
SR-SIS Newsletter, vol. 6, no. 3 (Spring 1996)

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Bring a Face of Love

Regardless of the position we hold or the blessings we enjoy, we all find ourselves making decisions, at one time or another, that are difficult. After the Winter issue, I received a note from a member who thanked me for writing about "taking a stand." She was making a change in her job situation and my words were in sync with her timetable about the job change and gave her encouragement.

With the upcoming 89th annual meeting being held here this year, my mind is constantly focused on the arrival of so many of you in July!

You've all gotten your registration forms by now and you have decided whether or not you are going to be able to attend the meetings. And now major decisions await you. What programs will you attend? It's more important than the choice of hotels, or even restaurants (and I say that slowly, as I spent *days* writing the restaurant reviews!).

As we gather this July, I think it is critical to remember what this SIS is about--empowering us to speak out against injustice, cruelty and oppression. Our educational programs say that to me. They may not be the most popular, but they are extremely meaningful and visible. It says we have looked at ourselves, and our profession, and how they mirror the world, and that we are not pleased with the status quo. We are voting with our conduct. We are deciding to attend our programs to show our support for each other, our speakers, and for the feelings and ideas we hold collectively. And we know that these are ideas that may not be held by some directors or department heads who think we should attend other meetings instead.

When I spoke in Boston at one of our programs, the face in the crowd that made me the happiest belonged to my then associate director. That one face made a difference to me. To alter a line from Sr. Helen Prejean of Dead Man Walking fame, Mary Ann was the face of love I saw in that room. Three years later, I can still tell you where she

was seated.

Welcome to Indy! And bring a face of love.

Bruce Kleinschmidt

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Program Announcement

SR-SIS invites all AALL members to attend our Wednesday program in Indianapolis entitled, "Taking a Stand: Delivering a Message of Social Activism."

From animal rights to abortion, "socially responsible" law librarian activists have challenged members of the profession to become involved in issues that might seem only tangentially related to law librarianship. This program will provide a brief history of the Association's involvement with social concerns, the formation of the Conference of Concerned Law Librarians, and the development of the Contemporary Social Problems SIS.

Issues raised by the SIS, and the positions taken by the Association, will be compared with social issues addressed by the American Bar Association and the American Library Association. Open discussion will focus on the future direction of social activism within AALL and the SIS. Come share your views.

We are still looking for help with the program. If anyone would like to help research information, or if you were part of the creation of any of these groups, please contact Prano Amjadi (408) 554-5320 or pamjadi@scuacc.scu.edu (Editors note: The program is scheduled for Wednesday, July 24, from 3:15 to 4:45 P.M. No location is available as of press time.)

Prano Amjadi

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New & Briefly Noted:

Mississippi: an American Journey by Anthony Walton. Knopf: 1996. A black man goes to Mississippi to understand his parents and the difficulties they endured. His descriptive abilities are superb. Any Southerner would profit from this reflection.

Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen. Knopf: 1996. Go quickly through the first 128 pages and then be prepared for this "take no prisoner's" tome. Otto Schindler was no ordinary German. The pedantic style is almost a relief, given the gristly material in his text.

Proposal Regarding Religious Exemptions and AALL Placement Services

By Michael Saint-Onge

I would like to propose that the Social Responsibility SIS make an appeal to the AALL Executive Board for reconsideration of the current policy that allows religious schools to use the placement services, in spite of the fact that they discriminate on the basis of religion. While I recognize that this option is legally afforded to them, based on 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(e)(2), it has the potential of contradicting the AALL policy which disallows the use of these placement services to institutions that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. I believe we need to take steps to ensure that the rights of all the members are protected.

In order to illustrate this dilemma, let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am 37 years old. Right after high school, I decided I wanted to be a Roman Catholic priest. I felt "called" and entered the seminary. I went to a seminary college for four years, had a two-year novitiate where I learned about the spirituality of my religious order and then I worked with poor in an inner city housing project. I then went on to graduate school for theological training. After nine years of seminary, I left, and while I never became a priest, I am still a deeply religious person. I try to live my life according to my spiritual traditions and beliefs. I am also a gay man. Some religious people see those two statements as incongruous, but many do not.

