Greetings from the cold Midwest. This is our pre-Midwinter Meeting issue, but we apologize in advance if this fails to reach you by then. As most of you know (especially you readers of The Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, but also readers of the excellent British publication Index on Censorship), censorship continues to be a major international pastime. But there is some good news: California and other states have finally rejected all those Gabler-tailored biology textbooks that don't mention evolution; attempts to write a censorship clause into NEA funding were defeated; and closer to home, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago resoundingly upheld the decision by Judge Sarah Evans Barker striking down the Indianapolis ordinance which attempted to define pornography as a violation of civil rights. But the fight goes on, and so do our own activities, to wit:

Membership Survey: Many thanks to those of you who have completed and returned the questionnaire sent out by Nancy Herman and the OIF, and to those of you who haven't, please do. The Initial response has been very encouraging in both quantity and quality: our plan is to build an "activists' database" for such purposes as committee appointments, support in local crises, national grassroots organization, and general consciousness-raising. This may seem a bit grandiose, but we clearly have some wonderful talents and energies among us, and who knows, it might work...

Awards: The next annual conference, in New York, will be the occasion for the first presentation of our award for excellence in writing in the area of Intellectual Freedom, named in honor of Eli Oboler. Although the deadline has now passed for nominations for this and our other awards, the Imroth Award and the State Intellectual Freedom Committee Programming Award, please keep in mind that you are the primary source for information about worthy nominees for the future. These awards serve vital functions, not only in rewarding outstanding figures in our good cause and honoring the achievements of Imroth and Oboler, but also in publicizing that cause and the IFRT. Thanks again to Elliot Goldstein and SIRS and to the good people of HBW Associates for making the State Program Award and the Oboler Award possible. Speaking of awards, and another of the many awards made possible by Elliot and Eleanor Goldstein, our man Gene Lanier just added another award to his considerable string, the North Carolina Library Association IF Award. Gene is also running for ALA Council next time around, along with other Intellectual freedom activists—as they used to say in Chicago, vote early and often!

Midwinter Meeting—Chicago: Our hard-working awards committees will be making their decisions in Chicago, and among other items of business, the Executive Committee will be considering possible revisions of the ALA Federal Legislative Policy. For your information, and in the odd chance this arrives before Midwinter, we include the intellectual freedom statement from that policy. Because the revision is a longer process, your comments are very welcome after Midwinter as well.

Annual Program—New York: The IFRT now has principal responsibility for planning the major Intellectual freedom program of the annual conference, and "Sex, Social Change, and Censorship" our Big Apple offering, promises to be major indeed. We are still in the midst of negotiations, but there are good signs. Be there!

Appointments: The above-mentioned survey will help us locate new volunteers for IFRT committee appointments, but we would also appreciate your letting us know about your willingness to serve early in the spring, because the process should be finished by the time of the annual conference. But thank you—there's much to do!

John Swan, Wabash College
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT

Barbara Jones reports a valuable addition to our ranks: Her son Zachary, born last August 27, will be joining us at Midwinter. She also seconds the call for volunteers for committees and also solicits your ideas for future programs, most importantly, the 1987 Annual Conference program, which she will coordinate. She mentions that issues surrounding the new information technologies and intellectual freedom are of particular interest, but she is open to all suggestions. Write to her at 782 West End, #62, New York, NY 10025 (Phone: 212-760-7782).

IFRT MEETING SCHEDULE FOR MIDWINTER

Saturday, January 18: IFRT Executive Committee, 4:30-5:30 pm, Hilton-Conference Room 4H
Sunday, January 19: IFC/Division IFCs/IFRT Joint Meeting, 2-5:30, Hilton-Astoria Room
Monday, January 20: IFRT Executive Committee, 11:30-12:30, Hilton Conference Room 4K

These are all open meetings—feel free to drop in with ideas, gripes, or even curiosity.

IFRT 1985-86 Officers and Committees.

(To save space, we have not given addresses of officers or committee members. Please consult the 1985/86 ALA Handbook of Organization for this information.)

CHAIR: John C. Swan
SECRETARY: Judith A. Sessions
CHAIR-ELECT: Barbara Jones
TREASURER: William H. Roberts
DIRECTORS: Amanda R. Bible, Elliot Goldstein, Gene D. Lanier, Anne Martel.

