GLBTF Volume 11 Number3 Newsletter Fall 1999

GLBTF NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDERED ROUND TABLE OF THE AMERCIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

From the Editor:

As of June 30, 1999 the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual
Task Force was promoted to round table status.
We are

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FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Roland Hansen, Male Co-Chair

As most of you know, the "Task Force" has now
become a "Round Table". The Transition Team
was well prepared for a thorough grilling by Coun-
cil, but as it turned out, all went fairly smoothly.

I want to extend my congratulations to all those people who worked on this project. An extra thanks (and a hug) to Michael Miller, immediate past-co-chair for spearheading the process. After the ALA Annual conference, the Steering Commit-tee created an Ad Hoc Transition Committee. Michael Miller is chairing this committee and will work closely with ALA HQ in facilitating our "com-ing out" as a Round Table.

And speaking of committees, we need some committee members for vacancies on the Program Planning Committee and the Book Award Break-fast Planning Committee. These are urgent needs. The Program for 2000 Annual Conference is pretty much in place; there is not a lot of work involved. We need to plan a 2001 Program Proposal for Midwinter, which will take a bit more effort.

The 30th Anniversary Gala is just beginning to take shape (Annual Conference 2000, Chicago) and needs some fleshing out. The Book Awards presentation and the Anniversary will be combined in 2000. The Breakfast Planning Committee will need to begin planning for Annual 2001. It sounds more complicated than it is. Please contact me directly and we can discuss the details.

Some of you may recognize my name as being a previous co-chair of the GLBTF. I was elected again (by acclamation) in New Orleans. I've been active with the task force since 1981, or so, and I'm glad to serve again as Male Co-Chair of the Round Table.

I welcome any and all suggestions, input, com-ments, etc. that any of you have. There will be a lot to do, and a lot to discuss during the transition, and we need members to get involved. There are many things to do that don't require a lot of time, and don't require attendance at Midwinter.

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Lots of work gets done electronically, and sometimes even by telephone - how old-fashioned!! So please keep in touch and get involved!!

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From Shari Clifton,
Female Co-Chair

Welcome to the GLBTRT! I feel very privileged to have been able to attend the Council III meeting at the ALA Conference in New Orleans. As Roland has mentioned in his column the Transition Team, led by outgoing co-chair Michael Miller, was prepared for questions regarding the task force's request to move to round table status. There were none and the recommendation of the Committee on Organization that "Council approve the formation of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Round Table" was approved unanimously without further discus-sion. What a wonderful moment in our history!

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About GtBTF Ne~;lett~r '

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I would like to welcome Roland as the new male
co-chair and express my appreciation for his
willingness to serve in this capacity once again. He
brings such a wealth of experience to this position
(and at such a young age!), experience I know the
round table will benefit from. Thanks too, go to Michael Miller for continuing his service as Chair of the Ad Hoc Transition Committee; I can't think of a more capable individual to fulfill this vital role.

Below is a brief recap of some 1999 Annual Conference activities and decisions:

* Nick Roselli will replace David Van Hoy as
the round table's male Diversity Council represen-tative.

* Please help welcome Rick Block, incom-
ing chair of Program Planning, and Michell Hackwelder as the new chair of the Breakfast Planning Committee.

There is always room for additional members on these committees so let either Roland or myself know if you're interested.

* A hearty thanks to all of the Breakfast
Planning Committee members for another success-ful, moving event; Ellen Bosman, Chair, Faye Chadwell, John DeSantis, Joseph Eagan, Roland Hansen, Nick Rosselli, and Jules Tate.

Three ALA presidents were in attendance: Ann Symons, 1998-99 President said a few words of welcome; Sarah Long, 1999-2000 President and President-Elect Nancy Kranich were also able to join us for at least part of the event.

* The social was moved out of the tradi-
tional Saturday night slot to Sunday, a move which facilitated setup for the Book Awards Breakfast and provided a good crowd for the Read Aloud. This success has prompted us to change traditions and adopt Sunday night for the Social from 6:00 to 8:00 pm followed by the Read Aloud and then setup for the Breakfast. As Roland has mentioned the Book Awards Breakfast will not take place in Chicago because of the 30th anniversary gala, however, it isn't too soonto begin making plans for 2001.

* Congratulations should be extended to chair Chet Mulawka and all members of the Program Planning Committee who put together this year's conference program, Daring to Save Our His-tory: Gay and Lesbian Archives. I received a wonderful note from Barbara Gittings who moder-ated the panel thanking us for including her in the program. Barbara's partner, Kay, also issued a challenge. She has developed a wonderful series of posters chronicling the in7

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Round Table Update

ROUND TABLE!!! When did that happen!?
Several parties have expressed an interest in an
anecdotal recounting of the processes leading to
the growth of the GLBTF into the ALA / Gay, Les-
bian, Bisexual, & Transgendered Round Table. As with most processes in this volunteer organization, the road was long. Fortunately, that is where the difficulty stopped! Here's how I experienced it...

