

IFRT REPORT

Publication of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table

No. 65 2007

Summer

IFRT Report

Table of Contents

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ProQuest/SIRS State and Regional Intellectual Freedom Achievement Award Steve Norman	3
IFRT Annual Nanette Perez	4
Toddlers' Rules and Bush Administration Information Policies by J. Douglas Archer	5
Intellectual Freedom Round Table Awards Reception by Nanette Perez	6
IFRT and GLBTRT Announce New Library Toolkit by Martin Gamar	6
IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifesto Guidelines Workshop in Costa Rica by Loida Garcia-Febo	7
From the Chair by Rosanne M. Cordell	8
"Sorry the Collection you need is Closed" by Diane Fulkerson	9
Framing a National Conversation on Privacy by Carolyn Caywood	10
Resolution on National Discussion on Privacy by Michael Fiels	11
Merritt Fund Convenes "Building Bridges" Conversations by Jim Kuhn	12

Greetings!

The ALA annual conference is just around the corner and IFRT has a full agenda.

We are excited to offer our first pre-conference and hope to see many of you there.

Also consider attending our program and awards reception.

Sincerely,

Lauren Christos

Carolyn Caywood asks to make a pitch for the Friday morning meeting on framing the National Conversation on Privacy. If you have an interest in privacy or in civic engagement, please add 8:00 to 10:00 AM, Friday, Convention Center, room 102 B, to your conference planner. You will learn how to participate in this project and how you might use the same process to tackle issues in your community.

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PROQUEST/SIRS STATE AND REGIONAL INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

By Steve Norman, Chair of the ProQuest/SIRS Award Committee

The winners of this year's ProQuest/SIRS State and Regional Intellectual Freedom Achievement Award are the Connecticut John Does. They were chosen for this award for defending intellectual freedom when they challenged the constitutionality of National Security Letters (NSLs) and the gag provisions of NSLs issued under the USA PATRIOT Act.

The four librarians are George Christian (Executive Director of the Library Connection); Peter Chase (Director of the Plainville (Conn.) Public Library and Chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the Connecticut Library Association); Barbara Bailey (Director of the Wells-Turner Memorial Library in Glastonbury, Conn.); and Janet Nocek (Director of the Portland (Conn.) Public Library).

In 2005, these four "John Doe" librarians served as the Executive Committee of the Library Connection—a consortium of central Connecticut public and academic libraries sharing an automated library system and telecommunications network—when it was required by a National Security Letter to turn over patron information to the FBI.

The story of how their lives were turned upside down during their dispute with the U.S. Justice Department is amazing and frightening. Their story deserves a wide audience and careful attention. The award committee applauds their courage.

Please think about nominees for the 2008 award. Isn't there a deserving group in your part of the country?

IFRT ANNUAL

The following is the meeting room schedule for Annual Conference:

Thursday, June 21

Celebrating the Library Bill of Rights

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Washington Convention Center, room 146 A

Friday, June 22

National Conversation on Privacy

8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Washington Convention Center, room 102 B

Friday, June 22

IFRT I

1:30 PM to 5:00 PM

Washington Convention Center, room 201

Saturday, June 23

IFRT Awards Reception

11:30 PM to 1:30 PM

Mayflower Hotel East Room

Saturday, June 23

Scientific and Health Information: The Threat Posed by Political Interference

1:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Mayflower Hotel State Room

Monday, June 25

IFRT II

8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Renaissance Washington, room 5

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TODDLERS' RULES AND BUSH ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION POLICIES

By J. Douglas AREHER

A few years ago one of my grandsons had a tee shirt with the following "Toddlers' Rules" on the front and back. It read something like this.

1. If I like it, it's mine.
2. If it's in my hand, it's mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it's mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
5. If it looks like mine, it is mine.
6. If I saw it first, it's mine.
7. If I think it's mine, it's mine.
8. If it's near me, it's mine.

Many versions are available on the Web (none attributed) with different titles such as "Toddlers' Rules," "Rules of the Terrible Twos," "Rule for Ferrets," and "Greyhound Rules." You get the point. These are the operating assumptions of children and pets who don't know how to share or to "play nice" – those who can't or don't yet respect the "other." While working on a paper concerning the information policies of the current Bush Administration it occurred to me that the "Toddlers' Rules" may just be at work here also.

