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President's Message

James Wilkerson

My how time flies! Three-fourths of the OLA year is gone already. Before you know it the 69th Oklahoma Library Association Annual Conference will be here. Plans for the Conference are coming along very well, thanks to our energetic and well-organized Second Vice-President and President-elect, Alfreda Hanna.

I would like in this edition of the President's Message to point out to the general membership several proposals which I had hoped could have been achieved during my term as your President. The gist of the proposals pertain to a major revamping of the OLA Constitution and By-laws. The present Constitution and By-laws has served us well during the past years; it has gone through several necessary changes. The Association has increased in membership, and we now have an Executive Secretary. Perhaps this suggests OLA's Constitution and By-laws should be thoroughly reviewed with some necessary revisions and changes made.

Following are my recommendations to obtain a strong association and more representative to the total OLA membership:

1. All executive officers should be elected for a two-year term. The Officers, President, 1st Vice-President and 2nd Vice-President should be elected from the membership at large and the duties of the Treasurer and Secretary assumed by the Executive Secretary. The remaining officers on the Executive Board would be past President, ALA councilor, and the Division Chairpersons from the School Librarians, College and University and the Public Libraries Division.

2. That the divisions of the Association be limited to three: School Libraries, College and University and Public Libraries Divisions. Under each division then would come sections such as Children's and Young Peoples section of the Public Libraries Division or the Reference Section for all three Divisions.

3. Secure and establish an annual year for the association business to be conducted. This would enable the Program Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Sequoyah Childrens Book Award Committee and the Membership Committee to have a precise time to complete the tasks for which the committees are responsible.

4. Change the dues structure so that the dues collected for a Division membership would be available to that Division for its program of activities for the year. This way each Division would have funds to work with during the year.

These are just a few proposals which in my thinking would improve the Oklahoma Library Association. You may not agree with them; if not let me or Alfreda Hanna know. If you do agree or have other suggestions which might help the Association, please let us know.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the 69th Annual Conference of OLA at the Lincoln Plaza Inn in Oklahoma City on March 25-27, 1976.
This may sound contradictory, but as a western fiction writer I believe that the gunfighter has been long overwritten and over-glamorized — and likely will continue to be.

Is it because, for one thing, the so-called gunslinger, often self-styled, represents an easy access to story or plot? Why not dig further? Why not examine the lives of the Five Civilized Tribes, uprooted from their southland homes, braving and dying in struggling columns, toiling their way toward the drumming ground of Indian Territory?

Why not look into the heart of the pioneer mother of eleven passing from life at thirty-five in a western Oklahoma dugout? Why not dig into the heroics of pathfinders, and Army men caught between the vise of official duty and compassion for the Plains Indians being herded onto reservations? Why the paucity of fiction on the professional buffalo hunters, who called themselves "buffalo runners," and the missionaries and traders and trail drivers, the wild horse hunters and homesteaders, the pioneer teachers and pioneer doctors? And most overlooked of all — the black man in the West?

The list goes on and on. There's so much to write about, so much fresh material which western editors would like to publish if they could get it.

This emphasis on the gunfighter has placed us in a bad light. Not long ago some academic observers of the national scene, looking for a scapegoat to blame for the outbreak of violence across the country, pointed accusingly at the western story and at the "western spirit." The West, they said, was responsible for crime on the streets.

I object. As I write this, I recall the words of a great oldtimer. "I grew up on the frontier," he said, "as did my father and my grandparents on both sides. I was taught never to point a gun at another person unless it was self-defense. The main purpose of the gun in those days was to shoot something for supper, not somebody."

As for myself, I still have my father's Winchester saddle gun, but I've never bought a single shell for it and never intend to. Neither have I glamorized a professional killer as a story character and never do I intend to do so.
So much for endless polemics. Actually, a majority of western novels are accounts of the human spirit. Justice vs. Injustice. Love vs. hate. Man's struggles against nature. Man's sacrifices, his giving and sharing, which is the western spirit. I learned that as a student of Foster-Harris and Dwight V. Swain and the late W. S. Campbell and Dr. E. E. Dale at the University of Oklahoma. These good and patient men gave more to their students than mere story structure and the mechanics of the scene.

I was born in Hominy, Oklahoma, and grew up in Osage County, which I consider fortunate. One doesn’t forget rounded hills, lush prairies and running creeks. My father was an early cowboy and rancher and "went up the trail" three times to the northern pastures. My mother was an original allottee on the Osage tribal rolls. I went to school with fullblood Osage boys and girls; they were warm friends. Years later I realized that my beginnings gave me a vantage point from which to write without bias about both Indians and pioneers.

A 1937 graduate of the O.U. School of Journalism, I wrote sports and was a general reporter on Oklahoma and Texas newspapers until the late 1940’s. After that came seven years as an assistant in the O.U. public relations office.

In the early 1950’s, I began writing short stories for the western pulp magazines. When they vanished one spring, victims of television, it was said (though poor management was another factor, since divulged) I saw that I must switch to the longer form.

My first effort was Flame of the Osage, a 1958 Pyramid paperback. Four Ballantine novels followed — No Bugles, No Glory, a Civil War story laid in the Southwest, and Sun Dance, Comanche Captives, and The Land Seekers. Comanche Captives received the first Oklahoma Writing Award and the 1962 Spur Award of the Western Writers of America and the Levi Strauss Golden Saddleman.

There was still a remnant short story market, and Comanche Woman and When the Caballos Came, the latter published in Boy's Life magazine, were named for Spurs in 1963 and 1966, respectively. Comanche Son, also a Boy's Life story, was a 1961 selection of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame for a Western Heritage Wrangler.

Novels often run in pairs for me. Buffalo Spring and The Buffalo Runners, Doubleday books, focused on virtual extermination of the southern buffalo herd. Recollections of hunters found in the O.U. Manuscripts Division of the Library helped provide stride-for-reality of that shameful period. I also traveled the buffalo country in Texas. I tried to show how a hide outfit was made up: the hunters, the skinners, the handymen, their equipment. How they stalked and skinned the doomed shaggies. The big-caliber weapons they used, chiefly the Sharps. How theypegged and dried the hides and marketed them; later, the even more profitable market in buffalo bones! The second novel received the 1968 Western Heritage Wrangler.

The Comanche War Trail through Texas and into Mexico had always fascinated me. Why not a novel built around a young Eastern artist come west to paint Indians in their primitive state? Why not have a band of Kiowas take him down on a raid? In 1971, Doubleday published War Journey.

Then, why not a novel on the traffic in white and Mexican captives in the Southwest? The Child Stealers came out two years later.

Ever since writing Flame of the Osage, unsatisfactory to me as a novel, I had wanted to get back to the exploitation of the Osages during the Roaring Twenties. Warrior Road was published in 1974. Drums Without Warriors, written from the viewpoint of an undercover FBI agent sent into Osage County to solve a series of baffling Indian murders, is scheduled for 1976 publication by Doubleday.

My current project is a novel on early quarter racing. At present I live in Norman with my wife, Lucile. It’s a pleasant life.
Editor's Note: It is not normal that as much space in the Oklahoma Librarian will be devoted to one subject as the following four articles. However, during this bicentennial year it is important that serious consideration be given to a study of the right to read and access to information.

Limits to Freedom? is a statewide project sponsored by the Public Library Systems of Oklahoma and supported by a grant from the Oklahoma Humanities Committee and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project provides Oklahomans with an opportunity to explore their private values and public policies on the right to read.

The opinions expressed and conclusions offered in these articles do not necessarily reflect the attitudes of the Oklahoma Humanities Committee, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Oklahoma Library Association or the Oklahoma Librarian.

Sandra Martin is Assistant Professor of Journalism and Chairperson for the Department of Mass Communications at Oklahoma City University.

I. Political Censorship

The struggle for a new nation . . . the promise of freedom . . . the emergence of the fabled 'land of the free.'

A nation so formed, so politically stable that it could withstand the rigors of criticism without censorship.

That was the tediously designed and tenderly nurtured plan for the newly fashioned United States of America.

The Constitution — the Bill of Rights — guaranteed the essentials to maintain that political stability for this democratic form of government.

Crucial among those guarantees were the promises of free speech and free press and their implicit right to read and right of access to information.

What the founders of our nation envisioned was for every American to have the right to say what he wished even if that meant criticism of the government and those who govern it, even if it meant speaking out in favor of other forms of government.

They believed so totally in the necessity of a free press that they specified Congress could make no law abridging its freedom, even if a newspaper chose to urge overthrow of the government, as long as it did not advocate violence.

They were convinced that the rights of free expression were the guardians of a free society.

In the words of Thomas Jefferson, au-
tor of the Constitution: "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost."

Our forefathers were men of great vision, but that vision was not theirs alone. Their dream for America had its beginnings in the minds of liberty-minded men in ancient Greece and Rome. It flourished in the minds of Englishmen and Frenchmen and in the consciousness of early modern humanists Milton, Voltaire, Rousseau, Darwin and Locke.

That dream was of democracy and of a nation that could be politically free. The aristocratic, intelligent young men who authorized our decrees of freedom were familiar with the works of Plato, though unlike him they did not design a system to be governed by the elite. They knew the wisdom of Aristotle and were guided by the teachings of John Locke.

Many of their concepts came from the British, but were refined and defined to serve a people for whom the government would be servant...not master.

The founders of our nation had come out of generations of questioning and criticism and rebellion. Democracy and America were not sacred to them. No political system was. They had even built in provisions for the peaceful reorganization of the government structure.

Criticisms of established forms of government were how they had spent their lives. So in structuring their ideal land they insured the right of future generations to raise their voices in criticism.

So it was that free expression and freedom of the press became essential to the new nation. The people's right to read and availability of information became its building blocks.

Censorship, or control of information, had been a part of all man's history. There are countless examples of the value of information to those who control it. But always there is the desire of the people to know.

Demosthenes recorded that tendency centuries ago when he recounted, "It is the greatest pleasure of the Athenians to wander the streets asking, 'What is the news?'".

The desire for knowledge ultimately became a demand as education advanced, as the intellectual sophistication of the populace grew and as technology permitted information to be printed and distributed.

The first great rebellion against censorship came from one of England's most famous men. John Milton was the greatest poet of his age, a political and religious figure of importance and a man whom principles superseded the law.

At that time in England nothing could be written and published without a license from the government.

Milton, stirred by restraint and personal ethics, published two works without government authorization. One essay was Milton's classic Areopagitica, a stirring plea for freedom. Despite the fact that he broke the law, the House of Lords never brought Milton to trial. Intellectual freedom had begun to loosen the restraints of governmental restriction.

The next great challenge to restraint occurred in the Colonies in 1735. The trial of John Peter Zenger was to become one of the most important incidents in the development of the free press.

Zenger, an immigrant printer had published a series of articles critical of the policies of the Crown Governor of New York.

He was arrested, charged with seditious libel, thrown into jail and brought to trial.

As the existing law was written there was no doubt that Zenger was guilty. For the mere fact that critical articles had been published was illegal. The Zenger case was critical not only because it established legal precedents on truth as a defense against a charge of libel and the right of a jury to decide a man's guilt or innocence, but because the jury simply refused to pay any attention to the British law.

The fireball of revolution was beginning to flame — there was no way the colonists would find against free expression.
Why were governments always in opposition to a free press? The answer quite obviously is power. Those who control information maintain power without challenge.

Even today in democratic societies, governments are quite sensitive about what the press has to say, and are constantly embroiled in struggles over the free press.


"Debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open, and . . . may well include vehement, caustic and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials."

Is the intention of our founding fathers still honored? Have circumstances developed which make political censorship essential? Are there certain things the government has a right to keep from the people? Have we evolved a nation where individuals may censor or attempt to censor access to political information?

As we look at the historical meaning of freedom from political censorship, it is essential also that we investigate the position of that concept in modern American society and that we look at the incidents and ideas that have created current community attitudes.

It was not long after the Revolutionary War that in essence the shoe was on the other foot. Many of those who had been so instrumental in developing this new government were concerned about protecting their proud accomplishment.

And so it was that just 22 years after the birth of our nation the Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Act which provided a prison sentence and fine for anyone convicted of writing, printing or uttering "false, scandalous and malicious statements against the government or Congress with intent to defame or hold them in contempt." Twenty-five men were arrested and ten convicted under this law.

The Act proved so violently unpopular with the masses, who still held fast to their American dream, that the politicians who had begun to fear loss of power were startled. It was repealed in 1800 and those arrested were pardoned by the new President Thomas Jefferson.

The next incident of official restraint of free expression came during the Civil War when the Lincoln administration suppressed some northern newspapers for "hurl(ing) violent abuse" at President Lincoln.

Then in 1917 and 1918 Congress passed the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act. Under these two acts the government was able to suppress information deemed damaging to the war effort. It would be these two laws that would first test freedom of expression in the Supreme Court and establish some guidelines still applicable.

Out of these laws evolved test cases which resulted in the classic 'clear and present danger' doctrine.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in explaining this doctrine wrote: "The question in every case is whether the words are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent."

What had happened was that suddenly America found itself a complex nation with varying people and varying attitudes. It had become the classic melting pot of immigrants. Some brought ideas that were not acceptable to those who had position and stability to protect. The melting pot had begun to boil.

Now it apparently became necessary to institute some kinds of limits on what could be said, what information would be available to the public.

The precipitator of that need was born out of a nation at war and a national fear of conflicting ideological concepts.

The approaches to political censorship became two-fold. First, there are those most obvious statutory limits. They are few and generally apply only under extra-
ordinary circumstances such as war or a condition of treason.

And then there is "unofficial censorship": restrictions placed by governmental classification of information; restrictions placed by self-censorship, such as the reporter who fails to report personal misconduct of a political friend; by sins of omission, in other words, just not releasing information; censorship created by self-interest, perhaps a newspaper publisher who refuses to publish information against his views or interests.

These "silent censors" are the most prevalent and the most effective. These are the kinds of political censorship that affect the daily lives of Americans, that decide whether or not they know what is going on in their government at national and local levels or whether they have the right to read viewpoints of those who disagree with official positions.

Those unofficial censors can exist at every "gatekeeper" position. In the field of communications the "gatekeeper" is the individual who makes decisions on what information is available to the public. It may be the city editor of a newspaper, a teacher, a librarian responsible for book selection, a public official who opts for decisions made "in camera" (in private), or a national politician who restricts information under a "Top Secret" stamp.

