

**6B—PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND VALUES 2: INFORMATION ACCESS &
INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM #3**

Access to Information and the Advancement of Knowledge: Reflections on the 250th Anniversary of Freedom of Information Legislation

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December 2, 2016 marked the 250th anniversary of the world's first access to information law in Sweden. Limited to northern Europe for 200 years, in the last 30 years freedom of information (FOI) laws have spread around the globe at a startling rate, resulting in numerous initiatives to support their use. This paper will highlight some of these major developments. Drawing on the author's experience as a FOI user and as an academic librarian, this paper provides a framework for thinking about the use of access laws, challenges common misconceptions about using them, and demonstrates how members of university communities are using FOI laws. Practical ideas about how librarians can support usage are described.