



# on Intellectual freedom

Edited by LEROY CHARLES MERRITT, Dean, University of Oregon School of Librarianship

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## PROGRAM OF ACTION

in support  
of the  
Library Bill  
of Rights  
(approved by  
the ALA Council,  
June 27, 1969)

- I. The Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) and the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) will announce that they are ready, willing, and able to take action on complaints of violations of the Library Bill of Rights whether from ALA members directly, through the state Intellectual Freedom Committees, or indeed, from anyone else. After receipt of a written and signed complaint, the Office for Intellectual Freedom will supply a standard form, which should be completed, signed, and returned to the OIF by the complainant.
- II. After receiving the details of the complaint, in a proper form, it will be the responsibility of the IFC to determine whether it has jurisdiction and responsibility in terms of whether the problem is really one of intellectual freedom, and second, in terms of whether or not the IFC has the capacity to act.
- III. The next step will be a determination by the IFC of the most appropriate course of action. Should the matter be referred to the ALA Library Administration Division, as a tenure matter, or to the American Civil Liberties Union, as one involving a very important civil rights issue, or, if the case involves or is likely to involve a lawsuit, should the IFC become involved only after a possibly adverse decision has been rendered and then file an *amicus curiae* brief in the likely appeal? In determining the most appropriate course of action, consideration should be given to the possibility of direct involvement of the local or state Intellectual Freedom Committee, as this seems either necessary or desirable.
- IV. If there is to be involvement of the IFC, the next step is an impartial and objective investigation along the lines of the "Policy and Procedure Regarding Tenure Investigations," which was established for the Library Administration Division in 1949. (A copy of this "Policy and Procedure" statement is attached.)
- V. After the investigation, the IFC will recommend appropriate action to be taken, based on the facts gathered in the investigation. The IFC will then report its recommendation to the Executive Board of the American Library Association, which will implement future action.  
Among possible recommendations for action could be the following:
  1. Publish a full or an abridged report of the facts in the case in the *ALA Bulletin*.
  2. Distribute summary statements of the results of the investigation to the national library and educational press, to national newspa-

papers, and to other appropriate media, with a statement that copies of the full report are available from the OIF.

3. Suspend or exclude from ALA membership individuals and/or institutions involved.
4. Use ALA's help, as appropriate, to assist individuals who have been dismissed or forced to resign under duress as the result of a censorship incident, to find suitable employment.
5. Appoint individuals who are victims of Library Bill of Rights incidents for temporary work as consultants to the OIF, working in or out of Chicago.
6. List in an official ALA publication those institutions adjudged in violation of the Library Bill of Rights (similar to the American Association of University Professors' list of "Censured Administrations").

The above was amended on the floor of Council by Ervin J. Gaines, Councilor at large, to include the following:

While the Intellectual Freedom Committee continues to investigate the feasibility of establishing a support fund, the Committee intends to take three steps:

1. Solicit gifts of money from members and from other sources.
2. Give wide publicity to its solicitation.
3. Use all such gifts at the discretion of the Director of the Office for Intellectual Freedom, with the counsel and advice of the ALA Executive Director and the ALA Legal Counsel, to achieve the goals of the action program.

### Libraries

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October 21, 1969

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## Betting on the Kids

In this week's ruling on who should decide what material is posted on school bulletin boards and distributed in school buildings, the School Board has taken an unexpected tack.

As anticipated, the board—influenced by recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions—scrapped the old rule, under which the superintendent of schools decided on the suitability of such material.

Now, at the high school level, the kids will make the decision themselves. At each high school, a panel of at least three students will rule on the material.

In the elementary and junior high schools, principals will review bulletin board items and literature slated for distribution.

Both the high school student panels and the principals will be bound by certain guidelines, which prohibit material of a pornographic, libelous, or inflammatory nature.

The question will be raised—and, indeed, was raised by the board members who voted against the proposal—as to whether high school youngsters are mature enough to interpret these guidelines and make the decision as to what publications are allowed to circulate in their buildings.

The answer to that question will not be determined until the new rule is in effect for awhile. But, at this point, we're hoping the kids will come through.—*Baltimore News American*, 12 July.

## Dillingham Gets 6 Months

J. Brinton Dillingham was sentenced to six months in jail yesterday for distributing a copy of the underground *Washington Free Press* containing a cartoon of a naked judge.

Judge William J. O'Donnell sentenced the 25-year-old Bethesda activist following a decision last month by a Montgomery County Circuit Court jury affirming an earlier People's Court verdict that the cartoon, showing a judge masturbating, was obscene. Dillingham had been arrested March 21.

In passing sentence, Judge O'Donnell said, "I know that you are not a dangerous person in the county and I'm not sentencing you with the idea that I'll rehabilitate you, change your thinking or change your way of life.

"I am considering the deterrent effect on others in the community who might have the same ideas in mind. No obscene matter is worth anything if it is undistributed."—*Washington Post*, 3 July.

## Freedom to Read Foundation

Legal counsel for the American Library Association has been directed to proceed with steps necessary and appropriate to establish a support fund, it has been announced by David H. Clift, Executive Director. The purpose of the fund will be to aid persons who resign, under duress, or are fired from their positions because they stood up for principles of intellectual freedom.

Preliminary action took place at the 1968 ALA Annual Conference in Kansas City, when the ALA Council directed the Intellectual Freedom Committee to conduct a study of the feasibility and legality of establishing a support fund, and also to determine what means could be undertaken to preserve the spirit of the Library Bill of Rights.

During the year of study, the Committee concentrated on the latter part of Council's resolution, believing that this aspect formed the foundation on which to build other and more extensive support. The PROGRAM OF ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which was announced recently, had been proposed by the Intellectual Freedom Committee and approved by Council at the 1969 Annual Conference in Atlantic City. In initiating the procedures outlined in the program, it became apparent that a support fund is a necessary adjunct. After a careful review of the concept and the implications of the program, Mr. Clift directed counsel to proceed.

It is intended to have completed and to place before the ALA Executive Board at its 1969 fall meeting a proposal for a Freedom to Read Foundation, which will have the function of aiding persons embroiled in the campaign to promote intellectual freedom.—*ALA News*, 12 August.

## Fla. Obs. Law Const.

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida Supreme Court, reversing a Duval Circuit Court decision, says the state's obscene literature law is constitutional.

The high court's ruling Wednesday overturns a decision by Duval Circuit Judge Frank H. Elmore, who held the law unconstitutional and refused to issue injunctions against three Jacksonville news stands. The cases were remanded back to the Duval court.

Involved is a petition by the state attorney for injunctions prohibiting the three news stands from handling certain named publications.

The Supreme Court's decision was based on an opinion it issued May 7 in a similar case from Pinellas County where the judge had ruled the obscenity law failed to prescribe a sufficiently ascertainable standard of guilt. This was the ground cited by Elmore for dismissal.—*Jacksonville, Times-Union*, 3 July.