Committees:

BYLAWS AND ORGANIZATION: Irene Stoller (Chair), James B. Nelson, Frank Van Zanten.
IMMROTH MEMORIAL AWARD COMMITTEE: Martha Merrill (Chair), Lee B. Brawner, William Davis, Ernest Di Mattia, Jr., Richard Waters.
MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION COMMITTEE: Laurence A. Miller (Chair), Barbara Jones, Scott B. Kass, Jeanne Layton, John J. Riemer, Russell Shank.
NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Pamela G. Bonnell (Chair)
STATE INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE PROGRAMMING AWARD COMMITTEE: J. Dennis Day (Chair), Douglas Archer, Karen Tallman, Ginny Moore Kruse.
PROGRAM COMMITTEE: John C. Swan (Chair), Carol Liu, Richard Buck, Barbara Jones.
PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: B. B. Rile
ELI M. OBOLER MEMORIAL AWARD COMMITTEE: Lamar Veatch (Chair), Joseph Harzbecker, William Davis, John C. Swan.
IFRT COALITION TASK FORCE COMMITTEE: Frances McDonald (Chair), David Cohen, Fay Ann Golden, Susan Heath, Duane Meyers.

IFRT Liaisons and Representatives to Other ALA Units and Organizations:

TO INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE: Sue Kamm
TO FREEDOM TO READ FOUNDATION: Richard Buck
TO LEROY C. MERRITT HUMANITARIAN FUND: Barbara Bryant
TO RTSD’S COMMITTEE ON CATALOGING: DESCRIPTION AND ACCESS: B.B. Rile
DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY ELIMINATES RENTAL CHARGE ON COMPUTERS. BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGREE THAT COMPUTER USE IS A "BASIC LIBRARY SERVICE."

The Board of Trustees of the Downers Grove Public Library, Downers Grove, Illinois, has voted to eliminate the hourly charge for the use of the library's Apple computers by local cardholders. The decision, which was made at a time that most other library fines and fees were raised, is intended to ensure that all library patrons have access to the information and activities (recreational and educational) available in the software collection.

The issue was raised in a meeting of administrators and department managers held to discuss proposed increases in fines and fees. Christopher Bowen, Assistant Librarian, advocated eliminating the charge for computer use. Discussion centered around the purpose of the computers. Are they a courtesy provided for the convenience of the patrons (as are typewriters and copying machines) or are they a part of basic library service?

Bowen argued that the library had committed resources to building a collection of software and that patrons should have free access to that material just as they have free use of microfilm readers to use microfilm holdings. The group agreed that computers are part of the future of every person and that access to these tools is a part of the library's function of providing access to information and to materials for recreation and self-education.

The library director and managers supported this view to the library board and board members agreed that the free use of computers is in line with their goal to avoid charging local patrons for basic library services.

EXCERPTS FROM ALA FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY prepared by ALA Legislation Committee and adopted by the Council of the American Library Association (ISBN 0-8389-6592-X)

** INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM **

Believing that an informed citizenry is the very foundation of democracy, and that the Constitution guarantees the free communication of ideas and information in every form through all media, the Association supports the rights of libraries and information centers to disseminate materials on all topics of concern, no matter how controversial.

The Association rejects discrimination in library service and upholds the rights of all citizens to have access to library services, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, handicap, economic condition, individual life-style or political or social views.
The Association supports the freedom of the press and the right of the news media to inform the American public without fear of governmental reprisal or control. The Association supports as equally basic to democracy the right of authors and publishers to disseminate their works without imposition of a governmental imprimatur.

Believing that the world of ideas and information cannot be provincialized without destroying its integrity, the Association maintains that American citizens have a right to access to the works and views of foreign authors and scholars. The Association further contends that the federal regulation of travel abroad and the importation of information materials should not be used to suppress free expression.

EQUAL ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICE

High among the Association's priorities is support of federal legislation that would help to redress the national imbalance in educational and information opportunities. The Association is committed to the provision of easier access to quality libraries for those persons who are disadvantaged by reason of cultural, educational, or economic factors or lack of mobility. Special library services and materials are needed by the aged, the disabled, those with learning difficulties and those with limited skills in English in order that they may claim their full share of our national life.

Access to library resources and services demands that individuals master the basic literacy skills to obtain information they want and to use information for their own and others' needs. Basic literacy skills are essential for self-fulfillment and fulfillment of each individual's role as a family and community member, as a citizen, job-holder, producer, and consumer. Library services and resources play a significant role in assuring that each individual acquire basic literacy skills. The Association urges that the federal government take a leadership role to ensure that the states initiate aggressive programs to improve the rate of literacy. The Association further urges that the federal government provide financial incentives to states to develop these literacy programs.

Further, the Association endorses the concept that literacy is not a program to be pursued by education agencies alone but by a coalition of agencies, including libraries, labor, manpower training and others, working in a coordinated effort under the leadership of the United States Department of Education.

Substantial progress has been made in developing and extending specialized library services to the blind and to persons with other physical handicaps that prevent them from using conventional library materials. The Association supports programs that will strengthen and expand library service not only to these persons but to those experiencing any barriers to information. It encourages adequate financial aid from federal, state, and local sources to enable libraries to offer these specialized services and to complement other related federal programs such as library materials for the blind and physically handicapped individuals provided by the Library of Congress.

