SRRT Newsletter

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SRRTAC-L Listserv Erupts Over Involuntary Subscriptions

News Report

by LaJuan Pringle and Myka Kennedy Stephens

SRRT members’ e-mail inboxes began overflowing on December 5 as involuntary subscribers to the SRRTAC-L listserv expressed their dissatisfaction with receiving the high-volume of e-mails our discussion list sometimes generates. The situation reached a critical point when subscribers were unable to unsubscribe themselves and tempers flared. The discussion list was closed on December 6 and reopened on December 17.

The unwanted subscriptions at the root of this incident can be traced back to the first SRRT Action Council Meeting at the 2008 Annual Conference. During that meeting, a motion was passed to reestablish the SRRTMEM listserv as a resource for general membership announcements and in preparation for electronic distribution of the SRRT Newsletter.

continued on page 3

ALA Midwinter Conference Overview

Additional information about these SRRT events may be found in the task force reports.

Saturday, January 24
8:00-10:00 a.m. SRRT All Task Force Meeting
10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. SRRT Action Council I Meeting, Rainbow Project Meeting I
2:00-4:00 p.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting I
4:00-6:00 p.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting II

Sunday, January 25
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting III
10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Rainbow Project Meeting II
1:30-3:30 p.m. Kermit, It Is Easy Being Green! Librarians’ Perspectives and Ideas
4:00-5:30 p.m. Progressive Librarian’s Guild Meeting
4:00-6:00 p.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting IV

Monday, January 26
6:30-7:30 a.m. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration
8:00-10:00 a.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting V
10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. FTF Amelia Bloomer Project Meeting VI
1:30-3:30 p.m. SRRT Action Council II Meeting, Rainbow Project Meeting III
4:00-5:30 p.m. Membership Meeting

Project Meeting IV
6:00-7:30 p.m. Feminist Task Force Meeting II, followed by dinner

Coordinator-Elect’s Statement

by LaJuan Pringle

In our haste to democratize the work of SRRT, we realize that we violated a principle tenet of democracy by involuntarily adding our entire membership to the discussion list. I sincerely regret how this incident has played out and hope this will not diminish your involvement in SRRT. Members of this round table share a common goal of promoting social and economic justice through libraries and throughout the world. While we may not agree on how to get there,

continued on page 3

Inside This Issue:

Letter from the Editor 2
Coordinator’s Column 3
Listserv Questions Answered 4
Greening at Midwinter 4
Member Profile 5
Bookmobile to Cuba Project 5
Task Force Reports 6
MLKTF
IRTF
FTF
RPPTF
TFOE
HHPTF
ALA Council Report 9
Minutes 10
Resolutions 11
Reviews 12
Questioning Library Neutrality
The Sugar Fix
“Strong Medicine” Speaks
Rescue Plan for Planet Earth
Freedomless
Traveling Light
Sustainability
Environmental Justice
Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

It is an honor for me to introduce myself to you as the new SRRT Newsletter editor. I am relatively new to ALA and the Social Responsibilities Round Table, having first joined in 2007 when I was completing my MLIS at Florida State University. My library experience includes working as a cataloger at Pitts Theology Library, Emory University, and most recently as a library consultant working with congregations and religious communities. I am deeply committed to finding ways in which libraries can contribute to and enable the work of the social justice movement. SRRT has helped me connect with people that share the same passions and has given me tools and ideas for this work that I find so crucial to librarianship. Becoming editor is a gift of deeper involvement in this organization that I am appreciative of and will cherish for the next three years.

You are likely noticing that the Newsletter looks different than it has in the past. It came to my attention early in the planning for this issue that SRRT has some serious budget concerns. The Newsletter is very expensive to produce, and I have made some attempts to reduce our costs. It is significantly shorter, amounting to twenty pages instead of the previous issue’s thirty-two. This is not an indication of less content, but of formatting that allows more to fit on each page.

Even with these efforts to reduce cost, more change may be ahead. Electronic publishing and distribution would reduce the Newsletter cost to almost nothing, but we may run the risk of loosing readership through the transition. Regardless of whether we decide to continue publishing in print, switch to electronic publishing, or compromise with a hybrid print/electronic Newsletter, I will do my best to make these transitions smooth and successful.

I am happy to hear your thoughts about the Newsletter, on the current issue or future issues. Please do not hesitate to e-mail me your with feedback and critiques.

Best wishes,
Myka Kennedy Stephens

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SRRT Newsletter
In Tough Times, Advocate for Libraries' Value
Coordinator's Column by Alison Lewis

As I write this column in mid-October of 2008, our presidential election is a little more than two weeks away and we are simultaneously in the beginning stages of what could be a long and drawn out economic crisis for our country. The financial state of the nation will undoubtedly present libraries with many challenges and opportunities. It’s unfortunately easier to imagine the challenges at this point. Many libraries already have been chronically under-funded for years. Libraries are also often seen as an “easy” place to cut the budget by their parent institutions, whether they are city or county governments, colleges or universities, school districts or corporations. Institutions take this step, seemingly unaware that cutting back or eliminating library services is probably the single most harmful and counter-productive thing that they could do.

Listserv News Report
Continued from page 1
The SRRT Action Council agreed to have the SRRTMEM list populated with all available e-mail addresses for current SRRT members. This would be a low-volume listserv, and it was believed this would not be unwelcome to the SRRT membership.

In reestablishing the SRRTMEM list, the SRRTAC-L list was also repopulated with all available e-mail addresses for current SRRT members. SRRTAC-L is our high-volume list that serves as a bullet-
Listserv Questions Answered by Myka Kennedy Stephens

What is the purpose of SRRT-MEM? SRRT-MEM is a distribution list for important announcements and electronic distribution of the SRRT Newsletter. As a distribution list, members are not able to send messages to the list. Traffic for this list is low, estimated at less than 6 messages per year.

What is the purpose of SRRTAC-L? SRRTAC-L is a discussion list for all SRRT members. It is an open discussion list, meaning that any member can post messages to the list. This is a high-traffic list, averaging 3-4 messages per day.

How do I manage my subscription to these listservs? ALA has recently adopted Sympa, a new mailing list service system (http://lists.ala.org/sympa). Members can provide an e-mail address and password to login. First-time visitors are supplied a password on request. Once logged in, current listserv subscriptions are listed on the left. Clicking on a current subscription reveals access to subscriber options, which offers a variety of message delivery options.

How do I unsubscribe from a list? All listserv messages include a tag at the bottom with instructions for unsubscribing. From the ALA Sympa site, log in and click on the listserv you wish to unsubscribe from. Click the "unsubscribe" link on the left and then "OK" to confirm your unsubscribe request.

Who can help me when I have trouble? Laura Koltutsky, our listserv moderator, can help with unsubscribe requests and other general difficulties. Contact her by e-mail: laurakoltutsky@atgmail.com.

How do I respond to someone who posts to the SRRTAC-L listserv? First, determine if your response is part of the ongoing public discussion or a private comment intended for one person. When you reply to the e-mail, always double-check the sender fields on your e-mail. E-mails sent to srrtac-l@ala.org will be sent to that list's 1000+ subscribers.

Midwinter Conference to Feature Discussion About Green Issues by Fred Stoss

SRRT's Task Force on the Environment is sponsoring Kermit, It Is Easy Being Green!, a discussion about the environmental issues librarians face in the places where they live, work, and play. Join other environmental information specialists, activists, and advocates to share your thoughts about what you are doing, what ALA (and TFOE) should be doing, and what the environmental agendas of importance are as we approach the 40th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2010.

