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I F R T REPORT

no. 26

IFRT Report is the newsletter of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table of the American Library Association. Editor: B.B. Rile, 2838 178th Place, Apt. 22, Hammond, IN 46323. Co-editor: J.C. Swan, Director, Crossett Library, Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont 05201.

Some of you may have seen the May 2 issue of Library Hotline in which Dorothy Broderick's letter was quoted in part. IFRT Report presents her comments and the text of the letter in full.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

All censors are well-meaning people. They want to save other people from being corrupted by something or other. It rarely dawns on them that people aren't that easily corrupted; that evidence proves that people who hate homosexuals are themselves secretly gay in many cases; that people like Jimmy Swaggart who rant against the evils of pornography are themselves secret addicts of the genre. We know about these problems: homosexuality, pornography, abortion are subjects that plague librarians constantly. We get used to dealing with the people who complain about the library having books or other materials which appear to promote these behaviors.

What we aren't used to is discovering that our professional colleagues are the censors. None of the literature deals with finding yourself called names because you want to protect the public's right to know. But that is the current situation within the American Library Association and either the intellectual freedom community rallies itself to put our internal censors out of business or we might just as well throw in the towel.

You might have missed Nat Hentoff's columns in THE VILLAGE VOICE concerning the fight we had in San Francisco over the Houston ordinance forbidding the library to buy books from publishers who would not swear they did not sell books to South Africa. Not only did the columns provoke a response from Herb Biblo, but when Hentoff escalated his low opinion of the anti-intellectual freedom crew, they cried foul and fed LIBRARY HOTLINE a "hot" tip decrying the fact that Broderick/Krug took the fight outside of ALA circles. That was it as far as I was concerned and I wrote the following letter to the editor of HOTLINE:

29 March 1988
To the Editor:

I wish to make a couple of observations/comments on your item of March 21 on the issue of ALA's conflict over the so-called South African issue.

First, about the anger and rumblings about taking the issue outside ALA: I can state unequivocally that I did absolutely nothing to bring this issue to the attention of Nat Hentoff or anyone else outside the library community. The debate occurred in an open forum, was widely reported in the library press (if not always accurately), and that very fine periodical called PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY has devoted considerable space to the issue.

Nat Hentoff is tuned in to First Amendment issues, indeed has written a superior book on the subject called THE FIRST FREEDOM, and it seems to me entirely conceivable that he "found" the issue all on his own. But what if he didn't? Is Josey claiming that the American people have no right to know that the library profession's most important association is willing to restrict their rights to information to further the personal political beliefs of some of its members? It is their money that pays the salaries and purchases materials: are they not to know the biases that influence purchasing decisions?

I have been so restrained on this issue that I did not even respond to Herb Biblo's letter to the VILLAGE VOICE in which he claimed we knew we were wrong because no resolution was presented at Midwinter in San Antonio. That statement, coming from a person who has served not only a couple of terms on Council, but was Treasurer of the Association for four full years, is absolutely amazing. One might have hoped that in all that experience, Biblo would know there is no membership meeting at Midwinter and thus no resolutions are possible.

Having said all that, the question remains why would Hentoff care? The attacks on free access to information are so legion these days from both the courts and the administration, why care about a bunch of silly librarians having what one side, at least, prefers to believe is a family argument? Well, for the same reason some of us inside ALA care: you refer to the issue as "books for South Africa." That was not then, and is not now, the issue for me, nor was it the issue presented in the resolution. The issue is/was the rights of American citizens to have access to a wide range of materials, something the American Library Association is SUPPOSED to stand for! It was not about South Africans being able to read American books; it was about penalizing American citizens by refusing them access to materials because we did not like the political stance of the publishers of those materials. I lived through that battle with Joe McCarthy when it was "leftist, Jew Communists" who were lurking on the shelves of libraries and hiding within the publishing industry. A little later in life, I lived through it when the anti-Civil Rights people said that only Communists would be supporting sit-ins, marches, and equal rights. "Outside of ALA," I am currently living with it in terms of the inability to buy a copy of PLAYBOY at my local 7-11, and seeing all non-Bork supporters being called "leftist, special-interest, Communist-loving."

Whatever steps ALA members wish to take to further their political position on any issue is okay with me as long as they take it as individuals and not ask for a litmus loyalty oath from librarians as professionals. There can be no justification for denying library patrons the right to materials because the librarian doesn't like the content or the political stance of the author or publisher.

There is no cause, however worthy, for which I would ask American citizens to willingly surrender their First Amendment rights. Only by remaining free ourselves can we help others to gain their freedom.

