

Newsletters that work

On January 21, 1996, at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio, ACRL's Public Relations in Academic Libraries (PRIAL) Discussion Group sponsored the first of an intensive two-part workshop on publishing "Newsletters That Work." The workshop was conducted by newsletter professionals Barbara Blake and Barbara Stein, coauthors of Neal-Schuman's *Creating Newsletters, Brochures, and Pamphlets: A How-to-Do-It Manual*.

This first session of the workshop focused on the technical aspects of design, layout, and production. Several representative newsletters submitted by participants were selected for close analysis. Blake and Stein view newsletters as the present-day equivalent of the personal letter; they should be brief, warm, consistent, portable, and easy to recognize, read, and absorb. They should provide the quick satisfaction of a note from an old friend.

Most suggestions emphasized easy readability, using the "keep it simple, stupid" approach. Use an 8" x 11" format, no covers, and aim for a length of four to six pages. Select high-quality white, cream, or light gray paper with black or blue ink, and avoid bright or fluorescent colors. Choose one typeface, preferably serif, and use it in a maximum of three sizes, with 12-point as the predominant type size. Use additional color cautiously, no more than one, and in the same place every time (the nameplate, for example). Divide the

page into two columns whenever possible. Be simple and consistent in page layout, maintaining the same structure within each issue and among successive issues, so that your newsletter develops a unique, instantly recognizable look.

Blake and Stein emphasize the importance of title, logo, nameplate, and masthead. They recommend a short, descriptive title without trendy terms that will date. Include copyright notice, volume and issue numbers, editorial staff, page numbers, and a brief table of contents for a professional appearance. Again, be consistent in use of these elements and in their placement within successive issues.

Caution was also advised in the use of graphics, which can be counterproductive if poorly done, purposeless, clichéd, too cute, or disproportionate. Bar charts are generally more legible than pie or line charts. Most novices fail to leave enough white space.

The second part of "Newsletters That Work" will focus on writing and editorial content and will take place at the ALA Annual Conference in New York. Check your program for details, and join PRIAL for what is sure to be another practical, "hands-on" session, focusing directly on improving your professional performance. For more information, contact PRIAL chair Jennifer Paustenbaugh at jpaust@Okway.okstate.edu.—Margaret Gordon, University of California, Santa Cruz

ing, tenure and promotion, displays and exhibits, and searching and hiring procedures. Older CLIP Notes looked at newsletters, interlibrary loan procedures, staff development and continuing education, emergency planning, and managing student employees.

To suggest a topic or volunteer to be a compiler contact: Elizabeth Sudduth, CLIP Note Committee Chair, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA 23005; (804) 752-7258; e-mail: esudduth@rmc.edu.

Choice Ethnic Studies on sale

The Ethnic Studies series, compiled by the editorial staff of *Choice*, is on sale for 50% off, through August 1, 1996.

Each volume contains carefully selected reviews of recent scholarly titles dealing with a

single American ethnic group. The four titles are: *African and African American Studies* (\$12), *Asian and Asian American Studies* (\$11), *Latino Studies* (\$11), and *Native American Studies* (\$8.50). Send prepaid orders (include \$5.00 for s/h) to: Steven Conforti, *Choice*, 100 Riverview Center, Middletown, CT 06457.

Censorship exhibit available

"Censorship in Public Colleges and Universities," a new exhibit developed by the Long Island Coalition Against Censorship, is ready for distribution. The exhibit examines more than 20 incidents of censorship from McCarthyism in the 1950s through the present day. Incidents such as censoring lectures, films, plays, student newspapers, and sex discrimination are described. Twenty-three 11" x 14" illustrations (21