

GLBTF NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL TASK FORCE OF THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

From the Editor:

This edition contains information about Midwinter Conference, updates from our co-chairs. Also enclosed here is a flyer regarding the times of the GLBTF meetings during ALA Midwinter in Philadelphia in January 1999. As this went to print, meeting locations were not yet available. Please look for them in your conference program.

An urgent note to book reviewers! Barb Stevens' hard drive crashed. She no longer has your contact information! Please email her again. She has books to go out! Her contact information is found with the book reviews.

A hearty welcome to our new, female co-chair, Shari Clifton! Please see her remarks in this issue. The Book Award Committee is also hard at work. Nominations for the 1998 awards closed in November. The committee will select finalists and announce the winners during Midwinter. Look for the announcement in Cognotes during conference.

Through the efforts of Kenn Bicknell of our External Relations Committee and the GLBTF Co-Chairs the GLBTF responded to the inflammatory letters re: Boy Scouts of America in the September issue of American Libraries. A copy of the letter is included in this issue.

External Relations is also in the process of identifying and contacting dozens of local and national GLB groups' websites so that they may provide links to the ALA GLBTF page. Our presence on the net, relationships with other groups, and possible future collaboration or partnerships will be enhanced through these links. They also continue to monitor the media for news and information regarding our supporters and detractors. These outlets include websites (such as Electronic Frontier Foundation, Family Friendly Libraries), listservs (such as Intellectual Freedom, GAY-LIBN), and traditional print and broadcast media. We heartily welcome others bringing to our attention important matters related to our mission!

Oops! Stephen Stillwell was kind enough to inform me that several other ALA persons of note attended GLBTF events in the past. The 25th anniversary dinner in Chicago was attended by the ALA President, the President-elect, and two of the three candidates for President, the Treasurer, and the Executive Director. Also when Midwinter was in Denver immediately following the passage of Amendment 2, both the President and the acting Executive Director addressed our rally and march. President Miller, confined to a scooter, did not march with us but would have were it not for her disability. Thanks for the correction, Stephen!

Finally, I am using new software to keep track of our mailing list. I know that there have been ongoing problems, hopefully this will clear them up! See you at conference!

-M. Callaghan "Cal" Zunt
Newsletter Editor

The ALA, SRRT, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Task Force (GLBTF) must address the discriminatory statements and misconceptions contained in the two letters from Mr. Garretson and Mr. Burch which are concerned with ALA's policy toward the Boy Scouts of America. (September, 1998 Vol. 29, No. 8 - p. 37).

Mr. Garretson states that "pederasty is so harmful to a child that strong measures must be taken to curb it." It is inaccurate and insulting to associate gay scout leaders and other gay, lesbian, or bisexual persons with pederasty. Indeed, even as demonstrated by his own faulty logic of employing Megan's Law as an example, not all convicted pederasty cases are homosexual in nature. Further fault can be found in his logic regarding homosexuals as Scouts but not Scouting leaders. Is not one of the main objectives of the BSA to train adolescents to become good leaders? Do not those gay scouts get the same training as the non-gay scouts?

Mr. Burch maintains that ALA is "attacking the BSA" and "appeas[ing] its homosexual fringe element," and that "The GL[B]TF has already limited the places we can meet." ALA Council, not the GLBTF, retains the responsibility of determining where the Association will meet. Please note the ALA Constitution and Bylaws section 7.1.1 as adopted by the voting membership of the Association. It

FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Michael Miller, Male Co-Chair

As gentle Autumn turns our world to soothing shades of greens, oranges, and reds, I'm hard pressed to concentrate on the work that continues to demand our strict attention in the Task Force,

Shari Clifton, Female Co-Chair

work that conon15eict at()TJEeds, hopefullye, e

About GLBTF Newsletter

GLBTF Newsletter (ISSN 1045-2893) is an official publication of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. It appears quarterly in March, June, September and December. Subscriptions are \$10 per year in the U.S.; \$15 for other countries. Send change of address to the editorial address.

