Developing Collections: Preparing for Challenges
Overview

- Challenge Scenario
- Principles of Collection Development
  - Value of policy
  - Elements of policy
- Applying Policy
- Educating the public
  - Freedom to read
- Need for Trustee Support
**Sample 1**

A patron sends a letter to the Board of Trustees with a complaint about a book they found. They are irate that your library would allow such a book. They want the book immediately removed from the shelves or they will go to the press.

**Sample 2**

A patron comes to the desk while you are there with the Director. They say they were just in the children’s room and saw such-and-such book on the shelves. They say, “I don’t want to ban books. I just think that this one does not belong in the children’s room.”
The Collection Development Policy
Principles of Collection Development Policy

- Grows from the library’s mission
- Guides purchasing decisions
- Guides acceptance of donations
- Guides weeding decisions
- Educates the public about collection development
- Helps defend decision making when necessary
Elements of a Collection Development Policy

- Define authority in charge of collection development
- Define the tools used in collection decisions making
- Discuss areas of focus
- Aim for diversity
- Consider what other collaborating libraries have (ILL)
- Consider how detailed it needs to be
Applying the Policy
Are there exceptions?

Consider these other collections:

● Digital collections: Hoopla, Overdrive, Kanopy
  ○ Overdrive Advantage
● Local authors
● Genealogy and Local History
● Library of Things
Take it one step further

- Books and materials on display
- Displays by community groups
- Programs and presenters
- Recommended websites
Educating about the Freedom to Read
...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.

For the full statement visit: https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement
Top 13 most challenged of 2022

1. **Gender Queer** by Maia Kobabe
   Reasons: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

2. **All Boys Aren’t Blue** by George M. Johnson
   Reasons: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

3. **The Bluest Eye** by Toni Morrison
   Reasons: depiction of sexual abuse, claimed to be sexually explicit, EDI content

4. **Flamer** by Mike Curato
   Reasons: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

5. **(TIE) Looking for Alaska** by John Green
   Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content

6. **(TIE) The Perks of Being a Wallflower** by Stephen Chbosky
   Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content, depiction of sexual abuse, drugs, profanity

7. **Lawn Boy** by Jonathan Evison
   Reasons: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

8. **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie
   Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content

9. **Out of Darkness** by Ashley Hope Perez
   Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit

10. **(TIE) A Court of Mist and Fury** by Sarah J. Maas
    Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit

11. **(TIE) Crank** by Ellen Hopkins
    Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit, drugs

12. **(TIE) Me and Earl and the Dying Girl** by Jesse Andrews
    Reasons: Claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity

13. **(TIE) This Book is Gay** by Juno Dawson
    Reasons: LGBTQIA+ content, sex education, claimed to be sexually explicit
Most commonly banned books of all time

1984 by George Orwell
Reason: pro-communism ideas, sexuality

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald; Matthew J. Bruccoli (Preface by)
Reasons: reference to drugs, sexuality, and profanity

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain
Reason: racism

Lord of the Flies by William Golding
Reasons: profanity, sexuality, racial slurs, and excessive violence

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
Reasons: offensive language, racism, violence

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey
Reasons: racism, misogyny, sexually explicit

The Color Purple by Alice Walker
Reasons: offensive language, sexually explicit, unsuited for certain age groups

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou
Reason: sexually explicit

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Reasons: offensive language; racism

https://libguides.butler.edu/c.php?g=34189&p=217684
“When you choose censorship as your tool for controlling access to information and controlling individuals’ ability to learn more about various ideas,” she said, “inevitably it’s going to sweep up ideas and materials that you actually agree with.”

Established December 1, 1967, the Office for Intellectual Freedom is charged with implementing ALA policies concerning the concept of intellectual freedom as embodied in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the Association’s basic policy on free access to libraries and library materials. The goal of the office is to educate librarians and the general public about the nature and importance of intellectual freedom in libraries.

- Challenge report form
- oif@aol.org
- 312-280-4221
Library Trustee’s Code of Ethics

“Sustain the core freedoms of our democracy by providing a broad diversity of viewpoints, beliefs, information, and literature and equal access to everyone.”
Trustee Support
Trustees role in material challenges

● Be informed: your policy, NH community, national news

● Use library policy as a guide for any challenges or discussions

● Include your Director in deliberations and decision making

● Communicate as a Board, not individuals
RESOURCES

Link to these slides https://bit.ly/3M8fqRf

- Kingston Community Library Collection Development Policy

- Nashua Public Library Materials Selection Policy
  https://nashualibrary.org/about/policies/english/materials-selection-policy/

- American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement
  https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement

- Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Esw_azwPj3tyiA1j78MbYK-YzTT-0vAT/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115241468628870561523&rtpof=true&sd=true

- Reconsideration Committee Report Conway Public Library