
SR-SIS Newsletter, vol. 7, no. 3 (Spring 1997)

In This Issue:

[Mirabile Dictu](#)
[Election Results](#)
[Baltimore](#)

MIRABILE DICTU!

(Note: In the last issue I made an appeal for some assistance with regard to the column on the remaining standing committee within our SIS, namely Lesbian and Gay Issues. I got a diskette on April 3, 1997, bearing a Georgia postmark. Many thanks to the author, who wishes to be unknown.)

Dear Mr. Kleinschmidt,

I want to take up your challenge and write something regarding the Les/bi/gay standing committee. In my mind I call this, "Imitation of Life." Some of your readers may know the Lana Turner movie in which Lana takes in a woman and her daughter. The woman is very grateful and becomes the world's greatest housekeeper so Lana can be the world's greatest actress. The daughter, "Sarah Jane" grows madder and madder at everyone because she has very light skin and can "pass" as being white, but her efforts are spoiled anytime her mother ("Annie") appears with her. So she rejects her mother and runs off to become a dancer. After finding out she is dying, "Annie" tracks down her daughter.

She asks "Sarah Jane" if she is happy now (living as a white woman) and gets a reply, "I'm some-BODY else." At the tear filled ending, "Sarah Jane" rushes home to her mother's death bed and everyone is reunited.

Growing up as a girl in the South, I used to think this movie was only about color. But I think this theme of "passing" applies to a lot of us, your readers. Do we know there is no wealth but life? Or do we want to imitate life, and pretend we are not who we are? And so we struggle to find our place of acceptance and respect. What is it we can expect of heterosexuals? Will they treat us with respect, as long as they don't know we are homosexuals? Or will they treat us as someone to be tolerated, like an uncle with a drinking problem or a cousin with epilepsy?

How much longer will we take the cliché as an answer? "Sarah Jane" found a life, on her own terms, and maybe it was "Annie" who needed to grow up and realize that her daughter was a different person than she was.

We need each other desperately. All too many of us are living in rowboats on a sea of

depression. I think Hannah Arendt said that our task was to make a home on the earth. And how hard that is. The risk of talking to people versus the relief of loneliness. But like "Sarah Jane," we must accept our fate and force the issue of identity. We are who we are, and it will never change. We either try to live as a community or we don't. Yet I struggle with this where I work and in my life.

Andrew Marvell described the alternative:

The grave's a fine and private place
but none I think, do there embrace.

>>>> [Back to Top](#) <<<<

ELECTION RESULTS!

The officers of the Social Responsibilities Special Interest Section are pleased to announce that Karen Westwood was elected to the office of vice-chair/chair-elect during our Spring Election. Rebecca Trammel has an additional year remaining in her two year term as secretary-treasurer.

Congratulations!

>>>> [Back to Top](#) <<<<

BALTIMORE!

Are you checking those airline prices? Practicing stuffing your suitcase with vendor goodies? Desperate to know what color the BNA tote bag will be this year, so you can plan your wardrobe? Well, sorry but I'm clueless too. I can tell you this much. Don't miss our Annual Business Meeting , Sunday, July 20, 1:30 to 3:00 PM, following by a free buffet and cocktails (yeah, right).

On Tuesday, get ready for seminar overload:

At 2:00 we have TWO programs:

E-3 The Breast Cancer Battle: Medical, Legal & Personal

E-4 Beyond Shawshank: Covering the Prison Law Libraries of Today

And at 3:45 on Tuesday is:

F-4 Keeping Watch on the Waterfront: A History of Social Responsibility In Legal and Library Professional Organizations

The schedule may change and room announcements will be in the final program.

For those who arrive on Saturday, the Committee on Diversity has another fine symposium planned, "Preparing for the Twenty-first Century: Workplace Diversity." You must pre-register for this, but it's free and always lively. And it does feature a buffet at

its conclusion, no joke! (Well, they did last year.)

*Comments to: [Rebecca Alexander](#)
Last updated 29 October 1999*