Led by Fred Stoss, Biological and Environmental Sciences Librarian at the University at Buffalo, attendees will break out into interest groups for recycling, global warming and climate change, environmental health (lead poisoning, fish consumption advisories, etc.), Earth Day programs, sustainable communities, energy use, and green library design. Each group will discuss their issue, describing what programs or projects are being done or what you would like to do in your library. Attendees will visit two discussion groups lasting twenty minutes each. At the end of the session, facilitators will summarize their groups' discussions and we will open a general discussion.

This session is for librarians in any venue—public, school, academic, government agency, or special—as well as publishers and vendors. All are welcome to attend and share their thoughts.
SRRT Member Profile: Erik Sean Estep

Q. Where are you from? A. I grew up in Lafayette, Indiana.
Q. Where did you get your MLS (or MLIS) and when? A. Indiana University-Bloomington, MLS 2001
Q. What is your current position? A. I’m the North Carolina Reference Librarian at East Carolina University.
Q. How long have you been involved in SRRT? A. Since 2002.
Q. What are your proudest SRRT achievements? A. Working as the newsletter editor and producing six issues in three years. It is a harder job than you think!
Q. How has your experience with SRRT helped you as a librarian? A. A major part of being a librarian is being aware of a variety of information resources. From reviewing books to editing the newsletter, I have always learned something new. For instance, the bibliography from the Rainbow Task Force has been a useful list for my education librarian friends. The SRRT resolutions, even if you don’t agree with them, make you consider librarianship as a more active agent of social change.
Q. Where would you like to see SRRT go? A. With their programs and other services, the Task Forces are the heart of SRRT. I only wish that the task forces would get their message out with a bit more force. Publicizing conference events and Task Force resources is vital. The Task Forces are the key to recruiting new members and getting fresh blood involved. SRRT is the largest Round Table in ALA, yet it seems like we always see the same faces.
Q. Do you have any advice for new SRRT members? A. Pursue your passion! There will always be a place for you in SRRT if you do.

Bookmobile to Cuba Project Successful
by Dana Lubow, Rhonda Neugebauer, and Ben White

The bookmobile has arrived at its new home! The story about our June 2008 trip driving the bookmobile from Los Angeles, California to Tampico México and eventually to Cuba with the Pastors for Peace 19th Friendshipment Caravan is available online: http://www.travelpod.com/travel-blog/danalubow/1/tpod.html. This travel blog includes a map of the journey, photos, and detailed entries of the 21-day long trek to deliver the bookmobile.

We have many people to thank for their generosity in helping us with this project. Perhaps you are one of them. We thank you from the heart for helping us along the way to making this dream come true. This bookmobile has close to 3000 books by all kinds of authors from around the world. It will help readers in Cuba by connecting them to great books on all kinds of topics. These books represent an exchange of information and friendship among librarians and Cuba enthusiasts, and an acknowledgement that the US blockade of Cuba ends up hurting the people of Cuba and their access to information, books, and other necessities of a good quality life. However, Cuban librarians work hard to bring services to all areas of the country and the bookmobile will enable them to reach rural areas with more books and reading materials. We hope the collective effort that sent the bookmobile to Cuba can lead to greater bonds of friendship and solidarity with the librarians and readers of Cuba.

Thanks again for your generosity! We will continue to send books to Cuba and do fundraising for the academic titles that we didn’t send on the bookmobile, which went to a public library. The next Cuban institution in the queue to help is the library of the University of Havana.

December 2008
Ideas Shared and Memories Celebrated at 2008 Annual Meeting
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance Task Force Report by Virginia B. Moore

The Eighth MLK Jr. Holiday Multicultural Idea Exchange included a panel discussion on library programs for the holiday observance and author John A. Stokes as featured speaker. Participants enjoyed sharing ideas for how to celebrate Dr. King's legacy in their libraries.

The panel discussion presented details of outstanding library programs for the 2008 King Holiday Observance as well as noteworthy historical activities. Johnique (Johnnie) B. Love, coordinator of personnel programs at the University of Maryland College Park, gave highlights of their unique programs. Vivian Fisher, manager of the African American department at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, shared details of their combined MLK and Black History Month celebration, spotlighting the 20th Anniversary of their Book Lover's Breakfast, Annual King Day Celebration, and a storytelling presentation of "Martin's Story" (of Martin Luther King, Jr. growing up). Carolyn R. Garnes, library consultant and African American children's book specialist from Atlanta, GA lauded her celebrations of Dr. King's birthday with elementary school students “to engage them in entertaining and enjoyable programs.” She described the development and presentation of her program in Fulton County elementary schools which offered storyline and media center lessons for pre-K through 3rd grades using poems, songs, timelines, and other activities. The panel presentation was followed by a lively question and answer session.

Following the panel discussion, featured speaker and author John A. Stokes (Students on Strike, National Geographic, 2008) took the floor, introduced by Elizabeth J. Wilkins of Greenbelt Library, Prince George's County Memorial Library System. Stokes mesmerized the audience with excerpts from his acclaimed memoir and corresponding memories of Jim Crow life in Farmville, Virginia. In a moving account, he related his work with the student committee that planned and executed a strike for better conditions at his Robert Russo Moton High School. Listeners were moved to tears as he dramatically presented his role as a plaintiff in the landmark case of Brown v. Board of Education and linked its significance to the Civil Rights Movement lead by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Continued on page 13

Looking Ahead Toward New U.S. Administration and 40th Anniversary International Responsibilities Task Force Report by Jane Glasby

At the ALA Annual Meeting in Anaheim, CA in June 2008, the IRTF co-hosted the program entitled “Earth Wind and Fire @ Your Library: Changing Climate and Changing Lives.” Fred Stoss of the Task Force of the Environment presented and chaired a discussion on what libraries, library workers and citizens are doing and can do about the catastrophic change with which we are threatened.

Discussions at the IRTF meeting included plans for the production of t-shirts with slogans to publicize the work of SRRT, and to celebrate SRRT’s upcoming 40th anniversary. This discussion fed into a more general discussion of ALA’s relationship with the products of sweatshops. SRRT sponsored a motion against the Association’s purchase or distribution of sweatshop products, which was passed by the ALA Council. Another item of discussion in the Task Force was the result of a communication from lawyers for prisoners at Guantánamo, where prisoners are being denied the right to read. The task force spent some time drawing up a motion to put before the SRRT Action Council in the hopes that a motion could be brought before ALA Council. This gave us an opportunity to meet and liaise with prison librarians. It was generally felt by Action Council that we did not have enough information to proceed to ALA Council at this time.

At the Midwinter meeting we will be discussing programming for the next couple of conferences, as well as our contribution to the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the founding of SRRT. By the time this goes to press, we will probably know who the next US President will be. It will be interesting to see if by the Midwinter meeting in January we have any premonitions of the intentions of the new U.S. Administration. Will there be any significant or material changes in foreign policy? For example, we discussed at past meetings the possibility of organizing a program about the Guantánamo prison camp. Perhaps a new administration will close the camp, but move the prisoners to other secret locations. We may be in a position to tailor our programming to our expectations of the new regime, or feel that the change of government has little, if any, effect on the issues we wish to treat.

