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A Statewide Survey of Censorship and Intellectual Freedom

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Abstract

This article presents the results of a survey given to public and school library workers to gain a foundational understanding of censorship within the state of Idaho. Our population was asked questions regarding position demographics; experience with challenges; the tracking, reporting and assistance sought; and the contents of said challenge policies. Special attention was also given to the history of censorship, both nationally and statewide, and the demographic, political, and legislative characteristics of Idaho, to provide a conceptual framework for the findings. The
results of this statewide survey address an important and uninvestigated segment of national challenges and Idaho librarianship.

Keywords: censorship, challenges, Idaho, intellectual freedom, public libraries, school libraries
Every September, libraries, bookstores, publishers, and book lovers across the country observe Banned Books Week. The annual celebration of the freedom to read raises awareness of censorship in libraries with events, displays, and social media campaigns that highlight the most commonly challenged titles of the previous year as well as historical challenges. Data compiled by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Office of Intellectual Freedom (OIF) are used to create helpful lists of frequently challenged books and the reasons for the challenges. According to the ALA, there were 464 reported challenges in 2012 (Banned Books Week, 2013), but the ALA estimates that as many as 80% of challenges go unreported (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010). This raises the question: what are the policies and practices of librarians regarding challenges in our own state?

Following this line of inquiry led to further interest in and exploration of the topics of challenges and, more broadly, censorship. As our research progressed, questions such as how often challenges to library materials occur, and when and how those challenges are made public emerged and expanded our scope. Through this study we have gathered a foundational understanding of censorship practices in the state of Idaho, with some revealing data on the rate of disclosure.

Background

General history of censorship

The attitude of librarians toward censorship of library materials has changed much since the beginnings of professional American librarianship in the late nineteenth century. Early on librarians were advocates for censorship (Robbins, 1996) and encouraged a very selective acquisition of materials in library collections. The favoring of censorship and strict selection
wavered over time, but it was not until 1939 that the ALA adopted its first Library Bill of Rights. This document outlined what would become the hallmark policy statement on intellectual freedom involving library materials (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010). With the creation of the Intellectual Freedom Committee in 1948, librarians began to advocate neutrality and impartiality in book selection (Robbins, 1996). The history of censorship and the library profession is long and detailed, and for more information we recommend Geller’s *Forbidden Books in American Public Libraries* and Robbins’ *Censorship and the American Library*.

**History of Censorship in Idaho**

We chose to focus on the state of Idaho for our survey due to our residence in the state, but also because of the apparent lack of data of this kind in a state-focused manner. Historic background for this study can be found in Eli M. Oboler’s research on censorship. Oboler, a strong advocate of intellectual freedom in libraries, was the head librarian at Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho from 1949-1980 and was active in professional organizations, including serving as president of the Idaho Library Association (ILA) (1950-1953) and the Pacific Northwest Library Association (PNLA) (1955-1956), as well as vice president of the Freedom to Read Foundation (1979-1980) (ISU, 2013). A prolific author, Oboler published over two-hundred articles and books. The ALA presents a biennial eponymous award, the Eli M. Oboler Memorial Award, to the best published work related to intellectual freedom.

In one 1962 study, Oboler surveyed Idaho librarians on the theoretical actions they would take if the school board ordered them to remove *Catcher in the Rye* from the collection. Oboler found that the survey responses indicated “laudable courage and strength among Idaho school
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librarians” who “know how to combat censorship and are prepared to do so, in a professional and constructive and tactful and cooperative way” (1980). In other writings, Oboler discusses pornography and obscenity laws in Idaho, the struggle to maintain First Amendment rights, book selection for young adults, and the history of censorship, especially in relation to human sexuality. Oboler indicates in much of his work that the intellectual freedom issues and cases in Idaho could be comparable to almost any other state and it is only in the frequency of “independent, ultraconservative, obscenity-and-curriculum-baiting groups” that Idaho sets itself apart (1980).