## Recognition of the Problem

Man has always been afraid of strange ideas. The killing of twins, the exposure of the deformed and the burning of witches are examples of man's rejection of ideas which have offended him. Even today the strange or unusual idea comes under attack. The bearded youths, the unknown in the village, the black in the "white neighborhood," the man with the sinister accent, the communist, are all examples of people who are somehow strange and must therefore be watched.

All of us are guilty of some of the prejudgments occasioned by what is strange to us. The politician knows this and uses it in his campaign to bring us into his corner when he calls his opponent: spendthrift — Red — bossist, or aligned with criminal elements.

Intellectual Freedom is concerned with the revulsion of some against ideas which have been reproduced in media. As such it has no real kinship with man's rejection of ideas as outlined above — and yet it does. For the problem of intellectual freedom is created by the rejection of what is strange, unacceptable or repulsive to some. It becomes a further problem when that "some" decides that everyone should be denied access to such ideas in print, film or other media and therefore takes steps to remove such ideas from circulation.

For Intellectual Freedom Committees this poses a real problem. For it demands the commission of some overt act of denial of ideas in media to all before one can appropriately take action. At that point, it is already too late. And all that can happen is that the committee seek to punish the miscreant for his foolhardiness. Recriminations result but little has been done for the cause of creating a climate in which the common idea doesn't drive out the strange.

A good example in point is that of the Farmingdale (L.I.) N.Y. Public Library. There, a Trustee, offended by a periodical removed it so that others could not have access to it. This case was and is still being promoted. The members of the Department of History went on record as "deploring and condemning the willful vandalism . . . and offering the services of the Department to devote time to helping restore the card catalog . . ." A student designed a poster condemning the action, and the University Foundation is offering a reward of \$1,190 for information leading to the identity of the vandal or vandals.

The seriousness with which this incident is viewed is indicative of the importance of the library in the maintenance of intellectual freedom in the university community. Attacks on the libraries and the card catalogs of academic institutions are a threat to the intellectual freedom of the entire university community.

— *Mrs. Barbara Slanker and  
Robert Oram  
Illinois Library Assn. IFC*

# Youth and the Freedom of Inquiry

“... we must explore, more honestly and intensively than most of us ever do, which of the values and goals that we hold dear are appropriate for living in tomorrow's world. Only if we have the candor and courage to do this can we hope to help youth into their world or to live meaningfully in ours.”

— *The Next Generation* by Donald Michael

If we accept the compulsion to inquire as an inherent quality in man's personality, then we must provide an atmosphere of FREEDOM OF INQUIRY in which all areas of investigation may profitably occur, and one which does not force conformity to whatever social, economic or political philosophy is fashionable at any given time.

If we also accept the fact that all societies impose controls of one sort or another, we must struggle between a control system and the freedom of inquiry.

One control system which is prevalent in the world today may be called RESTRICTIVE CONTROLS. The controls are external, imposed by minor or major governmental authorities and sometimes at the instigation of a distinct and highly vocal minority. As if afraid of freedom, these authorities decide what the individual may or may not inquire about by deciding the kind of materials which will be available. A static condition will obtain with subsequent subjugation of the individual.

Legislators perform an annual rite attempting to impose RESTRICTIVE CONTROLS by passage of censorship legislation. In order to make their effort a crusade, certain bills are designed ostensibly “to protect 17-year-olds and under.” It is curious to note that while youth may be ill-fed, ill-housed, and ill-schooled, lawmakers will “protect” them by censorship of materials and ideas.

Unfortunately there are those who should know better who are willing to cooperate with the censors by conceding that a need exists for controls beyond present legislation. Their cooperation suggests they believe that by accepting a little censorship, the censors will go away. History tells us otherwise.

Rather than endorse a system of RESTRICTIVE CONTROLS, these people would do well to defend a system of COMPETITIVE SELECTION or FREEDOM OF INQUIRY. In this system, the individual exerts control by personal selection and free choice among the myriad materials available for study and experiment. The concept is that all ideas, philosophies and points of view exist in competition with alternatives. It indicates more than the right of someone to read controversial material. It indicates the existence of a healthy society unafraid of change, innovation and the uncon-

ventional. It is these characteristics which make it imperative that an atmosphere is maintained where FREEDOM OF INQUIRY may flourish. Maturing in such an atmosphere will be far greater protection for youth than growing to adulthood under a system of RESTRICTIVE CONTROLS.

— MRS. MARJORIE BLODGETT, *Chairman*  
California Library Association—IFC

## AG Burch Makes a Point

BALTIMORE, Md. (AP)—The three-woman Maryland Board of Motion Picture Censors has banned the Swedish film *I Am Curious (Yellow)* from Maryland theaters.

The three women acted Tuesday after receiving a written opinion from Francis B. Burch, the state attorney general, who said:

“If the board cannot ban this sort of hard-core pornography masquerading as art, then I suppose it cannot ban anything and should be abolished.”

Burch said the movie shows sex acts “as frankly and explicitly as hard-core stage smoker films that are sold and exhibited illicitly and clandestinely.”

Emily Jean Goodman, general counsel for *Grove Press*, the film's U.S. distributor, said the firm would “appeal to the Supreme Court if necessary—*Eugene Register Guard*, 10 July.

On 31 July, circuit court judge Joseph L. Carter affirmed the action of the state censor board in banning the controversial film.

## Editing Ads OK

LOS ANGELES—Freedom of the press, as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, permits a newspaper to regulate its own contents, according to the ruling in a suit involving the editing of an advertisement for the motion picture *The Killing of Sister George*.

U.S. District Judge Warren J. Ferguson here, in dismissing a suit against the *Los Angeles Times*, held that a newspaper has a right to edit advertising as it sees fit.

The suit was brought by Producer Robert Aldrich and charged that the *Times* employed “capricious and arbitrary censorship.”

He contended that the newspaper had no power to censor because, in view of its dominance of the market, it had taken on the characteristics of a governmental agency.—*Publishers' Auxiliary*, 31 May.

### Instant Pornography

If the governor signs it, we'll have a new anti-pornography law in the State of Florida. That is, until it gets to the Supreme Court.—*Pensacola Journal*, 23 May.

## True

Speaking of censorship, we are more than a little teed off to learn that thousands of you good readers have been inconvenienced in recent months by certain store chains which have taken it upon themselves to decide whether our magazine is fit for you to read. *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Cosmopolitan* and other first-class magazines have been similarly witch-hunted. It matters not, apparently, that the Supreme Court has decided that you can read or look at anything you damn please in your own home—even if pornography is your pleasure. To this affirmation of freedom we say hooray and to hell with all the pea-pickin' prudes in this country who seem to have appointed themselves judges of what the rest of us may want out of life. But, meanwhile, back at the supermarket, a bunch of vegetarian vigilantes have been tossing magazines out because they found something they termed "objectionable." Next thing you know, these guardians of the commonweal will decide cigarettes shouldn't be sold, or booze or kumquats—or whatever turns you on. But before we give the greengrocers all such authority, it might be wise to stand upon on our hind legs as free men and ask whoinhell appoints the censors in this country anyway, huh?

