Policy 3015: Collection Management

Adopted: Unknown
Reviewed/Revised: August 26, 2009; January 28, 2015; April 26, 2017; May 22, 2019; April 28, 2021

I. Introduction

The Collection Maintenance policy sets forth the guiding principles that create and shape the Algonquin Area Public Library’s collection, provides the Library staff with guidelines for the curation and management of the collection, and also informs the Library’s users of the principles upon which the library makes decisions regarding the use and maintenance of the collection.

The Library supports the Library Bill of Rights, ALA Freedom to Read, and the ALA Freedom to View statements. The Library Board of Trustees shall review this policy at least biennially.

II. Scope of Collection

The Library provides resources for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the Library serves. The majority of the Library’s print and physical collection is intended to be a popular and actively used collection. Efforts are made to provide materials that will support learning curricula from preschool through adult education, but the Library does not acquire school textbooks or professional and technically oriented resources.

III. Selection Tools and Criteria

Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, and the Library strives to ensure that qualified personnel provide and maintain expertly selected resources to serve the needs of the community. Material selectors maintain an unbiased perspective to guarantee that the collection represents all significant viewpoints. Tools used in selection include professional journals, trade journals, online resources, publishers’ promotional materials, popular media, reviews from reputable sources, and patron suggestions and requests. Library staff select materials based on judgment and expertise and the following criteria:

- Anticipation of and response to community needs and interest
- Accuracy
- Popular demand
- Favorable reviews
- Relevance to and inclusion of experiences, viewpoints, and voices of diverse populations
- Artistic, literary, historic, scientific, cultural, or social significance
- Authority and reputation of the creator
- Price and availability
- Format, durability and ease of use

IV. Collection Maintenance

A library collection should be dynamic, and good stewardship of the collection requires that it remain fresh and tailored to patron needs as materials are added and withdrawn, formats rise and decline in usefulness and popularity, and publishing and library trends evolve. Systematic evaluation and weeding of the collection ensures the vitality and usefulness of the collection and makes room for newer materials. Materials may be withdrawn due to:
• Lack of demand or infrequent use
• Damage or poor condition
• Outdated, inaccurate, or obsolete information
• Availability through another source or in another format
• Availability of a new edition or better work on the same subject
• Parts or volumes missing
• Format obsolescence

Withdrawn materials may be discarded, sold, given to the Friends of the Algonquin Area Public Library, or offered to other local or non-profit organizations based on need, condition, and/or value.

V. Gifts and Donations
The Library accepts donations of new and gently used materials with the understanding that these materials will be managed using the same selection and collection maintenance criteria that apply to purchases. Donated materials must be given unconditionally and will not be returned. The Library does not accept gift subscriptions to magazines or newspapers. Most donations of physical materials are given to the Friends of the Algonquin Area Public Library.

When a monetary gift is received for the purchase of materials or other resources, the donor may specify the general nature or subject area of the item(s) to be purchased. Selection of specific titles will be made in accordance with the needs and selection policy of the Library.

VI. Reconsideration of Library Materials
The Library does not endorse opinions contained in its materials. Patrons are free to enjoy, dislike, or ignore any item in the collection, but are not allowed to restrict access to the material by others. If an Algonquin Area Public Library cardholder questions material in the collection, the manager of the department in which the material is located will discuss the issue with the patron. If the matter is not resolved, the patron may make a formal request for reconsideration. In that instance, the following procedure is followed:

The requestor submits a completed Reconsideration Request form to a library staff member which is then forwarded to the Executive Director. The Executive Director, with the appropriate staff, will review the item in question and make a decision regarding the retention of the material. The individual who submitted the form will be notified promptly of the decision. If the individual is not satisfied with the Executive Director’s decision, the individual may appeal in writing to the Library Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will then review the matter and make a final decision.

Material and resources undergoing review in a formal request for reconsideration process will not be withdrawn from the collection pending resolution of the process.
FORM FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Requestor information:
Your name ____________________________ Phone #________________________
Address ______________________________________________________________________________
Email Address ____________________________________________________________________________
Do you represent yourself _______ or an organization (name)__________________

Material information:
Format (Book, DVD, etc.) _________________________________________________________________
Author (if applicable) ___________________________________________________________________
Title_________________________________________________________________________________
Publisher ________________________________________________________________________________

Additional information about the request:
Did you read/view/listen to the entire work? ______________
If not, what sections have you examined? __________________________________________________
Why do you object to this item? (Please be specific, citing pages, sections, etc.) __________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

What prompted you to read, view, or listen to this item? _________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

For what age group would you recommend this item? _________________________________