**Idaho Demographics and Politics**

For over a half-century, the Republican Party has been the predominant political party in Idaho. Since 1952 its citizens have voted for a Democratic president only once, with the 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson election, and elected Democratic governors three times. According to a recent Gallup poll, Idaho is the second most conservative state in the nation, with 53.6 percent of the population leaning Republican (2013). The demographic makeup of the state is predominantly Caucasian, with an estimated 93.8% of the population identifying as white (U.S. Census, 2012). The state is also home to several Native American reservations, and the Hispanic population of the state has grown rapidly in recent years, with a 73% increase over the past decade (National Journal, 2013). In addition, 51% of citizens belong to a religious body (ASARB, 2010), with most affiliated with Mormon, Protestant, or Catholic churches (Pew Forum, 2008).
Literature Review

Libraries and the First Amendment

Attorney Theresa Chmara writes that public libraries are “designated public forums for the receipt of information,” indicating that any attempts to suppress access to materials must be viewed in light of the First Amendment (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010). Though the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, courts have found that this right also has a corollary in the right to receive information. This right particularly impacts libraries but, according to law professor Marc Blitz, has been neglected by scholars who have focused more on the expressive aspect of the First Amendment (2006). Public libraries in particular maintain a large degree of protection under the First Amendment, and any form of restriction by the government must be narrowly focused in regards to a “compelling interest” (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010).

School libraries have been embroiled in the most court cases and helped set the majority of legal precedent on censorship. Though the Supreme Court determined that students maintain First Amendment protections in Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969), these rights are not as absolute for students as they are for adults. Though an appeals court affirmed schools’ rights to control both curriculum and school library materials in Presidents Council District 25 v. Community School Board No.25 (1972), in 1981 the Supreme Court ruled that school districts could not remove books from the library simply because they objected to the ideas within them, in Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico. Courts have generally sided with school districts in the right to control curriculum, a standard reinforced by Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlemeier (1988), which
found that schools had the right to suppress student speech when directly tied to class activities, but have applied higher scrutiny in regards to extra-curricular censorship, including within school libraries. History professor Henry Reichman notes that courts have shown three standards should be met when attempting to remove books from a school library: 1) Personal opposition to ideas within the text is not a valid reason for removal; 2) Acceptable reasons for removal include space, age, “educational suitability,” and “pervasive vulgarity;” 3) Districts must follow established procedures when deciding whether to remove an item (2001). Librarian and author Herbert Foerstel argues that past cases instigated by parents and community members show one of the strongest defenses against banning attempts within schools and libraries is “enlightened school boards and supportive courts” (2002).

Professor W. Bernard Lukenbill and James F. Lukenbill, a data/analytics manager, studied the knowledge of school librarians in relation to prominent censorship court cases, including the Pico ruling. They surveyed a group of Texas librarians and found that for nearly all cases a majority was not aware of the case, and only a minority claimed they had a thorough understanding of its significance. This lack of knowledge, especially about the Pico case, which was highlighted in the study for being the only school library case to reach the Supreme Court, led the authors to argue that the findings “may imply that [school librarians] may not completely understand students’ First Amendment rights of free speech and students’ rights to receive information” (Lukenbill & Lukenbill, 2007).

**Idaho Law**

Although minors enjoy First Amendment protections to receive information, there are more limits on their rights than adults. Materials that adults can access under constitutional
protection may be designated as obscene or harmful for minors. Under this broadened definition, a number of states have instituted “harmful to minors” laws, including the state of Idaho. Idaho restricts the dissemination of materials deemed harmful to minors, with punishment including imprisonment or fine (Disseminating Material Harmful to Minors, 1972). However, an affirmative defense constitutes that “the defendant was a bona fide school, college, university, museum or public library, or was acting in his capacity as an employee of such an organization or a retail outlet affiliated with and serving the educational purposes of such an organization” (Disseminating Material Harmful to Minors--Defenses, 1972). As a result, while working in their capacity within a school, academic, or public library, librarians are protected from prosecution under this law. Nevertheless, the law has been cited in attempts to restrict underage access to library materials and limit collections. In 2008 the Nampa Public Library Board of Trustees voted to limit access to materials that they believed could be interpreted as harmful to minors. The board voted to restrict access to several books, including The New Joy of Sex and The Joy of Gay Sex, and place them within the library director’s office (Idaho Trustees Apply Harmful-to-Minors Law to Collection Access, 2008). The board reversed its position several months later, after the ACLU threatened legal action, citing First Amendment concerns (Nampa Board Reverses Itself on Sex-Ed Books, 2008).