You might be asking what all of this has to do with law librarianship, and that is a very good question. As you are most certainly aware, there are law schools connected with a number of religious institutions, and those law schools need good, qualified law librarians. Occasionally, these religious institutions use AALL placement services to locate those qualified librarians. AALL has had strict anti-discrimination policies in place, and anyone using its placement services must agree not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, and sexual orientation. Because these are religious institutions, they are allowed to discriminate on the basis of religion, per 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(e)(2). AALL passed a resolution in the summer of 1993 that allowed these institutions to use the placement services, but these ads would be placed under a heading specifying that they had availed themselves of this exemption.

As a religious man, I understand the desire to hire someone who shares the same religious tradition. In an academic arena that makes sense--teaching theology or campus ministries, perhaps. I am less convinced that a good atheist couldn't be just as sterling a law librarian as a born-again Christian, however. Regardless of the argument, I know my professional association stands behind me and will defend my right not to be discriminated against in any other area, other than religion, right? Unfortunately, that is not always the case. I mentioned my own religious background to illustrate how I might meet the qualifications of these religious institutions in my same religion, but my being a gay man could get me excluded immediately, which would violate AALL's policy.

Recognizing the possible conflict between these two protected classes, the SR-SIS submitted a program proposal for the Seattle meeting in which these issues could be aired. The program was a panel discussion, which included Richard Leiter, then Director at Regent University, a Fundamentalist Christian institution, Donna Hughes-Oldenberg, a technical services librarian and a member of the Standing Committee on

Lesbian and Gay Issues, and Catherine Lazuran, an Assistant District Counsel for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While the discussion was spirited, I am not sure anyone's views were changed by the arguments. What was interesting, however, was Ms. Lazuran's revelation that the religious exemption as described in 42 U.S.C. was rather narrowly defined by the body of case law, and that the EEOC was available in these instances to issue opinion letters to help institutions determine if they qualified for this exemption.

Unfortunately, significant time has now passed and no reconsideration of this present board policy has been forthcoming. I would like to open for discussion the possibility of the SRSIS formally proposing one of the following three options:

1. That all religious institutions that wish to avail themselves of the "religious exemption" first seek an opinion letter from the EEOC. This will do two things. It will take the decision out of the hands of the Executive Board and give it to those who deal with labor law on a regular basis. Two, it would protect individuals from acts of discrimination.
2. That religious institutions who wish to use AALL placement services must first sign a statement acknowledging that while they are being allowed to discriminate on the basis of religion, they will not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. If these institutions are unwilling to sign such a statement, the use of AALL services should be denied to them.
3. Some other proposal that guarantees that these religious institutions will not use this religious exemption to discriminate against our gay & lesbian members.

I recognize that there are many issues involved in this discussion, and there is no doubt a plurality opinion within the SR-SIS, but I honestly believe that we have a duty to at least consider the subject, preferably before an AALL member is denied a job, one for which he or she is imminently qualified.

Thank you.

(Michael Saint-Onge is the law librarian with the firm of Coudert Brothers in San Francisco.)

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Millions Dead! No Librarians Hurt!

If all politics are local, then surely a large part of the news is local as well. Two friends of mine have done extremely well by making fun of the small minded ways of the residents of "third smallest town in Texas."

In their radio broadcast on OKKK, the "RadioVoice of Tuna" they close with this line, "Millions dead, no one hurt in Texas."

I have tried to make our newsletter a lot different than that. My only perk as editor is to receive lots of newsletters. And aside from the fact one has pictures and a few have ads, guess what? They are all local.

Michael, thank you for giving us a challenge to raise our eyes to higher purposes. And thank you for sending me some copy to print! I hope others will take the opportunity. We'll resume publication in the autumn, and stick with the three issues a year schedule for the time being.

Have a safe summer and I'll see you when I see you (if you don't come to Indy that is!).