As attendees at many of the GLBTF functions have heard the co-chairs chant, several issues have pressed us over recent history. The TF has had difficulty comprehending the financial processes of the ALA home accounting offices, the book awards have expanded into a "profit-making" breakfast (though after all ALA, expenses even that is slim), and also had to be self-supporting by the year 2000.

We've also wanted to attract substantial funds for an endowment for book awards as well as other programming and support purposes yet the task forces within ALA can't "legally" perform fundraising. We ran into ideological issues about GLBTF inclusion in the ALA's Diversity Council of which we are now a part. Finally, ALA has pro-posed to shift its planning methods thus creating a more selective and perhaps competitive program-ming environment. Hence, the GLBTF becomes at risk of losing control over our regular annual pro-gramming opportunities.

After much discussion at GLBTF Steering Commit-tee meetings and Membership meetings over the past few years, the group decided that moving up within the organization would help us to overcome some of the technical obstacles to the survival of all that we do. We also discussed the need more over

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The ad-hoc committee then designed the petition
prior to the social at Midwinter in Philadelphia (2/99)
which many people signed at that event. It was also
mounted on the GlBTF www pages.

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Book Award Breakfast

Madcap Librarians Brave
New Orleans Mugginess

One hundred and fifty-eight librarians awoke early
on the morning of June 28 and braved the muggy
New Orleans weather to attend the Fourth Annual Book Awards Program and Breakfast. They were rewarded with breakfast at the attractive, air-conditioned Le Meridien Hotel, and the opportunity to hear ALA President Ann Symons and several wonderful speakers.

President Symons' opening remarks commended the award winners, recounted her experience as a librarian dealing with gay and lesbian youth, and noted the importantance of honoring GIUBIT literature. Also present were ALA Presidents-Elect Sarah Long and Nancy Kranich.

The Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award for non-fiction literature was awarded to Sarah Schulman, author of Stagestruck: Theatre, AIDS, and the Marketing of Gay America. Book Award Chair Faye Chadwell called Schulman's work "a provocative statement about the commodification of gay and lesbian culture," and Ms. Schulman's acceptance speech echoed these concerns. Ms Schulman invited audience comment, and a lively discussion ensued. Ms. Schulman's was also recognized as the first two time winner of the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award; After Delores was the fiction winner in 1989.

In the literature category, Michael Cunningham was honored for The Hours, which subsequently won a Pulitzer Prize. Although Mr. Cunningham was unable to attend the Program, he communi-cated his appreciation via letter, which was read by Book Award Committee member Daniel Barden. Daniel also read a selection from The Hours at Mr. Cunningham's request.

Mystery writer Mrs. Antonia Fennelly Catoire and editor Kyle Scafide added local color to the event. Mrs. Catoire, pen name Tony Fennelly, entertained the audience with humorous anecdotes regarding how a heterosexual female writer composes mysteries featuring a gay male detective.

Particularly amusing were the anecdotes regarding her book The Glory Hole Murders.

Kyle Scafide, former editor and publisher of New Orleans' gay/lesbian newspaper, continued to engage the audience. Drawing a parallel between the movie I t's a Wonderful Ufe, Mr. Scafide asked us to imagine a world without librarians, a world in which gay/lesbian works were neither collected nor accessible. He reminded the audience of our professional contribution, and encouraged the group to continue making information freely avail-able to all individuals.

In addition to the wonderful presentations, attend-ees who did not evaporate from the heat received 2-3 free books, due to generous donations from publishers and individuals. The books which were given to those librarians who subsequently evapo-rated will be available next year!

Speaking of next year, mark July 10, 2000 on your calender! The Awards Program will be a combined Gala to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the oldest Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered profes-sional organization in the country, as well as the Task Force's ascendency to a Round Table!

The event will be held in the beautiful Chicago Cultural Center, formerly the Chicago Public Li-brary, and speakers may include Lambda award-winning author Nancy Garden and Congressman Tammy Baldwin.

Your attendance at this historic event is strongly encouraged, but your assistance is desperately needed! If you can help, please contact me at: ebosman@ iunhaw1 .iun.indiana.edu or submit a volunteer form from the web: http://isd.usc.edu/ -trimmer/glbtfvolunteer.html

Many thanks to the Breakfast Planning Committee: Faye Chadwell, John DeSantis, Joseph Eagen, Nicholas Rosselli, Roland Hansen, and Teresa Burgin.Thanks also to all those who helped orga-nize the book donations the evening before the breakfast.

