing to periodicals such as the Committee to Protect Journalist's CPJ Update, the International Press Institute's IPI Report, and

Index on Censorship. Libraries that also receive Human Rights Quarterly provide access to such articles as John A. Lent's "The Perpetual See-saw; Press Freedom in the ASEAN Countries," (HRQ, v.3n1, 1981) or "Man, Media and Development; the Press in Sri Lanka," by Victor Gunewardena (HRQ, v.3n3, 1981).

In today's interdependent world, not having access to such information threaten's our public's right to know. Librarians interested in receiving copies of human rights resource bibliographies; or a list of resources on international human rights for use with high school students; or a copy of "The Possibilities of a World Movement for the Defence of Humanity," by Peter Hruby (a paper delivered at the 12th World Congress, International Political Science Association, July 1982) are invited to write to the IHRTF, c/o Lee Regan, 610 3rd St., S.E. #3, Washington D.C. 20003).

Lee Regan, IHRTF

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► LIBRARY UNION TASK FORCE

The Task Force participated in a variety of activities during the ALA Annual Conference in Los Angeles. On Saturday, June 25, it sponsored a program with the title, "Up Your Wages: Practical Steps Towards Pay Equity," with the co-sponsorship of the Feminist Task Force. Joan Goddard of the San Jose Public Library, Kathleen Prendergast of the Chicago Public Library, Jennifer Lambelet of the Los Angeles Public Library and Cheryl Parisi of AFSCME Council 36 shared their unions' experiences. In the case of San Jose, the issue of pay equity led to a strike; in Chicago it led to political action to defeat Mayor Jane Byrne.

On Tuesday, June 27, the Task Force co-sponsored a program entitled, "Staying Alive: Workplace Health and Safety," with the RASD-AFL-CIO Library Service to Labor Union Groups Joint Committee. Lawrence White, author of the book, Human Debris: the Injured Worker in America, spoke about workers' compensation and its considerable limitations. He believed that benefits are higher in states where organized labor

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SRRT ACTION COUNCIL

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SECRETARY: Billie M. Connor

MEMBERSHIP: Barbara Levinson

CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS: David Vespa

FREEDOM TO READ REP.: John Hostage

MEMBERS: William Galaway  
Joan Goddard  
Jeanne Kocsis  
Elizabeth Morrissett  
John Sheridan

SRRT NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Doris Kirschbaum

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is strong. Diane Factor, an industrial hygienist with California OSHA spoke on the health hazards of library work. She mentioned stress, indoor air pollution, various hazards of VDT's and toxic substances used in libraries.

Membership meetings were held on Monday, June 26 and Tuesday, June 27. Attendance was small, but some new Task Force members showed up and some useful things were accomplished. Peter Kidder of the Library of Congress agreed to be coordinator with Miriam Crawford.

Kathleen Prendergast reported on the Directory of Library Unions. A questionnaire is to be sent this summer to all the library unions we know about, and the directory will be compiled from the results. Please send additional names of unions to: Kathleen Prendergast, Chicago Public Library, 425 N. Michigan Avenue, 11th floor, Chicago, IL 60611.

Plans were discussed for the 1984 Conference in Dallas. Tentative programs are: "The Effect of Automation on Our Professional Lives," focusing on the health aspects of computer terminals (VDTs) and the effect on the autonomy of librarians, and another on "Using Political Action to Benefit the Library and the Employee."

I agreed to accept samples of union newsletters, so that they are available for comparison. Please send them to me at Shared Cataloging Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. 20540.

Peter Kidder  
Co-coordinator, LUTF

► CORETTA SCOTT KING AWARD TASK FORCE

Winners of the 1983 Coretta Scott King Award were presented at the Annual Breakfast on Tuesday, June 28. E.J. Josey welcomed everyone, and praised the dynamic leadership of SRRT Coordinator, Linda Pierce.

Virginia Hamilton, author of Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush (Philomel) addressed the group and although Peter Magubane could not be there to accept his award for Black Child (Knopf), a very moving photo essay, using his photographs, was shown in a slide presentation.

As last year, it was a wonderful way to have breakfast on Tuesday morning during ALA. Many SRRT members were there and we hope to have more of you there next year. As a special treat, Famous Amos gave out cookies to all.

