

School librarians have realized through the years, as have all educators, the value of good literature in building character, developing attitudes, strengthening human relations, and helping with self-identity.

Although such realization has been implicit in the book selection we have carried on through the years, our thinking in this regard was crystallized in the school library bill of rights, endorsed by our present group, the American Library Association, in July 1955, which reads as follows:

School library bill of rights: School libraries are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms and with the preservation of these freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. To this end the American Association of School Librarians reaffirms the library bill of rights of the American Library Association, and asserts that the responsibility of the school library is—

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, esthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

This bill of right appears again in "Standards for School Library Programs," a 1960 publication of the American Library Association. These standards, which are in the process of being revised and upgraded, are the result of the combined thinking of representatives from the American Association of School Libraries and 19 other professional or public service organizations.

We have serious concerns about the subject matter in books, both factual and fictional. We have equal concern that the subject matter be presented in the best style, language, and format, so that we can develop in our boys and girls standards of taste and selectivity in reading.

To this end we recognize the value both of sound literary criticism and of the availability of selective, but not restrictive, lists. One of our recent publications is "Selecting Materials for School Libraries: Guidelines and Selection Sources To Insure Quality Collections," and copies of this brochure have been distributed to you. (See appendix.)

If you were to examine all sections of this pamphlet you would find in each, lists which contain a representative sampling of books which relate to all ethnic groups and present these groups in a fair