— CHARLES N. BARNARD, Editor  
*True*, July

## Policy on Book Selection and Censorship\*

The board of this library recognizing the pluralistic nature of this community and the varied backgrounds and needs of all citizens, regardless of race, creed or political persuasion, declares as a matter of book selection policy that:

1.

Books and/or library material selection is and shall be vested in the librarian and under her (or his) direction such members of the professional staff who are qualified by reason of education and training. Any book and/or library material so selected shall be held to be selected by the board.

2.

Selection of books and/or other library material shall be made on the basis of their value of interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community. No book and/or library material shall be excluded because of the race, nationality or the political or social views of the author.

3.

This board believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declare that while anyone is free to reject for himself books which he does not approve of, he cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom to read of others.

4.

This board defends the principles of the freedom to read and declares that whenever censorship is involved no book and/or library material shall be removed from the library save under the orders of a court of competent jurisdiction.

5.

This board adopts and declares that it will adhere to and support:

a. The Library Bill on Rights, and

b. The Freedom to Read statement adopted by the American Library Association, both of which are made a part hereof.

\* Prototype policy drafted by Alex Allain, attorney, trustee, and member of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee. All library boards please copy.

## The Censor Always Rings Twice

On February 7, 1969, the Missouri Library Association, in conjunction with the Missouri State Library and University of Missouri Extension Division and Freedom of Information Center, held a conference on censorship on the Columbia campus. The meeting attracted a capacity audience of over 300 people from Missouri and surrounding states.

As exciting as the day they were "told," transcripts of the speeches and proceedings of the day-long Conference, entitled "The Censor Always Rings Twice," are now available. Published by the Freedom of Information Center, the Conference proceedings book contains (with minor editing to accommodate space and cost limitations) the speeches of Milton Meltzer, keynote speaker, Enid Olson, Margaret Twyman, Irving Levitas, Joan Bodger, Morris Ernst, and Anson Mount. A report of the major questions and their answers has also been included.

Attractively printed, this easy-to-read volume contains words on Censorship which will provide excellent source material for librarians, journalists, teachers of English, students, and others concerned with this subject.

Cost of the booklet to cover printing expenses has been set at a nominal \$2.25 per copy. Books may be ordered by sending a request, with check, to the Freedom of Information Center, Box 858, Columbia, Missouri 65201.

## Memphis Mayor Leans on Portnoy

Shocked at learning one of the filthiest books he has ever seen is available on the shelves of Memphis Public Library, Mayor Henry Loeb said today he would go before the Library Board Wednesday and ask them "to set up some standard of decency" in buying books for the library.

Loeb said he was referring to *Portnoy's Complaint* by Philip Roth. The book has been on the best-seller lists for many weeks.

"I'm no prude," said Loeb, "but I certainly wouldn't want my children to read this book.

"One of my main objections is that the book costs \$6.95, and I don't believe the taxpayers' dollars should be spent to put that kind of tripe on the library shelves so people can read it for nothing."

In reviewing the book for *The Press-Scimitar*, Edwin Howard, amusements editor, wrote: "It is, in the truest sense of the word, a dirty book; not an erotic one, which would imply pleasure, but a dirty one, which implies disgust . . . wade through it if you must, but wear hip-boots."

Loeb said even the U.S. Supreme Court recognizes that a ban can be placed on obscene matter for those below 18 years old, "but here on books, there is a loophole."

Checking with a library official, Loeb learned that juveniles may check out books only on a juvenile card until they reach the ninth grade. Loeb pointed out that that leaves a gap of about five years (13 to 18) for juveniles who might read *Portnoy's Complaint*.

Loeb said the book was called to his attention by a well known citizen. Then Loeb called the book to the attention of C. Lamar Wallis, head librarian.

Wallis replied in a letter to Loeb that "adults in this day and age are not willing for someone else to tell them what they can read."

Wallis wrote that he always tells people who object to this kind of book to exercise their right not to read it.

"The only workable solution seems to be to lean toward freedom and trust people to make up their own minds," wrote Wallis.

"I know many people will disagree with me on this," Loeb said in reference to his planned appearance before the library board. "I know also that many will agree with me.

"This country has to turn back to some kind of morality."—*Memphis Press-Scimitar*, 11 July.

### Keating for Keating Is Not an Even Trade

President Nixon appointed Charles H. Keating, Jr., founder and legal counsel to Citizens for Decent Literature, to the U.S. Commission on Obscenity and Pornography.

The 45-year-old Cincinnati attorney commented, "I shall serve on the commission with the objective of seeing these criminals (purveyors of pornography) jailed."

The Cincinnati will succeed former U.S. Sen. Kenneth P. Keating, who has been appointed ambassador to India. The two Keatings are not related.—*Cincinnati Enquirer*, 14 June.

## Portnoy and the Bard

To the Editor:

27 July, 1969

As is usually the case in education, one cannot criticize one part of the establishment without criticizing all parts of it. Your July issue with its many comments on *Portnoy's Complaint* highlights a very serious set of problems for the librarian in a public school system; namely, are there any limits on what materials should be made available to students in a school library? If so, what are they? Which reviewers is the librarian to trust when deciding the merits of a recent book? Are there, in fact, any objective criteria to follow in making value judgments about books?

Some of the responsibility for answering these questions in any school lies with the members of the English department. It should be in the English class that the student discovers what makes a novel, play, or poem "good" and what makes it lack literary merit. As I am sure most librarians would agree, those judgments have little to do with the number of letters in a word, or with the "purple pages"; but have a great deal to do with the idea of the work, its integrity of form and subject, and its ability to raise the dignity of man. These value terms of mine may also sound like balloon terms, but they are not and can be defined and defended in rational discussion.

One of the irate mothers you quote in your July issue said that Shakespeare was a "dirty old man." If she were to lift out of context all of the sexual commentary of Mercutio, the Nurse, *et. al.*, in *Romeo and Juliet* then her comment would be correct. But that comment on sex is only a part of the whole experience of that play and must therefore be discussed within a context of the whole. That mother who was up tight because her child had seen the Zeffereilli movie *Romeo and Juliet* probably was not upset so much by the few seconds of

flesh as she was by the idea of that movie: the older generation is often hypocritical, stupid, locked into its ways, and cruel. That lesson could shock anyone.