What action would you like the library to take in regard to this work? _______________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Signature_____________________________________________________

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FORM

Date: __________________________

Patron Name: __________________________ Library ID: __________________________

Address: __________________________ Phone Number: __________________________

Do you represent yourself? __________ Group or Organization: ________________

1. Library Item for which you are commenting:
   ______ Book     _____Video/DVD     _____CD-Music     _____CD-Audiobook
   ______ Magazine    _____ Other

2. Title: ___________________________________________________________________

3. Author/Producer: ___________________________________________________________________

4. What brought this item to your attention? ___________________________________________________________________

5. Did you read, listen to, or view the entire item? _______  If not, what parts?
   __________________________________________________________________________

6. Please state your objections to this item as specifically as possible. __________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________


REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION POLICY & PROCEDURES

The Pontiac Public Library adopts the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements as they pertain to the selection of library materials and management of the library collection as policy.

REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

- Requests for reconsideration of any library item(s) must be submitted to the Library Director using the Request for Reconsideration form (attached).
- Only registered library patrons may submit a request for reconsideration.
- Only requests for reconsideration for items owned by the Pontiac Public Library are permitted.

PROCEDURES:

1. Present the Request for Reconsideration form.

2. Instruct the patron to answer all questions fully and state his or her objections and concerns and clearly as possible.

3. Be certain to get the patron’s name and contact information. If the patron represents an organization, write down the name and any pertinent information. Do not assume that they will fill this information out fully on the form.

4. Inform the patron that the request for reconsideration form will be presented to the Library Director who will present it to the Library Board of Trustees in an upcoming meeting. The Library Board may not make an immediate decision regarding the item(s) in question. Literary and critical reviews of the item as well as circulation statistics and area interests will be consulted. After a Decision has been reached, the Board will notify the patron of the decision.

5. Staff members are not to engage in conversations about the appropriateness of any item with patrons.

6. Complaints will not be considered unless the Request for Reconsideration form has been completed.
MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The Pontiac Public Library adopts the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements as they pertain to the selection of library materials and management of the library collection as policy.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:
The Pontiac Public Library’s purpose in building a collection is to make available to all people who enter the library as comprehensive an assemblage of recorded knowledge as possible within the limits of funds available and needs of the community. The library recognizes that the needs of the community are of primary importance in the selection of materials and because the community is a conglomerate of individuals, each individual’s needs will be considered in conjunction with the majority of the present and potential patronage. All efforts will be made to include items representing all members of the community in which the library serves.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTION:
The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials are delegated to the Library Director and, under his or her direction, to additional staff members who are qualified for this activity. No employee may be disciplined or dismissed for the selection of library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with the written policy required to be established pursuant to Illinois Library Law.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION & SELECTION TOOLS:
In accordance with the recommendation of Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries, the Pontiac Public Library will allocate no less than 8% of its operating budget on materials for patrons annually. These materials will be selected in a variety of formats including, but not limited to, print, video, sound recording, and electronic media. Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value to humanity; others are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational, or educational interest of the community. Reviews in professionally recognized periodicals are a primary source for materials selection. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities including best seller lists, and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas will also be used. Suggestions from patrons are welcome and will be considered using the same criteria as all other selections. Inclusion of items in the library collection does not equate to endorsement of the content or the ideas and philosophies contained in the items from the Pontiac Public Library.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE:
A. Duplicate Copies- The number of copies purchased varies with the expected use and interest of any library item. As extensive use for individual titles is demonstrated, duplication to meet the demand may be implemented.
B. **Weeding:** The Pontiac Public Library keeps the collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential materials, and by removing, on a systematic and continuous basis, those works that are worn, outdated, of little historical significance, or no longer in demand. Materials which are removed from the library collection may or may not be made available to the public for purchase in the Library book sale. A complete weeding of the entire library collection is accomplished every five years.

**USE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS:**
They choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading materials for children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject materials for himself or herself and for his or her children, he or she cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

**COMPLAINTS:**
Strong objections to any library materials must be made to the Library Director following the request for reconsideration procedures. Requests for reconsideration of library materials may be made by registered patrons only. The Pontiac Public Library adopts the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read and the Freedom to View statements as policy. All individuals have the right to choose which library materials they will use. However, no one has the right to restrict the freedom of others to read or view the items they wish. No book or other material will be automatically removed from the collection on the basis of a complaint or a request for reconsideration.
Request for Reconsideration

First name *

Last name *

Address *

Address 2

City/Town *

State/Province *
- Select -

ZIP/Postal Code *

Phone number *

Email address *
Resource on which you are commenting:

☐ Book
☐ Magazine
☐ Newspaper
☐ Audiovisual item
☐ Other

Title *

Author/producer *

Please comment on the specific matters which concern you.

