

ALA President Roy applauds swift action to restore full access to U.S. funded health database POPLINE

During the first week of April, controversy erupted over a decision by database administrators to block the word *abortion* as a search term for searches conducted on POPLINE, the world's largest database on reproductive health.

In a statement, ALA President Lorieene Roy said:

POPLINE is run by the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health in Maryland, and funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Earlier this week, librarians and individuals who used *abortion* as a search term received the message "No records found by latest query. Those who inquired about the inability to search on the term *abortion* were told that the decision to restrict the term was made after USAID inquired about two items in the database related to *abortion* that did not fit POPLINE criteria. The Dean of the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Dr. Michael J. Klag, reversed the decision to restrict the search term when informed about the administrators' decision.

We applaud Dr. Klag's swift action to restore full access to the POPLINE database. We are dismayed, however, at the circumstances that caused the administrators running the POPLINE database to begin blocking any and all searches on the word *abortion*. Any federal policy or rule that requires or encourages information providers to block access to scientific information because of partisan or religious bias is censorship. Such policies promote ideology over science and only serve to deny researchers, students and individuals

on all sides of the issue access to accurate scientific information.

Peggy Hoon honored with 2008 Patterson Copyright Award

Peggy Hoon is the 2008 recipient of the L. Ray Patterson Copyright Award: In Support of Users' Rights, which was established to recognize the contributions of an individual who pursues and supports the Constitutional purpose of U.S. copyright law, fair use, and the public domain.


Hoon currently serves as special assistant to the provost for copyright administration at North Carolina State University. In that role, Hoon helps shape the university's policies and regulations with regard to copyright, and she has shared that knowledge with countless other libraries and universities, through a busy speaking schedule and strong presence on the Internet.

The award will be presented at the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, Monday, June 30, 2008.

OITP releases Copyright Slider

Recently, ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) unveiled the OITP Copyright Slider. This single, sturdy product provides instant access to copyright laws and guidelines. Simply align the arrows by date of publication and determine a work's copyright status and term. And the "Permission Needed?" box provides a quick answer to this very important question.

This is a great tool for librarians, teachers, artists, students, researchers, attorneys, and anyone who needs clear, concise information on copyright terms and conditions.

For more information and to order your own OITP Copyright Slider, simply visit www.wo.ala.org/districtdispatch/?p=421. 

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