2003-2004 CD#7.2
ALA Annual Conference

Core Values Task Force II Report

The foundation of modern librarianship rests on an essential set of core values which define, inform, and guide our professional practice.

These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association. Among these are:

- Access
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Democracy
- Diversity
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Preservation
- The Public Good
- Professionalism
- Service
- Social Responsibility

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to express our values more eloquently than ALA already has in the Freedom to Read statement, the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Mission Statement, Libraries: an American Value and other documents. These policies have been carefully thought out, articulated, debated, and approved by the ALA council. They are interpreted, revised or expanded when necessary. Over time, the values embodied in these policies have been embraced by the majority of librarians as the foundations of their practice.

Adopted by the ALA Council at the 2004 Annual Conf.
Codified by the ALA Council at the 2005 Midwinter Mtg.

Excerpts from ALA Policy

Following are some representative excerpts from ALA policy expressing the values listed above. These selections are direct quotes from the ALA Policy Manual. Please note that many of these statements express the interrelationship of these values.

A more extensive index of ALA policies compiled by CVTFII is available on the ALA web site.

ACCESS

All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users. *ALA Policy Manual 53.1.14 (Free Access to Information)*

CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY

Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship. *ALA Policy Manual 53.1.16 (Library Bill of Rights)*

DEMOCRACY

A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry. The First Amendment mandates the right of all persons to free expression, and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the community the library serves. *Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights, Economic Barriers to Information Access*

DIVERSITY

We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve. *ALA Policy Manual 53.8 (Libraries: An American Value)*

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ALA promotes the creation, maintenance, and enhancement of a learning society, encouraging its members to work with educators, government officials, and organizations in coalitions to initiate and support comprehensive efforts to ensure that school, public, academic, and special libraries in every community cooperate to provide lifelong learning services to all. *ALA Policy Manual 1.1 (Mission, Priority Areas, Goals)*

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources. *ALA Policy Manual, 54.16 (ALA Code of Ethics, Article II)*

THE PUBLIC GOOD

ALA reaffirms the following fundamental values of libraries in the context of discussing outsourcing and privatization of library services. These values include that libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in democratic societies. *1998-99 CD#24.1, Motion #1*

PRESERVATION

The Association supports the preservation of information published in all media and formats. The association affirms that the preservation of information resources is central to libraries and librarianship. *ALA Policy Manual 52.2.1 (Preservation Policy)*

PROFESSIONALISM

The American Library Association supports the provision of library services by professionally qualified personnel who have been educated in graduate programs within institutions of higher education. It is of vital importance that there be professional education available to meet the social needs and goals of library services. *ALA Policy Manual 56.1 (Graduate Programs in Library Education)*

SERVICE

We provide the highest level of service to all library users ...We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession. *ALA Policy Manual 54.16 (Statement of Professional Ethics)*

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ALA recognizes its broad social responsibilities. The broad social responsibilities of the American Library Association are defined in terms of the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society; support for efforts to help inform and educate the people of the United States on these problems and to encourage them to examine the many views on and the facts regarding each problem; and the willingness of ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service set forth in the position statement. *ALA Policy Manual, 1.1 (Mission, Priority Areas, Goals)*

Core Values Taskforce Roster

Patricia Glass Schuman, Chair
Neal-Schuman Publishers
Past-President, ALA
Past-Treasurer ALA

Betty J. Blackman (former Director, California State University, Dominguez Hills)
Past-Executive Board Member
Past California Chapter councilor

Michael A. Golrick
City Librarian
Bridgeport Public Library
Executive Board Member

Christine Lind Hage
Clinton Macomb Public Library
Past-President, Public Library Association
PLA Councilor

S. Michael Malinconico
EBSCO Professor
University of Alabama
Past-President, LITA
ALA Councilor

Bernard A. Margolis
President
Boston Public Library
Past Chair, ALA Endowment Trustees
ALA Councilor

Stephen L. Matthews
Foxcroft School
Chair, ALA Council Policy Monitoring Committee
Past member, AASL Board of Directors
Past President, Virginia Library Association
ALA Councilor