Continued on page 15
2009 Amelia Bloomer List To Be Finalized at Midwinter
Feminist Task Force Report by Diedre Conkling

The Feminist Task Force (FTF) has been doing a lot lately. During the 2008 Annual Conference FTF meetings we elected a new co-coordinator, Marie Jones, for the task force. She is working with Diedre Conkling. Marie is also the person in charge of the FTF website (http://www.libr.org/ftf/).

Dolores Fidishun is heading up a group working on a study of the gender representation among ALA presenters at ALA Conferences. This is a cooperative project between FTF, ACRL/ WSS and COSWL.

The Amelia Bloomer Project continues to be very successful. The lists can be found on our website (http://libr.org/ftf/bloomer.html) or on MySpace (http://www.myspace.com/amelia_bloomer_project).

There was discussion at our meeting about being on Facebook, but a group has not been started yet. The committee members are currently working on the 2009 list. They finished taking nominations for the next list at the end of September. They have a number of meetings at ALA Midwinter, where they will finalize the 2009 list. Anyone may sit in on their meetings.

We discussed ways to support the National Women’s History Museum (http://www.nmwh.org/). COSWL is also working to have ALA be a part of the coalition supporting this museum. We are adding links to our webpage and will be looking at other ways to give support.

Finally, we had a very successful program done in cooperation with Women Make Movies (www.wmm.com). At “Feminists Night at the Movies” we were able to show two great documentaries, “I Was a Teenage Feminist” by Therese Shechter and “The Noble Struggle of Amina Wadud” by Elli Safari. We are considering sponsoring another movie night in the future so keep watching for our program schedule.

Many of the past issues of Women in Libraries are on the FTF website. The rest of the archive will be loaded soon. We are slowly working to revive Women in Libraries and have it as part of our wiki (http://ftfinfo.wikispaces.com/).

The FTF discussion list, Feminist, has over 400 subscribers. About 70% of the subscribers are from the

Continued on page 20

2008 List of GLBTQ Books for Young Readers Near Completion
Rainbow Project Provisional Task Force Report by Nel Ward

With only a few days before the nomination deadline of October 31, the SRRT Rainbow Project Provisional Task Force has almost 50 titles suggested for the 2008 list of glbtq books for young readers. The goal of the Task Force is to prepare a bibliography of the best titles of currently published books for readers from birth through age 18 that provide supportive and realistic information about gay/lesbian/bisexual/trans-gendered/queer-questioning (glbtq) issues.

The 2008 list, to be determined at ALA Midwinter Conference, will be the second annual bibliography from this Task Force. The selected books must be originally copyrighted in the U.S. no earlier than July 2007 and demonstrate high appeal to readers, quality writing and illustrations, and accuracy.

Publicity of our 2007 list has resulted in positive responses. We appreciate that Booklist provided information about the Task Force in a May issue, including ten of the fourteen 2007-copyrighted books from the final list.

As found in the books last year, the current nomination list shows that the focus of the glbtq books remains heavily weighted toward upper grade levels and many glbtq characters in fiction are not the protagonists but instead take a peripheral position.

The voting committee has nine members appointed to a two-year term. After this two-year term, the member may be appointed to a second two-year term. In order to serve on this Project, members must actively seek books, nominate and read nominated books, and attend ALA Midwinter conferences. The Project will make every attempt to maintain gender parity. A tenth, non-voting member, acts as assistant to the Chair.

Currently the members are as follows: John Andrews, Washoe County Library System (NV); Helma Hawkins, Kansas City Public Library (MO); K.T. Horning, Cooperative Children’s Book Center (WI); Arla Jones, Lawrence High School (KS); Natalie Kendall, Greeley Elementary School (IL); Sharon Senser McKellar, Oakland Public Library (CA); Michael Santangelo, Brooklyn Public Library (NY); Victor Schill, Harris County Public Library (TX); Nel Ward,

Continued on page 19

DECEMBER 2008  7
Climate Change and Greening Principles At Core of Activist Efforts
Task Force on the Environment Report by Jonathan Betz-Zall and Fred Stoss

The Task Force on the Environment continues to produce activist-oriented programs on environmental topics for each ALA Annual Conference. In Anaheim we held programs on the “Greening of the Presses” and “Earth, Wind and Fire @ Your Library” which addressed issues of climate change. For Midwinter 2009 in Denver we will have a discussion group about green libraries, and for Annual 2009 we are looking to partner with other ALA units as co-sponsors once we have identified green-oriented programs from the preliminary conference program. 2010 will be the 20th anniversary of the Task Force’s founding and the tenth anniversary of our Libraries Build Sustainable Communities campaign.

On ALA’s newly-revamped website, a Google search on “environment” brings up the TFOE web page as the first hit. Our webmaster, Mary Feeney, has updated all of the links so that it functions as an up-to-date source of information on environmental activism within ALA.

At our annual business meeting, we discussed future conference plans as well as consideration of the role of TFOE, ideas for involving student members (over half of the membership!) in the work of the organization, and a potential resolution on greening ALA conferences. Officers will be Jonathan Betz-Zall and Fred Stoss, co-chairs through June 2009.

TFOE needs volunteers to facilitate and record subgroup discussions for “Kermit, It Is Easy Being Green!” Please contact Fred Stoss (fstoss<at>buffalo.edu), if interested. Multi-page, printed handouts are not encouraged, but virtual handouts are strongly encouraged. Bring plenty of your business cards to exchange or one (1) page fliers or brochures describing any special projects you want to share. This discussion is an information exchange, please bring your own stories and ideas and be prepared to share your concerns about pressing environmental issues. A synopsis of this meeting will appear in the Spring 2009 issue of the SRRT Newsletter, and a more comprehensive paper could be prepared for publication in The Electronic Green Journal.

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Action Items Adopted for Library Service to Poor and Homeless Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force Report by Lisa Gieskes

The HHPTF, in partnership with the OLOS Subcommittee on Library Services to Poor and Homeless People, reported the findings from the ALA Task Force Member Survey on Policy 61, “Library Services for the Poor,” during the ALA Anaheim 2008 Annual Conference. The full report is posted to the HHPTF website (www.hhptf.org).

In short, HHPTF Policy 61 action items are to:

- Add class to article V of the Library Bill of Rights
- Ask the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom to partner with the HHPTF and adopt ALA Policy 61 by including it in their Intellectual Freedom Manual
- Ask the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of services to the poor as an issue of intellectual freedom in libraries
- Ask the ALA Public Information Office and the Library Administration & Management Association (LAMA) to advocate for library services for poor people and to include poor people in library decision making
- Ask ALA to appoint a staff member devoted to increasing awareness of ALA Policy 61 and needs of the poor and working class and allow this staff member to work with all interested parties without regard to ALA member status since many librarians actively serving poor people cannot afford ALA membership
- Provide pro-active advocacy columns (implement the @ Your Library Campaign) to American Libraries and Office for Literacy and Outreach Services
- Provide a toolkit similar to the Office for Intellectual Freedom’s toolkit for libraries interested in serving the poor
- Ask libraries who serve the poor to post their information and resources to the Library Success Wiki page
- Offer ALA distinguished service awards to libraries that successfully serve the poor
- Seek financial assistance for award winning libraries who serve the poor.