Put simplistically, there are two kinds of information, that controlled by the government and that controlled privately. Regardless of the rationale for its actions, it is clear that the Bush administration has repeatedly reduced public access to information that it controls (e.g. the closing of EPA libraries, removal of data from government websites, an attempted recall of a GPO distributed document, reclassification of previously declassified documents, and decreased access to documents of previous administrations).

In addition, it has dramatically expanded its claim to private information through both the legitimate and illegitimate use of the USA PATRIOT Act and through wholly illegal actions such as its warrant less electronic surveillance program. They have even tried to justify torture to obtain information from designated individuals – the ultimate lack of respect for individual human dignity.

Whether accidentally coherent or intentionally consistent, in toddler's terms, the current administration's information policy can be summarized in two lines.

If it's mine, it's mine.
If it's yours, it's mine.

Toddlers' just don't know any better. What's George's excuse?

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM ROUND TABLE AWARDS RECEPTION

By Nanette Perez, IFRT Staff Liaison

IFRT Members are cordially invited to the Intellectual Freedom Round Table Awards Reception on Saturday, June 23, 2007, from Noon to 1:30 PM, in the Renaissance Mayflower East Room.

We will honor the ProQuest/SIRS State and Regional Achievement Award recipients, "Connecticut John Does"

- ◆ Barbara Bailey
- ◆ Peter Chase
- ◆ George Christian
- ◆ Janet Nocek

A social hour and light buffet will precede the awards presentation.

Please RSVP by June 15 via phone at 800-545-2433, ext. 4223, or via e-mail at nperez@ala.org.

Following the awards reception, stay for Scientific & Health Information: The Threat Posed by Political Interference, our program featuring Susan F. Wood PhD. Sponsored by the IFRT, GODORT, SRRT, and Feminist Task Force. The program is scheduled in the Renaissance Mayflower State Room from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM.

IFRT AND GLBTRT ANNOUNCE NEW LIBRARY TOOLKIT

by Martin Garnar

At the 2005 Annual Conference, IFRT and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table (GLBTRT) were tasked with creating a resource to help librarians defend materials related to sexual orientation and gender identity. In March 2007, the first version of this resource was launched on the ALA website. Using existing ALA policy statements and drawing upon resources from the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) and from the GLBTRT, a task force created a new toolkit titled "Out in the Library: Materials, Displays and Services for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community" (available at <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/iftoolkits/glbttoolkit/glbttoolkit.htm>). This resource includes strategies for handling a challenge, bibliographies on GLBT topics to aid in collection development, and a list of studies discussing homophobia and the impact of having access to GLBT information.

This is the first edition of this toolkit, so suggestions and comments are welcome. Please contact OIF (oif@ala.org) with your ideas. Thanks to task force members Lauren Christos (IFRT), Rosanne Cordell (IFRT), Lewis Day (GLBTRT), Martin Garnar (GLBTRT & IFRT), David Gray (GLBTRT), Anne Moore (GLBTRT), and Jami Taylor (GLBTRT), and to OIF staff members Nanette Perez and Don Wood for their work on this project.

IFLA/UNESCO INTERNET MANIFESTO GUIDELINES WORKSHOP IN COSTA RICA

By Loida Garcia-Febo

Last March, Barbara Jones and Loida Garcia-Febo, members of IFLA/ Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee (FAIFE), visited Costa Rica to present an Internet Manifesto Guidelines workshop within the umbrella of the Central American Seminar about the IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifestos for Public, School and Internet. A total of 96 people from 14 countries attended the event. The attendees included public, school and academic librarians, students, officials from library associations and specialized information centers, embassies, and others.

The guidelines are based on the principles stated in the [IFLA Internet Manifesto](#) that was prepared by IFLA/FAIFE and adopted unanimously by the Council of IFLA in August 2002. The Manifesto was created out of a perceived need for a policy document that brought the traditional library values of freedom of expression and freedom of access to information into the age of the Internet. The manifesto has been translated into 19 languages, and adopted by national library associations in 30 countries.

The guidelines offer guidance to library and information professionals, policymakers, and politicians in drawing up policies concerning public access to networked information in libraries. They provide a framework for implementation of policies guaranteeing freedom of access to information and freedom of expression on the Internet as well as access to information held by cultural institutions such as libraries, and will hopefully be of practical help when objectives, priorities and services in relation to national and local community needs be defined. For the Guidelines to be relevant to all members of the international library community, efforts have been made to ensure that the specific needs and challenges of the developing world are addressed.

Workshops like this one in Costa Rica are part of these efforts.