One of the specific ways in which the members of the English department can help the librarian in facing the criticism of the censors is to quit teaching only accepted "classics." If we all taught some "second rate" books, and even some "tenth rate" ones now and then, and honestly tried to explain how the value judgment between "first rate" and "tenth rate" is arrived at, then we would all be in a better position to understand how we make a choice between books.

Too often the "deliberated selection" of an English teacher has little to do with a sense of taste and a lot to do with the books he read while in college. Let every English teacher teach one "bad" book every term, for how can anyone tell good from bad without experiencing both? I am going to start with Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*; it is ever so much worse than any of Shakespeare's plays.

— ROBERT D. LANE  
Assistant Professor of English  
Southwestern Oregon  
Community College

## Help Wanted

In the days when Queen Victoria reigned, there would not have been any question of whether "explicit sexuality" exhibited publicly had any socially redeeming values. Anybody raising such a question would have been hauled off as a lunatic. But times have changed. While Victorian values maintain a tenuous toehold in the—if you will pardon the crudity—breasts of some of the more sedate citizenry they no longer provide a useful guide to official action.

And so Mrs. Rosalyn M. Schector, chairman of the Maryland Motion Picture Censor Board, has a problem. She has put out a public call for help. She says: "We need able psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, painters, sculptures, film makers, and college professors who are capable of viewing a pornographic picture intelligently and testifying in court whether the film has socially redeeming values."

That such high-powered expertise is required to draw the now-fine line between art and pornography might lead one to sigh and wonder what the good Queen Victoria would have made of it all. It's a sure bet that she would not have been amused. But coming back to the mid-Twentieth Century, the censor board's understandable call for help is another indication that the time has passed when a lay board of censors can serve any useful purpose. Other states have long ago come to this realization and have abolished theirs, leaving Maryland as the only state in the union with this outmoded vestige of times past.—Baltimore Sun, 6 August.

## Government Watchdogs Take Another Bite

The California State Senate approved a prohibition on advertising of cigarettes, and if the Assembly and Gov. Reagan go along with the senators, a major step will have been taken in censorship, in the name of "protecting" the people.

The measure is by Sen. Anthony C. Beilenson, a Beverly Hills Democrat, and would prohibit cigarette ads in newspapers and magazines published in California, including regional editions of national publications; it also would forbid such ads on radio and television stations in California.

One of the principal supporters was Sen. Stephen P. Teale of Rail Road Flat, a Democrat and an osteopath, whose emotional plea was to protect the people from doing foolish acts.

As usual it remained for Sen. John Schmitz of Orange County to point out the real meaning of such legislation. "This is a step toward further governmental control, which if followed to its logical extreme will lead to a totalitarian regime" said Schmitz. "Once you accept this principle, where do you go from here?"

If the Legislature can prohibit cigarette advertising, it can prohibit any other sort of advertising or communication. It may be foolish to smoke cigarettes. But defining foolishness and denying people the right to be foolish is not a proper function of government.

And any limitation on the right of people to communicate with each other—either by advertising or other written or spoken presentation—is, a step toward totalitarianism. We trust the Assembly and Gov. Reagan will not go along with the Senate.—Melbourne, Fla. Times, 24 July.

### Talking Dirty

I am no stranger to the dirty book.  
I've run through all the early Henry Miller.  
When pictures pass my way, I take a look.  
I separate the filthy from the filler.  
The cinema I've contemplated, too.  
I've witnessed Warhol's worst, from drag to stag.  
I read *The Village Voice*; I gawk at *Screw*.  
I'm titillated by Hugh Heffner's mag.  
But recently, lasciviousness palls;  
It's difficult unearthing something "better."  
I think (it's *crazy*) literature calls . . .  
I'm rediscovering *The Scarlet Letter*!  
However, while I'm certain lust's a bust,  
It's definitely hellish to adjust.

— W. H. VON DREELE  
*National Review*, 17 June.

# LA Library Commission Delays Action

7 August, 1969

The Los Angeles Board of Library Commissioners this week took under consideration a request from City Councilman Don Lorenzen that certain copies of the *Evergreen Review* "be removed from the shelves of public libraries."

Councilman Lorenzen wrote to the Commission that a particular story was "in complete bad taste, very offensive" and he asked that it be removed.

City Librarian Harold L. Hamill told the Commissioners that the *Evergreen Review* was a well-established literary review, often including quite frank writing. The magazine publishes material by recognized and important writers.

Hamill said the Los Angeles Public Library has never been the victim of literary censorship as far as he knows. He said material has never been removed merely because someone disapproved of it. Hamill added that there is lots of material in the library that is disapproved of by someone someplace.

"It is my position that we give no further consideration to the removal of this magazine," said Hamill. "We cannot remove it because that would violate censorship provisions of the Library Bill of Rights adopted by this Commission. We have many books on our shelves that are equally offensive to some people."

Library Commissioner Albert S. Raubenheimer said that no decision could be reached by him until he has had an opportunity to review the entire matter. Other Commissioners agreed and the matter was put over to next week's meeting so that there could be time to study the matter.

## New Definition of 'Censorship'

Councilman Donald D. Lorenzen is using his political office to appoint himself censor of the shelves of the West Valley Regional Library in Reseda, it was charged Tuesday by Jerrold A. Bloch, president of the American Civil Liberties Union Valley chapter.

The Library Commission today will consider Lorenzen's request that the *Evergreen Review* be removed from the library at 19036 Vanowen St.

Bloch branded the actions of the councilman as "hasty, irresponsibly naive, amazing and dangerous."

Lorenzen made the request after his field deputy reviewed "a real dirty story" in the magazine following a complaint by a Reseda housewife, according to the councilman.

As chairman of the council committee which passes upon library requests, Lorenzen also said, "We are going to start reviewing a lot of books."

The housewife complained to Lorenzen after a vice officer inspected the magazine and told her that there was nothing he could do about it.

Bloch said Lorenzen's action is amazing on several points:

1—The councilman is taking the broadest step toward censorship because a single individual and his field deputy were offended by the magazine's content.

2—Lorenzen concedes that he himself did not read the story.

3—He wants to ban the magazine despite the apparent opinion of a trained vice officer that it was not violating the law.

Bloch further charged that Lorenzen is "setting off on a most dangerous road of censorship. If he is going to use his elected office to bring pressure on the library system to set up book reviews based on his own or his field deputy's taste, it is most dangerous censorship."

Lorenzen denies he is engaging in an attempt at censorship. He said that he is not barring any books for publication.

"Barring books from publication is censorship," he asserted. "On the other hand, it isn't censorship if taxpayers don't want to pay for this filth going into our libraries."—L.A. *Times*, 6 August.

## Professionals Only

BOSTON, June 24 (AP)—The State Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that the film *Titicut Follies* may not be shown to the general public in Massachusetts but may be shown to specialized professional audiences.

The film, made inside Bridgewater State Hospital in the spring of 1966, depicts the life of mental patients there and includes shots of some inmates in the nude.