Official censorship is primarily conducted at the federal level of government. It is at this level the fighting has been most vicious and in recent years most obvious.

Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger has said that the secrecy system has become less a means by which the government protects national security than a means by which government safeguards its reputation.

When conducted in an official capacity that censorship is traditionally limited to material that could be considered in the national interest. Exactly what is in the national interest has proved to be a question of great import.

The Pentagon Papers case and the Watergate affair raised many questions about the kinds of material being classified and the techniques being used to withhold information from the public.

In 1966 Congress passed the Freedom of Information Act which was designed to make it impossible for government agencies to arbitrarily withhold information from the public. However, many journalists have charged that this has been an ineffective tool and has in reality given government officials and agencies a legal basis on which to deny certain kinds of data.

Despite the alleged ineffectiveness of the Freedom of Information Act it is more of an effort than has taken place on the local level in most parts of the nation.

Very few local communities provide any kind of requirement for public disclosure. Oklahoma, however, is the exception and does have an Open Meeting Law, which while not as effective as some would like, has had the effect of forcing more of the public's business into the open.

It was probably occurrences during the administration of President Richard Nixon that brought the conflict between government and free expression before the public more vividly than in many years.

During those years reporters by the dozens were subpoenaed and arrested for failure to reveal sources of information. Journalists were told by the Supreme Court that the first amendment offered them no protection in the news gathering function. Numerous reporters were jailed and others faced with "gag" actions by judges and government officials. Broadcast operations were faced with stiffer criteria from the Federal Communications Commission and demands for access.

Some political officials sensitive to the professed function of the press as "watchdog" of the government and guardian of the people's freedom, have urged passage of federal and state shield laws to protect reporters from imprisonment for fulfilling their journalistic ethic.

Several states, Oklahoma included, have passed qualified shield laws designed to guarantee ability of reporters to secure
information and to make it available to the public.

There is an aspect of freedom of political information apart from knowledge of governmental affairs. It is the right of the individual to seek and read information about political philosophies other than those accepted as the norm.

In this case the right to read or right of access to information is always censored by "unseen" elements, for there can be no national censorship.

Such censorship may be done by the local library or school through failure to provide reference books on foreign political ideologies or through refusal of a community newspaper to provide print coverage on an opposing political opinion.

How have the subtle techniques of censorship affected the availability of political information for Oklahomans? A research committee working for the Oklahoma Humanities Committee on its current Limits to Freedom project recently investigated Oklahoma coverage, reaction and accessibility to politically controversial information.

That study, directed by Dr. Duane Cummins of Oklahoma City University, indicated that there is little doubt that most Oklahomans historically have had little patience with political views out of the "Americanism" mainstream.

The attitude of many Oklahomans seems to be expressed in a January 1975 editorial appearing in the Oklahoma City Times.

The editorial expressed the attitude that once again citizens of Oklahoma were "stuck" with honoring the principle of free speech for a person whose views were unacceptable to the majority of the state's citizens.

The comments referred to the hotly debated appearance of avowed communist Angela Davis for a lecture at the University of Oklahoma.

The editorial concluded with the opinion that although she could not legally be kept from speaking, there was no law that said she could not be ignored.

Most of the newspapers of Oklahoma followed the lead set by the Oklahoma City paper. Those papers that acknowledged her presence in the state usually editorially condemned it.

Such populous areas as Ponca City and Ada received no local newspaper coverage of the "free-speech" political controversy surrounding Davis' appearance at OU.

They apparently were following the precedent established in 1908 by the Bartlesville Enterprise when it claimed "it is not our duty to present articles that will inflame the public's mind when conditions do not make it necessary or desirable."

The controversy surrounding the Angela Davis speaking engagement was a classic example of the historical confrontation between two concepts of Americanism. While some Oklahomans objected to her appearance in the state because of the many communists and non-traditional American views, others claimed those who fought her appearance were un-American because they wished to defy the constitutional guarantee of free expression.

Oklahoma's historical response to similar confrontations reveals much about the development of modern community views on political expression and the factors responsible for attitudes in your town.

That first great national battle between ideological interpretations on what it means to be politically free emerged when the nation seemed caught in a hysteria spurred by the war with Germany and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The "great red scare," as this era would be historically named, was to become the first great test of first amendment meaning.

Out of the fear and panic of upheaval in Europe came the Palmer Raids. The Raid were an organized round-up of "communist radicals" in the United States. Under the personal direction of the U.S. Attorney General hundreds were arrested for deportation to Russia. Those accused were allegedly involved in a nation-wide plot for overthrow of the U.S. government.

The Raids were the basis for brutal con-
troversty. Whether or not the constitutional rights of individuals were broken during the Raids, Oklahoma newspapers editorially indicated widespread support for the Raids and followed their progress almost compulsively on the news pages.

The Enid Daily News editorially cautioned that "the disclosures made patent (by the Raids) show that no community in our land is exempt from radical thought and teachings."

A few days later the Daily News observed: "Like the prudent farmer who goes through his cellar in mid-winter and sorts out the rotten apples to save the good fruit from decay, Uncle Sam is wisely gathering the misfits from Russia to send them back to their own kind."

The Lawton News carried an editorial entitled, "The Rattlesnake and the Bolshevist," and subtitled "Shoot'em or Ship'em."

Historical scholar Zachariah Chaffee, Jr. would later say that during these years the first amendment collapsed "like an empty box with beautiful words on it."

During the early 1950's the United States and therefore Oklahoma experienced another 'red scare'. This time the impetus was Senator Joseph McCarthy. Initially Oklahoma newspapers indicated strong support for McCarthy's investigation of 'communists' in the military, government and American life in general.

However, as national disillusionment with McCarthy and his relentless attacks on numerous Americans grew, so did local displeasure with his approach and his intensity.

By 1954 the attitude of most state newspapers was editorially expressed by the Enid newspaper: "We have seen and heard enough of the McCarthy-Army controversy to last us for a long, long time."

The editorial continued, "If he hasn't already...we do believe he (McCarthy) will wear out his welcome with the American people."

The Lawton newspaper probably said best what the feelings of most Americans and Oklahomans ultimately came to be when it cried that "there is not a democratic government in the United States as long as McCarthyism...is allowed to exist."

In this instance what had happened was a strong case of "overkill." Even those normally anxious for government investigation of "political enemies" had a little too much when Americans such as Gen. George Marshall and Gen. Dwight Eisenhower were accused of being communist enemies.

But again when political non-conformity attracted national attention with opposition to the Vietnam War research shows many Oklahoma newspapers were hostile to those who argued against the war and failed to provide an open forum of attitudes.

If a review of Oklahoma newspapers can indicate best how Oklahoma has responded to politically controversial situations in the past, then the windows to the present are the distributors of information available now.

The OCU research committee studied libraries, bookstores and school curricula in sixteen Oklahoma communities.

Dr. Duane Cummins explains what they found: "A quick survey of card catalogues revealed a general absence of controversial best-sellers in many libraries, as well as any reasonable range of scholarly works on communism."

He continued: "A degree of selectivity and controls exists in relationship to incoming materials, reflecting the librarian's view of what would be acceptable to the community at large...past collections or subscriptions to such magazines as The Nation or The New Republic tend to be on the absentee list in many libraries."

"Local bookstores exert a strict arbitrary control over the books and periodicals stocked on their shelves," said Dr. Cummins. "This," he said, "implies individual effort to conform to undefined and unwritten community standards."

Dr. Cummins' research group also indicated that few Oklahoma classrooms spend significant time studying opposing political
American dream and believed it or had re-stocked books on "radical" or unfamiliar political concepts.

Most Oklahomans apparently agree with national columnist Patrick Buchanan who in his June 6, 1975 column challenged the teaching of criticism of American history in schools and indicated that tax payers should see that our political system is defended in the schools.

By the time Oklahoma joined the Union, most Americans had caught hold of the ideologies. And few school librarians defined it and all its promises. An awe nearly approaching religious fervor existed for those now sacred pieces of parchment; an awe for the symbols and the system that for some did not include literal interpretation of those guaranteed freedoms.

Many Oklahomans now felt, as did many other Americans that political extremism or non-conformity posed threats to the nation's security.

Has the vastness of America, the complexity of American society, the diversity of her people and their tastes altered the original intentions of the founding fathers? Have the changing times altered and changed the rights of some to speak, publish, broadcast or seek access to information about non-conformist political attitudes?

II. Minors and Minorities

It was a revolutionary idea that was to play a great part in the Revolutionary War.

That a government should be formed professing as its basic declaration the freedom and equality of all, indeed assuming that the primeval condition of humanity was freedom, was startling. And then that it should declare the individual possession of inalienable human rights and make provision for their guarantee was even more extraordinary.

It was not that these were new thoughts. The arrogant young intellectuals who designed our governmental structure were familiar and sympathetic with the works of philosophers and humanists such as John Locke and John Milton.

It was from these and other great thinkers that our forefathers gathered their concepts. It was under the rule of the British that those concepts became convictions.

James Madison, our fourth President and one of the architects of our democratic government, explained, "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance. And a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives."

The realization that people must have freedom of information was one of the cornerstones of our nation. It was emerging fathers that a free press exist to assure distribution of that information.

That concern was so great for Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the Constitution, that he expressed firm belief that if a choice must be made between the government and a free press, then the free press must be the survivor.

That right, the right to gather information, make information available and to read and study that information, is one of the freedoms implicit in the first amendment to the Constitution.

Could it be however, that for some this guarantee of access to information, the right to read and to learn has been a hollow promise? Have some Americans, some Oklahomans, outside "the mainstream majority" faced limitations to their guaranteed right to read and have access to information?

If those limits exist — and investigation indicates that they do — where do they come from and how are they enforced?

The issues of freedom have been repeatedly analyzed, argued and applied during our nation's history. Even at the time of the nation's birth there were those who expressed great concern for the rights of minorities. Our first and third presidents, phasized by the determination of our found-
George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, spoke against slavery as morally wrong, and freed their slaves. However, in a society that depended heavily on slaves, their voices were almost unheard. Since the Civil War and the gradual development of an intellectual climate in America that accepts minority group members as more than "second class citizens," an overriding question has been the limits of freedom for minority group members.

The right to read and access to information implies equal access to the media coverage and access to the media. It means realistic portrayal of minority related historical events and accurate accounting of minority history. It means libraries stocked with reference material and books about and by minorities.

What part do citizens in local communities play in providing for this equal access to information? Is it possible that limits to freedom are controlled or influenced by the non-representative values of a few community residents?

In a democratic society attempts to restrict information, censor books or other learning sources have rarely been launched by official sources, but have come instead from the unofficial, which reflect the community’s attitude.

Those "unspoken rules" or private values that reflect existing community standards are the product of the historical development and intellectual atmosphere in a given community.

In recent years Supreme Court decisions have had an important effect on public policies relating to minority groups, especially in the areas of schooling and voting. Both are areas where access to information is of vital significance. Both are areas where community attitudes on the right to read and the availability of information for minorities can exert great control and could limit freedoms.

In his book Freedom To Know, author and journalist Joseph Carter stresses the point that there was an era in American History when inferiority of minority groups was an accepted truth.

There were a few voices speaking their convictions that prejudice was wrong. But there were many more who voiced agreement with President William Howard Taft when he said, "Africa hasn’t any history at all, except that which we trace to apes."

Or the statement of reknowned humanitarian Woodrow Wilson when he said, "In the matter of Chinese and Japanese coolie immigration I stand for the national policy of exclusion."

He continued, "We cannot make a homogeneous population out of people who do not blend with the Caucasian race."

In his book Carter also stresses, "It is not that men of this era were stupid or insensitive men, they were simply products of their times."

When "Alfalfa" Bill Murray, who would become governor of Oklahoma, spoke to the United States Senate in 1906, he urged separate but equal facilities for blacks and wanted a law against mixed marriages (which Oklahoma later passed).

Murray went on to say, "We would not hurt the black man by putting him into our society because he was only meant to be bus boys and shoe shiners." He too, was a man of the times, expressing an attitude of the times.

It is out of this historical attitude that current community values are structured. The development and defining of existing values is reflected in the literature and communications of our time, just as historical reflection illustrates for us how those values were created.

Recently Dr. Duane Cummins, Darabeth professor of history at Oklahoma City University, supervised a study of Oklahoma newspapers as part of the Oklahoma Humanities Committee sponsored "Limits To Freedom" project.

Dr. Cummins says that his study revealed that many early Oklahoma newspapers did view minority group members as second class citizens or even less. And that they rarely gave equal or objective cover-
age to minority groups or minority events.

Most minority news coverage was devoted to racial problems between blacks and whites. One of the earliest media accounts was a 1909 article on attempts in Guthrie to send all blacks back to Africa.

In 1921 the Enid newspaper published on its front page a letter from the Ku Klux Klan threatening 21 area blacks and warning them to leave town.

The Klan grew very strong in Oklahoma during the 1920's and spoke out regularly against several minority groups in the state. They also received extensive news coverage and frequent endorsement from the Oklahoma Press.

Dr. Cummins' OCU research group found in their study that the Ku Klux Klan and its popularity (90,000 Oklahoma members) was indicative of community attitudes and values at the time. It is also noted that a portion of that strength may have been precipitated by fear of reprisal.

Undoubtedly the greatest incident to evidence the racial discontent and mood of the times was the awesome 1921 Tulsa race riot.

The riot, historically one of the nation's largest and bloodiest, began after the alleged attack on a white girl by a black man. As reported in The Oklahoma City Times on June 1, 1921, there were an estimated 175 dead, 60 whites and 200 blacks injured. Ten city blocks of Tulsa's black district were burned. The city was placed under martial law. Three hundred armed guardsmen entered the city with hundreds more in readiness.

After the battles ceased, 6,000 black residents of Tulsa were marched through the streets with their hands in the air and held in "concentration camps" until a military commission established by the government could pass on their guilt or innocence.

Editorial reaction and news coverage of the Tulsa riot was varied. Reports of death were given ranging from 9 to 175. Some state newspapers featured only the information that 9 whites died in the riot and listed only the injured white, completely ignoring death and injury to blacks.

An accounting of black Oklahomans was well documented one segment of the state press. Black newspapers have existed as an alternate medium in Oklahoma for years. Their primary audience has been black community residents although they have had a limited non-minority readership.