The Association supports establishment of a national library service for the deaf and hearing-impaired with appropriate additional funding in an agency which is responsive to the needs of this constituency.
PUBLIC ACCESS TO FEDERAL INFORMATION

The Association supports freedom of public access to information generated by the federal government, a right recognized in the Freedom of Information Act of 1966. It urges strict enforcement of the provisions of this act.

Under federal law, selected libraries across the nation are designated as depository libraries to receive federal government documents and make them accessible to the public. The Association supports improvement of the depository system and improved means of access to the designated depository collections.

Any review of policies relating to public access to federal information should recognize these requirements: that all government publications be collected and distributed to depository libraries for free public access; that comprehensive bibliographic control of all government publications be provided through nationally recognized databases and library networks; that all government publications and government-produced information be disseminated in whatever format is most appropriate for the information, most cost effective, and most useful for government agencies, libraries, and the general public; and that depository libraries be recognized and funded to operate as federal information centers for public access.

The Association endorses a comprehensive centralized or coordinated sales program for government publications which offers on a cost-recovery basis all government publications in whatever format, without pricing basic documents beyond the reach of nonprofit libraries and information centers responsible for providing public access.

Further, the Association affirms the need for a national depository agency to provide a comprehensive current and retrospective collection of federal government publications and government-produced information for public access as a library of the last resort. Such an agency should also provide information dissemination services such as collection and distribution of documents to depository libraries and information centers, bibliographic control, reference service, interlibrary loan, and photoduplication, as well as administrative guidance and oversight to depository libraries.

ROCK N' ROLL RATINGS from the OIF Memorandum, October 1985:

What began last year as a P.T.A. resolution calling on the recording industry to rate and label record albums and cassettes containing "profanity, sex, violence or vulgarity," has reached the top of the hot-censorship issue charts—culminating in the September 19 Senate Commerce Committee's hearings on "porn rock."

The hearings were the work of the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC), a group consisting of two politicians' wives (Tipper Gore, wife of Tennessee Democratic Sen. Albert Gore, Jr., and Susan Baker, wife of Treasury Secretary James Baker) and three wives of influential Washington, D.C. businessmen. Their goal is to get the record industry to "clean up its act." The group objects to rock and roll songs with suggestive lyrics and is calling for a complex rating code system for records, the printing of song lyrics on all albums, the removal of "offensive" album covers from stores and the re-evaluation by record companies of their contracts with performers who engage in questionable on-stage behavior.
Specific objections? These are just a few examples of the artists and songs that are being criticized as "pornographic" or "unsuitable" for children:

Prince: "Darling Nikki"
Madonna: "Dress You Up"
Cyndi Lauper: "She Bop"
Sheena Easton: "Sugar Walls"
Bruce Springsteen: "I'm on Fire"
Tina Turner: "Private Dancer"

Interestingly enough, PMRC is focusing only on rock and roll (with the most outrageous examples coming from obscure heavy metal groups) and ignoring both country and western music ("Help Me Make It Through the Night" and "Tight Fitting Jeans") and the murder/incest/rape-filled Italian, French and German operas that are within easy reach and translation of adolescents everywhere.

One response to the censorship efforts of PMRC has been the formation of the Musical Majority—a group of journalists, radio programmers and performers, including John Cougar Mellencamp, the Pointer Sisters, Don Henley, Daryl Hall and John Oates. The group has joined forces with the American Civil Liberties Union and is considering an ad campaign on MTV.

Reaction within the record industry is mixed. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) tried to reach an accord with PMRC by suggesting the use of generic warning labels on risque albums, while MCA records recently announced that it would refuse to put warning labels on any of its records.

Rock lyric censorship is far from being a new development. At one time, Cole Porter's "Love for Sale" was considered "blue" and only the instrumental version was approved for radio broadcast. The Midnighters' "Work With Me, Annie" was banned in the '50s. Elvis Presley's 1956 performance on the ED SULLIVAN SHOW was called "filthy" by the NEW YORK TIMES. The King's response? "They all think I'm a sex maniac. They're just frustrated old types anyway. I'm normal."

At the September, 1985, Senate hearings, the following exchange occurred between Sen. Albert Gore, Jr. and Dee Snider, lead singer of Twisted Sister:

Gore: "Let's suppose the lyrics aren't printed? Then what choice does a parent have? To sit down and listen to every song on the album?"

Snider: "Well, if they're really concerned about it. I think that they have to."

Gore: "Do you think that's reasonable, to expect parents to do that?"

Snider: "Being a parent isn't a reasonable thing. It's a very hard thing. ... I'm a new parent, I have only one child, but I'm learning that there's a lot to being a parent that you didn't expect."

At the present time, no formal action is expected to be taken by Congress.

Pending a full discussion by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee during the Midwinter Meeting in January, which might lead to a more specific response, we suggest you rely on the STATEMENT ON LABELING to answer any questions regarding your position on the labelling of rock lyrics.