The high court said the picture's "massive unrestrained invasion of the intimate lives of the patients at the institution warranted the issuance of an injunction against public, commercial movie houses showing the film."

The unanimous opinion, written by Justice R. Ammi Cutter, upheld for the most part injunctions issued Jan. 4, 1968, by Superior Court Judge Henry Kalus.

The Supreme Court said the film "gives a striking picture of life at Bridgewater and as such would be instructive" to such persons as legislators, judges, social workers, psychiatrists "and organizations dealing with the social problems of custodial care and mental infirmity."—New York *Times*, 26 June.



## COOP Progress Report

Obscenity is an individual thing, like love or hate, a psychiatrist's study indicates.

Some persons tested by a St. Louis University psychiatrist found obscene a bucolic picture of a woman dressed in a white short dress that covered her body except for the legs. On the other hand, some did not think that a nude picture of a kneeling woman was obscene.

"It seems apparent that there is a wide variation as to what they call obscene," said the psychiatrist, Dr. Marshall B. Katzman of the St. Louis University School of Medicine. "This variation may be determined by their socio-economic background."

Dr. Katzman is studying obscenity on a grant from the Federal Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. He hopes eventually to determine if, as some have argued, pornography contributes to moral decay.

Dr. Katzman does not think it does.

"But I have no facts to back this up. No one has on either side of the question. And that question looms bigger as sexually related materials become more available," he said.

Dr. Katzman has just published the results of a preliminary study on obscenity in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Individuals from seven occupation groups—teachers, lawyers, police, physicians, psychiatrists, teamsters and businessmen—were asked to rate the obscenity level of 90 photographs of lone women on a scale ranging from not obscene to obscene.

He found that, as he suspected, individuals had different ideas of what they consider obscene. There were correlations, however. One of the pictures of a totally nude woman in an obvious sexual position was rated the most obscene by almost every person tested. Pictures rated obscene were likely to be black and white photographs of bad quality where completely nude models were posed in obvious uncomfortable or openly seductive positions.

Pictures of attractive women posed in outdoor settings with some artistic merit were for the most part not considered obscene, even if the models were nude.

Veteran policemen were less likely to term a picture obscene than any of the groups tested. Psychiatrists were close to the veteran police officers on this point. Rookie policemen or police cadets were the most likely to term a picture obscene.

"Probationary policemen might have an exaggerated view of what they ought to be calling dirty," said Dr. Katzman. "But it also may have to do with experience."

Men and women in general had about the same obscenity level. Religion did not seem to be a factor. Neither did age.

Despite the difference in obscenity levels recorded by the more than 250 persons tested, all picked essentially the same pictures as the most obscene.

Still there were basic differences between socio-economic groups in what they considered obscene.

"Obscene pictures designated by the lower groups all depicted total nudity," said Dr. Katzman. In the upper socio-economic group, models in seductive clothing and photographs that were generally not good technically more often were found to be obscene, he said.

Dr. Katzman is trying to do scientifically what the United States Supreme Court has dodged—essentially to find a definition of obscenity that would apply to society in general.

"I suspect that from the studies so far," he said. "That obscenity deals with abnormal sexuality or with overt sexual behavior. I have no doubt that other things are called obscene."

He held up the famous photograph of the South Vietnamete government official shooting a Viet Cong suspect to death.

"I would suspect that some people would consider this obscene," he said. "But we haven't got that far in our studies. That will take time."

— JEROME B. CURRY

in St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, 7 July

## Playing With Playboy

Carlos Matias, who has exclusive distribution rights here for *Playboy* and many other magazines and books, has a problem that is really a very public problem.

Because of a conviction over the sale of magazines that were deemed by a judge to be obscene (and for which an appeal is now pending with the Commonwealth Supreme Court) Matias is shy about what is in the publications that he distributes and sells at his photo-periodical shops.

The current issue of *Playboy* is a case in point. Because he is wary of a photo article on a nude dancer, Matias had somebody tear four pages out of each of 6,000 copies of the magazine distributed here.

But he continued to charge in his own stores \$1.25 for a \$1 magazine and not advise customers of the deletions.

If he does not want to handle the magazine, that is his opinion. But to self-righteously proclaim himself an arbiter of good taste and then cheat the public by selling at above price a product he has tampered with is unlawful.

But even that is not the real point. The real point is that Matias has no right acting as the public's censor. "I am the censor" he told this newspaper.

He is not and should not be permitted to act as one.—San Juan *Star*, 9 August.

## Sex Education: Controlled or Prohibited

Sex education is one thing. Legal prohibition is another. Remember prohibition days.

Alcohol was one thing. Legal prohibition of it was another. Some Americans had said liquor was evil in itself; it must be prohibited. They finally realized it wasn't liquor that should be prohibited, it was its abuse.

So too it is with sex education. This is as old as the relationship of parent to child. This education, particularly in its moral, psychological, spiritual dimensions, is necessary and highly desirable. It cannot be labeled as evil.

In it however, there have been abuses. There are individual abuses still. These are more pronounced and they are more shocking because the subject matter is very delicate.

Every parent feels this delicacy and shows a natural concern for his child. It is an area of instruction which is truly the primary responsibility of parents, as indeed, all education is. But whereas parents with little trepidation allow a teacher to give instructions in math to their children, they do not feel the same about sex instruction. They are far more sensitive to abuses here than in math.

Legislation, however, which prohibits sex instruction totally, or sets it up for constant harassment solves the problem by a simplistic prohibition. Such legislation cannot be considered good because it is too far reaching. It is very much like outlawing liquor because some men drink too much.

True legislation can never be too reasonable. Just legislation can never be too precise. In trying to control the delicate area of sex education, legislators must be abundantly both reasonable and precise.

Less than this and they will not end up controlling what is good; they will have simplistically prohibited it.—*Southwest Louisiana Register*, 29 May.

### They Are?

**CLOSED SHELF:** Why does the Library put books that are a little risqué on closed shelves? Are college students too immature to read them?

**ANSWER:** It is not that the students are too immature to read them, but that disproportionate losses of books of sensational content suggest that special measures must be taken to prevent misappropriations. Furthermore, closed shelf books are just as unrestricted in circulation as any other books in the general collection.—*The University of Idaho Library Bookmark*, June.

## Theodore Sorensen at the ABA

"Liberty and literature rise and fall together," Theodore Sorensen, former White House aide, told his listeners at the June 3 ABA Convention luncheon. "When intellectual freedom dies, the book business dies. When freedom of expression is threatened anywhere in America, the members of your profession have a special duty to respond." And freedom of expression is under threat right now on college campuses, "threat from the new Left and the old Right." That freedom is menaced by student nihilists, "whose only consistent program is to shout down those who do not agree with them," and by legislators "who cut off funds from students without making any distinction between the peaceful and the violent, between just and unjust complaints against the university, between those who commit outrages against the university and those who protest outrages by the university."