Ethical Perspectives

The broader library community has long advocated against censorship, and much of the published literature supports this position. The ALA has strongly affirmed a position supporting intellectual freedom in its “Library Bill of Rights.” The ALA notes that material should not be excluded from a library because of its background or viewpoints, or because of differing
ideological perspectives. In addition, libraries are called upon, as part of their professional duty, to “challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment” (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010). Charles Oppenheim and Victoria Smith of Loughborough University both advocate for intellectual freedom but note that, though the ideal should be maintained and pushed, libraries often encounter challenges in implementation due to obligations to outside organizations, including their local communities and other sources of pressure or funding (2004). Blitz argues for the necessity of libraries to protect patrons’ right to receive information. He claims that this right is key to the First Amendment and that this private form of “intellectual liberty” allows people to encounter controversial perspectives without expressing their own view, and offers those who may not have a strong viewpoint to explore a wide range of materials. Blitz writes that organizations such as libraries must protect this right and, to do so, they need autonomy from outside interference and the “‘communitarian’ impulses of political majorities” (2006).

Challenges, Selection, and Self-Censorship

Reichman argues that objections to curriculum and library materials in schools are an important part of the democratic process for education. Although it can be difficult to distinguish between “legitimate constraints” and censorship, especially in regard to youth materials, such a distinction must be made, and librarians should be able to deal with local concerns as well as balance diversity and a variety of interests (Reichman, 2001). Though everyone has a subjective bias, it is part of the job of professional librarians to understand and overcome this, in order to ensure that individual judgments over content do not impact selection decisions.
When librarians choose not to select a book for their library, or place restrictions on it due to content or fear of challenges, it is known as self-censorship. Debra Lau Whelan of School Library Journal notes that, while problematic, self-censorship can be difficult to quantify and study, due to the lack of an actual challenge or efforts to collect statistics (2009a). A School Library Journal survey found that 70% of respondents had not purchased a book due to fear over a “possible reaction from parents” (Whelan, 2009b). Though concerns over parental and community challenges are quite real, the ALA notes that minors have First Amendment rights, and “institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users” (Office for Intellectual Freedom for the American Library Association, 2010).

In a more critical view of anti-censorship efforts, Professor Kenneth Kidd argues that, while such efforts are important, traditional arguments about selection versus censorship within libraries places selection in opposition to censorship, vilifying the censor and ruining the opportunity for broader discussions about censorship and evaluation. Kidd also claims that anti-censorship awareness campaigns have contributed toward the “prizing” of certain books simply because they have been challenged, rather than based on actual merit (2008).

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to gain a foundational understanding of censorship practices in public and school libraries within the state of Idaho. Participants of this study included librarians, library workers, and administrators, who were asked to report job-related information (library specialty and position title), as well as their practices and experiences dealing with informally and formally challenged materials.
Our survey was comprised of 17 questions—7 closed-ended and 10 open-ended questions—focused on creating a baseline of research inquiry regarding how those working in, or overseeing, public and school libraries handle and report challenges in Idaho (see Appendix B). A non-probability methodology was used with distribution of an online questionnaire accessible via an email link to the sample population. The text of the email briefly outlined the intent of our research and welcomed participation from interested individuals (see Appendix A). Those who chose to respond were then provided with a statement of informed consent, followed by the survey questions. At the conclusion of the questionnaire, participants were encouraged to distribute the survey to colleagues working at public and school libraries in the state, creating a chain survey design, in an attempt to solicit feedback from members of the target population who would otherwise be undiscoverable.

Our study population was comprised of individuals working in or representing a public or school library in Idaho. As alluded to by the choice of a chain survey design, locating the target population posed a few challenges. Presumably for reasons of protection and privacy, many public and school libraries do not provide an online employee directory. Therefore, contact information was discovered by locating libraries through the Idaho Commission for Libraries directory (ICfL, 2013) and Google Maps (Google Maps, 2013). Once the libraries and public schools were identified, each institution’s website was searched for an email address. Contact information on such sites varied widely, so instead of restricting to one individual per organization, all potentially viable email address were collected. In total a list of 258 known addresses were sent an email asking to participate in our survey, yet of those 258, numerous addresses were now defunct due to attrition or library closures. Emails were also sent to all ILA members via their listserv (roughly 760 members), making the true number of those contacted...
indiscernible. During the month the survey was open, we garnered 61 responses from individuals. We compiled responses using Google surveys, which produced a .csv file that was imported to Excel for analysis.

