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*on equal terms:*

## THE CLASSICS

a report on the Tools for Consciousness-Raising program,  
ALA Annual Conference, 1980, by Donnarae MacCann

Affirmative action programs rest securely on the realities of history. But the history of inequality is still waiting to be written. When libraries examine their own evolution, will they be able to conclude that literary classics have been offered to the community on equal terms?

Literary classics have an unparalleled capacity to satisfy, delight, rehabilitate, and instruct. They stretch the boundaries of their own era, while also being, in various degrees, bound by convention and local prejudice. Given this

# SPACE AGE HARDWARE STONEAGE DATA

by Sanford Berman, Hennepin County Library, Edina, Minn.

Information Access Corporation's widely-touted Magazine Index - produced in COM, print, and on-line formats - nicely demonstrates the Jekyll-and-Hyde character of much "new technology". MI operates in a truly impressive, high-tech way, but if its mechanics are distinctly advanced, its content is just as surely ancient.

To travel - by button - from A to Z on a ROM reader takes only moments. Included on that one, single-alphabet microfilm reel are subject and author entries for material published in 372 magazines since 1976, the whole package being updated monthly. Now that's futuristic. However, not quite so far out is the fact that no entries appear under the subjects NUCLEAR POWER or SPACE SHUTTLES. Instead, they're tagged ATOMIC POWER and REUSABLE SPACE VEHICLES, terms hardly derived from Buck Rogers' vocabulary. Similarly, there's no descriptor for HOUSE PLANS, not even a "see" reference from that familiar phrase to MI's absolutely Byzantine rubric, ARCHITECTURE, DOMESTIC - DESIGNS AND PLANS. Further, nothing on buses, trucks, and truck drivers is directly findable under those current, commonplace words. For unknown reasons, this Wonderama product prefers such Baroque nomenclature as MOTOR-BUSES, MOTOR-TRUCKS, and MOTOR-TRUCK DRIVERS. And although at least one indexed periodical, The Futurist, has devoted much space to the topic of "Appropriate Technology", MI apparently doesn't recognize that increasingly important subject. There's simply no heading for it.

From the standpoint of what's indexed, there are plentiful "standards", an abundance of safe, mainstream, "respectable" titles like American Scholar, Barrons, Black Enterprise, Business Week, Changing Times, Esquire, Foreign Affairs, Harvard Business Review, House Beautiful, Ladies Home Journal, National Geographic, Reader's Digest, Time, US News and World Report, and Yale Review, but - beyond the token CoEvolution Quarterly, Mother Earth News, Mother-Jones, and Progressive (t out of 372) - few upstarts, few activist, visionary, grassroots alternatives, and no gay nor Latino publications: no Akwesasne Notes, Alternative Sources of Energy, Aztlan, Big Mama Rag, Body Politic, El Gallo, Gay Sunshine, Gray Panther Network, Green Revolution, In These Times, Jump Cut, Madness Network, New Age, No Limits, Off Our Backs, Open Road, Radical America, RAIN, Revista Chicano-Reguena, Seven Days, Southern Africa, Utopian Eves, nor Working Papers for a New Society.

## GAY TASK FORCE PUBLICATIONS

For all orders: Checks to "Barbara Gittings,  
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Censored, Ignored, Overlooked, Too Expensive?  
How to Get Gay Materials into Libraries. A Guide  
to Library Selection Policies for the Non-  
Librarian. 1979\* This explains library selection  
policies in a general way and tells what an  
individual or group can do to get a library to  
buy more gay books and periodicals. Also,  
sections on what to do if your request is  
refused, on why gay books are sometimes kept  
where you have to ask for them, and on donating  
materials to the library. \$1 prepaid (includes

# SURVEY

(continued from page 1)

## 1. Social Responsibilities.

The meaning which this phrase should have for ALA was explicated in a "Report to the Executive Board" dated August 18, 1970 in which the ALA Executive Director presented the precise wording of any changes made by Council in the ACONDA report. According to that memo the Council intended to:

Define the broad social responsibilities of ALA in terms of (1) the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or even solving the critical problems of society, (b) support for all efforts to help inform and educate the people of the United States on these problems and to encourage them to examine the many views on, and the facts regarding, each problem, and (c) the willingness of ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service clearly set forth in the position statement.