Bruce Kleinschmidt

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From the Chair

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Some Thoughts

My year as chair of SR-SIS has been spent largely getting our name out. I've worked on our SIS Homepage on AALLNET (the first comprehensive homepage of an AALL SIS!), and contributed columns and articles to Bruce Kleinschmidt for our Newsletter. It's been a relatively quiet year (as a social responsible librarian), but there are plenty of issues that I'd like to see the SIS tackle sometime down the road...including the placement concerns expressed by Michael Saint-Onge (elsewhere in this issue); the current cutting of prison law libraries in order to discourage so-called "frivolous lawsuits," and a proposal for the use of the Alan Holoch bequest by the SIS's Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues.

Thanks

I'd like to thank all of the people that made my year as SR-SIS Chair so much fun: **Karen Westwood**, outgoing Secretary/Treasurer, kept the minutes and books this year with real finesse and retained her sense of humor as she (at my direction) logged hundreds of minutes talking to AALL Headquarters about the accounts... She is a joy to work with, and the SIS was very lucky to have her serve as secretary/treasurer for two years. **Bruce Kleinschmidt** single-handedly resurrected the SR-SIS Newsletter, and actually published three issues with only a few delays (all caused by the chair, who for some reason, could never get his column in on time). Bruce will continue to edit the newsletter, even with his new responsibilities as Education Chair. **Rebecca Trammell** served (again!) as chair of the Standing Committee on Law Library Services to Institution Residents, and did a fine job coordinating a program last year at Pittsburgh, as well as representing the SIS and AALL at the American Corrections Association annual conference. **Prano Amjadi** did an excellent job this past year as Education Chair, proposing several programs that were accepted by the AALL Education Committee for Indianapolis, and agreeing to coordinate the SR-SIS table in the activities area during the AALL Annual Meeting. Finally, I'd like to thank **Camille Broussard**, **George Jackson**, **Alison Alifano**, **Carol Alpert**, and **Michael Saint-Onge** for their counsel, ideas, and help throughout the year.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will see the text of a bylaws amendment that I am proposing to help the SIS cut the cost of our election of officers. Currently, a separate ballot is prepared by the Secretary/Treasurer and mailed to the membership, resulting in a cost of over \$100 in materials and postage. I believe we can save most of these charges by printing a ballot with the March newsletter, as the Reader Services SIS currently does. SR-SIS Members would simply cut out the ballot, mark it, and mail it to the Secretary/Treasurer. Members could mark the outside of the envelope with their name, to safeguard the election process. This amendment would mean that the SR-SIS Nominating Committee would have candidates ready by the March Newsletter, with the ballots counted sometime in April. We are required to report the names of the successful candidates to AALL at least two months before the Annual Meeting, and we have sometimes had problems conducting the election in time to meet this deadline. Finally, early election of the vice-chair/chair-elect would help that person start the process of soliciting educational program proposals for the upcoming annual meeting. Plan to come to the SR-SIS Business Meeting in July to discuss this bylaws amendment.

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Reminders

Some quick reminders of programs/meetings to attend during the AALL Annual Meeting in Indianapolis:

SR-SIS Business Meeting: Sunday, July 21, 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

SR-SIS Standing Committee on Lesbian & Gay Issues Business Meeting: Sunday, July 21, 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm

SR-SIS Standing Committee on Library Services to Institution Residents: Sunday, July 21, 4:30 - 5:30 pm

"Human Rights Worldwide: When the Message is Hard to Deliver - Refugees": Monday, July 22, 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

"Human Rights Worldwide: When the Message is Hard to Deliver - Women": Tuesday, July 23, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

"Human Rights Worldwide: When the Message is Hard to Deliver - Sexual Minorities": Tuesday, July 23, 1:15 pm - 2:45 pm

SR-SIS Standing Committee on Lesbian & Gay Issues Reception: Tuesday, July 23, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

"Sex, Power and the Workplace: Delivering a Dangerous Message": Wednesday, July 24, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

"Transgendered Law Comes Out of the Closet: Delivering a Hidden Message":