An interesting comparison of content in black and non-black newspapers was noted by Kaye Teall, scholar and author, during a recent historical research project.

Teall recalled, "Just for fun I read a lot of the 1930's and 1940's Black Dispatch newspapers . . . and when there was a particularly interesting story or something that was really noteworthy, I would then look at the daily paper to see if I could find it in there, and it never was."

By the time the nation's Supreme Court outlawed segregation in the nation's schools in 1954 Oklahoma newspapers generally urged compliance and a willingness to abide by the law and implement the decision as swiftly and painlessly as possible.

If the struggle of the black Oklahomans received unstable news coverage, as research produced by the OCU study group indicates, they were still ahead of other minorities in access to media and availability of information.

The American Indian went virtually unnoticed in many early Oklahoma newspapers. That lack of attention was perhaps a reflection of a national attitude beginning when the Constitution of the new United States referred to the native Americans as "merciless Indian Savages," and perpetuated by President Rutherford B. Hayes' referral to Indians as "a weaker race" with whom our national dealings had not been encouraging.

These comments were in direct conflict with the comments of Christopher Columbus, discoverer of America, who referred to the Indians as "a loving, uncovetous people so docile in all things that there is no better people, or better country."

The struggle of women for their guaranteed freedoms also apparently received little documentation from the Oklahoma
press. They paid little attention to the fact that women fought for and won the right to vote, an incident apparently viewed as not a newsworthy event.

Indeed, research compiled by Dr. Duane Cummins of OCU for the Oklahoma Library Systems indicates the consensus was the less said the better.

In 1920 an article did appear in the Enid newspaper acknowledging that women now had the vote and were beginning to organize for social legislation.

The fact that the fight for women’s rights was not extensively covered by the Oklahoma press is not extraordinary. The approach seemed to be nationwide, and in some ways still seems to be.

Author Kaye Teall points to information gathered while compiling research for Governor Hall’s Commission on the Status of Women.

Teall relates that of all the history textbooks examined by the Committee, “None of them gave the whole Women’s Movement, which lasted from the 1840’s until the present day . . . more than half a page and most of them didn’t give it that and they always put it in terms that the Women were “given” the vote, ignoring the thousands of women . . . who used every means at their command down to going to jail . . . It doesn’t tell women that they did this on their own.”

Even in the last year, coverage of attempts to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in other states was apparently difficult to obtain in Oklahoma. This lack of information left both supporters and opponents of the ERA without accurate and complete knowledge of the Amendment’s progress.

The ERA dissension produced at least two examples of individuals within the community applying personal values in determining what residents in their area should read or view.

When the Oklahoma legislature failed to pass the ERA, an Oklahoma City radio station declined the request of a female news reporter to air a bulletin, responding, “It isn’t really important enough to go in the newscast.”

And when an Oklahoma City supporter of the ERA could find no information in local newspapers of progress of the Amendment in another state she called an Oklahoma City television station to be told, “We don’t keep track of it, because we don’t believe in it.”

Against this background, a view of what has been, is it possible to look at the American dream of equal access to information as accomplished fact? If media reflect existing community attitudes, or mold community values, then historically have our communities or portions of our communities placed limits to freedom on minority group members?

A crucial aspect of access to information and the right to read involves the effects of denial of information to specific group members. What happens when we Americans, so proud of what we are that we want the world to know, deny fellow Americans information crucial to knowledge of self and sense of worth?

The teaching of the American historical experience has been apart of public education for almost two hundred years. That history, that awesome history of a people driven to unseen goals has had one great flaw for minority Americans. For it is the history of their land but not of their people.

Most minority children experience a classic education in history. What they also experience is participation in a society that is rarely their own.

Recently at a taping session for a radio program on limits to freedom for minorities, author Kaye Teall explained, “When they present to all children a white middle class society . . . they do make the child . . . feel left out somehow, as though you’re not worth talking about.”

Indian children usually learn that their ancestors were savages who scalped their victims. They rarely hear that this was a little trick taught the Indians by white traders willing to pay well for the “novelties.”

Black children learn that their ancestors
learn that black people came from no culture but were gradually taught the culture of their new land.

They do not learn that a black man really invented the light bulb or ice cream. They came to his land in bondage, that there were no exceptions, which is not fact. They do not read the works of Ellison, Hughes, Cleaver or Momaday.

Russell Bates, an Oklahoma Kiowa Indian and professional writer, relates his own experience: "I had no concept of myself as an Indian from history that I learned at school. I was taught the same history as everyone else; therefore, I must be the same as everyone else, but the social difference that was heavily demonstrated to me in school meant that I was different."

Today very few of the textbooks used in the state contain minority information. A few literature books do contain articles by black authors, but no Indian works. Historical information from the point of view of minority groups is rarely available; most historical data is in the form of encyclopedia collections.

Generally if a female child were to form her self-concept from information readily available to her in Oklahoma she would find her future limited. Although some existing textbooks are being updated and new ones written, the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Oklahoma found current texts bulging with stereotypes.

Grade school texts feature little girls playing with dolls. A typical high school government text depicts women only in the roles of volunteer workers, voters, and once as a health nurse. All officials mentioned in the text were referred to as he and depicted as males.

The natural alternative for access to information not available in the school is the library. The problem as defined by the Limits to Freedom research group is that in Oklahoma the material is rarely available in public libraries, particularly those in small communities. This shortage of books on minorities or written by minority authors appears to have several causes.

Until recently there were few books being published by minority authors, with the notable exception of books written by female authors.

Most blacks, until recent years, had difficulty getting published unless they were "known" or co-authored with a white. It is just in recent years that Indians have begun to write books, or at least be identified as Indian authors.

Despite this, lack of books has not been the major problem. In many smaller libraries those responsible for securing books cite small budgets as one reason they are unable to increase their collections of minority related material.

Mae Nolan, consultant for the Southwest Center for Human Relations explains that committees established to select and censor books have failed to order books because they were not felt to be of general interest or because "the parents of non-minority children may object to their children learning particular kinds of things about their classmates or other children."

Often books rejected or removed from library shelves have been those authored by blacks. Two of those most frequently embroiled in controversy have been Claude Brown's Manchild in The Promised Land and Eldridge Cleaver's Soul On Ice.

Oklahoma does not stand alone in censorship of books directed at minority groups or specified for minority information. It is and has been a national experience.

Author Joseph Carter tells us that book censorship in America is ineffective. It is the mobility of our society. He explains that if a book is banned in the schools, it must be banned in the libraries and in the bookstores and in neighboring communities.

Eric Sevareid in his classic, The American Dream, tells us that America has come to the time when it is dedicated to "The first attempt to educate everyone to the limit of his capacities. We have known for a long time that this can be done only through the chemistry of individual freedom.

The "littlest" minority in American society is her children. They are a social minority.
which poses unusual problems in relation to the right to read and view.

Do children have the right to make their own decisions on what they see and read? Do their parents have the right—moral, not legal, for that right is certainly there in the eyes of the law—to control information available to their children, particularly those of school age?

Traditionally in Oklahoma the parent has been the final authority on what his child will be taught in the classroom. Is there a time when a child's rights to information supersede his parent's rights?

Sex education is one area of information some educators feel is essential for classroom instruction. However, a check of Oklahoma communities, conducted by an OCU research group indicates that a majority of parents do not agree.

The problem surrounding children's rights boils down to the question of the parent as the director of information for a child.

The conflict was verbalized recently by author Kaye Teall when she discussed the hostile reaction of a mother who objected to a television commercial for the National Organization for Women.

The mother expressed her desire that her daughter never have to work, that she never think in terms of a career, that she never strive to make as much money as a man if she did “need to work before she got married.”

Teall responded, “Is that mother . . . does she have the right to be the sole source of information about the potential of womanhood to that daughter, or does the community have a right to feed into that child, “you can be what you want to be.” What happens to minority group members when and if unseen or unidentified influences in the community define the stan-

dards and openness of that community?”

As we have seen, the basic problems are a limitation of their access to information and a resultant limitation in the development of self concept and historical identity.

But for the community there can be a loss too, for as James Madison stressed, “Knowledge governs ignorance.”

When the Limits To Freedom radio program on minorities was taped, educator Mae Nolan summarized the community benefit when complete access to information exists:

“When you provide accurate information about people, then you . . . have to take a look at . . . the nature of prejudice. We are prejudiced about most people and things because of our lack of knowledge. But if you know something about that person and you know that they tend to have more similarities than differences, you know, like you — then your prejudices might be to some degree eliminated.”

Why would a community persist in a value structure that denies information?

Nolan speculates, “To me it's the way . . . it's one way . . . of assuring yourself, if you're the person at the top, of remaining in that position. Because you can't be superior — unless you have subordinates.”

When you started to school one of the first things you learned was of our nation's struggle for freedom. You were taught that in America every person had been guaranteed certain rights. Among those rights were the right to read and to have access to information.

In your community are there limits to the right to read and access to information? Are those limits a reflection of community values in relation to minority groups? What are the private values and public policies on the right to read in your community? Or, are there any limits at all?

III. Religious Censorship

In part, this is story for three girls. They were born and raised in Oklahoma. They have gone to school together and are good students. They live in good neighborhoods, have successful parents. They are fair-skinned, rosy cheeked and pretty. They
learned American history in school, spend money marked "In God We Trust," and stand for the pledge of allegiance to a united America "under God." They all believe in the Constitution and Bill of Rights and the founding principles of this nation.

But could it be that our three friends do not share equally in those freedoms promised by our founding fathers? Is it possible that limits have been placed on their free expression of religion? Limits that are created by restrictions on the access to information and the right to read and that affect their individual quality of life and the attitudes of others toward them?

For you see, one of these fictional young women is Protestant, one is Jewish and one is an atheist.

To be Protestant in a Protestant nation, is to be one of the majority — it is to be constantly reminded that your beliefs are the most prevalent. Even to be a Christian in a Christian nation offers the knowledge that you are one of many. You hear your President call your nation a "Christian nation," you see your school holidays planned around Christian holy days, you are reminded constantly that you are a part of the power base. Despite this, some Christians, particularly Catholics and non-traditional religious sects, have apparently encountered minority religious group experiences.

To be Jewish in a Christian nation — what does it mean? Obviously it means being in the minority. It often means not being understood or having people think strange things about you and your faith and why you practice it. It means being cast in a complexity of stereotypes from a hooked nose to a tight fist with money. It means listening to a myriad of tasteless jokes and answering a myriad of tasteless questions.

To be an atheist in a Christian nation is probably the least popular thing you could be — an object of general contempt and distrust, often the recipient of less than Christian action from the Christians around you.

And indeed, if your religious persuasion is even more obscure, less popular, less known, chances are that you find proportionate misunderstanding and lack of acceptance for your faith.

In 1831 French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville visited America the first and only time. While he was here, he made some observations that have made his book, *Democracy in America*, increasingly popular for its relevance.

In that book de Tocqueville discusses the "tyranny of the majority" in which he says, "I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America." He continued, "For America the majority raises formidable barriers around the liberty of opinion; within these barriers an author may write what he pleases, but woe to him if he goes beyond them (the majority)."

In his writings de Tocqueville indicated his conviction that in a society ruled by majority opinion those who express different opinions (or practice a different religion) are oppressed in soul by the prevalent thoughts and attitudes.

He commented, "You are free to think differently from me and to retain your life, your property and all you possess, but you are henceforth a stranger among your people."

What then is freedom of religion? If there are no laws restricting individual freedoms, then where do those restrictions originate? Or indeed, are there any limits placed on freedom of religion?

What exactly did our founding fathers intend when they talked about freedom of religion? It is essential to remember they came out of a history of religious wars and persecution, of censorship and established state religions.

Above all they did not want the state to fund or support any religious sect. They wanted no established government control.
over religious conviction. These were their primary concerns.

However, they were also concerned that everyone have freedom of expression of religion.

Jefferson wrote, “We are bound, you and I, and every one to make a common cause... to maintain the common right of freedom of conscience.” For to Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of our Constitution, a man who was not a classic Christian, freedom of religion was in meaning — freedom of the mind. He was convinced that freedom of religion must be regarded as a wholly private matter, a matter of conscience.

That — until today — has been the public stand of our government on religion, and was recently reaffirmed by Supreme Court Justice Stephen O. Douglas when he said, “The absolute freedom of religious belief includes the right to believe that which would be heresy to orthodox faiths. Men may believe what they cannot prove. They may not be put to the proof of other religious doctrines or beliefs.”

That belief in free expression of religion was a result of the historical factors that brought about the establishment of this new nation.

The entire colonial land had been settled by religious dissenters; by men and women who wanted the right to believe in their own way and practice their beliefs without restraint.

Those first citizens came from countless places and for countless individual reasons. There were Puritans from England, Presbyterians from Scotland, Dutch Reformers from the Netherlands, Lutherans from Germany, Hugenots from France, Catholics and Jews from all over Europe. The only thing they all had in common was their desire to worship as they wished without the European heritage of persecution and religious conflict.

The vast majority of religious immigrants to the new land were Puritans and religious fundamentalists. But despite their numerical majority they generally felt a kinship with others in their flight from persecution. For this reason religious tolerance was widespread.

The progress of toleration was advanced, not only by so many people of so many faiths suffering under the same conditions, but also because of legal steps taken by some religious progressives. The earliest such step was taken by Roger Williams when he drafted the Maryland Toleration Act of 1649. Additional legal guarantees of religious toleration were provided by the passage of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

Alexis de Tocqueville said that despite our proclamations of tolerance, American society does limit one’s “soul” through the “unspoken” controls of the majority.

How do modern Americans — modern Oklahomans — in the religious majority react to those whose beliefs conflict with theirs? Do they sometimes deny full freedom of religion to other Americans through application of “unspoken rules” or by the opinion of the community majority?

Since freedom of religious expression was the predominant struggle that led to the American colonization, one could expect it to have been an overwhelming concern of the men who authored our independence. However, it was not. That is probably because at the time of constitutional establishment, freedom of conscience and religious expression were considered a foregone conclusion and their assurance was not considered essential.

The Constitution itself included only one reference to government and religion. That is in Article Six which specifies that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.”

Some of the citizens of the new nation were concerned that their religious freedom was not more expressly stated. So among its other guarantees of individual freedom, the first amendment to the constitution established the maxim that Congress could “make no law respecting an establishment of religion.”
Many of the states included similar statements in their own constitutions to preclude localized attempts to devise control. Then in 1940 the United States Supreme Court held that the freedom of religion clause in the first amendment had been extended to the states by the fourteenth amendment's guarantee of "liberty."