There is, of course, a very simple mechanism for putting an end to the guerrilla warfare within ALA: I will happily cosponsor with Josey, Biblo, and any others, a membership resolution calling for a mail vote of the entire ALA membership to rescind the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and THE FREEDOM TO READ statement, and to direct Council to replace the Intellectual Freedom Committee with a Committee on Right Thinking. Let the entire membership speak on the issue, not just the one or two percent who forego a night on the town to attend membership meetings. That would be the democratic way to resolve the problem.

As things now stand, we are, as an Association, resting on a very hypocritical foundation. We tell patrons they are censors if they object to what we choose to put on the shelves, but we are defenders of the truth, the light, and the beauty when we say we know what is correct.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Broderick
Chair, Intellectual Freedom Round Table

MY QUESTION TO YOU

Will you take a few minutes of your time and write to me to tell me how you feel about the interjection of personal political opinions into ALA and, by inference, into the selection of materials for libraries? How would you like being part of an Association that has a Committee on Right Thinking? How would you feel to be a part of an Association that puts its members' preferences over those of the people we are supposed to serve? You can find me at: 1226 Cresthaven Drive, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20903.

Dorothy M. Broderick.

MORE THAN RESOLUTIONS: THINGS TO DO IN NEW ORLEANS

Saturday, July 9 is the Program of the IFRT/Intellectual Freedom Committee/ Division IFC's Program 2-4 P.M. "How to Survive the 'Kill the Messenger' Syndrome"

Monday, July 11. IFRT Membership meeting and Roll Call of the States.

Sunday, July 10, 8-10 p.m. Two views of Intellectual Freedom.

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IFRT AWARDS

State Program Award, given annually and sponsored by Social Issues Resource Series, Inc. (SIRS). This year's winners are the New York Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee and the NYLA Intellectual Freedom Round Table. A plaque and a \$1000 check will be presented to these organizations in recognition of their outstanding publications, including their Intellectual Freedom Manual, their newsletter, Pressure Point, and their public information pamphlet.

Immroth Award, given annually and sponsored by IFRT, will go this year to Elliot and Eleanor Goldstein of SIRS. The award recognizes notable contributions to the cause of intellectual freedom. In addition to sponsoring awards like the State Program award, the Goldsteins have a long history of support for intellectual freedom and will have many friends cheering them on when they pick up their citation and \$500 award at the IFRT membership meeting.

BB Rile

Eli M. Oboler Memorial Award: The recipient of the 1988 Oboler award is Choosing Equality: The Case for Democratic Schooling, by Ann Bastian, Norm Fruchter, Marilyn Gittell, Colin Greer, and Kenneth Haskins. Published in 1986 by Temple University, the book is the result of a two-year study by the New World Foundation probing the elitist strain in the politically powerful "excellence movement" in American education. Its authors contend that equal access to education is a basic right, and that recent conservative-backed reforms ignore the needs of minorities and the poor. The book also presents an ambitious agenda for change based on the goal of true equality.

This is the second presentation of this biennial award (the first went to Leonard Levy's Emergence of a Free Press), which is sponsored by HBW Associates, and which was created by the IFRT in honor of one of the profession's most eloquent and committed champions of intellectual freedom. The award, \$500 and a certificate of recognition, will be presented by committee chair Joe Harzbecker at the membership meeting. Designed to reward the best published writing in the area of intellectual freedom (beyond as

well as in the library press) within a two-year period, the Oboler Award will be given again in 1990 to an article, editorial, series of pieces, a book or other publication that appears between January of 1988 and the end of 1989. If you spot a good candidate, please send it to the committee!

JC Swan

(Note: LCCN of the Choosing equality book is 86-5879, ISBN can be searched through OCLC 0877224382).

Information on the criteria for these awards and the deadlines for future nominations will be available at the membership meeting and may also be requested from Patrice McDermott at ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

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AND SPEAKING OF AWARDS...

GENE LANIER WINS ROBERT B. DOWNS INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AWARD. IFRT Secretary, Professor of Library and Information Studies at East Carolina, and tireless champion of our cause in his writing, his speaking (over 150 presentations in 15 states in recent years), and his personal involvement in hundreds of library and legislative censorship struggles, Gene Lanier received the 1987 Downs Award. This is sponsored by the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science and Greenwood Press; it was established in 1968 to honor Downs, who is now 84, and who served as dean of the libraries and the library school at U. of I. for 28 years, writing extensively in the cause of intellectual freedom, and appearing as an influential activist while ALA President and as an international library consultant.

Gene Lanier has been IFC Chair for the North Carolina Library Association since 1980, holds many other regional and national positions, and was recently elected Chair of the Board of Advisors of the North Carolina Office of People for the American Way. He also edited the fall issue of North Carolina Libraries, which is devoted to censorship issues addressed by a number of leading figures in the field, including Judy Krug.

