

**Committee on Professional Ethics
REPORT TO COUNCIL
2010 Annual Meeting – Washington, D.C.**

As Chair of the Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE), it is my privilege to report to Council the Committee's activities of 2009-2010. COPE continues to take a leadership role in educating librarians and information workers about ethics and in developing publications and programs that will provide practical tools for our members as they face the ethical challenges that arise in life and in the workplace.

PROGRAMMING

For the 2010 Annual Conference, COPE presented a well-attended program, "Ethics in a Digital World: Using Policies to Guide Professional and Personal Presence in Social Networking Spaces." Presenters were Ruth Connell of Valparaiso University, Peter Fernandez of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Brian Kooy of Georgia State University, and Robert S. Peck of the Center for Constitutional Litigation in Washington, D.C.. This was the second in a three year "Ethics in a Digital World" program series offered by the Committee. The Committee particularly thanks Brian Kooy, not only for presenting and moderating the program, but for taking the lead on the program's organization. Planning is underway for the final program of the series to be held at ALA Annual 2011 tentatively titled, "Ethics in a Digital World: 3D Guidance of the Young Avatar

Q & A ON THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE ALA CODE OF ETHICS

Over the last seven years, the COPE held a series of meetings and programs with our membership as part of the ALA Code of Ethics examination and revision process that resulted in adoption of minor changes to the Code by this body at Annual in June 2008. In response to the questions that arose during the multiple hearings and meetings during the Code revision process, the COPE recognized that clarification of Code enforceability was needed. In response, a Q & A on the Enforcement of the ALA Code of Ethics has been prepared. With input from ALA Counsel, the Q & A was developed over the last several years and adopted by the Committee for Association distribution. A copy of the Q & A was distributed to Council at 2009 Annual and the final version has now been added to the web page as a companion document to the COPE prepared Q & A on workplace speech.

ETHICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

At Annual 2009, COPE brought to Council three resolutions concerning ethics education for ALA members that also grew out of the series of meetings and programs held as part of the Code review process. The first, adopted by Council, acknowledged ethics education as a critical need for our members and identified ethics education as an educational priority of the Association. To meet that critical need, ALA has been negotiating with the Institute for Global Ethics to offer their Ethical Fitness® seminar to our members. The Committee has been told that contract negotiations should be completed soon. The Committee expects to report to Council at the 2011 Midwinter meeting that the contract has been finalized and that the specific procedures for offering the seminars have been arranged.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULING

The Committee recognizes the challenges of the new compressed conference schedule, but it is problematic to have Council committee meetings scheduled in conflict with Council sessions. The Committee asks that every effort be made to eliminate such conflicts for future conferences and meetings.

OVER

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM MANUAL

The COPE worked with Candace Morgan, editor, to enhance the ethics section in the new edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. The COPE thanks Candace Morgan and the OIF for helping the Committee to increase awareness of the ALA Code of Ethics and the Committee's activities.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

With the completion of the Code review and revision process, the Q & A on enforcement and the 2010 conference program, the COPE wishes to begin the delivery of Ethical Fitness[®] seminar to our members as soon as the final contract is signed. Plans for promotion and implementation are in progress. The COPE members also discussed what the new undertakings of the Committee should be. At the invitation of the Privacy Subcommittee of the Intellectual Freedom Committee the COPE has agreed to work with that group on an examination of the self-service holds issue.

Because of our name and acronym, the COPE meetings and programs are often difficult to locate in the conference materials, so it was decided that with the new compressed conference format it would be even more important that the COPE "brand" their program offerings at conference. The first series to be branded with a recurring theme, "Ethics in the Digital World," will be completed in 2011, so a new branded series needs to be developed and begin in 2012. The current thinking of the Committee is the new series will deal with issues of the role of libraries and information agencies in the ethical education of youth. The Committee will make a conscientious effort to seek more co-sponsorship of ethics programs with other appropriate ALA units, especially as the new compressed conference format offers additional scheduling challenges.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

It has been my privilege to serve two terms as a member of the COPE and as chair for three of those four years. Personally, I want to thank the Committee's members, including the division liaisons, for all of their hard work, not only this year, but during my entire tenure. In my 37 years of ALA involvement, I have never worked with a more passionate, articulate, and collegial group of people. I also want to thank the members of the Membership and Intellectual Freedom Committees for supporting our ethics initiatives. Thanks, too, to the OIF staff, particularly Angela Maycock and Deborah Caldwell-Stone, for stepping-in and stepping-up during the times of celebration and during the times of trial. And dear Judith, we miss you, but I know you're smiling at all that the COPE has accomplished. I know I speak for the members of COPE in wishing Barbara Jones, the new director of OIF, all the best in her new position.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Zimmerman, Chair

Committee Members:

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