If you are commenting on a resource you wish to have removed from the library, please tell us what resource(s) you suggest as more appropriate than what the library has provided.

Submit
The choice of library resources by a library user is an individual matter. While a person may reject resources for oneself, he or she may not restrict access to those resources by other library users.

The Library recognizes that certain resources are controversial and that any given item may offend some library user. The procedures enumerated below have been developed to assure that the requests of those who disagree with the inclusion of specific items in the collection are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

A library user who requests the reconsideration of a library resource will be referred immediately to the department director. This staff member will discuss the Resource Selection Policy and the application of selection principles.

If a library user insists that an item be withdrawn from the collection, the library’s procedure for reconsideration will be carefully explained and followed. A separate Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource form must be filled out for each item.

The procedure for the reconsideration of a library resource consists of the following:

- The library user must complete the Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource Form which will be submitted to the appropriate department director.
- The Request will be reviewed using the general criteria of the Resource Selection Policy and reviews from recognized evaluative sources to determine whether retention of the item would be in violation of the Resource Selection Policy.
- The library director will respond in writing to the library user regarding the recommendation of professional librarian staff.

An appeal of this recommendation may be made to the Library Board of Trustees. Such appeal must not exceed two pages and must include copies of both the original Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource form and the library director’s written response. The Library Board will review the staff decision based on whether or not the particular item conforms to the General Criteria outlined in the Resource Selection Policy. The Board of Trustees will then make the final determination of the matter, notifying the library user in writing of this action, in a timely manner.

The decision on reconsideration of a specific item will remain in effect for three years.

During the review process the Library will take appropriate action to insure that the item will continue to be available.

Approved by the Schaumburg Township District Library Board of Trustees on Sept. 21, 2009.
The Schaumburg Township District Library seeks to provide the community with resources that satisfy its educational, informational and recreational needs through the acquisition and organization of print, audio-visual and electronic resources. In support of these goals, the Library Board of Trustees emphasizes the importance of resources which have permanent value or contemporary significance.

The Library Board of Trustees has delegated authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials to the Library Director and, under supervision, to the professional librarian staff who are qualified by education, training and experience. The Library Board endorses the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association, copies of which are attached to this policy.

In considering individual titles for selection, librarians consult reviews and other evaluative sources. Some materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, while others are considered because of scholarship, historic value or ability to satisfy the needs of the community. Works that present an aspect of life honestly are not necessarily excluded because of frankness of expression. Resources are judged as a whole rather than on isolated passages.

To build a collection of enduring merit, resources must be measured by objective criteria. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are subject to the standards listed below. An individual item need not meet all of the criteria for acceptance.

**General Criteria:**

- Relevance, present and potential, to community needs. The library makes a conscious effort to obtain resources pertaining to local matters – civic, cultural, artistic, educational, recreational and historic.
- Reputation, authority and significance of the author, artist or publisher. No item will be excluded because of the race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, political or doctrinal beliefs or personal history of an author, artist or publisher.
- Topicality or importance of the resource as a document or recording of the times.
- Attention of critics, reviewers and the public.
- Relation to the existing collection and other resources on the subject. An effort is made to include significant works to illuminate the different and important sides of an issue.
- Insight into human and social conditions and relevance to the experiences and contributions of diverse populations.
- Accuracy and authenticity of scientific or historical fact.
- Suitability of physical format for library use.
- Price as a reasonable value for anticipated use.
- Popular demand.
The library recognizes that certain resources are controversial and that any item may offend some library user. Selections are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the works in relation to the goals of building and enhancing a collection that serves the diverse interests of the community.

Continual evaluation of library holdings is an essential part of collection development. To ensure a vital collection of continued value to the community, resources that are judged by the professional staff to have outlived their usefulness are withdrawn. Decisions for removal are based on diminished circulation, physical condition, usefulness and accuracy.

Library resources are not marked or identified by the library to imply or show approval or disapproval of the contents. All resources are kept on open shelves except those that are in poor condition and not replaceable, duplicate copies, extremely expensive or subject to mutilation.

The Library provides resources suitable for children and teens in collections that are clearly labeled and separate from the adult collection. Resources are selected for their merits and not necessarily excluded because of coarse language or frankness.

The Library provides resources in languages other than English that reflect the predominant languages spoken and taught in the Schaumburg Township District Library service area.