Overall, even though the main concern for librarians in Central America was the lack of infrastructure to access the Internet, they were receptive to the Guidelines and wanted to know more about how to effectively apply them. They expressed interest in including the Guidelines on LIS courses and promoting them among librarians from their countries. At the same time, librarians thought it is vital to encourage the habit of reading in their region before promoting the Internet. Moreover, they felt it is important for librarians to develop a unified voice and participate on development of information policies within their organizations and countries.

Central American librarians welcomed more advocacy trainings and workshops on ways to ensure equal access to information via the Internet. Based on this, FAIFE plans more Internet Manifesto Guidelines workshops for Latin America.

For more information about the IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifesto Guidelines, visit <http://www.ifla.org/III/announce/announcement-IM-guidelines.htm>

Loida Garcia-Febo manages Special Services for Queens Library. She is a member of IFLA/FAIFE, ALA/IRC and a Director-at-Large of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table.

FROM THE CHAIR

by Rosanne M. Cordell

We are all probably in the conference mode, checking our travel arrangements and making meeting and program plans. Be sure to put the IFRT events on your calendar! Our program features Susan F. Wood, former Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health at the Food and Drug Administration, who will discuss the value of sound science in health care policy decision-making, the growing politicization of science, and the importance of scientific freedom in safeguarding the public interest. The program will be held on Saturday, June 23, 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., in the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, State Room. Our awards reception is just before this program, at noon in the Renaissance Mayflower East Room. We will honor the Proquest/SIRS State and Regional Achievement Award recipients, "Connecticut John Does" George Christian, Barbara Bailey, Peter Chase, and Janet Nocek. A social hour and light buffet will precede the awards presentation. Please RSVP by June 15 via phone at 800-545-2433, ext. 4223, or via e-mail at nperez@ala.org.

Of course, we are hoping that all of you are beginning your conference by joining us in our Library Bill of Rights pre-conference! "Celebrating the Library Bill of Rights" is on Thursday, June 21, 1:00 to 4:00 PM in the Washington Convention Center, room 146 A. Melora Ranney has put together a great program with panelists discussing the importance of the LBOR in his or her library, and discussion sessions for all the attendees.

Don't get so caught up in attending programs that you forget our meetings! IFRT I is on Friday, June 22, 1:30 to 5:00 PM in the Washington Convention Center room 201. IFRT II is on Monday, June 25 8:00 to 10:00 AM, in the Renaissance Washington Hotel room 5.

On our agenda are updates on the Framing the Discussion on Privacy project led by Carolyn Caywood, the projects being worked on by Emerging Leaders Janice Tsai and Felicia Smith, a discussion of the two proposed Bylaws amendments (which would update our standing committee structure), reports by our Councilor and committee chairs, and news of current resolutions and initiatives. Our agenda is full, and there are often opportunities for members to volunteer for ad hoc projects.

Washington is an excellent setting for getting information on current legislative and judicial news on intellectual freedom and privacy. You may want to attend some of the other IF programs, which can be found at

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/oifprograms/ifprograms/intellectual.htm> .

I hope to see you all in Washington, D.C.!

"SORRY THE COLLECTION YOU NEED IS CLOSED"

by Diane Fulkerson

In today's society there is a need to balance access to information with an individual's right to privacy. In archives and special collections this issue is exemplified by closed collections. A closed collection has restrictions requiring the materials be made unavailable to researchers for a specified period of time or in some cases indefinitely. Intellectual Freedom when applied to archives should provide researchers with the opportunity to obtain primary source materials that will allow them to explore aspects of an issue, event, or person's life. A recent example is President Bush's Executive Order 13233 issued on November 1, 2001, which closed the papers of a President for 12 years after they left office, but also allowed the President the right to withhold the papers for public access indefinitely. Fortunately this Executive Order was overturned by Congress by a bill passed in March of 2007.

The American Library Association (ALA) and the Society of American Archivists (SAA) issued a joint statement in 1994 against restricted and closed collections. To read the full statement see link listed below:

(<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/jointstatement.htm>). Through this statement both organizations declared their support for making manuscript and archival materials available for research as soon as possible. The SAA and ALA support discouraging donors to place restrictions on the materials they donate and if restrictions are placed on a collection they should be for a specific period of time. In spite of this joint statement closed and restricted collections still exist in archives and libraries. They are a problem for the librarians and archivists who are responsible for the collections and prevent researchers from gaining access to necessary materials for their projects.