Coming out of the experience of America's first settlers, the separation of church and state and religious tolerance have become basic to the American concept of freedom.

It has not always been so, and even today in America there are concerns for restrictions on religious expression imposed by "community values"; by the attitude of the majority and its effect on the access to information and availability of public communication as they relate to religious expression.

Censorship of religious publications or material related to religious expression is hundreds of years old. The precedent of censoring material to withhold knowledge or suppress information has been a classic exercise of those in power.

The church itself has used the tool often. The Catholic church began as early as 499 A.D. to restrict information in conflict with its teaching, from the faithful.

The early Reformation Church followed suit quickly. Calvin banned Roman Catholic books; Quakers were tortured and burned in New England for spreading their beliefs.

Literary censorship has been applied for many reasons through history. Until contemporary times political or religious reasons were predominant causes. The Stationers Company, a British publications licensing house, explained its licensing theories once by explaining that erotic writings harmed no one... "It is the serious, learned work that might shake a man's faith in government or his state or the church."

As hard as it may be to believe, some of the world's great classic literature including The Bible, Walt Whitman's Leaves Of Grass, Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure and Homer's Odyssey have been censored for blasphemy or on other religious grounds.

America's history of religious censorship reveals some periods of religious persecution and countless episodes of religious misunderstanding.

Thomas Jefferson, our third President and author of the Constitution, once said if we "enlighten the people generally... tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at dawn of day."

What Jefferson was expressing was a belief that if people understand and are exposed to the unfamiliar they do not fear it. They see its place in society and accept it.

The experience of not being enlightened — of being denied information — was illustrated in a modern example recently by American Indian author Russell Bates.

During a panel discussion on minority attitudes, Bates cited a personal experience where information about Jews and Judaism was so wholly lacking that his relationships with the Jewish friends he eventually met were handicapped by an initial 'bad impression.'

"I guess you'd say the lack of information fostered an impression which I manufactured out of almost nothing."

It is perhaps the information or lack of information available about members of the Jewish faith and the result of the information abyss that is easiest to follow in American society.

In his essay, Recent Trends in Anti-Semitism, Howard M. Sachar explains that unlike the planned programs in Eastern Europe or Nazi Germany there was never an organized plan for violet action against American Jews.

What did and for a small part still does exist in this country, he says, is a stereotyped image of the Jew and his religious faith.

That distorted caricature began to have greater impact in the late 18th and 19th Century as some Jewish immigrants became wealthy and powerful. It was not difficult for the poverty stricken, mid-western As American cities grew and the number
Protestant to view the 'non-Christian' wealthy foreigners as responsible for their problems, Sachar explains.

The growing Jewish stereotype was not hampered by national politicians and their statements about 'money powers,' statements that received extensive publication and little rebuttal.

And the image was intensified by the literature of the time. Ignatius Donnelly portrayed a Europe dominated by "international Judaism" in his book Caesar's Column. of Jewish immigrants increased, the fear of the unfamiliar for the white-Anglo-Saxon Protestant grew. The economy was weak and increasingly the blame went to distrust of the "Jews." By the time of the first World War, racist fantasies had been fanned by sociologists' theories propounded in such literary publications as Schultz's Race or Mongrel or Grant's The Passing of The Great Race.

Rising out of this fear of alien ideas were such groups as the Ku Klux Klan. They were followed by more extremist groups, particularly aiming to challenge those of religious and ethnic minorities. These elements when blended with the Great Depression and other factors contributed to a growing air of anti-semitism in the United States — a growth that while earlier fostered by publication of prejudicial material, was ultimately destroyed in this nation by publication in American newspapers of stories linking anti-semitism with the actions of Adolph Hitler.

The coverage given to Nazi barbarism combined with the coverage given the struggle of the European Jews brought an end to most negative feelings for the Jews in the United States. This, added to articles filled with factual information and an upsurge in fictional material, did much to dispel long-standing stereotypes applying to Jews, their culture and faith.

What is most significant in this recollection is that control of information and access to information can and does affect opinions — not only opinions about the unfamiliar but our opinions about ourselves and our position in society. It is for that reason that information is a vital element in free expression.

Most expressions in religious beliefs are not in conflict with the law of the land; therefore most legal cases have involved relatively unorthodox groups and individuals.

Many of the court based decisions relating to religion and government are not directly related to access to information and right to read, but one of the classic decisions is.

The Amish, identified by most people because of their unusual dress and refusal to accept modern conveniences, consider the maintenance of their simple lifestyle as essential to their religious faith.

The Amish have repeatedly expressed their desire to educate their own children because they want them to learn limited materials. As a result of this they have come into direct conflict with local compulsory school attendance laws many times.

Amish children are taught by members of the faith and therefore also run afoul of teacher qualification rules. Amish parents do not want their children contaminated by the "outside." What information should the Amish children be exposed to — that requested by their parents and essential to their faith, or that dictated by the state?

Decisions in these cases have been decided both ways. But they raise the question — do state laws have a right to decide whether an individual receives only the information dictated by his faith, if it conflicts with the law?

Among the countless other court decisions involving aspects of free expression of religion and therefore irrevocably linked with first amendment rights, several have arisen from test cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses.

A well-known case was that involving the flag salute, which was a landmark for future decisions. The case originated in West Virginia where state law required all students to participate regularly in saluting the flag and the pledge of allegiance. Jehovah's Witnesses refused to permit their
children to do so, saying that this amounted to bowing down before a graven image.

The religious group won their case with the Court decision that the state could control the ecuational program including these patriotic practices, but that they could not be forced on those who had religious reasons for refusing participation.

Probably the most publicized religious expression case in the nation occurred when Madalyn Murray O'Hair, avowed atheist, challenged prayer in the public schools. The Supreme Court in reaching its decision restricted Bible reading, recitation of the Lord's Prayer and special prayer from public schools.

In reaching that decision the Court emphasized that government is neither to aid nor restrict religion, but “is firmly committed to a position of neutrality.”

Challenges by atheists and non-Christians have resulted in uncounted actions based on separation of church and state and free expression. Several years ago a much publicized case occurred in Oklahoma. Plans were announced to construct a large cross, symbol of the Christian faith, on the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City.

The cross was to be symbolic of the part Christianity played in the settling of Oklahoma.

What happened though, was an outcry of protest from non-Christians and specifically a legal challenge from an atheist resident of the state. The non-existent cross stands — or doesn’t stand — as testimony to the outcome of the conflict.

More recent cases have involved the American Indians’ fight to be permitted use of peyote, a hallucinogenic drug, in religious services. Use of peyote has historically been part of many Indian rituals.

And in challenges brought by members of the Black Muslim religion seeking the right to practice their faith and distribute information about their beliefs within the walls of prisons in Oklahoma and other states.

All of these incidents are involved in the complex problems surrounding free expression of religion, and all of them relate to the concerns surround access to information. A 1964 Supreme Court decision articulated the existing attitude of the Court on free expression.

In that decision the Court said, “. . . the truth or falsity of religious beliefs or claims regardless of how intellectually, morally or aesthetically outrageous they may seem . . . is beyond the cognizance of the law.”

The Court continued, “The question of sincerity or hypocrisy, the question of honesty, also should be beyond reach of the law. If the law could brand some religions as false and deprive them of the protection of the First Amendment, the law might thereby violate the establishment clause as well as the free exercise clause, for it would favor some religions and penalize others.”

This same concern, the favoring of some religions to the exclusion of others, is the primary concern in access to information. Do all religious groups have access to information supportive of their faith? Do they have equal opportunities for display and publication, both visual and print, for their ideas? Are the choices of conflicting religions imposed on them by the attitudes of the community as expressed through information sources?

Do local bookstores and libraries stock the religious books and manuals of various faiths? If one religious group prefers The American Standard Version of the Bible to the King James Version, is it available? Probably not, if the group or individual is located in a small community where the taste of the single bookstore proprietor decides what he has access to.

What are the chances of a Jewish child finding a Chanukah coloring book at the local variety store? Or of atheist’s receiving an hour of television time to explain and preach their faith . . ., or lack of it. Extreme examples perhaps, but they raise pertinent questions about just what our founding fathers meant when they talked about freedom of religious expression.
If, as Alexis de Tocqueville suggested, the attitude of the majority forms barriers around freedom of opinion, then what effect do the opinions or majority preferences in your community have on your freedom of religion.

There are several particularly significant historical factors relevant to the development of existing value structure and community attitudes in Oklahoma.

By the late 19th century most Protestant denominations had developed well organized and active missionary organizations. By the time the land run officially opened Oklahoma to settlers, missionary churches had been established across the territory.

On previous frontiers the church arrived after the population influx and was faced with attempting to transform existing values. In Oklahoma however, the church was already established to provide guidance in establishing community values even before statehood.

The obvious result was an unusually strong foothold in Oklahoma for the Protestant churches. This, coupled with the relative stability of Oklahoma communities and the continued popularity of private lodges such as the Masons, has placed fundamentalist Protestant churches in a strong majority in most areas of the state.

As Oklahoma's population expanded, a variety of religious settlements were established across the state. However, they were few and in quite scattered pockets. These immigrating religious groups included Jews, Roman Catholics, Orthodox Catholics and other less familiar sects.

Recently Dr. Duane Cummins, Oklahoma City University history professor, directed a research group sponsored by the Oklahoma Public Library Systems. The research group evaluated existing community values and information limitations in sixteen Oklahoma communities.

In the area of religious freedom what that committee found was that generally communities accepted and provided for that with which they were most familiar. A check of libraries and bookstores indicated that the King James Bible and The Living Bible, the most traditional and popular with Protestant Churches, were available in most areas. Other versions were virtually impossible to find.

As one bookstore owner said, "Other Bibles have additional information not necessary for complete understanding of the scriptures."

Many Oklahoma towns with no general-stock bookstores do have religious bookstores which offer "inspirational" publications supplemental to popular religious attitudes.

Newspapers in some Oklahoma communities include extensive religious content. Usually this content includes religious columnists, articles by local pastors or about local churches. It is rare that they include informative items on varying religious beliefs or customs.

Essentially the findings of the OCU research group indicate that Oklahoma communities have well defined values and religious majorities, and that those existing values are a product of historical events and are maintained by communities which remain basically the same in structure.

The research group found that religious toleration applies to those groups with which the populace is familiar. That familiarity is usually limited to traditional groups in the community and most often the information is not readily available to permit learning about groups or faiths outside those in the community.

Are these kinds of limits on information a denial of religious freedom? If one seeks to know and can not find, have one's rights been violated?

It was Archibald MacLeish who said, "Freedom is the right to choose: the right to create for oneself the alternatives of choice."

Can one make a choice without knowledge of alternatives? Is restraint of that knowledge violation of the soul?
IV. Obscenity/Pornography

If you had lived in ancient Rome or Greece instead of Oklahoma, during the middle ages, or even into the seventeenth century instead of today, you would probably have been more sophisticated about sex than you are.

For what you can read and cannot read, what information you have access to and do not have access to decides in great part what your attitudes are. In modern American society—and therefore Oklahoma—obscenity and pornography have been the focus of censorship efforts.

Among the guarantees of the first amendment to the Constitution is the guarantee of a free press. That promise is the cornerstone of the right of free expression. The Supreme Court has ruled that included in the spirit of that guarantee is the right to distribute, to receive and to read printed material. That means your right to read and right of access to information are constitutionally provided freedoms and are crucially intertwined with the promise of a free press.

In 1973, the Supreme Court ruled that contemporary standards rather than a national standard must be the basis for evaluating whether material is obscene or pornographic in the eyes of the law.

What does this mean? First, that you have a constitutional right to read and right of access to information, but that the community in which you live can through public policy (ordinances, statutes, etc.), and private values (unwritten "codes," etc.) determine what it deems obscene or acceptable in accordance with local values.

The subject of obscenity is still a very sensitive issue among Oklahomans. Dr. Duane Cummins, Darbeth professor of History at Oklahoma City University, supervised a recent research group in an exploration of attitudes and community values in Oklahoma.

Dr. Cummins says his study indicated that most Oklahomans consider obscenity "to be destructive of the quality of life and character they wish to build."

Censorship, or restriction of information, though not always applied to sex, has long been with us. Indeed, censorship of sex related material was preceded several hundred years by religious and political censorship.

As Dr. Donald C. Hayden, English professor at Tulsa University explains, "Looked at historically, one must conclude that the dominant power in each period tries to curb whatever it feels is hostile to its existence. When the church had the power to do so, heresy was suppressed; when political systems grew to power, opposing systems were rooted out; and in Victorian times, sex was the bugaboo."

Historical analysis indicates that censorship is much like a pendulum swinging from subject to subject depending on the taboos of society. But its effect is always felt and seen in the literature, art and forms of expression of an era and reflected by the laws and historical evolution.

In ancient Greece unpopular public lectures were banned and speakers sometimes killed. Socrates was forced to drink the poison cup because his religious beliefs were unorthodox.

In ancient Rome the written word was first censored and critics of the government frequently done away with.

In the Catholic church as early as 499 A.D. a list banning written works that challenged the Church, was published.

The early Reformation church was also an active censor. Calvin banned Catholic books; Quakers in New England were tortured and burned.

Such penalties as cutting off ears, branding foreheads and slitting of noses were imposed on those who printed unauthorized information in 16th century England.

In Virginia in 1671, the British governor defended censorship saying, "Thank God
we have not free schools nor printing; and I hope we shall not have these hundred years. For learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world; and printing has divulged them and libels against the government. God keep us from both."

When Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, he wrote for a sexually sophisticated Elizabethan audience. In the early American colonies sexually explicit pamphlets were widely distributed. Even the classic Biblical *Song of Solomon* is historically viewed as sexually oriented.

Benjamin Franklin, one of America's major historical figures, was the author of two articles that by today's standards would be considered by many as "dirty" books. Franklin's *Advice To A Young Man Choosing A Mistress* and *A Letter To The Royal Academy At Brussels*, were later described as being "as unashamedly joyous as that of any pagan."

Other famous authors whose works included literature that would be banned by modern day censors include Eugene Field, who has grade schools across the nation named after him, and Mark Twain, one of America's favorite authors.