**Results and Discussion**

**Position Demographics**

Two position-related demographic questions started the survey: “What type of library do you work for?” and “Which option best describes your position title?” In regard to the former, the response population was comprised of 62% school library workers and 38% public library workers. This markedly increased level of school librarians may reflect the ability to locate individual emails, as opposed to public libraries, which often only provide a primary email. Self-reported position titles presented a wide variation. Among the 61 respondents, 20 identified as library administrators, 37 as librarians, 3 as library assistants, and 1 as other (Table 1). One library employee who performs all roles specified gave the response of “other”. This division of respondents matches well with our target population for the survey.

Table 1. Which option best describes your position title?
Experience with Challenges

Responses indicated varying roles exist when a library challenge is made. Of the 61 respondents, 18 receive the initial complaint or take part in the discussion regarding the challenged material, while 12 immediately forward the complaint to the next level of authority. Another 12 responded that a challenge has never occurred, and thus had no personal experience with handling challenges. Seven make the final decision regarding challenges. The remainder of responses were: 5 no response, 2 provide selector statements, 1 teaches sessions on challenged books, 1 developed the challenge policy, 1 consults with colleagues, and 1 who provided a comment stating experience with complaints over materials with sexual content and orientation. These responses demonstrate that Idaho librarians and those representing the library take part in many levels of the challenge process.

This hierarchical nature for challenges is most evident when examining responses to the question, “Who (library director, committee, district board, etc.) participates in the final decision to remove or restrict a book?” Responses varied widely and spoke to the myriad library structures within our state, including: library directors, library boards, principals, superintendents, review committees, and solitary librarians or library workers (Table 2). From the large public library system to the rural elementary school library, the construction of policy authority is as limitless as the libraries they represent.
Table 2. Who (library director, committee, district board, etc.) participates in the final decision to remove or restrict a book?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review Committee</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Director and Board</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Board</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Director</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/School District Board</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and Librarian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent and Board of Trustees</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian/Library Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It Depends</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and District Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and Superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Committee and Board (if appealed)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian and Administrator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian, Library Director, Library Board (if challenge is appealed)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library challenges, according to the data, are not extremely common, but still occur with enough regularity to warrant serious attention. While more than half of library workers had no formal challenges in the last three years, 19 of the 61 individuals reported at least one formal
challenge (Table 3). Eight respondents had more than three in the past three years, showing that for some libraries in Idaho challenges are not an uncommon occurrence. One shocking example shared by a respondent recounted a colleague’s interaction with a parent who chose to tear up a book and pay for it rather than keep it on the shelf. Given the supporting data and personal accounts, Idaho librarians are still ambassadors of and greatly invested in communicating intellectual freedom to their community.

Table 3. How many formal book challenges has your library dealt with in the past 3 years?

Interestingly, when challenge data are compared to the data for resulting restrictions and removals, 8 individuals reported censoring the book by relocating or removing 1 to 2 books from the collection, and one respondent has removed more than 6 books (Table 4). The strong relationship between challenged materials and rates of books restricted or removed is worth further study.
Table 4. How many of these challenges resulted in a book being restricted or removed from the library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/no response</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tracking, Reporting, and Seeking Assistance with Challenges**

Perhaps the most surprising response came from the question, “Does your library track past formal challenges?” A large portion, 26 out of 61, does not track formal challenges and another 21 respondents were unsure. After accounting for 2 non-responses, this indicates that only 12 of the 61 respondents work at a library that clearly tracks formal challenges. Without accurate internal data collected at the library level, we cannot fully contribute to state and national reports, such as Doyle (2010).
Related to the internal tracking of data is the reporting of formal challenges to external organizations. Those who responded to the question, “Does your library notify any outside sources when a book is challenged?” confirmed that less than half report that outside sources are notified of external challenges (Table 5). Among the outlets for reporting listed were the OIF, ILA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee, the local or state library association, or consortium.