Kathleen de la Peña McCook
Distinguished Professor
University of South Florida
School of Library & Information Science
Past-Chair OLOS, OLPR (NOW HRDS), COSWL

Kenton Oliver
Director
Stark County Public Library
Executive Board Member
Incoming Chair, Intellectual Freedom Committee

Melissa J. Riley
Reference Librarian
West Portal Branch
San Francisco Public Library

Sally Gardner Reed
Executive Director, Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA)
Past Executive Board Member
Incoming Chair, Public Awareness Committee and ALA Membership Committee

Mark Rosenzweig
Reference Center for Marxist Studies
SRRT Action Council
ALA COUNCILOR

Mary R. Somerville
Library Consultant and former director Miami-Dade Public Library
Past President, ALSC
Past President, ALA

Carla J. Stoffle
Dean of Libraries
University of Arizona Library
Past President, ACRL
Past Treasurer, ALA

Maureen Sullivan
Library Consultant
Past President, ACRL
Past President, LAMA

Michael B. Wessells
Regional Library Manager
Timberland Regional Library
Hoquiam Branch
ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee Representative
Former Chair of IFRT

Lois Winkel
School Library Consultant
Member CVTF 1

Mark D. Winston
Asst Professor
Rutgers University
School of Communication Information & Library Studies
College & Research Libraries Editorial Board
Jury Chair, Doctoral Student Research Forum of LRRT

End of Section

At Midwinter, 2008, Council approved several revisions to the ALA Code of Ethics. In the document passed by Council, the sections of the Code were numbered as "ARTICLE X, ARTICLE Y, etc.," while the Code itself uses the numbering "1), 2), etc." PMC regards this difference as an editorial matter only, and has substituted the existing numbering system for the one used in the Council document. Otherwise, the changes put forth here are exactly as passed by Council.

At the 2008 ALA Annual Conference, the ALA Council Policy Monitoring Committee moved and Council voted to incorporate the following changes to Policy 40.2:

3): DELETE the current wording and REPLACE WITH: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted."

4): DELETE the current wording and REPLACE WITH: "We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders."

5): DELETE the current wording and REPLACE WITH: "We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions."

40.2

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

I. **We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.**

II. **We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.**

III. **We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.**

IV. ~~**We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.**~~ **We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.**

V. **We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.**

VI. **We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.**

VII. **We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.**

VIII. **We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.**

Comment [e1]: A comma was added to Article III, otherwise the text remained unchanged.

Comment [e2]: Article IV was completely rewritten.

The final version reads: "We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders."

Comment [e3]: A comma was added to Article V, otherwise the text remained unchanged.

~~Adopted June 28, 1995, by the ALA Council~~

Adopted 1981, Amended, 1995 AC, 2008 AC

revised by ALA Council at the 2008 Midwinter Mtg

OLD

American Library Association Code of Ethics

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.

II - We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.

IV. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.

V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.

VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.

VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.

VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

amended
~~Adopted~~ *by the ALA Council*
June 28, 1995

adopted 1981

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT, CD#18.5-18.7, Exhibit 45. E. J. Josey, chair, moved and Council

> ***VOTED,*** **To adopted CD#18.5, Resolution on Vo Thi Van, which read: "That the American Library Association urges that the United States work directly with the Royal Thai government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to fully reinvestigate [Vo Thi Van's] status and claim of eligibility for refugee status."**

Councilor E.J. Josey moved and Council

> ***VOTED,*** **To adopt CD#18.6, Resolution on the United States Information Agency, which read: "That the American Library Association registers its strong opposition to the proposed transfer of the USIA to the State Department; and, that the United States Congress should allocate the needed funds to enable the USIA to continue to operate independently and to maintain its ability and flexibility to manage the public dialogue abroad for each of the U.S. government agencies which have lead roles in policy issues of foreign affairs significance; and, that the American Library Association urges all members of the United States Congress to oppose legislation that will undermine the USIA by merging it with another agency, cutting back its funding, reducing or eliminating USIA programs relating to library programs or the exchange of librarians; and, that copies of this resolution be submitted by the American Library Association in person or by regular or electronic mail to all members of the U.S. Congress, including chairs of the budget and foreign relations committees, the State Department, the White House and the media."**

Councilor E.J. Josey moved and by *CONSENT*, Council voted that the American Library Association further the dissemination of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto through the appropriate communication channels.

COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, CD#36-36.1, Exhibit 46. Jeanne Isacco, chair, reported that the committee had completed a four-year process to revise the *ALA Code of Professional Ethics*. She emphasized that during this process, the committee had received numerous comments, many of which were incorporated into the revision. Lastly, she said that for several years, the committee had encouraged members in individual libraries to use the code, discuss the implications of each statement, and adopt it as part of their institution's practices. Isacco said the committee was anxious to encourage the adoption and, more importantly, the discussion of the Code after its adoption in local, regional or state libraries. She said that only by encouraging such discussion could the committee hope to make the Code a meaningful part of the library profession.

Jeanne Isacco and Councilor Carolyn Daniel moved the adoption of CD#36.1.
Councilors Ronnie Budge and Susan M. Flannery moved to amend by substituting for Statement 6, which currently read: *"We do not advance interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or employing institutions"* with the words: *"We avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions."*

Councilor Bernard Margolis proposed a friendly amendment, which was accepted by the mover, that the words *"private or"* be added to the amendment, which would then read: *"We avoid situations in which private or personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions."*

Several Councilors spoke against the amendment and Council then

> VOTED, To defeat the amendment to substituted the wording in Statement #6 of the *ALA Code of Professional Ethics*.

Council returned to the main motion.

Councilor Charles Bunge and Lynette Anderson moved to amend the title to read: *"ALA Code of Ethics for Library and Information Services"* and also, *"To amend paragraph 2 in the same manner."* Bunge said he was troubled by the title of the document, since the Code was not limited to professional librarians and that it was a statement of ethics for all levels of staff, trustees and institutions. The title, he said, should reflect this.

Councilor Bunge then recommended that the title be shortened to *ALA Code of Ethics*. The change would be reflected in both the title and in the second paragraph of the document. Council then

> VOTED, To amend the title of the ethics statement to *ALA Code of Ethics*

Councilors Martin Gomez and Linda Elliott moved to amend by striking from the first paragraph the words *"of work"* and adding the words *"that guide the work of library professionals."* Councilor Larry Romans remarked that this seemed to be contrary to the previous action. The motion to strike was ***DEFEATED.***

Council then

> VOTED, To approve the *ALA Code of Ethics* as amended.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION REPORT, CD#21.1, Exhibit 47. Sarah Pritchard, chair, presented the first action item. She stated that COO agreed with the recommendation of the Executive Board that the Development Office Advisory Committee should be dissolved because its functions had been taken over by the Fund for America's Libraries. Pritchard said, however, that

Committee on Professional Ethics Report on revised Statement is available at Exhibit 11, page 134 of 1981 Annual Conf. Council minutes

STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, 1981

Introduction

Since 1939, the American Library Association has recognized the importance of codifying and making known to the public and the profession the principles which guide librarians in action. This latest revision of the CODE OF ETHICS reflects changes in the nature of the profession and in its social and institutional environment. It should be revised and augmented as necessary.

Librarians significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, librarians are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

Librarians are dependent upon one another for the bibliographical resources that enable us to provide information services, and have obligations for maintaining the highest level of personal integrity and competence.

Code of Ethics

I. Librarians must provide the highest level of service through appropriate and usefully organized collections, fair and equitable circulation and service policies, and skillful, accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests for assistance.

II. Librarians must resist all efforts by groups or individuals to censor library materials.

III. Librarians must protect each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.

IV. Librarians must adhere to the principles of due process and equality of opportunity in peer relationships and personnel actions.

V. Librarians must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of an institution or professional body.

VI. Librarians must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the employing institution.

OLD 54.75 54.46 40.2

54.15

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Item: LIBRARY PERSONNEL *Item Number:* 106.13

Approved by: ALA Council *Page:* 1 *of* 2

Issue Date: January 1975 *Supersedes:*

STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Introduction

The American Library Association has a special concern for the free flow of information and ideas. Its views have been set forth in such policy statements as the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement where it has said clearly that in addition to the generally accepted legal and ethical principles and the respect for intellectual freedom which should guide the action of every citizen, membership in the library profession carries with it special obligations and responsibilities.