Just as history has always produced those who felt it essential to censor some aspects of expression, censorship has had its challengers throughout history. The great poet and statesman, John Milton, a devout Christian, repeatedly voiced opposition to censorship.

He argued: "Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do ingloriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"

Nineteenth century British author John Stuart Mill argued for liberty of conscience, of thought, feeling and opinion; for liberty to plan one's life to suit his character and for freedom of people to peaceably unite.

Mill's famous essay *On Liberty* concluded: "No society in which these liber-
ties are not, on the whole respected, is free, whatever its form of government."

One of America's founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, expressed his support for liberty by asking, "Whose foot is to be the measure to which ours are all to be stretched?"

Jefferson was perhaps history's greatest supporter of the free press, writing such lines as, "Where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe," and "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

Joseph Carter, newspaper editor and author, stresses in his book *Freedom To Know*, that Jefferson's strong belief in the right to read and right to published rested in his feeling that this was the most crucial freedom in any democratic society.

In his book Carter notes that without this freedom it is doubtful that the other freedoms would last long.

The men who drafted the Constitution made no provision for areas of censorship or restriction of specific kinds of information. The development of the attitude that access to sex related information or an individual's right to read or see such controversial material should be prohibited can be traced to the influence of the Christian Church and — initially in this country — to the Puritan movement.

Between the years from the adoption of the Bill of Rights and the Supreme Court's decision that the first amendment did offer a shield to material accused of being obscene or pornographic, most states in the union passed laws making it a crime to produce or sell obscene materials.

Throughout these years many plays, books, films and works of art were suppressed as obscene while numerous others were kept secret with the fear they would be suppressed if discovered.

Then, in 1973, the Supreme Court made its historical decision charging communities with defining their values and determining
what was obscene or pornographic in the eyes of local citizens.

The effect of this ruling is that your neighbors, the people who control information and its accessibility, can control what you read and see.

In some communities formal boards have been established to decide what is acceptable to a community and therefore to its residents. In other communities those decisions are made by people in positions of control over information.

If community values are the deciding factor of what is to be available to the public, then what are those values and how have they developed?

Dr. Cummins, member of the Oklahoma Humanities Committee funded research group at OCU, spent months evaluating the factors that have established existing Oklahoma community values.

Dr. Cummins reported: “Among the most significant factors contributing to the value structure of these communities is the church.”

Dr. Cummins’ research revealed that Oklahoma was the only state in the union settled by the church before it was opened to population. Missionary organizations established churches on prime sites before the land-run and the result was “an unusually strong foothold for the church” in building community values.

The OCU research group also found the Masonic Lodges to be a strong factor in formation of community standards. Nearly every community in the state with a population of over 5,000 had at least one.

Additionally, Dr. Cummins and his researchers cited the population stability of many smaller Oklahoma communities and “the frontier experience” as factors in making community values what they are today.

These elements tended to develop pockets of intense conservatism and moral and religious conviction in early Oklahoma towns. That “community unity” still lives in many areas of the state and creates “unseen codes of conduct” that often are more important than written laws in establishing the local standard.

In more metropolitan Oklahoma areas the “community cohesion” has begun to dissolve.

Dr. Peter Denman, Oklahoma City University history professor explains, “As communities expand, as citizens begin to vary their lifestyles, as the complexity of values and beliefs begins to intensify, we see a breakdown of the community. The defining of community values becomes quite difficult.”

In most areas of the state, community values are strong and legal steps have been taken to protect them. Usually there are local ordinances banning the showing and distribution of pornographic films and materials, as well as nude dancing.

The state has statutes against writing, printing, publishing, selling, distributing, keeping for sale or exhibiting “any obscene or indecent materials.” In addition there is a state law against ‘obscene’ speech and a unique statute which makes it unlawful to use obscene speech in the presence of a female or child under ten.

Senator Bob Shatwell (D-Tulsa) failed in an attempt to secure passage of an obscenity and pronography bill in the 1975 legislative session. The bill would have brought Oklahoma law into line with guidelines established by the Supreme Court.

It is not, however, just written law that controls Oklahoma community standards. In most areas the ‘unwritten law,’ the code of what is ‘right and moral,’ in the opinion of those in positions of power is the factor that decides whether individuals are granted their right to read or access to information of their choice.

In their investigation of Oklahoma community attitudes the OCU research group found this concept verbalized by such comments as those of a Ponca City librarian: “Frankly I don’t believe in censorship, but I’m in a community in which certain standards must be observed.”

Or the comments of a father and son who own movie theaters in Woodward. Al-
though they negotiate what is viewed in the theaters, they say Woodward citizens in a "silent manner" decide what films are fit and unfit.

Perhaps even more significant is the comment of a Weatherford bookstore owner who said his policy of what was sold was what "his values dictated" - there was no other policy. Or the statement of an Altus book dealer who admitted that she does not sell books that do not measure up to her personal idea of morality.

These are views of people in a position to control material available to members of their community. Sometimes their decision is based on interpretation of the community standard, sometimes it is a reaction to community pressure, sometimes it is based on a personal standard or desire to "protect" the community.

A continuing part of the "right to read" controversy has been fought in Oklahoma classrooms. A few years ago a controversy developed in Tulsa when a teacher attempted to use Catcher in the Rye, a book on the state approved book list. The teacher was fired from her job, and ultimately a grand jury began questioning teaching materials used in the Tulsa schools.

In some cases Oklahoma high school librarians have used their personal sense of morality to cut rectangles out of National Geographic magazines in the place one would normally find naked breasts of native women, or to cut out and tape squares of white paper over the lower torso of male models appearing in underwear advertisements.

In January of this year Variety newspaper reported a strong national trend by "educators" to limit children's exposure to the pornography of violence. The article also reported that local communities are increasingly throwing "violence into the same barrel as sex" in looking for legal regulations based on an evaluation of community standards.

Repeatedly national studies have indicated that frequent exposure to violence results in children who become less concerned about other people. They tend to become callous about crimes, cruelty and murder.

All this national attention focuses on an extraordinary trait in Oklahoma communities. In his research of sixteen state communities Dr. Duane Cummins and his group of students found that the Oklahoma concept of pornography rarely included violence.

Dr. Cummins attributes this to the fact that violence was "one of the most constant themes in frontier Oklahoma history," and that much of Oklahoma still cherishes its pioneer connections.

Motion pictures, the newest mass medium, have been embroiled in controversy since their beginning, usually because of sex, more recently for violence.

Thomas Edison's 1896 fifteen second long film, Widow Jones Klas, was condemned as an affront to public morals. The film showed a couple exchanging a quick kiss.

Why have movies always been so controversial? John Pickard, professor of art at Central State University, explains, "It should be remembered that even in the earliest stages the movies were a true mass medium and have remained so ever since. It is through the mass media that an open society most readily distills and expresses its fears, and these fears usually take the form of controversy. Controversy, at least in the arts, is the unofficial trial of an idea by what can be called community standards. That is, moral persuasion on the local or state, rather than national level."

Oklahoma communities are divided on what kind of movies should be shown in their towns. How divided they are is reflected by the diversity in kinds of films shown and films that may be advertised in local media.

What movies can be seen in a given community depends primarily on the interpretation of the community standard by theater owners and the eagerness of local officials to prosecute exhibits of some films.
An excellent example of open division in a community occurred in El Reno in 1972. The city held a hotly contested election to decide whether or not "R" and "X" rated films could be shown in the community. The proposed law banning the films was defeated by the narrow margin of nine votes. With a community almost evenly divided how could an equitable decision be reached on the existing contemporary standard?

Despite the outcome of the El Reno election it is interesting to note that there has never been an "X" rated movie shown in El Reno.

And in January of 1975 the local police chief shut down a theater for showing The Klansmen. He declared the film was in violation of a city ordinance prohibiting "obscene" materials. It was just three years earlier the town had voted not to allow restrictions of movies.

In Oklahoma City, a community where several studies have indicated "X" rated movies are apparently not in violation of the contemporary community standard, there have been repeated closing of theaters regularly showing "skin flics."

The most recent incidents involved the Chieftain Theater which was closed twice in a seven day period in January. The films were confiscated and the theater manager was charged with exhibiting obscene movies. The Chieftain lost its case in district court but has sought federal review because "state laws governing in-house showing of x-rated movies are vague in their definition of what constitutes pronography."

Barry Albert, Oklahoma City attorney defending the Chieftain, sees much more at stake than just his clients' welfare.

As Albert explained to a reporter for the Daily Oklahoman, "If you can close down a theater and take a film because of policeman or prosecutor doesn't approve of what he saw, the next day, I suppose, they could arrest a preacher because someone didn't think his Sunday morning sermon was satisfactory."

"And the next day the Oklahoma City Times or The Daily Oklahoman could be taken off the racks because some policeman or prosecutor may think their contents are not suitable to the community."

Albert continued saying that what the controversy boiled down to was that 'freedom of expression is not a right to be tampered with in an indiscriminate manner.'

The newest mass medium, television, has been heavily censored through several channels. Network officials have censored and deleted sexually explicit materials, profanity and what they deem an excessive violence from broadcast movies.

Most programs with material considered intense or possibly objectionable now carry taglines urging parental discretion. Local station officials usually preview special programs for content they feel might not be popular in their community.

The major area of difficulty in compatibility with local community standards has occurred in network series programs where local stations must air the programs sent. There have been strong objections to some of these programs in some Oklahoma communities. Most objectionable programs have been socially "liberal" series such as Maude, with its contemporary subject matter and language, and Cher, with its revealing apparel. Significantly, All In The Family, a program filled with strong language but espousing conservative viewpoints, is quite popular in Oklahoma.

The conflict between those who believe in censorship and those who do not believe in censorship is a classic one. There is no reason to believe that it is a conflict that will ever end.

What did our founding fathers mean by freedom? What did the Supreme Court intend when it required that local values be the test for obscenity? How can those standards be effectively determined? And how can those determinations relate to your constitutionally guaranteed right to read and access to information?

Perhaps the year of the bicentennial celebration is a good time for evaluating our community and individual standards and values in relation to the Constitution. And for asking if there are for individuals Limits To Freedom?
H. Wayne Morgan, Professor of History at O.U., and his wife, Anne Hodges Morgan, also a professional historian, have been selected to write the volume on Oklahoma for the Bicentennial series, "The States and the Nation," to be published by W. W. Norton. Sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History and funded through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the project will encompass fifty-one volumes covering every state and the District of Columbia. The Morgans' book, Oklahoma: A Bicentennial History, will offer an interpretive approach to the state's history, focusing on qualitative topics — land, peoples, politics, economics — in a national context. Greatest attention will be given to the period from 1920 to the present, when Oklahoma's increasingly sophisticated industrial system emerged. H. Wayne Morgan, a native Oklahoman, has published seven books in the field of American cultural, diplomatic and political history since the late nineteenth century, the most recent of which are From Hayes to McKinley: National Party Politics, 1877-1896 and Unity and Culture: The United States, 1877-1900. He has edited seven others and written numerous articles. Anne Morgan is a Consultant in Public Affairs with the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Her principal research interests center around American partisan politics since 1945. Recently, she completed a political biography of Senator Robert S. Kerr, to be published by the O.U. Press.

There is a new Oklahoma magazine on the newsstands: Oklahoma Monthly. It is edited by Thomas Boettcher, and its format is similar to the large monthly news/comment magazines. In contrast to Oklahoma Today, which pictorializes and articulates the "positive aspects" of Oklahoma's heritage, Oklahoma Monthly presents the Oklahoman's response to local and national issues in and out of the state.

With The Judge: The Life of Robert A. Hefner, by Clifford Earl Traفزer, the Oklahoma Heritage Association inaugurates the new "Oklahoma Trackmaker" biographical series, to be published by the O.U. Press. The idea of the series is to recognize some outstanding Oklahomans who made significant contributions to the development of the state. Odie B. Faulk, Professor of History at O.S.U., is the series editor. Traفزer's Hefner is a self-made man whose "tracks" are visible in a life of public dedication as an attorney, oilman, rancher, mayor of Oklahoma City, and justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court. A review of The Judge will appear in the next issue of Oklahoma Librarian.

The Presidio; Bastion of the Spanish Borderlands (O.U. Press), by Max L. Moorhead, Professor Emeritus of History at O.U., has received the Regional Border Library Association's 1975 award for excellence in Southwestern history. Moorhead, a specialist in Latin-American history, carried on his research in the Southwest, Mexico, and Spain, where he discovered detailed plans of numerous presidios.

Two well known Oklahoma authors have published new novels: Marilyn Harris' Bleeding Sorrow (Putnam's) is a harrowing suspense tale built around a haunted English manor. Rumble Fish (Delacorte), by S. E. Hinton, is set in the inner city, and tells the story of a teenager with a misguided zeal to be "Motorcycle Boy," like his big brother.
School Library News

Aarone Corwin

OASL and the Library and Learning Resources section of the State Department of Education have kept school librarians very busy the past few months.

October 23, at the Hilton-Inn West in Oklahoma City, OASL and OAECT conducted their third annual meeting. The theme was "The Administrative Commitment to Media Programs" and featured speakers: Dr. Leroy Iretom, Administrator; Resource, Innovation and Support Programs; State Department of Education; Mr. Daniel D. Draper, Jr., Oklahoma State House of Representatives; Mr. Bill Goodwin, Superintendent; Hooker Public Schools; and Robert Mooneyham, Executive Director of the Oklahoma State School Board Association.

Dr. McKinley Nash, Principal; Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Illinois, served as the keynote speaker for the event. Throughout the workshop the following messages were relayed. 1) Librarians should plan ahead for all requests and budgeting proposals. 2) Be certain to work through all administrative levels seeking support for your needs. 3) Get involved in the legislative process by writing to your congressmen about matters of importance. Do not send form letters.

Foster Estes Vo-Tech School was the site of the Regional Library Media Workshop held November 6. During this workshop we were told that Title IV-B funds were "still in a holding pattern" and would be available soon.

Sheila Alexander also announced that copies of the newly revised Curriculum Guide for Teaching Media Skills K-12 are now available from her office. If you have not received your free copy, write Sheila at the State Department of Education, Library and Learning Resources Section, 2500 N. Lincoln, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105.

The film entitled "Libraries are Kids' Stuff" was shown to the workshop participants. If you are interested in using this film for a PTA meeting, call or write Sheila.