The HHPTF wants to hear your story. If you are a

Continued on page 20
Resolutions on Sweatshop Labor & Living Wages Among Those Adopted at Annual Meeting
ALA Council Report to SRRT by Al Kagan

Anaheim, June 2008

ALA met at Disneyland, whoops, I mean Anaheim, June 27th to July 2nd. The ALA and APA Councils passed several resolutions that are particularly important to SRRT concerns. As Council goes, it was a remarkably tranquil meeting and Council III finished its business in record time, adjourning around 10 am on Wednesday morning. In fact, I immediately thought that since we had extra time we should have worked harder and got more SRRT resolutions on the agenda.

Our SRRT “Resolution Concerning ALA Policy Opposing Sweatshop Labor and Support for Union Businesses” passed in modified form. At the Council Forum where Councilors informally discuss forthcoming resolutions, it was quite clear that there was a lot of support for the sweatshop provision but vehement opposition to including anything about unions. Jonathan Betz-Zall and I therefore deleted the union language before it came up on the Council floor. So this is a step in the right direction, but it is unclear on whether we can ever get a union provision. ALA itself is not unionized. Keith Michael Fiels, ALA Executive Director, is quite pleased about our resolution and he is eager to begin implementing it.

Another SRRT initiative came up again as part of the usual ALA Implementation Report from the Midwinter Meeting. It seems that although we had substantial documentation and included a short bibliography, our resolution demanding the return of confiscated Iraqi documents had several inaccuracies. These were pointed out by Dr. Saad Eskander, Iraq’s National Archivist. Jonathan and I revised the resolution and resubmitted it to the International Relations Committee. The IRC reported it out, and the Council passed the revised version without much comment.

The never-ending Cuba discussion came to Anaheim in the form of another resolution in support of the so-called “independent librarians” who are neither independent nor librarians. Rather they are mostly politicians and journalists, funded by the US Government, who happen to have small book collections in their homes. Although proposed by three Councilors, both seconders were new to ALA Council and when given full information about ALA’s longstanding record and the covert motives of the powers behind the effort, both seconders withdrew their support. The resolution therefore had no second, and was never included in the official agenda. I want to complement Peter McDonald, Chair of the ALA Resolutions Committee, on his excellent work on this matter. Peter explained the background to the debate at the Council Forum to new Councilors and the old ones chimed in to note their disgust in having to deal with this again and again. Peter also initiated a discussion at the Council Forum and on the Council floor exposing the anti-Cuba lobby’s dirty tricks. This time they seem to have crossed a line when they revised an ALA document, and then distributed it as if it were a real ALA document. They even sent it with a simulated ALA Council subject line in their e-mail messages.

The document is Michael Dowling’s (Head of the ALA International Relations Office) extremely well researched report titled Cuba Update for ALA Annual 2008. The original document shows that 98% of the funds of these “independent librarians” come from the US Government. And it also shows how US Government funds have been used to try to influence library associations. Peter explained how this lobby has targeted new ALA Councilors and even candidates for Council. They have bullied them and tried to get them to sign on by asserting that their support would get them elected to Council. Two new Councilors came forward to publicly decry these tactics from their personal experiences. Keith Fiels will write a letter to Steve Marquardt who doctored the document noting ALA’s displeasure, possibly including the legal issues involved. Keith will work on ways to alert new Councilors of these dirty tricks, and he will also alert big name ALA speakers so they are not duped as in the past.

I was particularly happy to see the passage of the ALA APA resolution, “Endorsement of a Living Wage for All Library Employees and a Minimum Salary for Professional Librarians.” This follows-up on a resolution passed last year endorsing a salary minimum of $40,000 adjusted each year for inflation. The rate stated in the new resolution is $41,680 for librarians and $13.00/hr. for hourly workers.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee brought and Council passed six revisions to interpretations of the

Continued on page 18
Minutes of SRRT Action Council Meeting I  
Saturday, June 28, 2008 in Anaheim, California

Introductions
Larry Romans, Executive Board Liaison to SRRT, discussed membership meetings, encouraging SRRT members to submit resolutions and to attend. Discussed new ALA website and encouraged us to visit the preview. Discussed the Library Education Task Force Core Competencies document. The Elections Task Force is going to be investigating the question of unit endorsements for ALA elections. Beginning Midwinter 2010, Council meetings will end on Tuesday instead of Wednesday.

Elaine Harger gave the report for the Membership Committee. John Chraska of the ALA membership office is now helping us with membership related issues. He is analyzing membership patterns, and provided some advice about outreach. One suggestion was to use the SRRT-MEM listserv as an “interim newsletter” to keep all members informed. Another suggestion was to send communications to new members, to welcome them and inform them of what SRRT is doing. Another suggestion was to use SRRTMEM for this communication. Also suggested using the Pavillion (flyer depot at conferences). Need to reach lapsed members as well to find out why they haven’t renewed. Discussed possibility of expanding SRRTMEM to include all members who have provided email addresses, and for ALA offices to manage subscriptions.

Motion: Action Council will reestablish the SRRTMEM list to use for news and announcements. The list will be populated with SRRT member addresses by the ALA Membership Office, and postings will be prepared by the SRRT Membership Committee, with approval by the Coordinator. Moved by Elaine Harger, seconded by Jonathan Betz-Zall. Motion carries.

Discussion of Web 2.0. Discussion of SRRT member

Minutes of SRRT Action Council Meeting II  
Monday, June 30, 2008 in Anaheim, California

Minutes of Midwinter 2008 meetings approved.
The Guantanamo Bay resolution passed at the membership meeting was re-passed by Action Council to “cover the bases.”

Resolution on sweatshops discussed. This resolution was aimed at setting a rule that ALA units purchasing goods for any purpose (e.g. t-shirts to sell as promotions) would not by from suppliers using sweatshop labor or non-union labor. Resolution passed and sent to Council.

SRRT’s 40th Anniversary is coming up in 2009. An Ad Hoc Committee for planning events to celebrate this milestone was named, consisting of Theresa Tobin, Lajuan Pringle, Nancy Garmer, Elaine Harger, and Mike Marlin.

Satia Orange, OLOS office director and SRRT liaison

Travis Bonnett’s offer to work with us to explore applications of Web 2.0 technologies for doing the work of SRRT.

Motion: SRRT will explore Web 2.0 technologies for outreach. Moved: Lajuan Pringle; seconded: Theresa Tobin.

Report from Coordinator Alison Lewis on Affiliates and their reporting. Kansas and Illinois SRRT chapters, which had not reported for some time, have reported back and are up and running. Did not hear back form NY SRRT or Oklahoma SRRT. Having gone through a process of seeking reports from them for a couple of years, Alison proposed to remove OK and NY SRRT as affiliates, according to the SRRT bylaws.


Discussion of present bylaws provisions and AC practices concerning election of officers. Further discussion deferred until membership meeting Monday.

Discussion of H. W. Wilson’s interest in indexing and scanning back issues of SRRT Newsletter for inclusion in Wilson Library Literature database. Some royalties would be paid to SRRT.

Motion: SRRT Action Council approves in principle an agreement between ALA and Wilson to include SRRT Newsletter in Wilson databases. Moved by Theresa Tobin, seconded by Jonathan Betz-Zall.

