

For Immediate Release
June 1993

From: Pamela Goodes
Linda Wallace
312-280-5043, 5042

Gordon M. Conable honored at freedom of expression event

Gordon M. Conable, president of the Freedom to Read Foundation, the American Library Association's sister organization, was one of 16 men and women honored by New York cultural leaders during an event titled "May 5, 1993" for the significant role each has played in upholding the principle of freedom of expression.

Conable, director of the Monroe County, Michigan Library System, was recognized for his role in dealing with threats due to his book acquisitions policy.

"Like many of his colleagues throughout the nation, Mr. Conable has resisted library censorship for decades, fighting to preserve access to the full spectrum of human expression for us all," organizers said. "He has faced bomb threats, smear campaigns and vindictive attempts to remove him from his job.

"Nevertheless, Mr. Conable has never failed to keep his shelves filled with books and materials of all persuasions. He has insisted that the library is a place where all kinds of information and ideas must be accessible and available to the public. Mr. Conable and librarians across the country are currently facing a formidable battle that is rarely glimpsed in the media."

Gordon M. Conable honored at freedom of expression event -- add one

While serving as president of the Freedom to Read Foundation, which provides legal defense for the freedom to read in libraries, Conable is also past chair of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee. He is currently a member of the ALA Council, the association's governing body, and chair of the ALA Coordinating Committee on Access to Information.

Others honored during the program included:

Dennis Barrie, former director of the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, Ohio; performance artists Karen Finley, John Fleck, Holly Hughes and Tim Miller known as the "N.E.A. Four;" Joseph Papp, late director of the Public Theater and the New York Shakespeare Festival; Los Angeles choreographer Bella Lewitzky; the late artist and AIDS activist David Wojnarowicz; Marlon T. Riggs, professor in the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley; Jonathan Fanton of The New York School for Social Research; Martha Wilson, performance artist and founder/director of Franklin Furnace; Ana Ferrer and Kukuli Velarde, members of New York's Vistas Latinas, and Gene Dugan and Jay Browse, directors of the Out North Theater Company in Anchorage, Alaska.

"May 5, 1993" was organized by Alberta Arthurs, director of the arts and humanities program, The Rockefeller Foundation; Margaret C. Ayers, executive director of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation; Larry Condon, president of the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation; Archibald L. Gillies, president of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and Charles R. Halpern, president of the Nathan Cummings Foundation.