The impact of closed collections on writers of biography, history, literary criticism, political events, and similar research projects is significant. Closed collections halt the work of researchers. If a collection is closed the researcher is forced to find alternative sources of information. This means having to check and recheck the facts they have with other sources. The end result is the article or book may not be as comprehensive in its scope due to lack of access to a particular collection or collections. This issue is just as frustrating for archivists and librarians as I recently discovered when two researchers from major universities were denied access to a collection in our archives.

As librarians and archivists, we need to strike a balance between the needs of researchers and the restrictions placed on collections by donors for privacy or other reasons. What can archivists or librarians do to diminish this problem? New agreements should have few restrictions, if any. Agreements for existing collections with restrictions should be reviewed and the librarian or archivist should work with the donor to remove those restrictions. This issue will continue to exist, but if we work with donors we can remove existing restrictions and develop better donor agreements for new collections with limited restrictions. When creating an agreement, librarians and archivists need to know the public records statutes for the state where the records will be housed. The public records statutes may determine the length of time records can be closed and the types of records that can or cannot be withheld from public access. Balancing the right to access with the right to privacy can be difficult, but if done correctly donors and archives will provide researchers with the materials they need well into the future.

FRAMING A NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PRIVACY

By Carolyn Caywood

The next face to face meeting of the IFRT ad hoc task force on framing a National Conversation on Privacy will be from 8:00 to 10:00 on Friday, June 22. This is a conflict with IFC, and I'm hoping it will be next door so that IFC members can visit on breaks. Since Midwinter, we have been working electronically and the results can be viewed at <http://privacyframing.wetpaint.com/>.

Here are the stages in the process the task force is following: Identify people's concerns; Group/ cluster related concerns to bring the problem into focus; Recognize tensions among choices; Outline benefits & drawbacks, actions & tradeoffs; Test the frame. We are at the stage of gathering concerns from the American public. We still need to hear from more regions of the country, so we will use the meeting at ALA to show how to have a conversation with the public. (As a side benefit, these conversations are a great PR boost for the library, and they get people thinking!) As we practice, we'll gather the issues that matter to the librarians who come to the meeting. If you want to learn how to participate in this project, or want to make sure your privacy concerns are included, please join us.

I have been using the text that follows to persuade teachers to let me work with their classes.

In 2006, the American Library Association passed a [resolution](#) to lead a National Conversation on Privacy (attached) and I am leading the Intellectual Freedom Round Table's part of the project. We intend to create a guide, on the model of the [National Issues Forum](#), that will be available nationally to hold deliberations on public policy in the area of privacy.

The first step is framing the issue by finding out what is on people's minds. To do that, I will be asking questions like these:

What is important to you personally about privacy?

What information about yourself are you comfortable in giving out?

What influences in our society are changing how we think about privacy?

What concerns do you have about privacy?

What types of information could hurt a person if made public?

What information about others do you feel you need to know?

What decisions have you made about your privacy? Do you take any actions to protect your privacy?

Is privacy an important topic for the public to discuss?

Using a wide diversity of concerns will help us to create a deliberation guide that is meaningful and relevant to the general public, so we will collect every opinion expressed. Then we will look for commonalities in order to cluster the concerns into 3 to 5 broad choices that are meaningful to

the average person. While we are in the concern-gathering stage, we will respect all opinions and avoid persuading or challenging other opinions or pushing any conclusions. Responses are aggregated at <http://privacyframing.wetpaint.com/page/Field+Research>

No one will be identified with their responses. I will make some general demographic notes to ensure that we are hearing from a wide diversity of people. No claims of statistical validity will come from this – we are not interested in which opinions are widely held and which are not, but rather in capturing the greatest possible diversity of views. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

2005-2006 ALA CD#19.4

2006 ALA Annual Conference

Resolution on National Discussion on Privacy

WHEREAS, The American Library Association is committed to protecting library users' privacy and confidentiality (ALA Policy Manual, 40.2, ALA Code of Ethics, Article III) and connecting people with ideas (ALA Policy Manual, 53.8, Libraries: An American Value); and

WHEREAS, Government agencies and corporate entities are observing, monitoring, collecting, recording, and mining private and confidential information about individuals and organizations without consent; and

WHEREAS, There is a lack of public awareness of the necessity of privacy to civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, "Many wrongly characterize the debate as 'security versus privacy.' The real choice is liberty versus control. Tyranny, whether it arises under threat of foreign physical attack or under constant domestic authoritative scrutiny, is still tyranny. Liberty requires security without intrusion, security plus privacy. Widespread police surveillance is the very definition of a police state. And that's why we should champion privacy even when we have nothing to hide"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Intellectual Freedom Committee, Intellectual Freedom Round Table, and ALA Fostering Civic Engagement Member Interest Group collaborate with other ALA units toward a national conversation about privacy as an American value.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