Motion: Pursue amending the contract between ALA and Wilson such that Wilson will scan deep backfiles in an accessible format and make these scans available to SRRT for the SRRT website, with paper copies to be returned to sources providing them. Moved by Al Kagan, seconded by Jonathan Betz-Zall. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

from the ALA offices discussed the need to raise money to help keep SRRT afloat. Ideas included charging more for the Alternative Media Reception, raising SRRT dues for regular and/or student memberships, sales of t-shirt and other items. Discussed idea of allowing members to opt out of receiving a paper copy of the newsletter. Membership Committee is planning a survey of new members and will include questions regarding format of newsletter and willingness to pay dues.

Election of new officers. Susan Dillinger will continue as Treasurer and Elaine Harger will continue as Membership Committee Chair. Mike Marlin will serve as Secretary. Alison Lewis will serve as Interim Coordinator through Midwinter Conference. Lajuan Pringle will serve as Coordinator-Elect, taking office as Coordinator following Midwinter.
Resolution on Guantanamo & the Rights of Prisoners to Read

This Resolution was adopted by SRRT on Monday, June 30, 2008 in Anaheim, CA.

WHEREAS, the United States is maintaining a prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where torture and abuse of prisoners has been documented and is suspected to be ongoing due to the refusal of U.S. officials to permit independent prison inspections by organizations such as Amnesty International;

WHEREAS, the American Library Association (ALA) is on record as having condemned “the use or threat of use of torture as a barbarous violation of human rights, intellectual freedom and the rule of law”;

WHEREAS, lawyers representing prisoners of Guantanamo Bay report that the prisoners have been denied access to books, magazines and other reading materials;

WHEREAS, international law, as codified by the Geneva Conventions Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, has long held that “belligerents shall encourage as much as possible the organization of intellectual and sporting pursuits by the prisoners of war” (1929, Pt. III, Section II, Chapter 4, Article 17), and “shall encourage the practice of intellectual, educational and recreational pursuits...and shall take the measures necessary to ensure the exercise thereof by providing them with adequate premises and necessary equipment.” (1949, Pt. III, Section II, Chapter 5, Article 38);

WHEREAS, the ALA recognizes the right of prisoners to library services in jails and other detention facilities;

WHEREAS, the ALA recognizes prisoners’ right to read;

WHEREAS, ALA recognizes Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression” including the right “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers”;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court recently recognized the rights of the prisoners being held at Guantanamo to legal representation in accordance with the United States Constitution and international law; and

WHEREAS, international calls, such as that by the European Parliament in 2006, have been issued over the course of several years for the prison to be shut-down; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association

1. calls on the President of the United States to begin the closure of the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba;

2. strongly urges that, until such time that the prison is closed, all prisoners shall immediately be afforded the right to read and supplied with materials enabling them to do so by the United States Department of Defense and its libraries; and

3. recognizes that all people imprisoned as a result of the belligerent acts of the United States and other warring entities be afforded with all rights described by the Geneva Conventions Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War and any other rules of law pertaining to the humane treatment of prisoners.

Minutes of SRRT Membership Meeting
Monday, June 30, 2008 in Anaheim, California

Introduction of guests present from ASCLA Forum on Library Services to Prisoners.

Discussion on resolution coming from IRTF (SRRT International Responsibilities Task Force) on library services to Guantanamo Bay prisoners. Advice from ASCLA guests is that their forum would not support the resolution if it calls for the closure of Guantanamo. Provided useful information about prison library practices and urged us to gather more information. Offered help in gathering information from the prison lawyer who initially contacted us on behalf of a prisoner. Resolution amended, passed as a SRRT resolution. Discussion on whether to bring to Council. Motion to bring to Council fails.

Discussion of issues surrounding election of officers and bylaws provisions for it. Coordinator Alison Lewis appointed a committee, consisting of Theresa Tobin and Deirdre Conkling, to work on a bylaws revision with the general aim of bringing SRRT’s election process more in concert with other ALA units.

Resolution Concerning ALA Policy Opposing Sweatshop Labor and Support Union Businesses

This Resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on Tuesday, July 1, 2008 in Anaheim, CA.

WHEREAS, The American Library Association (ALA) has broad social responsibilities (Policy 1.1); and

WHEREAS, ALA and its divisions, round tables, and other various units purchase all kinds of products for distribution to membership, such as tee shirts, conference bags, etc; and

WHEREAS, A large proportion of those available products are produced in sweatshop conditions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association (ALA) and its divisions, round tables, and all other units should purchase all products for distribution to membership from sweatshop free producers; and that this resolution and information about how to comply with it shall be distributed to all ALA divisions, round tables, all other units and ALA staff.

True story: I dreamed a few months ago that I had a set of guiding principles. It was one of those sensory dreams, sort of like "Diet Coke is Refreshing" or "Dark Closets are Scary," but in this case the dream brought a great sense of calm and relief. And then I woke up in post-millennial urban America, a land of contingent realities where politics are primarily spectacle and everything is true only until the analysis sets in. So it's no wonder I'm attached to the Library Bill of Rights, an admirable set of core professional values that undergird our daily labor and soothe my secular soul. Into this peaceable kingdom comes Questioning Library Neutrality, edited by Alison Lewis. A collection of eleven articles from Progressive Librarian, it complicates the core value of neutrality from historical, theoretical, and practical perspectives, somewhat unexpectedly making good old Article 2 feel freshly relevant and worthy of vigorous defense, if from a more critically engaged place.

Lewis arranges these eleven essays in the order in which they appeared in Progressive Librarian. While this gives some sense of how long progressive librarians have been grappling with neutrality as a principle and professional approach (hint: forever, as duly demonstrated in Mark Rosenzweig's kick off piece), we're left to draw our own broader conclusions about the state of the neutrality debate that travel through and connect these pieces in interesting ways. In particular, the collection helps us think about censorship as something that happens even when we don't see the smoke of book burnings rising up over the hills. Rather, censorship occurs most insidiously when it is invisible, when our efforts to create balanced collections fail not because individual librarians fail to do their duty, but because of the systemic vagaries of corporate capitalism, or the fundamental impossibility of true 'neutrality.' Peter McDonald's essay cogently analyzes the ways creeping corporatization of collection development functions effects a kind of censorship-by-homogenization. As libraries increasingly rely on big name vendors (he uses the outsourcing of the Hawai'i State Library collection as an example), small press and alternative materials that don't make it into vendor databases disappear from library shelves. Rather than focusing on individual librarians, his is a systemic analysis, suggesting that the movements of information capitalism work against our value of balanced collections and in fact require active development of alternative viewpoints.

His essay is followed by Sandy Iverson's skillful blending of postmodern arguments about "situated knowledge and partial perspective" with contemporary professional approaches to building neutral collections (30). Iverson compellingly argues that there is no such thing as objectivity. When librarians select some material over others, they always make those decisions from a political and ideological framework, even if that framework is invisible to them. Arguing for neutrality, then, becomes a denial of the reality of politics, and exempts us from a professional requirement to always acknowledge and grapple with the limits of our subjectivity.

There is an interesting link here, one that tantalizingly suggests that neutrality in collections can be achieved only through the recognition that there really is no neutrality, only hard-won balance that comes from critical reflection and engagement, as articulated by John J. Doherty within these pages. Balanced collections don't happen by accident, and it doesn't happen because we believe in a set of abstract principles. We tend to think of censorship as occurring only when we see great plumes of smoke—in the battles around GLBT materials described by Steven Joyce, or in the telegenic media moments like that recounted here by Ann Sparanese in a wonderfully humble and generous speech about the brouhaha surrounding the publication of Michael Moore's Stupid White Men. Lewis's slim volume is a useful reminder that we can lean on the pillars of professional ethics, but only if we engage in the constant struggle of building them.