In connection with these social responsibilities the ACONDA report, as amended by Council, recommended that ALA establish an Office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged and Unserved. The current office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged is a result of that recommendation. Table 8 shows the five questionnaire items which are directly related to the work of this office:

made funding the primary sr priority. One is reminded of adage that when one is surrounded by alligators it is difficult to remember that your objective was to drain the swamp. Likewise, funding and other legislation must be secured before librarians can effectively carry out their societal duties. Seen in this light, five of the six highest priorities in the survey may be considered sr objectives.

SR is not as easily isolated from library activities or programs as library architecture, on-line catalogs, or other, more discrete phenomena. Unfortunately the report unfairly categorizes SRRT in a very narrow fashion. One should note further that the categories used in the original questionnaire are entirely different from those used in the analysis of the questionnaire. On the former there was no "SR" category which was probably wise considering the breadth of the concept. Another possible methodological flaw was the use of broad questions and other, narrower questions subsumed by the former. As an example "Removing barriers" generally was ranked sixth overall whereas service to the illiterate, disabled, poor, minorities, and institutionalized were ranked much lower.

To: PLANNING COMMITTEE  
FROM: SRRT ACTION COUNCIL  
RE: SURVEY OF PRIORITIES OF MEMBERS OF ALA

A superficial reading of this report might lead one to believe that social responsibilities (sr) have become a relatively low priority of ALA members. A closer reading reveals that those few items designated as sr issues are in fact only small aspects of sr.

To the contrary, the concept of sr is broad and pervasive, effecting many areas of library service.

Working against fees and working against barriers, for example, are listed in the Intellectual Freedom category even though SRRT has taken a leadership role in bringing these issues to the fore of ALA discussion and action. Eliminating barriers imposed by racism, sexism, ageism, etc., clearly a central sr concern, was ranked sixth in importance.

SR is also implicit in establishing guidelines or standards for library service. Then again, perhaps only fiscal constraints rather than the principles of equal opportunity and equal access are important in establishing such guidelines. We doubt that many ALA members would agree with such a cynical analysis.

More importantly, the top three priorities which emerged from the survey involve crucial legislative and political activities. For years SRRT has worked to motivate librarians to become part of the political process. The Coalition to Restore Quality Library Service (California) has had the leadership and active participation of SRRT and Women Library Workers members who have

On page VI-2 the Committee on Future Structures recommends that the survey be conducted again and then evaluated. The number and scope of "Important concerns not covered" suggested by respondents reveals the inadequacy of the original survey instrument. (Among those suggestions were a program dealing with unfair labor practices, promoting part time professional jobs, library service to the Spanish speaking, etc., clearly sr issues). Decisions relating to funding, programming, etc. should not be based on the survey alone.

The report includes the key question "Who decides what is good for ALA?" Does one judge the health and interests of the patient by remote sensing such as a survey or by a variety of closer measures? We suggest that the Association's priorities should be shaped by the activities of its members and by the needs of this nation's citizens. Noting the interest and participation in SRRT programs and those of SRRT-generated groups such as GODORT and the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship it is difficult to conclude that sr is actually a low priority of members. The key to understanding the disparity between survey results and actual sr participatio





# LIBRARIES AND THE SMALL PRESS

in the light of ALA Mid-winter, 1980s,

By David Ferguson

In a crowd of acronyms, plentiful enough  
for aerospace to envy, it was fun to wear a set  
of generally unexpected letters,, COSMEP

was to bring Small Press to libraries., But the business of general distribution is less susceptible to informal organization than is the small, individual press. It's often hard enough for a



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