DK

HELP NEEDED TO.... (Continued from p.5)

HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED! We know it is difficult for many of you, but please send us as large a donation as you can.

All contributions are tax-deductible...."

In struggle,

Leonard Roy Frank  
for the staff

Madness Network News  
P. O. Box 684  
San Francisco, CA 94101

# MEN'S ISSUES TASK FORCE NEWSLETTER

FALL 1983 NO. 5

DR. HERB GOLDBERG WITH MITF AT ALA LOS ANGELES

The first MITF-sponsored program at an ALA summer conference was presented Sunday, June 26, 1983, at the Los Angeles Convention and Exhibition Center with Dr. Herb Goldberg as the featured speaker. Dr. Goldberg's title was, FROM THE HAZARDS OF BEING MALE to the NEW MALE to the NEW MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIP: IS THE MEN'S MOVEMENT REALLY HAPPENING? This, taken from the titles of three of his books, a trilogy, follows a progression of his thinking through his research as a psychologist and his clinical practice.

According to Dr. Goldberg, the question is an illusive one. Men's issues are human issues. These do not lend themselves well to external type movements. How does one march in the streets about the fact that he doesn't have a friend, can't express emotions, is body destructive and has undergone conditioning which has destroyed his sex life. A man is part of the men's movement: if he is coming to the awareness of what his masculine conditioning has done to his life and the inevitable end points and impasses to which it leads him; if he is sometimes taking yoga instead of football; if he sometimes is drinking carrot juice instead of beer; if he is giving his male buddieships a priority in his life; if he is refusing to relate to the women in his life on the basis of protectiveness and guilt; if he does not label himself hatefully in a sexual situation; if he gives vent to his emotions; if he refuses to be a work machine; or if he cultivates his playful side. The men's movement is the rehumanization of the male.

What we are talking about is not male or female but rather feminine versus masculine defense systems. Being born male or female subjects us to conditioning which kills off some of our defense systems. Masculinity kills off the human side of males and exaggerates the power side. The male becomes the actor. The female becomes the reactor. Reactors are never guilty but an actor is either a hero or a bum. He feels a bottomless-well sense of responsibility for everything. He is loaded with guilt. Masculinity is a man's reaction against himself. You never prove your masculinity enough. The gender role revolution, then, is a rebalancing of masculine and feminine defense systems.

Men are in a double bind. What makes male liberation so hard is that most of what constitutes male growth, such as expressing needs and emotions and getting closer to other men, are all defined as feminine. If the man changes, he is flooded with terrifying feelings that he is loosing his masculinity. If he doesn't change, he is an anachronistic fool who is going to go under in our society.

Dr. Goldberg is a delightfully engaging, humorous, well-timed speaker with a profound message and a mastery of storytelling. A large audience, slightly more than half women, remained through an astounding full two hours in preference to the nineteen other programs offered by the conference at the same time, including ALA Council and Executive Board meetings. The entire program, including the question and answer session was taped by ALA CASSETTES and is available in two 60-minute audio cassettes from Eastern Audio Assoc., Inc., Oakland Center, 8980 Route 108, Columbia, Maryland 21045 for \$18.00. The quality of the tape is known to be as excellent as the content of the program.

Carl H. Hays, Chair and Action Council Representative.

"There isn't any thing left to discuss about a male-only draft registration law, the Supreme Court already decided that."  
--well-known long-time SRRT member.

MEN IN VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS: AN ANALYSIS OF SOME HOTLINE CALLS RECEIVED IN 1981

Men who batter come from all economic, social, ethnic, cultural affiliations, and education levels. Men who abuse their wives, partners, and children often want to change and need help to change their violent behavior. They feel peer support for violence yet they experience shame, guilt, loss of control, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem or fear, leading to denial of the problem. Due to fear, lack of support from friends and family, and societal conditioning, men often find it difficult to seek help or assistance with individual emotional problems.