Another beneficial aspect of the workshop was the "talk time" allowed for participants to share their common problems. We were also allowed time to discuss Library Media Standards in Oklahoma. Hopefully, many of the suggestions made will be incorporated in the next Annual Bulletin for Elementary and Secondary Schools.

A certification study is underway to combine into one certificate the Librarian and A-V Specialist certificates. Librarian members of the committee are: Polly Clarke, Northeastern Oklahoma State University; Elizabeth McCorkle, Oklahoma State University; Josephine Rayburn, Cameron; Frances Allsworth, Central State University.

In the last article, Ame Gorena's name was inadvertently omitted as the OASL Legislative Chairperson. My apologies to Ame!

School librarians once again appeared on the "Inside Oklahoma Education" program. Sheila Alexander, along with Calvin McIntire, Principal of Skyline Elementary, and Mrs. Bonnie Alexander, Librarian of Skyline Elementary discussed "Multimedia in the Classroom."

Ms. Barbara Campbell and her Constitution Revision committee have been making changes to allow for more flexibility and to reflect changes in the OLA and OEA Constitutions.
"This artist was so talented that when he painted a dog it bit him."
"But he should have known better. Earlier he had painted a snowstorm and caught cold."

THE LIE IS BY MR. ALVIN SCHWARTZ. HEAR MR. SCHWARTZ DISCUSS HUMOR IN AMERICAN FOLKLORE ON FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 25, DURING THE JOINT MEETING OF THE

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DIVISION
AND THE
OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

COPIES OF HIS BOOKS: WHOPPERS: TALL TALES AND OTHER LIES; CROSS YOUR FINGERS, SPIT IN YOUR HAT; WITCRACKS; TOMFOOLERY; AND A TWISTER OF TWISTS, A TANGLER OF TONGUES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR SALE.

AN AUTOGRAPH PARTY WILL FOLLOW HIS PRESENTATION.
ACTIVITIES AT OLA IN '76
a conference preview
by Ruth Herrington

Librarians can look forward to a particularly interesting schedule of events in this year's conference program. The Oklahoma Library Association's Conference, March 25-27, at the Lincoln Plaza Forum, Oklahoma City, will have as its theme, "The Spirit of '76: a view of the past, a vision of the future."

The overall program promises to be an excellent one with: a number of professional leaders discussing a variety of contemporary topics, workshops for professional growth ranging from opportunities to viewing sophisticated automated systems to demonstrations of book mending, and musical entertainment interspersed throughout.

DIVISION AND ROUND TABLE PROGRAMS

Frances Neel Cheney, Director of the Library School at George Peabody College, in keeping with the conference theme, is speaking on, "The Future of Reference Service." Mrs. Cheney is on the editorial board of Reference Services Review and the author of the text, Fundamental Reference Sources. She received the ALA Mudge Citation in 1962 and was for many years the reference book reviewer for Wilson Library Bulletin.

Dr. James S. Healey, Director of the School of Library Science, University of Oklahoma, library consultant, and author of "John E. Fogarty: Political Leadership for Library Development," will be guest speaker for a combined meeting of the Library Education Division and the Public Libraries Division. His talk, "Asheim's Razor," will be about Lester E. Asheim's expertise and what it means for the education of librarians. Who should provide continuing education for the technical assistant, the generalist, the specialist, and the librarian who wants to keep on learning? A timely subject for Oklahoma librarians and one about which there are many questions.

Ms. Barbara Evans Markuson, Director of Indiana Cooperative Library Service Authority, will be guest speaker for the Automation Round Table. Ms. Markuson conducted Library Technology Reports' study of automated circulation systems and was keynote speaker and consultant for the program "Mini-Computer-Based Package Circulation Systems; a consumer's approach," at the ALA Conference in San Francisco.
The Social Responsibilities Round Table is pleased to have as guest speaker Mrs. Clara Jones, ALA President-Elect. Mrs. Jones has been, successively, youth librarian, adult librarian, chief of a division, chief of a department, neighborhood consultant, and Director, since 1970, of the Detroit Public Library. She has served on an advisory board at the School of Library Science, Western Michigan University; was the recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus award University of Michigan School of Library Science in 1971. She has chosen to speak on the controversial topic of “Information and Referral Services.”

“Encouraging Curiosity in Children through Humor” is the intriguing topic of Mr. Alvin Schwartz, author and guest speaker at the combined meeting of Children and Young Adult Librarians with Oklahoma Association of School Librarians, following an exhibitor’s continental breakfast. His books for young people treat subjects from folklore, urban problems, and American institutions to books on crafts. In his words, “I write books because it provides me with a rather remarkable opportunity to explore in depth what interests me without organizational ties that inevitably hamper a writer.” A recent work is Witcracks: Jokes and Jests from American Folklore.

Public Library Division will sponsor a workshop of interest to staff members of small branch libraries and unaffiliated libraries: Is there a future for small libraries (with staffs of one to five); or, answers to questions you may have been afraid to ask. Discussion topics will include: How can I purchase enough reference books on my small budget (paperbacks)? Where can I buy discount and remainder books? Where can I get free films and where can I show them? How can we recruit and train volunteers? What can we do about our tattered book covers? etc. Ten experts from other small libraries will prepare “how-to-do-it” displays and bibliographies and answer questions. John Hinkle will present a slide program on “The reading blitz.”

Library Development Committee has an information-packed program for all librarians on topics on major interest — money and legislation. An important part of the program will be to provide information about State Question No. 507, which deals with future funding for Oklahoma libraries.

The OLA Program Committee has designated Friday as “Trustees’ Day.” Public Library trustees will be urged to attend, all day, will be given an opportunity to understand more clearly the issues, needs, and interests of the library, and will be recognized and feted throughout the day. In their divisional meeting they will view "The image of the trustee, 1976:” as seen by a prominent, active trustee, Dr. Rollin H. Thayer, as envisioned by a famous librarian, Allie Beth Martin (our own ALA president), and as ideally developed by a noted public relations ad man, Howard Neumann, president of Lowe Runkle Advertising Agency and moderator of the Barry Switzer TV show.

The program for College and Universities Division is planned to include a continental breakfast, followed by a nuts and bolts presentation on micrographics by Mr. Francis F. Spreltzer, who spoke on the subject at the ALA Conference in New York. There will be discussion on gaining accep-
tance from library patrons for the use of microforms; of staffing considerations; of equipment and maintenance; and of setting up the physical area where microforms will be used. Mr. Gene Hodges, Librarian, Central State University, will have a film presentation on the micrographics industry and equipment. Exhibitors dealing with micrographics will be invited to participate in a question and answer period.

YOU WILL NOT WANT TO MISS THE GENERAL SESSIONS—

Mrs. Clara Jones, dynamic keynote speaker, will present the challenge “Reaching out to a new public at the beginning of our third century,” at dinner Thursday night. An Oklahoma authors’ panel, with Betty Boyd of KTUL, Channel 8, Tulsa, as moderator, will provide an interesting introduction to the authors who are guests Friday night at dinner. Mrs. Boyd is a dynamic panelist and speaker. Librarians are invited to the Exhibitors’ reception following dinner Friday night to meet the panel of authors, the ALA President and the ALA President-Elect, featured speakers of the Conference, fellow librarians and friends at a “Tasting Soiree” — cheeses and wine (for those who “do”), cheeses and carbonated beverages (for those who “don’t”).

Following the Saturday morning business meeting, Mrs. Allie Beth Martin, Director of the Tulsa City-County Library System, and President of the American Library Association, will give a summary of the 1976 Conference and her challenge for Oklahoma libraries and librarians next year. Mrs. Martin’s dynamic influence and purposeful activities in professional organizations have been a matter of national as well as local record. Her view of the public library as a center of and a link between the arts, humanities and the sciences in a community is well known, as is her published work, “A Strategy for Public Library Change.”

ENTERTAINMENT

“The Tunesmiths,” a 25-member mixed chorus from Central State University, directed by Dr. Coleman Smith, will entertain with their popular bicentennial concert during dinner Friday night.

We can look forward to a unique multi-media/live presentation at the Friday luncheon, featuring a cast of librarians from Oklahoma County Library Systems, which will be “A bright, provocative, evocation of library notables, quotable unquotes, and witty observances in a performance relating the development of libraries in the U.S. with its cultural and political happenings.”

The “Van Hook Voices,” the seven-voice ensemble heard on the weekly TV program “A Life Worth Living,” will sing during dinner Thursday. They have appeared recently on a New York City telethon. Their smooth style ranges from nostalgic numbers through country to popular songs.

After-dinner options on Thursday include a night out on the town and/or “Cinema Nightcap,” a series of short, award-winning films on a variety of subjects, made so popular last spring by John Blevins, who will again be host.

For those librarians not involved in committee meetings, who are staying over for the Sequoyah luncheon, there will be an opportunity Saturday morning for tours of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and the Library for the Blind and Handicapped. Also, OLA hopes to have a waiting area with movies for children who come in for the Sequoyah luncheon to help make the occasion special for them.
Family Fun During OLA!!!
Compiled by Ruth Anne Brown

Have you thought about combining a trip to OLA and a family holiday? For those who bring their families here are some ideas on points of interest in Oklahoma City.

State Capitol Building. Open 8-4. See where the state legislature works.
Oklahoma Historical Society. Open 8-9:30 p.m. Storehouse of the state's historical treasures.
Cowboy Hall of Fame. 1700 N.E. 63rd. Open 9:30-5:30. Adults $1.50. Children $.50. Historical museum of the old west, a must for those who haven't been there.

Heritage Hills. N.W. 14th to N.W. 21st between Walker and Robinson. Delightful homes of early day Oklahoma City.
Oklahoma Heritage Center. 201 N.W. 14. Adults $1.00. Children $.50. Restored Overholser Mansion which was a focal point of early day Oklahoma City.
Zoo. N.E. 50th and Eastern. One of America's finest collection of animals from around the world.
Art Galleries. Contemporary Arts Foundation Gallery; Oklahoma Art Center.
Ice Cream Shops. Farrells Ice Cream Parlour; J. B. Nimble's Ice Cream.
Library Services at Oklahoma State Prison

John Hinkle
Outreach Consultant,
Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Robert J. Griffin has been named to head the newly created librarian position at the Oklahoma State Prison. Griffin had previously been the assistant librarian at the McAlester Public Library. (Photo by Hugh T. German, News-Capital, McAlester, Oklahoma)

I took everything out of my pockets and put them all into a small wooden box, opened my glass case for inspection then lifted my arms for the guard to frisk me. This time, as I stood waiting to enter the prison, I had a friend, Robert Griffith new OSP librarian accompanied me.

Eight years ago I was myself a beginning librarian entering through this series of 6 check points. In 1987 I was just finishing up an OU directive reading and had gained permission to interview the elderly guard in charge of the prison library.

It was the largest collection of Western trivia I had ever seen; perhaps the largest in the world. Not a bright color in the whole building and the arrangement of material was so unique that in retrospect I can’t even describe it.

Being an eager new librarian I was full of suggestions, each new idea was cut to the quick. I realized I was getting nowhere when I suggested a “library selection tool” and got a hostile look, rephrased my statement to suggest: “There are magazines that can help you select books... you might even be able to save some money...”

“Son, I don’t need to worry about money here, we get a part of the canteen cut and I
can get any book I want... as long as it ain’t over $3.00.”

A few years later I found myself acting as the consultant for the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. Reluctantly I had to cancel my first visit because we were short handed at the Capitol reference desk. Later that day, as I went about the business of answering reference questions, I got a tense phone call from my wife. She was relieved to hear my voice. OSP was in riot, the library building burned to the ground that day and I would have been among the group held as hostages.

Now Robert and I stand and wait for entry clearance. He has a wife and 2 children. I’m the one that wrote the proposals to create the job, buttonholed friends, made repeated phone calls, worded grants to read: “Money only available IF professional librarian hired,” sent noisy letters to everyone from the governors on down for these past three years... but Bob is to be the one that will work inside these walls.

At last final clearance comes and we enter the rotunda. No amount of white wash on the walls will ever make the place cheery to me. The gates slam shut with such a heavy final sound. My beard and our business suits stand out in contrast to the brown shirted guards and blue work shirted prisoners. Our presence is noted and aside comments are expressed. Prisoners have such an uncanny ability of giving the appearance of seeing through you. We weave our way back through more locked and guarded doors, out to the yard. December allows for no grass in this yard, most living things inside are dormant, awaiting a time for spring.

I pointed out to Bob the level gravel spot that once was the old library basement and chapel. He returns the favor by enthusiastically showing me the level spot and stakes that outline his new quarters. It’s to be a simple building, but it’s taken dozens of false starts to proceed through two years of leveled ground and one year of stakes, once again plans call for its completion within 90 days. I throttle my remarks of skepticism.

Through two more locked gates and we come to what’s left of an Air Force Base Library Collection. Last year we set up a temporary library using skinners and the old shelving from the capitol. But last year the effort to create the librarian’s position fizzled. Later a water pipe busted inside the dark storage area and now mildew has claimed half the books and rust the shelving... a year of my time wasted... and little I had done had put books into prisoners hands.

But this time it’s not going to be a false start. This time there’s a librarian on the spot to keep the library alive. The good natured giant that will be his assistant has the usual prisoners’ gift of gab and should/could/can help in reaching the other prisoners.

We’ve set up short, medium and long range goals, designed library procedures, mapped out projects, written job descriptions and library policies (like book selection that will be initiated by the Warden). The Warden is a tough man, a work horse, de-
pendable but most of all “he likes my librarian.”

As we work our way to the outside the two paragraphs of ALA’s “Jails Need Libraries Too” run through my head:

Prisoners usually sit in idleness, despair, isolation and boredom. Thus, undue strain is placed not only on the prisoner, but also on the administrator and staff. Potentially explosive situations can develop in such atmospheres.

The value of effective library programs in combating idleness and boredom in prisons has long been recognized. Meaningful, relevant materials can improve reading and education levels, stimulate and produce employment interests, and offer temporary mental escape avenues.

Have we done it this time? A good prison library has been a long time coming, but it still is vulnerable to destructive pressures. What if the library turns into a book factory, interested only in circulation statistics and geared only for those cons who say they like the library?

As we exit the last gate I see an old friend, a guard that was there the first time I came. I introduce him to Bob and tell him our hopes. It’s funny how the OSP population can say so much with that doubtful little smile. He told me he’d “take good care of my boy.” Have we done it this time?