“Small amounts of fructose offer clear benefit, while consuming too much may make you sick,” advises Richard Johnson, a practicing physician and clinical research scientist at the University of Florida’s Department of Medicine. Timothy Gower, a freelance writer, has assisted with this nicely formatted work. Those who have viewed King Corn, the PBS documentary that highlights the commercial production of corn sweeteners, especially might appreciate this related but completely separate work. King Corn only touched on the unhealthy nature of high-fructose corn syrup (corn that has been refined so that some of its glucose content is converted to fructose). In this well-written book of health advice, the author explains how and why eating high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) and other foods, high in fructose, can contribute to health problems.

In Part I, Johnson gives a history of HFCS (a corn product which is sweeter than table sugar and able to be processed at a lower cost) including how it became a desirable substitute for refined sugar. Johnson says that: “most soft drinks sold in the U.S. today are sweetened with HFCS” but that even non-drinkers of these beverages could be at risk, due to the presence of HFCS in so many other foods.

In Part II, Johnson links an increased consumption of fructose to obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. This professor of physiology gives a well-developed rationale for the importance of consciously limiting one’s consumption of foods that contain fructose and of completely eliminating the ingestion of HFCS. He explains that eating fructose produces uric acid in the body which, if too abundant, can play havoc with the brain, joints, kidneys, liver and digestive organs. Also a professor of functional genomics, Johnson correlates high fructose consumption with the incidence of cancer, eye disease, dental caries, and stunted growth in children.

In Part III, Johnson posits his low-fructose solution for staying well and losing weight. This includes engaging in physical activity, getting sun exposure, the use of particular food supplements and specific suggestions for individuals with diabetes. Johnson states, “I have no doubt that just about anyone who is consuming a high daily dose of fructose will lose weight and enjoy better health by following my diet” and he supports this claim with population studies.

The Sugar Fix appendix includes a wide variety of recipes (with nutrients per serving) and tables of regular and fast foods describing their fructose and purine content. Nowhere, in this well-referenced book with its very adequate index, does the author market any products or services.

Another edition of this same title is due to be released in May 2009 by Pocket Books, Inc.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance Task Force Report

Continued from page 6

Attendees came from a broad range of locations, including Vestavia Hills, AL, Amherst, MA, Houston, TX, Albania, and the Republic of Macedonia. At the conclusion of the session, participants accompanied John A. Stokes to the Diversity Fair, where materials were redistributed and a book signing took place at the MLK Holiday Task Force exhibit.

For such a successful meeting, we extend our gratitude to Nancy Laties Feresten, Vice President and Editor in Chief, Children’s Books and the staff at National Geographic for the appearance of John A. Stokes and copies of his book. Additionally, we are grateful for a reference in the author’s new publicity which reads: “The ALA Social Responsibilities Roundtable, Martin Luther King Task Force calls National Geographic author John Stokes the ‘torch bearer for MLK and the Civil Rights movement.’” Moreover, we acknowledge and express appreciation to all program contributors and participants as well as Satia Orange, Director, and the OLOS Staff for all assistance to honor Dr. King’s life and legacy in an effort to “Keep the Dream Alive” in our libraries and communities.

December 2008

13
Reviewed by Jane Ingold, Assistant Reference Librarian, Penn State Erie

I chose “Strong Medicine” Speaks: A Native American Elder Has Her Say, believing it would be a good pick as a Women’s History book. It certainly delivered on that score, but it offered two other themes that may be of interest to SRRT members: race issues and environmental concerns.

The book is written by Amy Hill Hearth, popular author of the bestseller Having Our Say and other volumes on the Delany sisters. Hearth was surprised to discover from her father that she had Lenni-Lenape Indian ancestry (although she was even more surprised at the reaction of friends and acquaintances who advised her not to publicize the fact) and she set out to research the tribe. Along the way she met and befriended Marion “Strong Medicine” Gould who allowed her to record an oral history of her life and that of her family. Born in 1922, she is the mother of Mark Gould, chief of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape tribe.

Those interested in Women’s Studies will find the book’s discussion of gender issues in the Indian culture appealing. Gould notes several times matriarchal nature of her tribe. Traditionally, the men did not go to war without the approval of the women. She also recalls the trials of providing for her family while her husband fought in World War II and several episodes of workplace gender discrimination.

A more predominant theme though, is how her tribe has battled racism through the years. She mentions that the Lenni-Lenape cooperated with the Underground Railroad and, in some cases, welcomed former slaves to stay with the tribe. She reminds the reader of the threat that the KKK posed to Native Americans (she believes it absurd that Americans believe that terrorism in this country began with Oklahoma City and the World Trade Center) and comments on the complications to race relations when people can’t quite place you in a category:

“Being an Indian was a secret, something you didn’t talk about outside the family. If the government came around and asked questions, like when they did the census, the members of our tribe might not talk to them. Sometimes we would say we were “colored.” That’s a term they used in the old day for people who are not white. Well, the government workers were white and they didn’t know what the heck we were. They thought we meant we were “black” when we said “colored.” We let them think that. I tell you what, the United States census must be messed up, going way way back, ‘cause I’m pretty sure we aren’t the only ones who did that”. (page 18)

Racial tensions extended themselves within the actual tribe. She recalled that treatment that her husband received as he returned from duty in World War II. Wilbur Gould found himself unable to secure employment. It seems because he has some Irish ancestry and blue eyes, the army placed him in the “white army” while others of the tribe, including Strong Medicine’s brother, were assigned to the “Negro army”. This left a bitter taste in the mouth of fellow tribesmen.

The environment is a final recurring theme in this memoir. She speaks eloquently about global warming and her concerns for the planet’s future, but she also explores the traditional Native American relationship with nature and it’s dichotomy with the white man’s way:

“...white colonists didn’t think very much of our gardens. They planted everything in perfect rows, and to them, our gardens looked like a mess. But we did this on purpose, planting in alternating rows so when the corn grew tall, the stalks provided a stake for the pumpkin or squash vines to grow onto. It didn’t look pretty to white people’s eyes, but it made perfect sense. See, they could have learned something if they hadn’t been so quick to judge”. (page 130)

An interesting read, “Strong Medicine” Speaks is appropriate for young adult readers and up.
Rescue Plan for Planet Earth is a triumph. It belongs in a class with Thomas Paine’s “Common Sense.”

Just as Paine was a commoner who dared to advocate independence from British rule for the United States of America, Stark is a commoner who dares to advocate the creation of a democratic world government through a grassroots initiated global referendum.

The book provides a compelling argument for creating an effective structure for global governance, as well as a detailed description of how to make it happen. There is a companion website at http://www.voteworldgovernment.org at which people can vote today to “support the creation of a directly-elected, representative and democratic world government.”

Stark affirms the principle of “subsidiarity” which means that “all issues should be resolved by the smallest appropriate political unit.” So, national governments will continue to deal with national level issues, on down to municipal governments dealing with local issues. A democratic world government would best be able to deal with issues such as weapons proliferation and disarmament, and global climate change.