Subscription Address: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Task Force, OLOS, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

Letters to the editor, correspondence to the above address care of:

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or via email at: cal.zunt@cpl.org

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Meeting Schedule for the
Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Task Force

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As was noted in the GLBTF Newsletter, at press time the location of one key event is has not yet been finalized at press time: the location of the Midwinter GLBTF Social. Once the location is finalized, the GLBTF will post an announcement on our website and on the two listservs serving GLBT librarians: Gay-Libn and Lezbrian. The site will also be noted on our website at:

http://calvin.usc.edu/~trimmer/ala_hp.html or
http://www.ala.org/alaorg/rtables/rtables_home.html

Additionally, a flyer indicating the location will be available at the Office of Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) desk in the ALA office at the Convention Center. Our Social continues to be a highlight of the conference for GLBT librarians. We look forward to seeing you there!

ALA Travel Technology Group: 800-999-0925

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

The Philadelphia International Airport is eight miles from downtown. The SEPTA Airport Rail Line R1, connects the center city with the airport and operates every half-hour. One-way fare: \$5.

Shuttle Service—Several shuttle bus services operate between the airport and downtown hotels. Generally, service is available on the hour and the half-hour. Call in advance for reservations.

SuperShuttle: 215-551-6600, approximately \$8 per person, one-way. Operates 24 hours.

Taxi Service—operates 24 hours at an approximate cost of \$20 for up to four people.

City Cab: 215-238-5000

Quaker City Cab: 215-728-8000

ALA Conference Map of Philadelphia:

Book Reviews

Reviews are a regular feature of the GLBTF Newsletter. If you would like to be a reviewer or receive reviewing guidelines, please contact:

Barbara R. Stevens
GLBTF Book Review Editor
Email: stevenbr@uwec.edu
715-836-2522 or Fax 715-836-2902

Urgent Message from Barb to current reviewers: The hard drive on her computer crashed. Please send your contact info to her again. She has books to go out!!! Thanks.*

LIFE OUTSIDE: THE SIGNORILE REPORT ON GAY MEN: SEX, DRUGS, MUSCLES, AND THE PASSAGE OF LIFE, by Michelangelo Signorile. HarperCollins, 1997 (ISBN 0-06018-761-1)

Here is a work that is both timely and timeless; one which touches upon the most important issues confronting gay men today, yet may be completely alien to a vast majority of their brethren.

Signorile, author of *Queer in America* and *Outing Yourself*, has thoroughly researched and documented the contemporary "cult of masculinity" that has offered acceptance and refuge for a vast number of urban gay men. Although focusing primarily on urban gay male culture, there is a little something for everyone here. History buffs will be interested in how post-Stonewall social networks which evolved into circuit parties.

These events draw gay men from around the country (indeed around the world) to party together in a ritualistic manner. Signorile explains how the "cult" is constantly reinforced through the pressures to conform. A combination of drugs (both steroids and recreational), pursuit of physical perfection, social climbing and making the scene are all factors in this reinforcement. The content of his informal interviews is at times fascinating, depressing, unbelievable, and cynical. The information speaks for itself and is presented without undue editorializing and judgement.

There is, however, an inspiring component to the work. The second part of the book deals with the real "life outside." Non-urban, monogamous gay men are leading lives that can be held up as viable alternatives to the instant gratification and compulsive behavior described in the first half of the book.

Readers will be interested in, and no doubt take issue with, Signorile's conclusions and suggestions for "deprogramming" from the "cult." His writing style is not always first-rate, and he can be repetitive from time to time. Regardless, this work will surely be considered pivotal in launching countless discussions about what it means to be gay and male in America at the end of the century.

Reviewed by Kenn Bicknell, Catalog Librarian,
Redwood City (Calif.) Public Library

As the book progresses, it is made increasingly clear that the mythologies created centuries ago to support patriarchal agendas no longer work today. According to Highwater, the term homosexuality was actually invented. Once there as a suitable label for the sexual transgressor, as if by magic, homosexuality became debated, analyzed, and eventually vilified.

Although the book gets bogged down at times in the author's scholarly synthesis of centuries of research and opinion, this thesis and conclusions are compelling enough to make it an important addition to the gay studies genre. Incidentally, even though this is not promoted as a self-help guide, the well-researched/ positive information contained

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Send a check or money order and this form to American Library Association, SRRT/GLBTF, Office of Library Outreach Services, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

The GLBTF Newsletter Committee maintains the subscriber address list. It is confidential and not release to ALA. Subscription questions should be forwarded to the newsletter editor.

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