"The college campuses are a microcosm of American life," Mr. Sorensen told the ABA. "If it is happening in the universities the book industry may be next." Mr. Sorensen warned booksellers that they might some day suffer from "the more subtle forms of lawful pressures. If your business suffers because you carry the works of certain 'discredited' authors or fail to promote the works of others, remember that it all started on the college campuses." Referring to Governor Ronald Reagan's statement that the University of California was "too heavily weighted with liberal professors," Mr. Sorensen asked the booksellers, "are your catalogs too heavily weighted with 'liberal' authors? Are you trying to place 'controversial ideas,' in 'publicly supported libraries'? Are you aware of the implications for your own rights and businesses when the Pentagon dismisses a peculiarly thoughtful appraisal of the ABM folly published today as 'unworthy' because its authors did not have access to secret data?"

"I am concerned lest McCarthyism in some new and insidious form return to threaten this country's values," Mr. Sorensen concluded. "I am concerned about the self-righteous pressures from both sides on intellectual freedom by those who advocate war and those who question war." Mr. Sorensen said he was concerned that the "present waves of unrest on our college campuses, unless heeded, will lead to more violence and counter violence." When Senator Robert Kennedy was killed a year ago "a voice that never hesitated to speak out" was stilled, Mr. Sorensen said. "Without that voice to lead us and challenge us, it will be all too easy for America to accept a conformity we cannot afford. The voices of reason are giving way now in some cherished corners of American intellectual life. We must make it our business to object to any encroachment on intellectual freedom."—*P.W.*, 16 July.

# Tougher Laws Favored, Says Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J.—Most Americans favor stricter laws on pornography. At the same time they are not afraid to have sex dealt with in a frank and objective manner. A majority of adults, in fact, favor courses in schools in sex education, which would include a discussion of birth control.

Of every 100 adults interviewed in a new Gallup survey, 85 say they favor stricter state and local laws dealing with obscene literature sent through the mails and 76 in every 100 want a tougher stand on the kind of magazines and newspapers available at newsstands.

Among those opposed to restrictions are some who feel that the lifting of all laws on pornography could have a salutary effect on public morals.

A total of 1501 adults were interviewed in the survey, which was conducted May 16 through 19. These were the questions asked and the findings:

*What about magazines and newspapers sold on newsstands? Would you like to see stricter state and local laws on such literature or not?*

Stricter Laws on Newsstand Literature?

	Yes %	No %	No Opin. %
NATIONAL.....	76	17	7
Men.....	70	23	7
Women.....	80	12	8
21-29 years.....	61	31	8
30-49 years.....	77	17	6
50 and over.....	82	9	9
College.....	65	30	5
High school.....	80	13	7
Grade school.....	77	13	10

*Do you approve or disapprove of schools giving courses in sex education?*

The seven in ten (71 per cent) who answered in the affirmative were then asked this question:

*Would you approve or disapprove if these courses discussed birth control?*

The latest results and those from 1965:

	1969 %	1965 %
Approve of courses with discussion of birth control.....	55	46
Disapprove.....	12	18
No opinion.....	4	5
Favor sex education:.....	71	69

Of particular interest is the finding that Catholics are nearly as likely as Protestants to approve of sex education courses that discuss birth control. Young adults,

as well as people with a college background, express the highest degree of approval.

To discover the views of Americans on the fare offered by the movies, TV and in magazines, this question was asked:

*Have you seen anything dealing with sex on television or in the movies or in print in a magazine that was objectionable?*

Here are the findings:

- 38 per cent say they have seen something objectionable on television.
- 25 per cent say they have seen something objectionable in print in a magazine.
- 23 per cent say they have seen something objectionable in the movies.—Washington Post, 26 June.

## Censorship by Printer

GRAND FORKS, N.D.—The editors and editorial staff of the University of North Dakota student literary magazine, *Tyro*, resigned Wednesday to protest the censoring of a poem which contained an “obscene” word.

Editor Leah Manning and assistant editor Wayne Hall were joined by seven of the magazines’ 10 editorial board members. Miss Manning said the other three board members “will probably resign” once they are informed of the others’ action.

The protest stemmed from the censoring of a poem, written by editorial board member Lyn Burton, containing a word which normally refers to sexual intercourse. University Press manager Joe Hughes refused to print the poem, and the UND Board of Publications (BOP) Monday upheld his decision.—Fargo Forum, 15 May.

GRAND FORKS, N.D.—The University of North Dakota student literary magazine, *Tyro*, may be printed in full—including a controversial poem—as a result of a Board of Publication (BOP) action Friday morning.

The board, by a vote of seven to two, rescinded an earlier motion upholding University Press manager Joe Hughes’ decision not to print the poem, which includes “an obscene four-letter word.”

According to BOP member Sam Meyers, the special meeting Friday was called after several members of the Board complained the Monday action violated the BOP constitution. The constitution requires the organization to check with two members of the UND Law School faculty before deeming an article libelous or obscene.

“This, plus the mass resignation of the *Tyro* staff,” Meyers said, “made some of us feel the issue deserved further consideration.”—Fargo Forum, 15 May.

## Seoul USIS Chief Defends Use of Censored Material

SEOUL—The United States Information Service here displays censored American magazines in its library, and has restricted the distribution of a government-sponsored research journal, *Problems of Communism*.

The local USIS director, Dr. Daniel E. Moore, defends these practices as the best to operate under the circumstances.

He says that as far as he knows, USIS has no overall policy on the problem of how local posts should cope with censorship by host governments.

Each country and each situation is handled on a case-by-case basis, Dr. Moore says.

Here, for example, the library at the American Cultural Center carries censored copies of *Time* and *Newsweek*.

This is strictly a matter of convenience, Dr. Moore says, permitting the library to carry the Asia editions that come to South Korea through a local distributor. They are checked and stamped by South Korean officials.

Because *Time* and *Newsweek* are news magazines, Dr. Moore says, "we figure it's worth getting the current copy."

Uncensored versions do come to the library from the U.S. by sea mail several weeks later, and they are available to readers, he says.

But by displaying the air mail edition first, even if it is censored, readers can get most of the magazine's current information more quickly, Dr. Moore says.

The January-February issue of *Problems of Communism*, a selected journal published by USIS and distributed free to audiences abroad, contains an article about North Korea.

When it arrived in Seoul, Dr. Moore says, the local USIS staff decided not to send it to all the usual recipients.

"We felt it was a prudent thing to do," a staff member says, noting that under South Korea's anti-communist law, mere possession of words written by a communist may subject a person to prosecution.

According to the masthead of *Problems of Communism* "its purpose is to provide analysis and significant background on various aspects of world communism today. Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States government."

The journal is widely respected among Western scholars for its discussion of new trends in the Communist world, and it contains contributions by noted scholars.