New Orleans, Louisiana



*Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director*

MERRITT FUND CONVENES "BUILDING BRIDGES" CONVERSATIONS

By Jim Kuhn

There are several ALA-affiliated organizations and divisions with resources for library workers facing employment challenges. But people don't always know those resources are there. Therefore at the past two Midwinter meetings, trustees of the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund (<http://www.merrittfund.org>) convened the second of an ongoing series of fruitful conversations about discrimination and intellectual freedom in libraries.

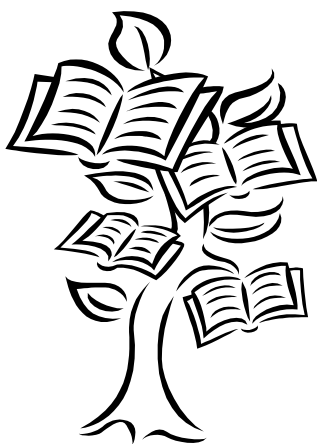
At ALA entities have joined current and former Merritt trustees to speak about how both could build bridges with other areas of ALA and better get the word out about the Fund and other resources to those in need.

The Merritt Fund was established in 1970 as a special trust in memory of Dr. LeRoy C. Merritt and is governed by a board of three trustees who are elected by donors of the Fund. It is devoted to the support, maintenance, medical care, and welfare of librarians and library workers who, in the Trustees' opinion, are: denied employment rights or discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, age, disability, or place of national origin; or denied employment rights because of defense of intellectual freedom, that is, threatened with loss of employment or discharged because of their stand for the cause of intellectual freedom.

- ◆ The AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations)–ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups (<http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/divisioncommittees/divisioncommittees.htm>),
- ◆ The ALA Allied Professional Association (<http://ala-apa.org/>),
- ◆ The ALA Human Resources, Development & Recruitment (HRDR) Office (<http://www.ala.org/hrdr>),
- ◆ The ALA Office for Diversity, and Committee for Diversity (<http://www.ala.org/diversity>),
- ◆ The Intellectual Freedom Round Table (<http://www.ala.org/ifrt>),
- ◆ The Library Support Staff Interests Round Table (<http://www.ala.org/lssirt>),
- ◆ The Social Responsibilities Round Table (<http://libr.org/srrt/>)

One outcome of these discussions of interest to IFRT members is the proposed establishment of a standing IFRT "LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund Promotion Committee." IFRT members will be asked to vote on this issue in 2008. The IFRT bylaws subcommittee is considering the following draft language for inclusion on the 2008 ballot: "The LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund Promotion Committee shall consist of at least three members, including the chair. The committee shall consider ways to help promote general knowledge of the existence of the fund in order to help with outreach to potential grant recipients as well as to help encourage ongoing support from current and potential donors."

IFRT members interested in seeing minutes from the 2006 and 2007 "building bridges" conversations, or in learning more about the Merritt Fund or other anti-discrimination resources, can contact Jonathan Kelley, Merritt Fund Administrative Assistant jkelly@ala.org or (800) 545-2433 x4226, or Jim Kuhn jkuhn@folger.edu



If you would like to contribute to the IFRT Report, please send your piece to:

lauren.christos@fiu.edu

Thought essays, opinions, book reviews, articles, and reports are all invited.

Thank you!

Publications Committee

- ♣ Diane M. Fulkerson
- ♣ Cindy A. Lombardo
- ♣ Camille McCutcheon
- ♣ Lauren Christos, Chair

Founded in 1973, the Intellectual Freedom Round Table is the grass roots intellectual freedom organization within the American Library Association.

Mission Statement

The Intellectual Freedom Round Table provides a forum for the discussion of activities, programs and problems in intellectual freedom of libraries and librarians; serves as a channel of communications on intellectual freedom matters; promotes a greater opportunity for involvement among the members of the ALA in defense of intellectual freedom; promotes a greater feeling of responsibility in the implementation of ALA policies on intellectual freedom.

The IFRT

Provides broad opportunities for ALA members to become involved in the support of freedom of access and freedom of expression in libraries

Supports librarians involved in censorship controversies

Monitors intellectual freedom developments affecting library and information services

Provides a forum where ALA members involved in intellectual freedom activities on the state and local level can discuss programs, activities and problems