An appendix is included which contains a “hoped for sequence of events.” In this sequence, the online voting which has already begun will continue until at least 2013. Preliminary efforts to write a draft Earth Constitution would begin in 2009, a Global Electoral Commission would be set up starting in 2012, and the inaugural session of the Democratic World Government would begin in 2018.

Stark qualifies many of his ideas as “proposals,” and there are any number of ways some of his proposals could be challenged. For instance, in order to guarantee some measure of transparency and corruption-proofing of the directly elected world parliament, members of this parliament and other top level officials would have “recorded lives.” This means that every word uttered and action taken by these individuals during working hours would be recorded and published.

A technical solution to the problem of concentrating power into the hands of a relatively small number of people may or may not work. Other proposals and gaps in the rescue plan will be challenged as well.

That is as it should be. The American Revolution was not completed by the publication of “Common Sense.” It wasn’t until six month later that the Declaration of Independence was signed, and almost six years after that when the Revolutionary War ended, and six years after that until the Constitution of the United States was written.

What Jim Stark has written is a starting point, advocating a totally nonviolent method, for humanity to take the next step in its social evolution.

International Responsibilities Task Force Report
Continued from page 6

Along with other task forces of SRRT, we will be meeting at the All Task Forces meeting at the Midwinter meeting in Denver on Saturday, January 24, from 8 am to 10 am, followed by a SRRT Action Council business meeting. If you have never been to a SRRT meeting, you will be very welcome to come and see what all the task forces are doing, and join in. Do you have any specific international concerns you would like us to discuss? This will be an excellent opportunity to let us know, and to find out what we are interested in and how we work.

Please e-mail me: jglasby<at>slpl.org if you want to be added to our new and very low-traffic listserv.

Reviewed by Tracy Marie Nectoux, Cataloger, Illinois Newspaper Project, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Freedomless is a hybrid documentary/drama that reminds us that domestic violence still remains an all-too-common occurrence, with 154 women suffering some kind of abuse “every minute around the world.” The film divides its time between presenting important and startling statistics and information and showcasing a powerful drama about three women from different cultures, who live similar nightmares. Ana is Japanese, and married to a man with a hair-trigger temper who exhibits a disturbing and violent misogyny toward not just Ana, but all women.

Shama, from Egypt, is convinced that her husband will kill her if she tries to leave. Because she also has a child to consider, she endures repeated beatings and rapes from a man who considers sexual relations his “right as a husband.”

Both Ana and Shama have turned to Helena Blanc—a spousal abuse counselor—for help. Helena strongly advises both women to leave their husbands. She urges Ana to go to the police and even offers to accompany her for moral support. She points out that tolerating physical abuse is not like accepting infidelity: while both are demoralizing, abuse is life-threatening. Helena also reminds Shama that she has more freedoms in the United States than she had in Egypt, and she should “take advantage” of them. She desperately tries to convince Shama to leave, if not for her own sake, then for her daughter’s.

Yet, after listening to Helena’s sincere encouragement to Ana and Shama, reminding them of their dignity and worth, we soon learn that her own home life is as violent and dangerous as theirs.

Directors Michael Jacoby and Xoel Pamos juxtapose the film’s message with statements from various actors, musicians, and public figures. Athenea Mata states that there is a line “in terms of respect . . . that should never be crossed.” Elisa Matilla explains that “abuse” also means to “damage” or “undermine.” And Silvia Marso implores women to “stop abuse from happening the moment it begins.”

Women are not the only ones addressed. Musicians Huecco and Nowan encourage men to get help before letting their emotions get the best of them. And Nieves Herrero explains: “I want little boys to know that insults are a form of violence, a precursor to physical abuse.”

Though Freedomless runs less than half an hour (duration: 21 minutes), it is packed with information and stark imagery. Viewers of this film will learn harsh and disturbing facts: “only half of all female victims of intimate violence report an injury, [and] violence against women is the most common but least punished crime in the world.” The drama, which illustrates the factual presentations, is compelling and the individual performances are moving. The message is a potent reminder that domestic abuse is a universal matter: if we are not free in our own homes, civil freedoms are quite meaningless.

It is important to note that the focus of Freedomless is on particular cultures and particular relationships. Domestic abuse within the LGBT community and female-on-male abuse are not addressed. But though it is not a comprehensive treatment of domestic abuse, Freedomless serves as a valuable introduction to this extremely important topic.

The most severe violence in Freedomless occurs off-scene, but the topic is not sugar-coated. Still, this film should not be too disturbing for audiences older than 16 years of age, and is recommended for all libraries, especially high school and public.

Reviewed by Leigh Anne Vrabel, Senior Librarian, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Will you be attending the Midwinter and/or Annual conferences? If your answer was yes in one or both cases, how will you travel? Many of us will pony up the plane fare, and consider ourselves fortunate that we can do so. Maybe you’ll skip the not-so-friendly-anymore skies altogether in favor of an Amtrak train. But have you considered the possibility of going Greyhound? If you have, Weston’s ethnographic study of contemporary American bus culture will definitely resonate with you. If you haven’t, you’re about to take the ride of your life.

Weston positions herself as participant-observer of Greyhound culture by relating her own prior bus narratives, necessitated by her family’s working-class background and budget, in the prologue. Inspired by her own personal experiences, and aided by her training as an anthropologist at both Stanford and the University of Chicago, Weston makes it clear from the start that her text will neither romanticize the working poor nor downplay the challenges that can lead people to bus travel in the first place. Instead, she argues that buses play a key role in our economy, and are some of the most colorful, vibrant, diverse settings in America. Unfortunately, this means they also serve as lightning rods for various forms of injustice. Over the course of five cross-country trips, Weston will give equal time to the better and worse circumstances of “people who are living out poverty at a particular historical moment, facing their circumstances with creativity, despair, animosity, analysis, resentment and panache” (xxi).

Within those five road trips, the narrative flows fast and loose. Characters appear and disappear, seemingly randomly, and Weston offers no neat solutions or happy endings (I’m still wondering over whether or not the woman traveling from Boston to Oklahoma made it there with her birthday cake intact). This tapestry of stories is interwoven with facts and figures on poverty, economics, racism, and immigration issues, to name but a few threads of interest. Detailed descriptions of the bus stations themselves, and their sparse amenities (pay phones, decent food, and clean restrooms are hard to come by), stand out like chunks of inhospitable granite in a sandstorm. It’s an effective narrative technique: just when the reader has been lulled into the spirit of a particular traveler’s circumstances, Weston brings him/her back to earth with an unreasonable ticket agent, a short-tempered driver, an unreasonable policy, or an unexpected fact, figure, or sound bite. These reality checks are peppered with footnotes, and Weston’s references are well worth looking at. In addition, readers eager to learn more have an extensive, diverse “Read On” list to pore over.

However, what really makes this book shine is that it appeals to the non-scholarly reader in a way that many scholarly studies do not. It breathes life and hope into topics that are all-too-frequently tarred with the doom-and-gloom pity-brush of “lucky us, poor them.” When Weston writes, it is impossible not to feel that her fellow travelers are human first, case studies second. And while they must, in some ways, serve as symbols for the millions of people just trying to get by in the current dismal economy, they are also each unique. Not a single character has the potential to be confused with another character because Weston takes the time and trouble to illuminate little details that speak of individual dignity: the way a woman carries herself, or the tilt of her hat; the sing-song voice of a small child; the singular strokes of a struggling artist’s pencil. Furthermore, in spite of conflicts between passengers, the constant proofs of sharing, decency and simple human kindness offer up hope. Despite those things that set us apart—race, class, gender, religious beliefs—we are all more alike than we are different. We are all travelers, moving through life together like—as Weston optimistically puts it—hermanas.