Dr. Moore says the January-February issue was sent to South Korean government officials, libraries, research institutes, and individuals who have a definite research interest in North Korea. It was not sent to intellectuals who normally get a copy but who have no professional interest in North Korea, he says.

One of the two copies on the USIS library shelf was annotated as follows: "Do not lend this issue to any customer." The other copy has no special instructions.—Thomas Pepper in *Baltimore Sun*, 27 July.

## Wayne State Suspends Student Paper

DETROIT, July 12—Publication of *The South End* one of the nation's most controversial student newspapers, has been suspended and a special 24-page edition has been scrapped by Wayne State University's president, William Rae Keast.

Dr. Keast said that he took the action Thursday night as the edition was at the printers because "I am convinced that its publication would do serious damage to Wayne State University and to the future of student journalism here."

The suspension will continue, he said, until a newly formed Student Newspaper Publication Board of four students and two faculty members can develop policies and guidelines for the newspaper.—*New York Times*, 13 July.

Two days later *South End* went underground, without WSU support, at fifteen cents a copy. Sales were brisk, according to the *Detroit News* for 15 July.

### Paging George

Speaking of obscenity, even the Supreme Court has difficulty defining that obscene word, but it's a cinch for the Post Office, right down to clerk level. If a clerk at a port of entry, which this is, decides a sealed envelope COULD contain obscene material, all he has to do is stamp it "Supposed to Contain Matter Prohibited From Importation." Then a notice goes out to the addressee, who has to report to a postal worker—still a clerk—and open the envelope in his presence. If the clerk cries "Ooooo, doity-doity!" big trouble begins—and how are you whirring these days, George Orwell?—Herb Caen in *San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 July.

## British Obscenity Laws Under Fire

The case of the creative artist and the consenting adult reader against the present state of the obscenity laws in Britain has never been better made than in the report which the Arts Council's working party presented for consideration on Tuesday. Its radical recommendations follow logically from the arguments set out there: no evidence has been produced (either for the working party or in courts of law) to demonstrate that sex in the arts has criminal or anti-social repercussion; and "when juries and defendants are without a comprehensible definition of the crime alleged, the defendant is left at the mercy of a personal opinion, which is a system of censorship rather than a system of law." Accordingly, the working party has drafted a Bill which would repeal the Obscene Publications Acts of 1959 and 1964, and close loopholes by which prosecution may at present be brought under other Acts now in force.

The candour and forcefulness of the report and its proposals will probably provoke strong reactions. Those who support restrictive legislation will no doubt argue that too little account was taken of the need for social control over pornographic material for which no supportable claims to artistic merit are likely to be made. Here, the report relies, perhaps too readily on submissions about the effect of the repeal of restrictive legislation in Denmark, where it is claimed that sales of hard-core pornography have actually fallen. It might have been better to stand on the evidence of the witness who said of our own obscenity laws: "If they are intended to prevent the distribution of anything that might bring a blush to a maiden aunt's cheek, they are demonstrably not working." No London policeman

### First Doesn't Cover Heads

Superior Court Judge Robert C. O'Hora has upheld the conviction of four University of Delaware students for distributing handbills headlined with a 12-letter word ruled obscene. The defendants were Ramon M. Ceci of 600 N. Clayton, a June graduate; George Wolkind, former extension student; David A. McCorquodale, former student; and Steven A. Sass, a junior from Silver Spring, Md.

O'Hora held that use of the word in the body of the political leaflet was protected by the First Amendment, but that free speech guarantees did not apply to its use in the headline.—*Wilmington Journal*, 3 June.

would be likely to argue with that. On the other hand it is equally demonstrable that in a number of cases brought against material of literary merit, our laws have been working absurdly.

"The proper sanction for breaches of taste or non-conformity with current mores," says the report, "should be social reprobation and not penal legislation." The point was made more constructively by Marx when he said: "The true censorship . . . is criticism." No one would deny that we are living through a period of intense confusion about sexual morality, and that none of the important arguments is simple. It may be that the proposed Bill has a slender chance of becoming law at this stage of the Government's life. But if it does lead to more rational rules for this area of our life which is so bedeviled by irrationality, it will still be only the beginning of a debate, in which intelligent doubters will be freed from inhibitions which the law's present absurdities tend to promote.—*Manchester Guardian*, 17 July.

## Impeccable Logic

A high school student can't be expelled for having an underground newspaper laced with dirty words if his school library carries books and magazines containing the same words.

This was the essence of Federal Judge Thomas P. Thornton's ruling to the Van Buren Board of Education, which twice in the last two months voted to expel David Vought, 17, a junior at Belleville High School.

He was ordered out of school after he was found with a copy of *Argus*, an underground newspaper.

Vought, who missed three weeks of classes in March and April before Thornton ordered him reinstated pending a judicial hearing, said the board's stand was "preposterous, arbitrary, unreasonable and a denial of due process."

Vaught's attorney, Lawrence W. Sperling, said the school board had acted unreasonably in view of the fact that the same four-letter word found in *Argus* appeared in a school library copy of *Harper's* magazine and in the novel, *Catcher in the Rye*, which is required reading in Belleville High School's 10th grade English classes.

Thornton agreed: "If we, as a trial court, are confused, what are we to suppose is the state of mind of a student subjected to such a double standard?"

The judge added that even if Vought were in violation of a school rule, "the drastic action of expulsion for such single incident, carrying as it does a lifetime stigma, is hardly punishment fitting the crime."—*Detroit News*, 17 June.

## VII. CENSORSHIP

A. The Board, officers, paid and volunteer staff, and committees of the Library, while avoiding acquisition or retention of materials of little merit or little interest to the members and users of the Library, shall neither censor nor promote by disproportionate emphasis any particular political, moral, philosophical, patriotic, religious, or esthetic convictions, opinions, or modes of expression.

B. The Board, officers, paid and volunteer staff, and committees of the Library shall oppose, resist, and disregard every form of censorship from any source or authority, not excluding the Association. The fact that a book or other material may be the subject of a prosecution in the State of New York or elsewhere, or of a court decision in another state, or of a Federal Court decision involving importation, use of the mails, or interstate commerce shall be presumed to have no legal consequence to the Library, except that the precise terms of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction shall not be violated.

C. The policies of the Library shall be based on the following considerations:

(1) That many books and other materials which have been most controversial or objectionable to some persons or groups have, in due course, been recognized to be among those which most, rather than least, belong in public libraries;

(2) That if any idea or expression is truly dangerous or evil, the best protection against it is a public that has been exposed to it and has rejected it, and the least protection is a public that has been shielded from it by official or self-appointed guardians;

(3) That the guarantees of free speech and free press in the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York apply with more than usual, not less than usual, force to controversial or objectionable expression;

(4) That if a member or user of the Library wishes to find out for himself whether any particular book or other material is worthless, tasteless, vicious, or inaccurate, it is the duty of the Library, within its ability, to give him an opportunity to do so.

