

ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Report to Council

2005 Midwinter Meeting

Boston, Massachusetts

Wednesday, January 19, 2005

The ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) is pleased to present this update of its activities. Under **Information**, this report covers *Libraries: An American Value*; the ALA Strategic Plan: Ahead to 2010 draft goals and objectives; privacy; and media concentration. Under **Projects** are updates on Lawyers for Libraries and Banned Books Week. The committee's action items (under **Action**) include "Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles" (CD#19.1.), and three revised policies (CD#19.2–19.4), all *Interpretations* of the *Library Bill of Rights*, in preparation for the publication of the seventh edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*.

INFORMATION

Libraries: An American Value

During the 2004 Annual Conference in Orlando, FL, the ALA Council took the following action:

REFERRED, ALA CD#32.1, Resolution to Amend *Libraries: An American Value* Statement, to the Intellectual Freedom Committee. The proposed additions to ALA Policy 53.8 are in caps: "We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity BY RECRUITING LIBRARY WORKERS OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, AND by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;" to assure the imperative inclusion of library workforce diversity in any and all statements or reports related to the Association's Core Values. (ALA CD#32.1, Council Committee on Diversity Report, Item #1)

As directed by Council, the IFC reviewed *Libraries: An American Value* and reaffirmed the policy is a contract between the public and the profession. The committee conveyed its decision to the Committee on Diversity at this Midwinter, and both committees are in agreement that the suggested revision to *Libraries: An American Value* would be unsuitable.

During its discussions, the IFC found a reference in the *ALA Policy Manual*, which addresses the goal of this association to promote the recruitment of a racially and ethnically diverse group of high caliber persons to librarianship (*ALA Policy Manual*, 1.3.E.8.). In light of this ALA policy, and being appreciative of the Committee on Diversity's concerns, the IFC will address diversity recruitment in other policies, as appropriate.

ALA Strategic Plan: Ahead to 2010

In accordance with Keith Michael Fiels' request, the IFC reviewed the Ahead to 2010 draft goals. During discussion, the committee expressed disappointment that intellectual freedom, a key action area, was mentioned so infrequently in the draft strategic plan.

Privacy

Similar in style and purpose to the *Libraries & the Internet Tool Kit*, the *Privacy Tool Kit*, which was developed by the IFC Privacy Subcommittee, is a resource to assist librarians in protecting users' privacy and confidentiality. The *Tool Kit* is available at <http://www.ala.org/oif/iftoolkits/privacy>. The IFC Privacy Subcommittee has reviewed *Questions and Answers on Privacy and Confidentiality*, which complements *Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, and has added several new topics: RFID in libraries; the use of social security numbers in library records; library workplace privacy; and the use of personally identifiable information for nonadministrative purposes. The Q&A is available at <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/interpretations/questionsanswers.htm>.

Media Concentration

The Intellectual Freedom Committee's Subcommittee on the Impact of Media Concentration on Libraries has developed a draft checklist to help libraries counter the impact of media consolidation on the diversity of ideas and localism in their communities. The checklist covers a broad range of topics, such as collection building, cataloging, 21st-century literacy, electronic resources, children's services, and library programming. At this Midwinter Meeting, the subcommittee sought suggestions and ideas for adding to and improving the draft checklist. Over the coming months, the subcommittee will annotate the checklist, add links to relevant resources, and mount it on the OIF Web site (<http://www.ala.org/oif>).

PROJECTS

Lawyers for Libraries

Lawyers for Libraries, an ongoing OIF project, is creating a network of attorneys involved in, and concerned with, the defense of the freedom to read and the application of constitutional law to library policies, principles, and problems.

Five regional training institutes have been held since 2002 in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. A sixth institute is being planned in Atlanta on May 4 in conjunction with the SOLINET's Annual Membership Meeting. To date, over 150 attorneys, trustees, and librarians have attended these five trainings, and an e-list has been created to allow for ongoing communication.

Topics addressed include the USA PATRIOT Act, Internet filtering, the library as a public forum, meeting room and display area policies, and how to defend against censorship of library materials.

As OIF continues to sponsor institutes, more and more attorneys are learning about the intricacies of First Amendment law as applied to libraries, and the country's library users can be more secure knowing that their rights will continue to be vigorously protected.

For more information about the Lawyers for Libraries project, please contact Jonathan Kelley at jkelly@ala.org or 1-800-545-2433, ext. 4226.

Banned Books Week

ALA's annual celebration of the freedom to read—Banned Books Week—begins September 24 and continues through October 1, 2005. This year's theme—It's Your Freedom We're Talking About—highlights that intellectual freedom is a personal and common responsibility in a democratic society. More information on the twenty-fourth BBW can be found at <http://www.ala.org/bbooks>.

ACTION

Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles (CD#19.1)

For 25 years, the Book Industry Study Group (BISG) has been a key resource for publishing professionals in every facet of the book industry. BISG has led the way in setting industry standards and conducting vital industry research on behalf of publishers, booksellers, libraries, and vendors.

During the past year, the ALA Office of Information Technology Policy (OITP) and OIF have been working with BISG to develop a privacy policy statement on the use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

Both the IFC and the OITP have reviewed this policy, entitled Radio Frequency Identification Privacy Principles, which can be found at http://www.bisg.org/docs/BISG_Policy_002.pdf and attached as Exhibit A in the attached CD#19.1.

Because these RFID privacy principles compare favorably with ALA's privacy policies, the IFC and OITP now move for adoption:

“Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles,”
CD#19.1.

Intellectual Freedom Manual—Seventh Edition

Background on Revised Interpretations

As you know, the IFC anticipates the seventh edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual* will be published in time for the 2006 Midwinter Meeting. To meet the publication schedule, the manuscript must be in Publishing Services by April 1, 2005.

At the 2004 Annual Conference, Council adopted eight policies the IFC updated. The IFC informed you at that time that the remaining three would be brought to Council at this Midwinter Meeting. On November 10, 2004, as usual, the proposed drafts of the policies were mailed to the ALA Executive Board, ALA Council, ALA Division Presidents, ALA Council Committee Chairs, ALA Round Table Chairs, and appropriate ALA staff liaisons for their input.

The IFC carefully considered and discussed all comments received both prior to and during this Midwinter Meeting.

One of the comments received was from the ALA Committee on Professional Ethics, which suggested that the IFC develop a Q&A on labels and rating systems. The committee has agreed to undertake this project, and will be seeking input from the profession as it develops this Q&A.

Motions (CD#19.2–19.4)

The IFC now submits three revised policies for Council’s adoption:

- “Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks”; the IFC moves the adoption of its revisions to this policy, CD#19.2;
- “Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program”; the IFC moves the adoption of its revisions to this policy, CD#19.3; and
- “Labels and Rating Systems”; the IFC moves the adoption of its revisions to this policy, CD#19.4.

In closing, the Intellectual Freedom Committee thanks the Division and Chapter Intellectual Freedom Committees, the Intellectual Freedom Round Table, the various unit liaisons, and the OIF staff for their commitment, assistance, and hard work. We also want to recognize and congratulate Judith F. Krug, director of the office, who will receive an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign this May for her tireless commitment to protecting intellectual freedom for all.

Respectfully Submitted,

ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Kenton L. Oliver, Chair

Yvonne Snyder Farley

Jack Forman

Carrie Gardner

Nancy C. Kranich

Candace D. Morgan

Samuel F. Morrison

Peg Oettinger

June A. Pinnell-Stephens

Pat R. Scales

Vivian R. Wynn

Bowie Kotrla, Intern

Bianca Roberts, Intern

Gail A. Weymouth, Intern