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EXHIBIT 19

historical file

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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LIBRARY SERVICES FOR YOUTH

WHEREAS, Services to youth are recognized as a basic component of professional librarianship; and

WHEREAS, Library censorship problems consistently occur in connection with sex-related information for youth; and

WHEREAS, It has been documented that the onset of puberty is occurring approximately four months earlier each decade; and

WHEREAS, This early maturation has led to earlier sexual exploration and pressure among children and adolescents, with especially severe consequences for girls; and

WHEREAS, adolescent pregnancy has reached epidemic proportions so as to be recognized as a target area of concern by the U. S. Public Health Service; and

WHEREAS, social responsibility and support of intellectual freedom are acknowledged to be priorities of the ALA;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That ALA hereby affirms the right of youth to comprehensive, sex-related education, materials, programs, referral and health services of the highest quality; and

FURTHER, That ALA hereby affirms the active role of librarians in providing sex-related education, materials, programs and referral services; and

FURTHER, That ALA urges librarians and library educators to reexamine existing policies and practices, and to assume a leadership role in seeing that information is available for children and adolescents, their parents, and youth-serving professionals at the state and local level, to assure that comprehensive sex-related education materials, programs, referral and health services for youth are available and publicized; and

FURTHER, That ALA offer this Resolution to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America Inc. for inclusion in their POSITIVE POLICY HANDBOOK of organization statements supporting sexual health and education services for youth.

ADOPTED by the
Council of the American Library Association
January 26, 1978



AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Item: INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM Item Number: 103.4.8
Approved by: ALA Council Page: 1 of 2
Issue Date: June, 1972 Supersedes: _____

FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS

An interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Some library procedures and practices effectively deny minors access to certain services and materials available to adults. Such procedures and practices are not in accord with the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and are opposed by the American Library Association.

Restrictions take a variety of forms, including, among others, restricted reading rooms for adult use only, library cards limiting circulation of some materials to adults only, closed collections for adult use only, and inter-library loan service for adult use only.

All limitations in minors' access to library materials and services violate Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which states that, "The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age...". Limiting access to some services and materials to only adults abridges the use of libraries for minors. "Use of the library" includes use of, and access to, all library materials and services.

Restrictions are often initiated under the assumption that certain materials are "harmful" to minors, or in an effort to avoid controversy with parents who might think so. The librarian who would restrict the access of minors to materials and services because of actual or suspected parental objection should bear in mind that he is not IN LOCO PARENTIS in his position as librarian. Individual intellectual levels and family backgrounds are significant factors not accommodated by a uniform policy based upon age.

In today's world, children are exposed to adult life much earlier than in the past. They read materials and view a variety of media on the adult level at home and elsewhere. Current emphasis upon early childhood education has also increased opportunities for young people to learn and to have access to materials, and has decreased the validity of using chronological age as an index to the use of libraries. The period of time during which children are interested in reading materials specifically designed for them grows steadily shorter, and librarians must recognize and adjust to this change if they wish to maintain the patronage of young people.

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The American Library Association holds that it is the parent--and only the parent--who may restrict his children--and only HIS children--from access to library materials and services. The parent who would rather his child did not have access to certain materials should so advise the child.

The word "age" was incorporated into Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS as a direct result of a pre-conference entitled "Intellectual Freedom and the Teenager," held in San Francisco in June, 1967. One recommendation of the preconference participants was, "That free access to all books in a library collection be granted to young people." The preconference generally concluded that young people are entitled to the same access to libraries and to the materials in libraries as are adults and that materials selection should not be diluted on that account.

This does not mean, for instance, that issuing different types of borrowers' cards to minors and adults is, PER SE, contrary to the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. If such practices are used for purposes of gathering statistics, the various kinds of cards carry no implicit or explicit limitations on access to materials and services. Neither does it mean that maintaining separate children's collections is a violation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, provided that no patron is restricted to the use of only certain collections.

The Association's position does not preclude isolating certain materials for legitimate protection of irreplaceable or very costly works from careless use. Such "restricted-use" areas as rare book rooms are appropriate if the materials so classified are genuinely rare, and not merely controversial.

Unrestrictive selection policies, developed with care for principles of intellectual freedom and the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, should not be vitiated by administrative practices which restrict minors to the use of only part of a library's collections and services.