Wednesday, July 24, 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

"Taking a Stand: Delivering a Message of Social Action": Wednesday, July 24, 3:15 pm - 4:45 pm

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SR-SIS Election Results for 1996-97

The votes have been counted, re-counted, and re-counted again! Congratulations to Bruce Kleinschmidt (Indiana University School of Law Library, Indianapolis), who was elected Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect; and Rebecca Trammell (Schmid Law Library University of Nebraska-Lincoln), who was elected Secretary/Treasurer. The election, which was conducted by Karen Westwood, current SR-SIS Secretary/Treasurer, made history this year, with a first-ever tie for the post of Secretary/Treasurer between Rebecca and Donna Hughes-Oldenburg (Golden Gate University Law Library). Fortunately, the bylaws provided a means to break the tie ("the successful candidate shall be determined by lot conducted by the nominating committee"), and Rebecca's name was drawn out of the "nominating committee hat." Thanks to all the candidates that ran this year.

Bruce and Rebecca will join the other officers of SR-SIS in July on the SR-SIS Executive Board: Prano Amjadi (Santa Clara University Law Library), Chair; James E. Duggan (Southern Illinois University School of Law Library), Past Chair; and H. Edward Brown (Morgan Lewis & Bockius, Los Angeles), Chair, Standing Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Law Library Services to Institution Residents will be named at the Business Meeting in Indianapolis. As a result of his election, Bruce is now Education Chair, and will be seeking out educational program ideas/proposals for Baltimore in 1997. Please contact Bruce now if you would like to begin to work on the Education Committee.

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Proposed Bylaws Change

This proposed bylaws amendment changes the way the election of SR-SIS Officers is conducted. Instead of a separately mailed ballot, the ballot would appear in the Spring issue of the SR-SIS newsletter, and members would vote by cutting out the ballot, marking it, and mailing the ballot in an envelope to the SR-SIS Secretary/Treasurer. The amendment is designed to cut the postage and materials costs of a separate ballot.

Following is a draft of the proposed change. Bracketed sections are to be deleted; underlined text is to be added. This draft will be discussed and revised at the SR-SIS annual business meeting on Sunday afternoon, July 21, 1996, at 1:30 pm. Please note that before the bylaw amendment can be formally adopted, it must be reviewed by the AALL Bylaws Committee. Following our own discussion in Indianapolis, the revised draft of the bylaw (if approved) will be published in the Fall issue of the SR-SIS

Newsletter, and then submitted to the AALL Bylaws Committee, so that we may formally vote on the Bylaw change at the 1997 Annual Meeting.

**Social Responsibilities
Special Interest Section
American Association of Law Libraries**

BY-LAWS
(Amendment)

Proposed: May 1996

Adopted:

Article VI. Nomination and Election of Officers

The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee and shall appoint two others to serve until the next annual meeting.

Two candidates shall be presented for each office to be voted on, the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect every year and the Secretary/Treasurer every other year. Further nominations may be made upon written petition of five voting members. Such petitions, with the written consent of the nominees, shall be filed with the Secretary/Treasurer not later than April 1st.

The Secretary/Treasurer shall prepare the ballot, including nominations by petition, and [mail a copy of the ballot to each member of the Section] instruct the Newsletter Editor to publish the ballot in the Spring issue of the SR-SIS Newsletter, which is mailed to all members of the Section. Ballots shall be marked, sealed in [plain] envelopes marked with the member's return address, and returned to the Secretary/Treasurer for a tabulation by the first week in May or two months prior to the AALL Annual Meeting, whichever is earlier. The candidates receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected and this shall be reported to AALL Headquarters, in the SR-SIS [CSP] Newsletter, and at the Annual Meeting by the Chair of the SIS. All candidates shall be notified of the results of the election by the Chair of the SIS at the earliest possible time. In case of a tie-vote, the successful candidates shall be determined by lot conducted by the Nominating Committee.

*Comments to: [Rebecca Alexander](#)
Last updated 28 October 1999*