PALS—
an Outreach Project

Robert Griffith

Originally initiated in March 1975, the volunteer program to nursing homes and the homebound sponsored by the McAlester Public Library, was given the title PALS, an acronym for “People Aiding Library Services.”

Due to the fact that four out of five volunteers originally involved in the program had to curtail their volunteer work, it was necessary to re-organize the program in Sept., 1975. There are now six volunteers actively involved in the program. Publicity about the program in the two daily newspapers and free 30 second radio broadcasts for a period of two weeks aided in soliciting the volunteers.

The volunteers are recognized as non-paid staff members of the Choctaw Nation Multi-County Library System and are reimbursed for any travel expenses incurred while in the process of volunteer work. The volunteers are invited to attend staff meetings and any workshops relevant to their volunteer work.

Homebound Services

Volunteers assigned to be homebound obtain names from a file compiled by the librarian and kept current from two sources — local churches and the director of the senior citizens program. The file is weeded periodically by the volunteers because some of the people listed are not receptive to the services, or have a physical disability for only a short time, (such as recuperating from an illness or operation), and no longer require the services when health is restored.

First, the volunteer phones the homebound person to explain the services of the project and gets a verbal agreement for visitation. During the first visit, the volunteer completes an “Application and Certification for Library Services” form. Listed on the form under reading interests which is checked by the volunteer are the following categories: fiction — adventure classics, historical novels, modern novels, mystery, romance, science fiction, and westerns; non-fiction — a complete list of the 100 sub-divisions of the Dewey Decimal System. This is provided on the form so that the librarian will have an idea of the reading interests of such homebound persons and may select and have the books ready for the volunteer on the day of visitation. Also included on the form is a statement of responsibility for materials loaned to the homebound which the homebound must sign. The volunteer explains that overdue notices will not be sent, but if there is a list of requests for a specific book, it must be returned as soon as possible. There is also a
space provided on the form for the homebound to list reading preferences for information contained in pamphlets from the vertical file and magazines, and a questionnaire on the extent of physical limitations due to sight or mobility.

Each homebound person who is receptive to the services provided by the volunteer project is given lists of magazines, cassettes, and large print books which are in the library collection. Also, each homebound person receives a brochure explaining the services of the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. A magnifying lens with light and cassette players are also available for circulation to the homebound by the volunteers.

**Service to Nursing Homes**

Volunteers assigned to nursing homes are trained by the library staff to operate 16mm. and 8mm. projectors and cassette players. Also, the Oklahoma Department of Libraries film policy is explained and a current film packet from ODL is made available.

An agreement is made between the volunteers and the administration of the nursing home which is to receive library service concerning a schedule and length of film programs. Presently films are being shown by library volunteers regularly once each week. Films with the most favorable response from nursing home patients have been 16mm. sound films about description and travel in the U.S. and foreign countries, historical documentaries; and 8mm. silent Walt Disney cartoons with background music on cassettes. The patients showed unfavorable response to the silent classics of innovators such as Charlie Chaplin and Tom Mix, so those films have been discontinued. Although most of the 16mm. films are presently being selected from the ODL collection, other sources such as free-loan film catalogs are being searched for titles relevant to the interests of the nursing home patients.

Books are also taken to the nursing homes following the same procedure that is used for the homebound persons. Also, a cassette player with cassettes of Bible verses is on loan from the library and being circulated among patients from the office of one of the nursing homes.

To keep track of books distributed to the homebound, two files are kept at the circulation desk. The volunteer file contains checkout cards for each book the volunteer takes. When the volunteer returns the books, he or she pulls the checkout cards and places them back in the book pockets checking closely to see if accession numbers on the check-out cards and book pockets correspond. The homebound file is used to record books taken to each homebound person to prevent duplication of titles already read by the person and also to aid the volunteers in knowing where each book is.

To adequately evaluate the volunteer project, each volunteer is required to complete circulation forms provided by the library.

Listed on the circulation forms for the

**Serials Updating Service**

If you’re lost in the confusion of the periodicals world—changes in titles and frequency, additional volumes, delays in publication, etc.—Faxon’s Serials Updating Service can help you find your way.

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**Serials Updating Service**—a monthly newsletter sent no charge to selected Faxon customers.

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**SUS Annual**—an annual cumulation of the newsletters—$10.

The Serials Updating Service is an invaluable resource in the acquisition, serials records, reference and binding departments, wherever serials are processed.

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[Ad]
homebound are the names of each homebound persons visited, date visited, length of stay, and number and kind of library materials circulated; including, fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, vertical file material, cassettes, and recordings.

Information recorded by volunteers on the circulation forms for the nursing home film programs include titles of films shown, length of film program, name of nursing home, date of film program, and attendance. Circulation forms for the homebound are used in reporting library materials distributed to nursing home patients.

As public awareness of the PALS outreach project increases, so does the demand for more volunteers, and more money in the yearly budget for large print books, cassette players and cassettes, and additional projectors to adequately serve the nursing homes in McAlester not yet involved in the project and the growing list of homebound people in the area.

Hopefully, the public awareness, as well as the efforts of the library staff through regularly scheduled publicity about the project and personal contact with the public will produce more volunteers. Priorities in the annual budget will have to be re-evaluated or money will have to be obtained from other sources if the project is to expand to adequately serve all nursing homes and the homebound in the future.

What began as a spark of an idea from an outreach workshop conducted by John Hinkle, library consultant for the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, has grown into a small brushfire continuously needing more fuel to grow. That fuel is being supplied by the dedicated volunteers that are donating their time and compassion to re-acquaint nursing home patients and the homebound with the world of books, music, and films.

The PALS outreach project has greatly increased the library’s public relations and made city officials and the public aware that the library is more than just a “body of books.” The library now has “arms,” the outreach project one of those “arms,” reaching out to help strangle loneliness, frustration, and depression by providing books and entertainment to those who might not otherwise have access to either.

**TCCL Birthday Celebration**

*Sue Fontaine*
Information Officer
Tulsa City-Council Library System

Over 650 persons attended the Tenth Birthday Dinner of Tulsa’s Central Library, which featured Author James Michener as guest speaker.

The event, held September 12, 1975, was hosted by the library commission, Friends of the Library and library staff.

Two days of community events followed the dinner and included the performing arts, craft demonstrations and exhibits featured continuously on every floor of the main library from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Michener autographed books in the library on Saturday morning.

The birthday festival kicked off at noon

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Oklahoma Librarian, January 1976, Vol. 26, No. 1
on Friday with 60 day care center children launching helium balloons on the library plaza in the Civic Center.

Reservations for the dinner, a fund-raising event, were $17.50 per person. Tables were placed throughout the plaza level of the library and centered with birthday cakes topped with three tail, lighted tapers.

A brief social hour preceded the dinner event at which city and county officials gave brief testimonials to the value of the library in the community.

Michener, who currently is writing a book about sports, discussed "Sports in American Life." He was well received by both Oklahoma sports and literary buffs.

Press coverage was excellent for the three-day activity.

OLA/LED Workshop

Ray Lau
Secretary, OLA/LED

Approximately library educators, administrators and instructional media specialists from Oklahoma colleges and universities attended the fall workshop at the Library Education Division of the Oklahoma Library Association, held September 26, 1975 at Central State University, Edmond.

Mrs. Sheila Wilder Hoke, Southwestern State University library director and chairperson of L.E.D., welcomed those attending and introduced Dr. Roscoe Rouse, OSU library director, who moderated a panel discussion centering on the topic of library science courses taught in Oklahoma. Serving on the panel with Dr. Rouse were Dr. John Suter, East Central State University, who spoke on teaching Reference courses; Mr. John Chaffin, Northeastern State University, who spoke on teaching Cataloging and Classification; Mr. Ray D. Lau, Northwestern State University, who spoke on Book Selection; and Mrs. Ruby Ewing, Central State University, who spoke on School Library Administration. Course content, use of texts, grading, teaching methods, and student motivation were among the topics explored for each of these library science courses.

While the panel on library science courses was underway, a separate panel discussion was taking place for the instructional media specialists. Their group was led by Dr. John Ludrick, and their dis-
Discussion centered around audio-visual courses taught in Oklahoma colleges and universities.

Following a short break after the panel discussions, a joint meeting of the Library educators and instructional media specialists was held. At this time, Mrs. Frances Alsworth, Central State University, presided over a discussion entitled "Should Separate Library Science and Audio-Visual Departments be Abolished?" This topic was the result of a seminar conducted at Central State University under the supervision of Mrs. Alsworth, and each member attending the meeting had received a copy of the paper beforehand.

This topic proved to be most interesting and the consensus of the group was that a follow-up study should be made of this report. As a result, a Curriculum Revision Committee was formed to study joint certification of librarians and audio-visual specialists. Serving on this committee are Polly Clark, chairman, Northeastern State University; Frances Alsworth, Central State University; Elizabeth McCorkle, Oklahoma State University; and Josephine Raburn, Cameron University, all representing librarians. Those representing audio-visual specialists are Dr. John Ludrick, chairman; Howard Farris; Dr. Kenneth King; and Tillman Ragan.

Legislative Network

Pat Woodrum
Chair, Library Development Committee

The Library Development Committee is in the process of organizing two state wide legislative networks; one to work on library legislation at the national level and one to work on library legislation at the state level.

On September 23rd an orientation and luncheon program was given for members of both networks. Approximately forty people attended including laymen, as well as school, academic, and public librarians.

The purpose of the orientation was to become acquainted with other members of the network, to share ideas on the most effective ways to work with Congressmen and legislators, and to be updated on the current status and goals of library legislation. Communication was stressed as the key to an effective legislative network. When legislative action is needed, members will receive a message by mail or phone and will in turn, contact the legislator or Congressman for which they are responsible.

Senator Rodger Randel, the guest speaker, discussed the nuts and bolts of working with legislators and Congressmen on library issues. He suggested days and times when legislators were easiest to contact, discussed the necessity of presenting information in a clear and concise manner and emphasized the importance of expressing appreciation for assistance. Senator Randel's tips were helpful and informative and will be of value to all of us in the coming year.

Packets of materials were distributed
which included a brief but very informative sheet on "How to Write Your Congressman"; a list of state legislators, home address, phone, party affiliation, committees on which they serve, and a copy of the Washington Newsletter.

A brief introduction of legislation affecting public libraries was given by Lee Brawner, co-chairman of the Committee. He discussed the Oklahoma Department of Libraries' request for $500,000 in state aid and the SJR No. 8 bill; now State Question 507, which will be of major importance to the future of public libraries. Mary Esther Saxon, chairperson of the Academic Library Sub-committee, spoke to the needs of the academic libraries and expressed appreciation for the monies recently received. Ame Gorena addressed the goals of the school libraries; Esther Mae Henke discussed national legislation.

Pat Woodrum, chairperson of the Library Development Committee, discussed the two networks and their objectives which are 1. to inform as many individuals as possible of the function and importance of libraries, and of federal and state library programs; 2. to enlist citizens, local and national officials and library employees alike in joint legislative efforts; 3. to establish and maintain a timely flow of information on current library legislative proposals to all interested persons; 4. to assign specific responsibility for liaison with each Oklahoma member of Congress and the state legislators and to insure receipt of appropriate information and to provide feedback on their position.

The workshop was brief and filled with information. Each member of the network became acutely aware that communication is essential and that it is their responsibility to present the facts, to set up a positive relationship with their legislator and to be sensitive to the political process and community support.

State Question 507

Pat Woodrum
Chair, Library Development Committee

In the coming year, major library legislation will go to a vote of the people statewide. Although the legislation applies only to those public libraries in systems, its passage could pave the way financially for better public library service, thus affecting everyone in the state. Each one of us as librarians or supporters of libraries must work together, if this legislation is to pass. The following is an explanation of State Question 507.

All library systems in Oklahoma — Multi-County and City-County — presently derive their permissive authority for funding from the Oklahoma Constitution (Article 10, Section 10A, 1960) which states that voters in each county may assess an ad valorem tax levy of not less than 1 mill nor more than 2 mills on the dollar of assessed valuation of all taxable property in the county for operation of the library. The present permissive mill levy does not provide adequate funding to support minimal levels of library service.

The Oklahoma Constitution further prohibits counties with populations of 250,000 or more (that is, Tulsa and Oklahoma counties) to expand beyond their county lines for multi-county library system development. All other 75 counties in the state have au-
authority to form multi-county systems.

The 1975 Oklahoma Legislature responded to OLA's request for legislation to raise the permissive mill levy and to remove the restrictions of Tulsa and Oklahoma counties. The legislature passed Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 8 calling for a statewide election asking voters to approve increasing the present 2 mill maximum to a 4 mill maximum and allowing counties with populations of 100,000 or more to cooperate with other counties for library services.

The text of the State Question scheduled for the November 2, 1976 General Election reads:

Shall a Constitutional amendment amending Section 10A, Article X of the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma by changing the special annual recurring ad valorem tax levy for cooperative and joint city-county libraries from an allowable maximum of two (2) mills to an allowable maximum of four (4) mills on the dollar of the assessed valuation of all taxable property in the county, and allowing counties having a population of more than one hundred thousand (100,000) to use the proceeds of such a levy for libraries or library services in cooperation with one or more other counties be approved by the people?

If you have any questions concerning State Question 507, please contact Pat Woodrum, Assistant Director, Tulsa City-County Library, 400 Civic Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74103.

We need your help!

**OU Conference Rescheduled**

The School of Library Science of the University of Oklahoma has rescheduled the Conference on Children's Books in Mexico. The Conference will be held June 1-8, 1976. It will be held in Colima, Mexico at the University's Hacienda El Cobano. Conference leaders will be Dr. Frances Laverne Carroll, Professor of Library Science, and Mary Meacham, Instructor of Library Science.

The purpose of the conference is to bring together practicing children's librarians, teachers of children's literature, and graduate students to share their knowledge and to extend their knowledge of children's books portraying Mexicans and Chicanos.

The conference will include seminars, field trips, and research projects. The research project will involve the selection of titles from children's literature which are to be evaluated against the cultural background of Mexico, with the assistance of local teachers and librarians.

Discussions and materials will be in English; however, if any research projects necessitate the use of Spanish, translation services can be provided at the expense of the participant. Further information will be available upon request.

Inquiries about the Conference should be directed to the University of Oklahoma, Hacienda El Cobano, 555 East Constitution Avenue, Norman, OK 73069, (405-325-1751).

