

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Item: INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM Item Number: 103.4.7
Approved by: ALA Council Page: 1 of 1
Issue Date: February, 1973 Supersedes: _____

REEVALUATING LIBRARY COLLECTIONS*

An interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The continuous review of library collections to remove physically deteriorated or obsolete materials is one means to maintain active library collections of current interest to users. Continued reevaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of libraries and is a valuable tool of collection building. This procedure, however, is sometimes used as a convenient means to remove materials thought to be too controversial or disapproved of by segments of the community. Such abuse of the reevaluation function violates the principles of intellectual freedom and is in opposition to Articles I and II of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which state that:

"As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

The American Library Association opposes such "silent censorship," and recommends that libraries adopt guidelines setting forth the positive purposes and principles for reevaluation of materials in library collections.

*The traditional term "weeding" implying "the removal of a noxious growth," is purposely avoided because of the imprecise nature of the term.