



Conversations around Social Justice and Intellectual Freedom

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During the summer of 2022, the Freedom to Read Foundation (ftrf.org) hosted a successful and groundbreaking virtual symposium. “Where Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice Meet: A Call to Action” focused on topics around the intersection of social justice and intellectual freedom. The board invited educators, authors, journalists, publishers, First Amendment advocates, and all areas of librarians to come together and share their thoughts and ideas. The board also invited them to think about action plans, steps, and tools that could be taken from the symposium to move the discussion beyond the walls and place of thoughts regarding the current challenges.

In this issue we share commentaries and featured articles to continue that conversation and to forge a deeper understanding of how social justice and intellectual freedom may, or may not, support and enhance one another as we continue to navigate challenges to intellectual freedom and see the need for social justice. There are commentaries that speak on topics from the classroom to boycotts, and featured articles that speak on the multidimensional role of the library and economic emphasis as well as thoughts around social justice and intellectual freedom.

As we read the submissions, let’s seek to explore our own knowledge of:

- How do we foster a stronger understanding about the ways intellectual freedom supports social justice?
- How do intellectual freedom and social justice support one another, and how do we utilize both to mitigate harm to marginalized groups?
- How do society’s intellectual freedom and social justice stakeholders work together to promote underrepresented voices on this topic?

I don’t believe this discussion can be exhausted. We continue to see and hear about challenges that appear in new places and in different ways, and as we continue to explore this topic, I am thankful for the spaces we create to hear thoughts and develop action plans.

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