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SWLA Survey Published
Marion Mitchell
Executive Secretary, SWLA

The Southwestern Library Association (SWLA) announces the publication of Continuing Education for Library Staffs in the Southwest (CELS): A Survey with Recommendations by Allie Beth Martin and Maryann Duggan.

This survey financed jointly by the State Library Agencies in the Southwestern Library Association with funds under the Library Services and Construction Act assesses the continuing education of library staffs in the six SWLA states. It proposes a plan of action designed to meet the needs revealed by the survey.

Paperback copies of the survey are available from the University of Texas at Austin, Graduate School of Library Science, Box 7576, University Station, Austin, Texas 78712. The price is $5.00 per copy.

On-Line Reference Service Workshop Planned
Marion Mitchell
Executive Secretary, SWLA

A workshop, "Interactive On-Line Reference Service," sponsored by the Special Libraries Association (SLA) Texas and Oklahoma chapters, the Southwestern Library Association (SWLA), and the American Society for Information Science (ASIS) will be held in Dallas, Texas, Friday, February 20 and Saturday, February 21, 1976.

The program, designed for working librarians and information specialists, users and potential users, will be held at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Dallas and at the Sheraton Inn-Mockingbird West. Keynote speakers will be Martha Williams, Professor, University of Illinois, Information Retrieval Research Laboratory; and William Caldwell, Chief of Bibliographic Service, National Library of Medicine. The workshop will review the state-of-the-art of reference retrieval systems. It will include the opportunity for hands-on experience. Systems to be considered include Pi Retr, SDC, Lockheed, Medline, New York Times Data Bank and others.

Registration for the workshop is limited to 125 for the Friday session. The fee for both sessions which includes lunch on Friday is $30.00 per person. Registration for Saturday only is $10.00 per person. Arrangements for housing must be made separately. Deadline for registration is February 10, 1976.

Requests for information and applications should be sent to Paul Dumont, Dallas Public Library, 912 Commerce St., Dallas, Tx. 75202.

Academic Library Buildings Survey
From LJ-SLJ Hotline

Jerrold Orne, author of the annual survey of academic library building in the December 1 LJ, is marking his 10th year of recording what may be the greatest surge of college and university library construction to be seen for a long, long time. Orne, still at the University of North Carolina, but teaching at the library school instead of directing the UNC Library, is now contacting each and every academic library ever listed in his annual surveys and asking for a check on the figures then reported. Orne is also asking for comments on the successes and failures of library building planning, with an eye toward developing "in readable, useful form a synthesis of the best planning advice we all combined can offer to future academic libraries." Any four-year college or university which has had a building project completed in the 10 year period 1967-76, and which has not been contacted by Dr. Orne with a copy of his survey form is asked to send word to him at the School of Library Science, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board Meetings of the Oklahoma Library Association are OPEN MEETINGS. All members are invited and encouraged to attend.

Meetings are held on the third Friday of each month. For time and place of meeting contact the Executive Secretary.

Date—Friday, September 19, 1975
Time—10:00 A.M.
Place—Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Conference Room

Members Present — James Wilkerson, Alfreda Hanna, Verma Meader, Frances Alsoworth, Frances Kennedy, Leonard Eddy, Mary Esther Saxon and James Zink.


The meeting was called to order by the president. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented.

The treasurer's report of income and expenditures from August 15 to September 19, 1975 was presented. In the absence of Josh Stroman, Jim Wilkerson asked the group's advisement on the reinvestment for another year of the funds currently in certificates of deposit. After some discussion, a motion to reinvest the funds for another year in certificates of deposit was approved.

Irma Tomberlin was not present, but she reported by communicating with Frances Kennedy that she had no items to present from A.L.A.

Frances Kennedy announced that she had O.L.A. stationery available for any board member who needed it. She and President Wilkerson will be getting the President's newsletter out very soon. Frances called for suggestions on distributing membership lists. It was decided to make the lists available to O.L.A. members for three ten-cent stamps to cover the cost of mailing.

Jim Zink reported that the July issue of the Oklahoma Librarian was out and that the October issue should be out by the end of October. This next issue will include a supplement to the membership list.

Esther Mae Henke told the group that Oklahoma's Congressional delegation except for John Jarman voted to override the veto of the bill funding educational programs (including libraries). She also reported that Daniel Boorstin has received committee approval as the new Librarian of Congress, but the Senate has not yet acted on the appointment.

Sheila Alexander was welcomed and given an opportunity to make comments, but she made none.

Ralph Funk talked briefly about O.D.L. He said approval had been received to staff their department up to 62 personnel positions rather than the 50 previously indicated. He told of meeting with a subcommittee of the Governor's Reorganization Committee, and he said that no definite reorganization plan has been devised.

Alfreda Hanna reported that the program committee voted to meet that afternoon at the 1976 convention site, Lincoln Plaza Inn in Oklahoma City.

The Sites Committee recommended that the board rescind previous action limiting conference meeting places to Tulsa and Oklahoma City and approve O.S.U. at Stillwater as the 1977 site for April 21-23 of that year. Both suggestions were moved and seconded and passed by the board. The President announced that after further communication with the Arkansas Library Association, the attempt to set up a joint conference between their association and ours has been dropped.

The Continuing Education Committee reported that there have been only 30 applicants for the Program Planning Workshop to be held at Fountainhead Lodge November 12-14. The Committee is hoping to have 60 participants. The board suggested a general mailing to the membership of O.L.A. giving more of the interesting details concerning planned activities of the workshop and extension of the deadline for receipt of applications. A request has been received from Montana for information on Oklahoma's Continuing Education activities. Frances Kennedy agreed to respond to their request after consulting with Marilyn Shackelford.

College and University Division presented a request for funds to finance a December 5 workshop on library orientation, instruction and use. They wish to invite two out-of-state consultants to this workshop. The board suggested that they lower their proposed registration fee from $7.50 up to $5.00 per person and approved the expenditure of not more than $375 of O.L.A. money to finance it.

Gary England (OKC television weather man) will be National Library Week chairman.

Jim Zink reported briefly on the press reception in connection with the "Limits to Freedom?" program.

The Auditing Committee's report on O.L.A. treasurer's records for July 1, 1974 through June 30, 1975 was received and approved. They also suggested that the treasurer's duties be transferred to the Executive Secretary with adjustments being made in that job description and salary. It was decided that a committee should be set up to study that suggestion.

The board noted that clarification is needed to assure that board members know funds are available for clerical help when necessary.

Resignations from committee assignments had been received by the president from Hiram Davis and Anne Rounds.

A copy of a letter to Mr. Rucker Blankenship, Office of Manpower, concerning the vital need for a librarian at the state prison in McAlester was presented. John Hinkle would like O.L.A. attention to the matter. The
board decided that O.L.A. would endorse John's request for action.

Next board meeting will be at Bethany Nazarene College Library, October 17, 1975, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Frances Alsworth, Secretary

Date—Friday, October 17, 1975
Time—10:00 a.m.
Place — Bethany Nazarene College Library
Present — James Wilkerson, Alfreda Hanna, Frances Alsworth, Josh Stroman, Mary Esther Saxon, Ima Tomberlin, Esther Mae Henke, and Sheila Alexander

The meeting was called to order by the president. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented.

The Treasurer's report of income and expenditures from September 19 to October 17, 1975, was presented. The reinvestment of $8,091.97 into a certificate of deposit at 6.5% was reported. The report was accepted.

Ima Tomberlin reported that ALA wants information on library activities in Oklahoma during this calendar year for use in the yearbook. Any information for inclusion in this publication should be sent to Ima Tomberlin before November 15.

President Wilkerson suggested that O.L.A. would want to extend some expression of its concern to Mrs. Allie Beth Martin. The group decided to leave the details of what to send and the best time to send it to the discretion of Frances Kennedy.

Esther Mae Henke reported that L.S.C.A. funds probably will be released with no delay. She called attention to HR 8803 which is intended to provide an annual appropriation to the Postal Service to prevent the continued rise of library postage. She stated that White House Conference planning should begin in Oklahoma very soon. She also reported that L.S.C.A. advisory personnel had recently checked on the administration of federal programs in our state and would be reporting their findings soon.

President Wilkerson asked the group to consider nominating a White House Conference coordinator for O.L.A. Mary Esther Saxon was suggested. She agreed to consider the appointment and give her answer in about a week.

Sheila Alexander announced that the school librarians would be meeting with A.E.C.T. members at O.E.A. on October 23. The Oklahoma Association of School Librarians is presently reworking its constitution. The Governor's Reorganization Committee has consulted Sheila in regard to school and public library cooperation in Oklahoma.

Alfreda Hanna reported that program plans for the 1976 conference have not yet been clarified to the point of submitting a budget request. Several prominent out-of-state speakers are being sought. She asked an expression of the group concerning the funding of entertainment for the conference. Action was deferred on the until more definite information is received concerning the out-of-state speakers. Mary Esther Saxon suggested that a progress report concerning the White House Conference be included in conference plans. Alfreda also reported that each booth in the exhibit area will cost $35.00. She asked if O.L.A. wanted to pay that cost to professional exhibits or if some other location (such as hall space) should be used. Further information is needed before a decision can be made.

Jim Wilkerson announced that he had written letters in response to John Hinkle's request concerning the appointment of a prison librarian at McAlester, and that movement toward this appointment is being made.

The Membership Committee is now involved in membership development for national and regional associations as well as for the state organizations.

The Library Development Committee presented a request for $960 to finance the development of a slide-tape presentation in support of the library proposition that will be on the statewide ballot in November 1976, for bookmarks to accompany the slide-tape presentation, for sandwich luncheons for legislators, and refreshments for meetings. The request for funds was approved.

The Governor's Mansion Library Committee requested $500 to be used in updating the mansion's reference collection. The committee pointed out the fact that several standard reference sources in the library are 1967 editions. Materials suggested for purchase are: Encyclopedia Americana; Who's Who in America, 1975-77; Who's Who in American Politics, 1975; World Almanac, 1975; Statesman's Yearbook, 1975; Guinness Book of World Records, 1976; and a two-drawer card catalog for an author-title file. Their request was approved. The board also suggested that the committee consider a plan for continuing action to insure that the collection is kept up-to-date in the future.

Announcement was made that Marcia Brown will be at O.D.L. on November 18th at 2:00 p.m.

A law workshop will be held at O.D.L. on November 9. O.D.L. requested permission to use the O.L.A. mailing list to publicize the workshop. Permission was given. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Frances Alsworth
Secretary

Date — Friday, November 21, 1975
Time — 10:00 a.m.
Place — Pioneer Multi-County Library, Norman.

The meeting was called to order by the president. There was no quorum at the beginning of the meeting so action items were delayed.

Jim Vore, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Humanities Committee, discussed his committee's request that O.L.A. submit a program development proposal establishing a procedure to work with the Committee and approximately 25 small and medium sized libraries in the purchase, distribution and use of Gaylord Resource Materials. O.L.A. is being asked to choose the libraries that would participate and to report informally to the Humanities Committee concerning decisions made in regard to the proposal. O.L.A. is also asked to submit a budget of probable expenses. A preparatory workshop may be included in plans submitted. Libraries selected to participate would agree to have some library discussion groups (at least one) concerning the American Issues Forum. The Humanities Committee is not concerned that dates sug-
gested in the Forum materials be adhered to. Mr. Vore suggested that the O.L.A. Continuing Education Committee be charged with this responsibility and asked that the proposal be submitted by January so that funding might be handled quickly.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented. Treasurer's report of income and expenses as of November 21 was presented.

Irma Tomberlin announced that a reporter should send in information for the ALA yearbook. She has prepared a chronology to submit for this year. Dr. Healey asked her to request assistance through O.L.A. in structuring a committee to advise about curriculum needs in preparing librarians.

Frances Kennedy reminded the group that Leonard Eddy has a deadline for nominations. Ballots will go out about February 9th.

After some discussion of voting procedure, Mary Esther Saxon moved that the Constitution Committee examine the constitution in regard to voting procedure. The motion was seconded by Irma Tomberlin and was approved.

Jim Zink reported that he is receiving copy for the next issue of the Oklahoma Librarian. He stated that the ad form announcements for division news seemed to be favorably received. The next issue will probably contain extensive information concerning the Limits to Freedom program.

Esther Mae Henke announced that regulations are out for the ESEA program and Title II grants. A public works bill under consideration by Congress includes possible funding for public libraries. Those who wish to encourage support for this bill should write to committee members (through our Oklahoma representatives). A legislative day is planned for April 6.

Sheila Alexander reported that the State Department of Education is now working on ESEA claims and will soon be sending out funds. She expressed the displeasure of the School Librarians Division over the current structure of the Sequoyah Committee. She also reported that their division would like to see a school librarian in the President-Elect position next year. The Executive Board suggested that the Division supply the Nominating Committee with input concerning this.

Alfreda Hanna presented the tentative program for the 1976 OLA Conference, and a proposed budget. Both were approved by the Board.

Jim Wilkerson reported that the Continuing Education Committee would present a report on the Continuing Education Workshop held at Fountainhead at the next Board meeting.

Mary Esther Saxon has agreed to serve as Chairman of the White House Conference Committee.

A budget request from the Recruitment Committee was reviewed by the Board, and was approved tentatively by those present. Since a quorum of the Executive Board was no longer present, final approval will be given at the next meeting.

Plans for a Reference Division workshop, and a proposed budget, were presented by Kenneth Tracy, Chairman of the Reference Division. The Board approved a tentative budget of $104 for a program using one speaker from the Census Bureau. If more than one speaker is needed, Mr. Tracy will be asked to present a supplemental budget. This approval will be subject to final review at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Hanna will represent OLA at the SLICE meeting to be held during ALA Midwinter in January 1976. Travel expenses are included in the Association's budget.

The Executive Secretary was asked to send a plant to Allie Beth Martin during the holidays.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Frances Alsworth
Secretary

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN OLA AND SWLA?

OLA dues should be paid by February 1 to assure receiving a ballot for the annual election of officers. Only those persons whose membership dues have been received will be eligible to vote.

Membership dues are shown on page 2 of this issue. For membership application, contact:

OLA Executive Secretary
1629 Camden Way
Oklahoma City, OK 73116

SWLA dues are to be paid directly to the Association. Contact:

SWLA Executive Secretary
7371 Palacio
Dallas, TX 75240

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