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TWO VIEWS OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: This is the title of a debate scheduled to take place at ALA in New Orleans (see top of p. 5 for time). It is sponsored by the Social Responsibilities Round Table and the Intellectual Freedom Round Table and, indeed, promises to be one more expression of the long-running tension between the different perspectives of intellectual freedom stressed by these two groups, as well as many others (often allies) within and beyond the library community. On the one hand (presumably

ours, the civil libertarian position emphasizes that "as librarians our cause is, in a very practical sense, not truth but freedom ... our truth IS freedom, freedom of access, freedom for our patrons to ... sort their own truths out of our carefully collected ... truths, half-truths, untruths, and non-truths." (John Swan, in Library Journal). On the other hand, the social responsibilities position stresses that the marketplace of ideas is often rigged in favor of dangerous untruths, and "the current libertarian theory ... detaches itself from reality, logical and political: we have no defense against manipulators, while we have no room for sensitivity toward the community which surrounds us ..." (Noel Peattie, responding in SIPAPU). This "liberal paradox" is much more than a theoretical fine point as the crisis over our ALA South African Policy reveals (see Dorothy Broderick's letter). Be there to hear Swan and Peattie explore the issues--and bring your own issues (the loser will take the winner to dinner!).

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NOT ONE FOR OUR SIDE: Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier

The U.S. Supreme Court handed down a landmark 5-3 decision in January affirming the power of school officials to censor student expression in a school setting:

...we hold that educators do not offend the First Amendment by exercising editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns.

In 1983, Hazelwood (MO) East High School Principal Robert Reynolds deleted two pages from the high school newspaper, which was published as part of the journalism curriculum, because he objected to two articles, one based on interviews with students who had become pregnant, the other a discussion of divorce. The student staff members protested, then challenged his action as a violation of their First Amendment rights in court. Although they lost in the district court, the Eighth Circuit Appeals Court reversed that decision on the grounds that the paper was not only a course requirement, but also "a conduit for student viewpoint."

In reversing this decision, the Supreme Court confronted and significantly narrowed the interpretation of what Nat Hentoff has called "the Magna Carta of student rights," the historic 1969 TINKER armband decision, in which Abe Fortas declared that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of expression at the schoolhouse gate." Although Byron White's Hazelwood opinion agrees with Tinker in that students "cannot be punished merely for expressing their personal views on the school premises," it ultimately comes down on the side of the

the recent (also pro-authority) Fraser decision, which emphasized that a school need not tolerate student speech inconsistent with its "basic educational mission." The ruling logic of the majority was to make a distinction between tolerating student speech, called for by Tinker, and "affirmatively to promote particular student speech," which, they believe, is effectively the case with all supervised activities which are in some way "part of the school curriculum," whether or not they take place in the classroom. Thus, the student newspaper may be a public forum, but it is also the result of school and curricular sponsorship, and the school "in its capacity as publisher" may "refuse to disseminate student speech on potentially sensitive topics" ranging from "the existence of Santa Claus in an elementary school setting to the particulars of teenage sexual activity in a high school setting."

In a strong dissent, Justice Brennan (joined by Marshall and Blackmun) criticized the majority for deviating from the balance between freedom and order struck by Tinker and effectively approving "brutal censorship" and "thought control in the high school." The effects of this decision are already being felt. A District Court in Florida has ruled that a public school board may ban a textbook containing Chaucer's Miller's Tale and Aristophanes' Lysistrata, irrespective of the works' literary merit, because of their coverage of the above-mentioned "potentially sensitive topics."

There are many censorship incidents currently reported in the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom (to which we should all subscribe for a mere \$25 to the OIF) which may well be affected by Hazelwood. Among the titles recently banned in public schools are The Great Gilly Hopkins (a Newbery winner), The Chocolate War, Forever, also a student-produced supplement to a community newspaper, and the publication of a student survey on drug and alcohol use. However, according to its latest newsletter, the Freedom to Read Foundation (which we should all join, also a mere \$25 for regular members) holds out a modest hope: "In Hazelwood, the Court seemed especially concerned with the possibility that the school might be understood to be endorsing the ideas in the school paper. No reasonable person, however, could similarly think that the school endorses all of the ideas contained ... in a school library. So we have grounds for cautious hope for the integrity of school library collections."