Every citizen has the right as an individual to take part in public debate or to engage in social and political activity. The only restrictions on these activities are those imposed by specific and well-publicized laws and regulations which are generally applicable. However, since personal views and activities may be interpreted as representative of the institution in which a librarian is employed, proper precaution should be taken to distinguish between private actions and those one is authorized to take in the name of an institution.

The statement which follows sets forth certain ethical norms which, while not exclusive to, are basic to librarianship. *It will be augmented by explanatory interpretations and additional statements as they may be needed.*

The Statement

A librarian

has a special responsibility to maintain the principles of the Library Bill of Rights.

should learn and faithfully execute the policies of the institution of which one is a part and should endeavor to change those which conflict with the spirit of the Library Bill of Rights.

must protect the essential confidential relationship which exists between a library user and the library.

must avoid any possibility of personal financial gain at the expense of the employing institution.

has an obligation to insure equality of opportunity and fair judgment of competence in actions dealing with staff appointments, retentions, and promotions.

has an obligation when making appraisals of the qualifications of any individual to report the facts clearly, accurately, and without prejudice, according to generally accepted guidelines concerning the disclosing of personal information.

End of Section

40.3

At the 2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting, upon recommendation by the Presidential Task Force on Education, 2008-2009 ALA CD#10, the ALA Council adopted the ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship, as amended, as a policy of the Association and as an important component of the revision of the Association's accreditation standards.

At the 2009 ALA Annual Conference, upon recommendation by the Policy Monitoring Committee, Council approved the codification of ALA Policy 40.3, Core Competences of Librarianship, in its entirety, into the *Policy Manual* as follows:

2008-2009 ALA CD#10.1
2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting

ALA's
Core Competences of Librarianship

Final version
Approved by the ALA Executive Board, October 25th 2008
Approved and adopted as policy by the ALA Council, January 27th 2009

This document defines the basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies. Librarians working in school, academic, public, special, and governmental libraries, and in other contexts will need to possess specialized knowledge beyond that specified here.

CONTENTS

1. ***Foundations of the Profession***
2. ***Information Resources***
3. ***Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information***
4. ***Technological Knowledge and Skills***
5. ***Reference and User Services***
6. ***Research***
7. ***Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning***
8. ***Administration and Management***

A person graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies should know and, where appropriate, be able to employ:

1. Foundations of the Profession

1A. The ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.

1B. The role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience).

1C. The history of libraries and librarianship.

1D. The history of human communication and its impact on libraries.

1E. Current types of library (school, public, academic, special, etc.) and closely related information agencies.

1F. National and international social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.

1G. The legal framework within which libraries and information agencies operate. That framework includes laws relating to copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), and intellectual property.

1H. The importance of effective advocacy for libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services.

1I. The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.

1J. Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).
.
1K. Certification and/or licensure requirements of specialized areas of the profession.

2. Information Resources

2A. Concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use to disposition.

2B. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and de-selection.

2C. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the management of various collections.

2D. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.

3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information

3A. The principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.

3B. The developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information resources.

3C. The systems of cataloging, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.

4. Technological Knowledge and Skills

4A. Information, communication, assistive, and related technologies as they affect the resources, service delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.

4B. The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.

4C. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.

4D. The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.

5. Reference and User Services

5A. The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.

5B. Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.

5C. The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.

5D. Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.

5E. The principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.

5F. The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.

5G. The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.

6. Research

6A. The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

6B. The central research findings and research literature of the field.

6C. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning

7A. The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.

7B. The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.

7C. Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.

7D. The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.

8. Administration and Management

8A. The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.

8B. The principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.

8C. The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.

8D. The concepts behind, and methods for, developing partnerships, collaborations, networks, and other structures with all stakeholders and within communities served.

8E. The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for, principled, transformational leadership.

End of Section