When anger manifests itself in violent behavior, where can one turn? A hotline is often the first source an abused person or the abuser turns to for help. Hotline services have underscored the need for calm conversation-fostering, and information-eliciting attitudes on the part of phone counselors. The telephone offers a strategic combination of safety and intimacy. It is a useful treatment option for the long term supportive care of some sensitive, isolated, and demoralized individuals.<sup>1</sup>

Within the Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area, an anonymous 24-hour telephone counseling and referral service to men in violent relationships exists for both batterers and battered, members of their families, and human service agencies. Men in violent Relationships (MVR) has as its primary objective to help men who batter stop their violent behavior and to substitute healthy ways of relating. It is specifically designed to meet the needs for emotional support, help, and referral for men in violent relationships, often when the man is in a stressful or crisis situation. To provide public information and address community concerns, MVR through its Speaker's Bureau, educates the community concerning the dynamics, problems of, and resources available to men in violent relationships.

MVR volunteers are trained in a 20 hour workshop with continued supervision by professionals. Both callers and volunteers remain anonymous as an aid to confidentiality. Neither face-to-face counseling nor direct advocacy for clients is performed by MVR volunteers. The phone line allows a man to call anonymously and discuss his situation and feelings, receive supportive counseling, and get access to ongoing therapy and social services.<sup>2</sup>

Who batters and who are the victims? Do individuals who are battered as children batter as adults or seek to be battered as adults? Are individuals more prone to batter when unemployed and/or under the influence of alcohol? In which season of the year were most calls received? What was the age of the caller? A study attempted to answer these questions from data supplied by 75 MVR phone counselors on 1,191 forms used in 1981.

In 1981, it was found that more individuals phoned the hotline in January than any other month of the year (59 calls or 13.5% of all calls received). January, because it follows the holiday, may be a month when some people take out their frustrations on others. As Wolff<sup>3</sup> emphasized the inability to express strong emotions in acceptable forms of behavior causes major upheavals in families especially during the cold winter months. It was generally thought by the MVR staff that since November and December are months when holidays occur more calls would be received during this period. However, the study indicates that this assumption was false.

## THE LOS ANGELES CONFERENCE REVISITED

Who called MVR in 1981? Of all callers, 14.6% were male batterers as compared to the 0.4% female batterers. By contrast, 12.5% of all callers were battered females as compared to the 1.9% battered male callers. The difference between the number of males and the number of females who called MVR in 1981 is great. It is not accurate to infer that in general women who called MVR in 1981 were battered. It is possible that 145 women called MVR versus 520 men because MVR is advertised as a hotline for men. Consequently, women who face the same or similar problems as men may be reluctant to phone a hotline billed for men. What is most surprising is the low number of battered men (21) who called the hotline in 1981. Few men called MVR perhaps out of fear, perhaps not realizing there are alternatives to living in an abusive atmosphere. While the majority of callers to MVR in 1981, for whom data were obtained, was between the ages of 18-29 years old (51.8% of total) callers between the ages of 30-44 years of (43.9%) ranked second.

As was predicted more individuals under the influence of alcohol or drugs called MVR in 1981 than individuals not under the influence of alcohol or drugs (58.7% versus 41.22). While Pizzey<sup>4</sup>, Martin<sup>5</sup>, and Gelles<sup>6</sup>, emphasize that uncontrolled aggression and alcoholism are not coincidental, MVR callers, under the influence of alcohol, called MVR due to violent behavior while intoxicated.

As was predicted, more individuals who were abused as children called MVR in 1981 than individuals who were not abused as children (64.3 versus 35.7). These findings support the studies of Herbruck<sup>7</sup>, and Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz<sup>8</sup> who maintained that child abusers generally were abused themselves as children thereby making the cycle within families continue from one generation to the next. In addition, these authors emphasized that parents who are child abusers cannot respond in healthy ways to the frustrations of daily life.

It is generally believed that unemployment causes frustration which in turn leads to violent behavior. In fact, Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz found that unemployed men are twice as likely to use severe violence on their wives and children as are men who are employed full time. Unemployed men and men employed part time are three times more likely to be beaten by their wives than are employed men. Of the callers to MVR who answered this question, 67% were employed. Therefore, the callers to the MVR hotline, in general, do not fit the assumption.

