



Letter from the Past President

Dear Colleagues:

You won't see a Expiration Date slip at the back of this new *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, but you know and I know it needs one. That's how dynamic and sometimes unpredictable the delicate balance of intellectual freedom and homeland security can be. Yes, we live in dangerous times above a covert world that makes no bones about wanting to destroy us. And yes, we cherish the notion that intellectual freedom and the rights protected in the First and Fourteenth Amendments are some of the strongest weapons in our arsenal to combat that covert world.

The Louisiana Library Association promulgated its first *Intellectual Freedom Manual* in 1988, and the volume was followed by revisions in 1994 and in 2000. Now, almost six years later, LLA is proud to update its members with the latest instrument for their continuing concerns about intellectual freedom.

The structure of the *Manual* is as familiar as the structure of the challenges to intellectual freedom. Herein you will find articles to help you articulate the Constitutional foundations of intellectual freedom, along with key documents from LLA and from our parent organization, the American Library Association. These articles will provide you with the history and perspective of the library community about the frequently controversial issue of intellectual freedom and provide you with the assurance that your community offers support and guidance on the topic. And in a country bisected forever by 9/11, you will be relieved to see a new article on the U.S.A. P.A.T.R.I.O.T Act and its ramifications for our work and our lives.

I would like to thank Charlene Cain for again undertaking this revision and providing an overview of the topic in the academic world. A past president of LLA, she is a tireless and—this is a crucial requirement—fearless advocate for intellectual freedom. Our appreciation extends also to Dr. Margaret Wilhite and to Ladonna Guillot, who provide us with timely overviews of the topic in the public and school library arenas. Every member will be able to find pertinent information in this revision.

The terrorist alert levels issued by the government are analogues to the alert levels we try to ascertain in our professional library world. Ray Bradbury wrote that there “is more than one way to burn a book. And the world is full of people running about with lit matches.” Use this manual as your fire hose or, even better, as your fire prevention program.

Terry Thibodeaux
2004-05 President
Louisiana Library Association