JC Swan

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THE RIGHTS OF AIDS VICTIMS

In January the ALA Council adopted a "Resolution on Access to the Use of Libraries and Information by Individuals with Physical or Mental Impairment" which states that the ALA "deplores discrimination against and denial or abridgment of library and information access to persons of all ages who have acquired immune

deficiency syndrome (AIDS), AIDS-related complex (ARC) or who test positive for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This important policy statement was originally inspired by a call to the OIF by Judy Greeson, Regional Library Director of the Clinch-Powell Library in Clinton, Tennessee, who was responding to potential problems of public library access for an AIDS-infected child who had already faced much opposition attending a local school (he is now being taught alone in a classroom by a volunteer). Judy Greeson has created a library policy statement that begins, "A public library is a facility where access is available to anyone who is entering the building/s or grounds with valid reasons to be there. Library personnel are employed to serve individuals, assisting them in obtaining information and materials within the public library. It is not reasonable or lawful that library staff "screen" patrons who may come into the building, making judgments of their conditions of physical or mental health. To do this would be a practice of discrimination."

JC Swan

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Want some IF postcards? AAUW is offering a set of six postcards with slogans like "The right to learn--it's elementary," "Promote individual liberties" and "Keep the shelves full in the marketplace of ideas--fight censorship." The set is available for \$2.50 from American Association of University Women, Sales Office, 2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20037

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The question which made the vines hum--whether or not the end of the Ronald Raisin era would signal a return to the Grape Society.....



INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

1988 ANNUAL CONFERENCE - NEW ORLEANS

Thursday, July 7

Freedom to Read Foundation	9:00 am-12:30 pm	INT-Poydras Room
Board of Trustees	2:00 pm-5:30 pm	INT-Poydras Room

Friday, July 8

Intellectual Freedom Committee	8:00 am-11:00 am	HIL-Elmwood Room
IFRT/IFC/Div. IFCs Joint Program Planning Committee	11:30 am-12:30 pm	HIL Rosedown Room
IFRT Executive Committee	2:00 pm-5:30 pm	MER-Maurepas Room
YASD Intellectual Freedom Committee	2:00 pm-5:30 pm	INT-Acadia Room
ALTA Intellectual Freedom Committee	4:30 pm-5:30 pm	SHER-Southdown Room
Committee on Professional Ethics	8:00 pm-10:00 pm	HIL-Durham Room

Saturday, July 9

AASL Intellectual Freedom Committee	8:00 am-9:00 am	HICP-Bourbon Room
Intellectual Freedom Committee	8:00 am-12:30 pm	HIL-Eglinton/Winton
IFRT/IFC/Div. IFCs Joint Program: -- Helen Thomas	"How to Survive the 'Kill the Messenger' Syndrome" 2:00 pm-4:00 pm	FAIR-International Blrm

Sunday, July 10

IFC/Div. IFCs/IFRT Joint Meeting	8:00 am-11:00 am	HICP-Mississippi A
YASD Intellectual Freedom Committee	2:00 pm-4:00 pm	HICP-Board Room
AASL Intellectual Freedom Committee	2:00 pm-5:30 pm	HY-Versailles Room
Ethics Program: The Not-Quite-Saturday-Night-Live Players Present Master Peace Theatre: The Ethics of Hiring or Bloodless Battlefields Revisited"	2:00 pm-4:00 pm	NOCC, 10, 12

Monday, July 11

ALSC Intellectual Freedom Committee	8:30 am-11:00 am	MAR-Beauregard Room
YASD/IFC Program: "Building Bridges Over Troubled Waters"	9:00 am-11:00 am	SHER-Birm A & B

Committee on Professional Ethics	9:00 am-12:30 pm	NOCC #9
IFRT Membership Meeting and Awards	9:30 am-11:00 am	WEST-Ballroom II
IFC/AAP-FtRC Joint Program: "Murder by the Book" - Margaret Truman	2:00 pm-4:00 p.m.	HIL-Versailles Room
IFC/AAP-FtRC Joint Meeting	4:30 pm-5:30 pm	FAIR-Rex Room
SIRS Reception/"Intellectual Freedom Party"	7:00 pm	HIL-Ballrooms C&D

Tuesday, July 12

ALSC Intellectual Freedom Committee	8:30 am-11:00 am	MAR-Iberville Room
PLA Intellectual Freedom Committee	9:00 am-11:00 am	HIL-Windsor Room
IFRT Executive Committee	9:30 am-11:00 am	MAR-Galerie 4
Intellectual Freedom Committee	2:00 pm-5:30 pm	HIL-Rosedown Room

Key:

- FAIR** - The Fairmont Hotel
- HICP** - Holiday Inn Crown Plaza
- HY** - Hyatt Regency
- INT** - Hotel Inter-Continental New Orleans
- MER** - LeMeridien Hoel
- MAR** - The Marriott Hotel
- NOCC** - The New Orleans Convention Center
- SHER** - Sheraton New Orleans Hotel
- WEST** - The Westin Canal Place Hotel
- HIL** - The New Orleans Hilton and Towers Hotel