

## **Intellectual Freedom: Views Through A Cross-Cultural Lens, 2006 IRRT Chair Program**

### **Julia Glynn**

Intellectual Freedom is a concept that is fundamental to many US librarians. However, the understanding of intellectual freedom varies from country to country and may or may not be considered to be an important part of a library's philosophy.

At the ALA Annual Conference, in New Orleans, LA, on Monday, June 26, the International Relations Round Table will be presenting, with IFRT as a co-sponsor, a program titled, Intellectual Freedom: Views through a Cross-cultural Lens. The three invited panelists will explore how the concept of intellectual freedom is perceived by our colleagues in China, the Middle East, and Africa, and how intellectual freedom is implemented in their libraries. Topics to be discussed include: How is intellectual freedom viewed and supported around the world? Are technology and globalization trends changing the dialogue about intellectual freedom in other countries?

The keynote speaker is Robert Wedgeworth, President and CEO of ProLiteracy Worldwide (<http://www.proliteracy.org/>). Mr. Wedgeworth has served as President of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), Executive Director of ALA, University Librarian and Professor of library administration at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Dean of Library Science at Columbia University. He has been editor of three editions of the *World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services*. Mr. Wedgeworth is an international specialist in the library and book field who served on President Ford's National Commission on Copyright and President Reagan's Advisory Committee on the U.S. Information Agency.

The panelists representing three areas from around the world are

China: Yue Li, Resource Services, University of Florida Library. Mr. Li recently traveled to China, where he visited the China National Library and interviewed journalists. His research interests are in Sino-American libraries with a focus on intellectual property and intellectual freedom.

Middle East: Jordan Scepaniski, former Dean, Zayed University Library, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Mr. Scepaniski has worked in several Middle Eastern countries during his career. He represents IRRT and other Round Tables on ALA Council, is past chair of IRRT and the International Relations Committee, and served as ALA staff liaison to IRC and IRRT.

Africa: Angel Batiste, Area Specialist, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress. Ms. Batiste is currently serving as Chair of IRC Africa Subcommittee and Co-Chair of the Society for International Development, Development Information Workgroup.

[Program Details](#)

Title: Intellectual Freedom: Views through a Cross-cultural Lens  
Date: Monday, June 26, 2006  
Time: 1:30 - 3:30

Program will also include the presentation of the John Ames Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award for significant contributions to international librarianship and the presentation of the Bogle Pratt International Travel Fund award at the beginning of the program.