Ellen Bosman, Chair
1999 Book Awards Breakfast Program

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PROGRAM PLANNING

"Daring to Save our History"
(and Herstory) a Success

Another Program Committee year has come and
gone. I need to thank those who have made our
programs and social a success in New Orleans.

* To Jules Tate and PFLAG for organizing another wildly successful social.

* To Mike Poma and Ethel-Ruth Magal for smug-gling the social food supplies down from Wendy Thomas' hotel room.

* To Mark Martin for smuggling the food up to Wendy's in the first place.

* To Wendy Thomas for not eating or drinking any
of the party food while it was stored in her room.

* To Barbara Gittings, for moderating a wonderful
program on Gay and Lesbian Archives.

* To our panelists, Lucinda Zoe, Jim Van Buskirk,
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Election Committee

The newly established GLBTRT Elections Commit-
tee is looking for nominees for female co-chair and
secretary. If you would like to run for either position,
or would like to recommend someone for either
opening, please contact me by November 15th. The Committee will announce the names of candi-dates at Midwinter.

We are also looking for RT-friendly candidates who are running for ALA Council. We

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Mail must be postmarked by the nomination dead-
line. Nominations will be accepted by regular and
electronic mail, as well as through facsimile trans-
mission (FAX).

Nominations may be sent to:
David Garnes
Homer Babbidge Library
Box U-SRIS

University of Connecticut
Storrs CT 06269

email: dgarnes@lib.uconn.edu
Fax: 860-486-6100

BOOK REVIEWS

.Book .Reviews area regular feature m the GLBTF News-letter. If you would like to be a reviewer orreceive reviewing · guidelines, please contact:.

Barb Stevens, GLBTF Book Review Editor _ .
4302 Woodridge Drive
EauClaire, WI 54701
(715) 836-2522
EmaH :stevenbr@uwec.edu.

The GLBTF is looking for book reviewers. If you are interested, please contact Barb Stevens at the information above.

Completely Queer: the Gay and Lesbian Ency-clopedia. By Steve Hogan and Lee Hudson. Henry Holt and Co., 1998. (ISBN 0-8050-631-6; paper) $25.00.

No public or academic library collection is complete without Completely Queer in its collection. No other single resource contains as much historical and literary information of interest to the GLBT community. Whether you want to know the birth
name of writers who have written under various
pseudonyms, the winners of literary awards, the
history of various movements within the queer
community, a listing of gay detective novels, or a
myriad of other information, this is an excellent
source. Of source. th55 0 Td ib0ARf0 Td (above.)Tj 0. 942 0.0069 4m0l a d1her 7 21

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Nestle, Joan. A Fragile Union: New and Se-
lected Writings. Cleis Press, 1998. ISBN: 1-
57344-040-X. $14.95

" Now I sit, as the night grows later, in a room in the
city trying to put up words to stand against the flood
of knowledge and memory, words to hold at bay the pain of a failing body, words that commemorate the persistent need to touch, to discover, to survive the loss of assured beauty."
- -Joan Nestle, The Ridge Runners

In A Fragile Union Joan Nestle's new collection of essays, narratives and short stories is a stirring testament to her lifelong activism, to her ongoing commitment to the lesbian community as chronicler and champion of lesbian life and ways of relating. Her credentials as preeminent lesbian historian include being an "ouf' lesbian activist in pre-Stone-wall America, co-founding the Lesbian Herstory archives in 1973, educator, author and editor of a~ard-winning works like A Restricted Country (Firebrand, 1987) and The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader (Alyson, 1992).

The book is grouped into three sections: I. Letter to My Community, II. The Politics of Thinking, and III. Our Gift of Touch. Together, the sections work to present the themes of lesbian sexuality and politics, butch-femme relationships, the importance of preserving lesbian and gay history, and the love between lesbians and gay men. Nestle calls her writings "offerings", that is-"pieces of understanding or of questions ... as fragile as the body that lived them, my body, like yours." Some of the most intense and vibrant writing in the book deals with her journey as a woman living with colon cancer and her "last CR group", a Cancer Care support group. Beautiful writing and an insistent honesty mark all of Nestle's writing.

A Fr.agile Union is an important book from a major lesbian author and is highly recommended for public and academic libraries. While some of the pieces included have been previously published in
oth~r books and periodicals, most have been newly
revised for thiS collection. An extensive bibliography
of Nestle's work is included.

Reviewed by: Kathy Anderson, MLS
Principal Reference Librarian,
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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:

Please note