Findings from the study show that significantly more male batterers were abusive under the influence of alcohol than when they were not under the influence. Further research is needed to indicate why males under the influence alcohol batter more than females under the influence of alcohol. By the same token, although findings from this study show that significantly more male batterers were abused as children than were not, further research is needed to indicate why males abused as children batter more than females abused as children.

MVR is providing a service, unique in the Midwest, whereby men who batter or are battered can phone anonymously and talk to a counselor who will be empathetic and suggest alternatives to violent behavior. It is hoped that other communities will develop a similar hotline. It is important for all individuals in the helping professions to learn that, like drugs and alcohol, battering knows no social class. It affects suburbia as well as inner city rich and poor. It is a social problem that is only beginning to get national attention.

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By every measure the Los Angeles ALA Conference, 1983 was the best of times so far for the Men's Issues Task Force. The major events were an outstanding program meeting with Dr. Herb Goldberg as the featured speaker (fully reported elsewhere in this issue) and two Men's Issues Task Force working sessions. In addition, your Chair and Action Council Representative attended two SRRT Action Council sessions. MITF distributed a revised bibliography, FIFTY MAIN STREAM TITLES ON MEN'S ISSUES, the Introduction to the Task Force, the Statement of Purpose, membership forms and the University of Minnesota Audio Visual Library Service 16 MM Film Rental list entitled MEN'S ISSUES from the SRRT booth on the exhibit floor throughout the conference. MITF sold copies of Herb Goldberg's new book, THE NEW MALE/FEMALE RELATIONSHIP.

Many new and interested persons came forth both at the program session and elsewhere during the conference. These provided two major resources, the names of several persons who appear to have real energy and interest to invest in MITF and conversations, some very long and involved, with many people who care both negatively and positively, about men's issues generally and MITF specifically. From those discussions come a number of generalizations which follow as food for thought and, hopefully, for your response.

The first function stated for MITF is, "to promote within the library profession an increased awareness of men's gender-based issues." This and two of the stated goals, "to establish a men's gender-based issues awareness human resources network within the Association," and, "to establish methods for encouraging a broad variety of groups within ALA to be responsive to men's gender-based issues," imply consciousness raising. The most unmistakable basic need for consciousness raising both among librarians, and probably elsewhere, is to promote the understanding that addressing men's issues and addressing women's issues (including feminism) is not a zero sum game. To advance one is not to deny the other. The eradication of gender as the basis for the repression of any person or group ultimately depends upon the advancement of both sets of issues. The most articulated interest in MITF has been on this very point. Some feminists (both male and female) find this a very difficult idea to grasp. It is not the purpose or the intent of MITF to be drawn into a diatribe with or into an adversary stance in relationship to feminism or women's issues in general. To arrive at this understanding will require a great deal of patience and perhaps a long turning of the other cheek. Nonetheless, until this understanding is reached feminists will continue to provide a major temptation of distraction from the MITF central purpose.

Secondly, even though feminists have been the loudest respondents to MITF, they are not representative of the most common source of interest. Neither are men for that matter. The greatest number of interested persons are among women who recognize the men's issues agenda either through men they have known and loved, men they are related to or men they have provided with library services. These persons have often passed the no-zero-sum-game level of consciousness. These persons along with many interested men recognize that much more important than anyone's political views, whether it be about men's issues or otherwise, is the freedom to read (listen, watch, discuss) as it relates to men's issues. It is the need for library collections, services and programs which address men's issues which transcends our need to promote personal political views just as is true for the host of other social issues librarians provide information about. To succeed, librarians must accept that responsibility regardless of their political views.

Third, in the matter of programming for MITF in the future, the conference program with Herb Goldberg was by every measure a resounding success. Surely, we have the potential to do it again next year. We have completed a successful year of the MITF NEWSLETTER. The report is (if memory serves well) that the written response to the MITF NEWSLETTER has outstripped that to the SRRT NEWSLETTER five to one (those are raw scores) over the past year. This is not a high volume response but in every case the letters, pro and con, have come from a great investment of energy and care from the writer. Most of the other-than-conference new member contacts have come from the NEWSLETTER. This, too, we can continue. There is always need for more contributions from members and others, contributions of opinion articles as well as information about resources and effort to address men's issues in libraries.

Carl H. Hays, Chair and Action Council Representative.

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