Selection of resources for the library’s collections will not be inhibited by the possibility that some resources may inadvertently come into the possession of children. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE READING, LISTENING AND VIEWING OF LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN RESTS SOLELY WITH THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS.

The library does not acquire highly specialized or technical resources which can be obtained through interlibrary loan or can be accessed electronically. Nor does it acquire special interest publications in fields including, but not limited to, law, engineering and medicine where such collections exist at nearby institutions.

The library’s collection does not take the place of elementary, middle school, high school or college libraries. It is the responsibility of the public and private schools to supply curriculum resources. The library works cooperatively with schools to supplement and enhance their collections.

Once an item has been accepted under the Resource Selection Policy, it will not be removed at the request of those who disagree with its inclusion unless it can be shown that retention of the item would be in violation of that Policy. Copies of the Resource Selection Policy and the Reconsideration of a Library Resource Policy are available on the Library website. The Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource form may
be obtained at Central Library Reference Desks and at the branch libraries’ Information Desks. You can also fill it out online.

Approved by the Schaumburg Township District Library Board of Trustees, September 21, 2009.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and
the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and
publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the
preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of
democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the
good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and
misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We
do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be
“protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor
free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought
against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet.
The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these
pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by
those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change.
And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension.
Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps
open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice.
Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the
toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with
controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to
read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or
manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written
word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the
original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that
serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into
organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and
a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the
danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our
democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must
jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own
freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound
responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the
readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people
will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the
responsibilities that accompany these rights.
We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. **It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.**

   Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. **Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.**

   Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. **It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.**

   No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. **There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.**

   To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters
values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. **It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.**

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. **It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people’s freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.**

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. **It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a “bad” book is a good one, the answer to a “bad” idea is a good one.**

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader’s purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state
these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.


A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
The Children’s Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression
Challenges to Library Books and Materials

Holly Eberle
Amber Creger
Kristin Holzhauer
**Materials Challenge:** an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group.

**Materials Ban:** The removal of library materials as a result of a materials challenge.
REASONS FOR CHALLENGES

OBSCENE
BLEAK
ANTI-SEMITIC
PEDOPHILIA
SEXUALLY EXPLICIT
CRITICAL RACE THEORY
CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS
ala.org/bbooks | #BannedBooksWeek

Each word and phrase in this graphic is cited from 2021 censorship reports
WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?

- 39% Parents
- 24% Patrons
- 18% Board/administration
- 10% Political/religious groups
- 6% Librarians/teachers
- 2% Elected officials
- 1% Students

Statistics based on 715 responses
WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?

- 44% School libraries
- 37% Public libraries
- 18% Schools
- 1% Academic/Other

Statistics based on 729 responses

CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS
ala.org/bbooks | #BannedBooksWeek
**TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2021**

1. *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe
   - Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to have sexually explicit images.

2. *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison
   - Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

3. *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson
   - Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content, profanity, and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

4. *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Perez
   - Reasons: Banned, challenged, and restricted for depictions of abuse and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

5. *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
   - Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, violence, and it was thought to promote an anti-police message and indoctrination of a social agenda.

   - Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references, and use of a derogatory term.

7. *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews
   - Reasons: Banned and challenged because it was considered sexually explicit and degrading to women.

8. *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
   - Reasons: Banned and challenged because it depicts child sexual abuse and was considered sexually explicit.

9. *This Book Is Gay* by Juno Dawson
   - Reasons: Banned, challenged, relocated, and restricted for providing sexual education and LGBTQIA+ content.

10. *Beyond Magenta* by Susan Kuklin
    - Reasons: Banned and challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

**OFFICE FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM**
**American Library Association**
Preparation is KEY!
Create/Update Policies & Procedures

Review Intellectual Freedom Resources

Provide/Refresh Library Board & Staff Training
Things to Consider with Policies and Procedures....
Policies

- The library adopts ALA’s statements of Intellectual Freedom as policy- Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View

- Only registered patrons can make requests for reconsideration.

- Requests for reconsideration can only be made on items owned by your library.

- Inclusion of items in the library collection does not equate to library endorsement of the items.

Procedures

- Patron Request for Reconsideration Form that states the patron must have read/viewed the item being challenged.

- Establish clear written procedures for how the patron may address the Board. State that the Board will not make an immediate decision.
Tips for navigating difficult conversations

LISTEN First
Be Empathetic
Provide a place for the patron to be heard, felt, and found
Intellectual Freedom
Resources that educate and spark conversation

OFFICE FOR Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

225 Michigan Ave, Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 280-4226
E-mail: oif@ala.org