No act of any officer, librarian, or committee of the Library in accordance with these policies and considerations shall be reversed, countermanded, or penalized by any officer, librarian, or committee of the Library or by the Board of Trustees.

D. In the event that any person or group shall object to the Library's acquisition, display, or retention of any book or other material on political, moral, philosophical, patriotic, religious, or esthetic grounds, the objection shall be recognized as an indication that the book or material in question may well be of more than routine interest and may be likely to be desired by

persons who wish to judge its merits and demerits for themselves. Objectors shall be notified of the Library's policies, either by provision to them of a copy of this By-Law or by other suitable means.

— From page 3 of the By-laws adopted  
21 May, 1969, by the Palisades Free Library,  
Palisades, New York 10964

## “Inga” Obs. in N.H., or Is It?

Barry Steelman, manager of Cinema 93 Theater, this morning was found guilty of showing an obscene film.

District Court Special Judge William Maynard fined Steelman \$500 and sentenced him to 30 days in the house of correction for showing *Inga* in the theater during a three-week period in February. His attorney, Alan L. Reische of Manchester, said Steelman would enter an immediate appeal to Merrimack County Superior Court.

After the finding, Police Chief Walter Carlson, who served as prosecutor during a three-day hearing March 19 through 21, recommended Steelman be fined \$250 and given a 30-day sentence, suspended on payment of the fine.

In a statement to the court, Reische said he did not think his client should be given a criminal sentence to the house of correction because he acts as business manager of the theater only, and has no control over what is shown in the theater. “Mr. Steelman plays what is booked for him,” the attorney said.—Concord Daily Monitor, 4 April.

The final action in this case was that the theater manager appealed the case to the New Hampshire Superior Court, and the County Attorney nol-prossed the case—in other words, he refused to participate in an appeal, effectively ending the case and voiding the judgment of the lower court.

—EMIL W. ALLEN, JR.  
New Hampshire State Library

## Rocky Nixes Obs. Lib.

A bill establishing a Depository of Obscene Literature at the School of Criminal Justice of the State University in Albany has been vetoed by Governor Rockefeller.

In vetoing the measure, Rockefeller said such a depository is maintained by the FBI laboratory and state and local law enforcement officials have free access to it.

The use of the contents of the depository would have been limited to the district attorneys and police officers holding special permits.—Albany Times-Union, 29 May.

## As the Bard of Avon Said . . .

One can always find in Shakespeare something to fit the occasion. For instance, his *Much Ado About Nothing*, and a line from it, "What men . . . do, and not knowing what they do." How aptly both title and part of the quotation fit the squabble over whether the Public Library should be used for an experimental theater production that is either great theater or kooky, depending on how one looks at it.

John Lennon, library board chairman, didn't indicate which view he took. What jarred him was the mess, so described, that was left by the audience after the dress rehearsal (?), so he ruled against an opening night, or any other, for that matter, as far as the library was concerned. Enough of his associates ruled with him to make it stick. Also backing Mr. Lennon was Mayor Burns. The Mayor was less than his usual vigorous self in taking his stand. He seemed to indicate that what was good enough for Mr. Lennon was good enough for the Mayor. For the benefit of those who might have been first nighters Monday, and who might have welcomed at least an informal sneak review from the board and the Mayor, we sadly relate that none of them has seen the play they are barring.

This newspaper doesn't give two hoots about the production, which is named "A Masque of Revolution, Being a Celebration of Bastille Day." Frankly, we're not sure what it's all about, even after one of our most astute staff members tried his hand at decoding it for our readers Wednesday.

But if all that was the matter was a little untidiness by the audience, then the world premiere (if that's what it is) should be allowed to be presented on Monday night as was scheduled, providing the audience promises not to leave any litter. That much is owed to art and its patrons.

Meanwhile, we can only sigh with Bard Will: *Much Ado About Nothing*.—Pawtucket, R.I., *Times*, 24 July.

## Glendale Kills Board of Censors

The Glendale Board of Censors will no longer act as a city-sponsored advisory commission as a result of action taken by City Council Tuesday.

Council members voted 4-0 to dissolve the Censor Board of duties as watchdog over decency in the community.

Councilmen acted on a recommendation from City Attorney Joseph Rainville in a report taken from his conversations with the group last week.

Rainville suggested instead that members consider becoming aligned to a private group of citizens, apart from the city, and calling themselves a title such as Committee for Decency.—Montrose, Calif. *Ledger*, 19 June.

## Censorship Attempt

An organization calling itself the New York State Committee for Responsible Patriotism has issued demands that "smut" and specifically Philip Roth's novel *Portnoy's Complaint* be taken out of libraries. The incident reported occurred in Jamestown, New York, location of the Chautauqua-Chattaraugus Library System. Director Murray L. Bob responded immediately to the censorship move with a statement broadcast over local radio; it stated the library system's intention to continue circulating *Portnoy's Complaint* and cited numerous reviews in prominent publications which praised the book. Bob has circulated to all system members copies of his statement to be used in the event of further incidents.—*Library Journal*, August.

## The Censorship Boomerang

Judy Crist, the nationally known drama and movie critic, recently had some thoughts on censorship which librarians have known for a long time. In a brief discussion on the NBC Today show, she observed that attempts to censor movies have frequently catapulted a mediocre film into a big box office attraction. She pointed out that a mediocre film usually sinks into well deserved obscurity unless some censor decides the public should be protected from it. The attendant publicity nearly always pushes the film into a place of prominence far out of proportion to its worth.

This is an old story in the book field. A book that would ordinarily never become a best seller is suddenly in great demand if the public discovers that it is "forbidden." This is not a complaint against human nature, it is simply a statement of human behavior. As Carl Sandburg observed, children who are forbidden to stick beans in their ears usually stick beans in their ears.

It should be stated also that poor and mediocre writers have just as much right to have their works published as do good writers. The passing of time and the judgment of the reading public usually decide correctly which books are truly worthwhile and which are not.

The experience of Denmark during the recent past indicates the wisdom of removing all censorship controls. During the past year or two in which there was no censorship control, the sale of obscene and pornographic material has dropped, evidently because it was no longer forbidden.

It seems, therefore, that from a purely practical standpoint the censor defeats his own purpose. To censor seems to produce the exact opposite of what is intended. To censor invites a boomerang.

—Willard D. Hunsberger, Chairman  
Indiana Library Assn. IFC

### Box Score

New Obscenity Legislation:  
Colorado. 27 May, 1969.  
Melbourne, Florida. 27 May, 1969.  
Prince William County, Virginia. 27 June, 1969.  
California. 25 June, 1969.  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. 17 June, 1969.  
Moline, Illinois. 24 June, 1969.

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