This book is enthusiastically recommended for both public and academic libraries. School libraries that support secondary students should also consider this book for upper-level and advanced placement students. Between its narrative power and its provocative facts, Weston’s study would make not just an excellent read, but a great “One Book, One Roundtable” pick for those inclined to start a conversation about the economics of travel.
Mary Ann Liebert publishers offers two interesting journals regarding environmental concerns. The first, Sustainability: The Journal of Record addresses professionals in academia, business, policy, and local to national government (including elected, appointed, and civil services constituencies) with responsibilities and commitments to issues related to sustainability practices and for building sustainable communities at work and at home. Sustainability provides the information and resources to “foster collaboration, between sustainability managers, educators, corporate executives, administrators, policy makers, economists, and technology innovators who have the mandate to address and move forward the imperatives of the preservation and sustainability of global resources,” and covers:

• Sustainability in higher education
• Implementing corporate sustainability programs
• Integration of environmental, social, human, and economic goals
• Sustainable products, food, and agriculture
• Design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings
• Development of laws and policy
• Government and nonprofit initiatives
• New collaborations and opportunities

Each issue is written by recognized leaders in their respective fields of study and provides the full gamut of coverage in a number of special features, including:

• News and commentary
• Innovators in sustainability
• Profiles of corporate sustainability programs
• Tools for implementing sustainability programs on campus
• Provocative roundtable discussions
• Peer reviewed papers
• Reviews of books, Web-based resources, and other resources
• New products
• Meetings and conferences

Sustainability is produced in conjunction with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (www.aashe.org). AASHE is an association of colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada working to create a sustainable future. It was founded in 2006 with a mission to promote sustainability in all sectors of higher education, from governance and operations to curriculum and outreach, through education, communication, research and professional development.

ALA Council Report to SRRT

Continued from page 9

Library Bill of Rights. Most of these involved only very minor language changes. The most important change added “gender expression” to the interpretation now titled, “Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation.” The Council passed a separate resolution on pending legislation, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). The resolution calls for the reinstatement of protections for transgender persons regarding gender identity and expression. Evidently, these protections were in the original bill but subsequently deleted.

The Committee on Legislation brought and Council approved resolutions on funding support for the National Agricultural Library and outreach to the five national libraries regarding the @ Your Library campaign, support for the E-Government Reauthorization Act of 2007, and support for preservation and access to the US audio heritage by bringing these materials under federal Copyright jurisdiction.

Finally, Council passed the “Resolution Adopting the Definitions of Digital Preservation and the Revised Preservation Policy for the American Library Association,” and a resolution expanding Council transparency which might eventually lead to live streaming of Council sessions.

As always, I will try to answer any questions by email (akagan<at>uiuc.edu).
Environmental Justice, New Rochelle, NY: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. ISSN: 1939-4071
Reviewed by Fred Stoss, Associate Librarian, University of Buffalo, SUNY

The second publication from Mary Ann Liebert publishers for those interested in environmental issues is Environmental Justice, a quarterly peer-reviewed journal that is a forum for the research, debate, and discussion of the equitable treatment and involvement of all people, especially minority and low-income populations (the politically, socially, and economically disenfranchised), with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental actions and inactions, laws, regulations, and policies. Environmental Justice explores the adverse and disparate environmental burden impacting marginalized populations and communities all over the world. The journal draws upon the expertise and perspectives of all parties involved in environmental justice struggles: communities, industry, academia, government, and nonprofit organizations. Major themes covered in this journal are:

• Studies demonstrating the adverse health affects on populations who are most subject to health and environmental hazards
• Protection of socially, politically, and economically marginalized communities from environmental health impacts and inequitable environmental burden

• Prevention and resolution of harmful policies, projects, and developments and issues of compliance and enforcement, activism, and corrective actions
• Multidisciplinary analysis, debate, and discussion of the impact of past and present public health responses to environmental threats, current and future environmental and urban planning policies, land use decisions, legal responses, and geopolitics
• Past and contemporary environmental compliance and enforcement, activism, and corrective actions, environmental politics, environmental health disparities, environmental sociology, and environmental history

• Connections between environmental remediation, economic empowerment, relocation of facilities that pose hazardous risk to health, selection of new locations for industrial facilities, and the relocation of communities
• The complicated issues inherent in remediation, funding, relocation of facilities that pose hazardous risk to health, and selection for new locations.

Those finding use of this journal include social justice advocates, public health and public policy professionals, industry leaders, environmental planners, academic researchers and educators in a wide variety of disciplines, attorneys, ethicists, legislators and government officials, citizen (neighborhood and community) and environmental advocates, and the libraries supporting them.

Mary Ann Liebert also anticipates the launch of a new, peer-reviewed, online journal called Ecopsychology (ISSN: 1942-9347) that will “explore the relationships between the environment and ecological issues and mental health on an individual, societal, and global level.”

Rainbow Project Provisional Task Force Report

Continued from page 7

Newport (OR), Chair; and Christie Gibrich, Bowles Life Center Branch/Grand Prairie Public Library System (TX), Rainbow Project Task Force Public Relations, Liaison, and General Support Person.

The Midwinter meetings are open, and we encourage observers to attend our discussions. See page 1 for meeting dates and times.

Although the voting membership is limited to nine, the Project invites anyone with an interest in this area to join the Task Force. Some of the activities for these interested parties are to suggest suitable books, obtain reviews for them, and assist with publicity. Anyone interested in this Task Force/committee should go to www.myspace.com/rainbow_list or contact Nel Ward (Chair) at rainbowlist<at>gmail.com.
Hunger, Homelessness & Poverty Task Force Report

Continued from page 8
library actively serving the poor please share your information and resources on the Library Success Wiki page (http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Services_for_the_Poor_and_Homeless#Success_Stories). If you are interested in working on the toolkit, e-mail lisagieskes<at yahoo.com

The HHPTF held a panel discussion, “Building Communities Through Libraries,” on Saturday, June 28, 2008, from 1:30-3:30 pm, at the ALA Anaheim 2008 Annual Conference. Special and academic librarians described how they provide information outreach services that address community needs such as healthcare, literacy and education. Special and academic librarians talked about successful partnerships that have led to lessening the knowledge gap and reducing information impoverishment. Discussion was also centered on information capitalism, the knowledge economy, and paradoxical lack of resources. Speakers were John Buschman, Associate University Librarian, Georgetown University Library; Dorothy Warner, Professor-Librarian, Rider University; Nancy McKeenan, Assistant Director of Libraries for Systems, Medical University of South Carolina Library; Eileen Abels, Master’s Program Director and Associate Professor, College of Information Science & Technology at Drexel University and Denise E. Agosto, Associate Professor, College of Information Science & Technology at Drexel University.

Feminist Task Force Report

Continued from page 7
U.S. There is also a large contingent of subscribers from Australia. Anyone can subscribe to the list by going to http://mailman.mit.edu/mailman/listinfo/feminist.

See page 1 for our meeting dates and times at the 2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting. We will have a Feminists Night Out on Friday, January 23, with more information to follow. Anyone interested is invited to join us for dinner after the business meeting on Sunday, January 25, at a place to be determined.