Table 5. Does your library notify any outside sources when a book is challenged?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We do not notify any outside sources of library challenges</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALA Intellectual Freedom Office</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It depends</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local or state library association</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report to consortium</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local news outlets</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Idaho library workers also appear to have limited need of outside assistance to deal with a book challenge. Of the listed answer choices to the question, “Has your library ever sought assistance from an outside source when dealing with a book challenge?” 67% have not, 13% gave no response, 6% selected not applicable, 5% were not sure, 3% have used a local or state library association, 3% have used lawyers, 2% would seek assistance if necessary, and 1% have
used the ALA Intellectual Freedom Office (Table 6). This study cannot determine whether such responses speak to a strong challenge policy being in place, a lack of awareness, or some other contributing factor. Hopefully these data can encourage additional communication efforts between Idaho libraries and such support organizations to share their suite of help resources with libraries statewide.

Table 6. Has your library ever sought assistance from an outside source when dealing with a book challenge?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We have not sought assistance from a source outside of our library when dealing with a book challenge.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local or state library associations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALA Intellectual Freedom Office</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would seek assistance, if necessary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Challenge Policies**

Written policies governing the formal process for challenging a library item are heavily present in Idaho libraries. A large majority of the population surveyed, 45 out of 61, have a formal written policy (Table 7). This high number may be a result of the efforts of the ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee, including their excellent handbook on creating challenge
policies (Idaho Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee, 2007), or through popular national events that highlight censorship, notably Banned Books Week. Data also support that these challenge policies often are not static documents. Twenty respondents answered yes to the question, “To your knowledge, has this policy changed over time?” Those libraries that have revised their challenge policy made changes including: addition of formats (e.g. DVDs, e-books, etc.), attaching their collection development policy, or revising wording. This effort taken to update challenge policies on the part of Idaho library workers denotes the importance of such a document and that by having current rules in place libraries can better address intellectual freedom questions posed by their patrons.

Table 7. Does your library have a formal written policy for how to deal with challenges?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several libraries shared their challenge policies and/or complaint forms. Though the policies differed in length, wording, and in the detailed processes, most shared common general requirements and ideals. The majority of the policies were from schools, though we also received a few from public libraries. All of the policies required that challengers submit a formal written complaint explaining exactly what items they were challenging and why. Many of the forms also
requested that the person submitting the form detail what action they were hoping the library would take and whether they had any alternative materials that would suggest instead. Most detailed the challenge process, including who would be judging the materials based on the complaint (such as a committee or the library director), and many also offered an appeals process, generally up to a trustee board or similar governing body.

**Further Research**

Although this study was successful in obtaining respondents’ experiences of and practices for dealing with materials that have been challenged and gathering information about challenge policies, many enhancements could be addressed by further study.

For example, the study population could be more intricately explored. The present survey design was one of convenience sampling, and this negates the generalizability of the findings. If a future survey is attempted, random sampling is suggested as a way to collect results that better reflect the larger population of public and school librarians in Idaho. Similarly, random sampling would also address some, although not all, of the issues that may have occurred due to response bias. Alternately, census methodology could be implemented to gather comprehensive data on this issue.

Altering the survey wording to remove focus on books could reveal a greater depth of challenged materials. In the survey challenges and challenge polices were frequently referenced as “book challenges” and “book challenge policies”. By simply substituting the term “item” or “material” for “book” our results would no longer be restricted to a format type. Finally, it may also be useful to look further into other aspects of information restriction within Idaho libraries, including issues such as online access policies and internet filters in public and school libraries.
While alterations could certainly be incorporated to improve the richness of the collected data, overall, this survey represents novel and valuable information that provides key insights into censorship practices in Idaho.

Conclusion

Libraries in the state of Idaho are diverse institutions with varying needs and experiences. This diversity can be seen in the wide range of roles library professionals play, their varied responsibilities when a challenge is made, and the differing experiences with challenges. Idaho librarians and library representatives take part in many levels of the challenge process and have diverse forms of challenge policy authority.

Despite the range of experiences with challenges to materials, or perhaps because of it, Idaho librarians appear to be prepared for challenges in their libraries. A high percentage of libraries already have a formal written policy for challenges to materials, and most appear not to have needed much outside assistance or guidance with censorship issues. Our findings do not make it clear, however, if librarians’ reluctance to seek out assistance or report challenges is due to confidence in their own policy mechanisms, a desire to keep challenge matters generally private, or a lack of awareness about institutions that track challenges and/or offer support. Additionally, we did not seek out further explanation from those libraries that claimed they did not have a challenge policy. The literature on challenges has shown that these policies offer one of the best defenses against censorship attempts, so even those libraries that have yet to experience a challenge would benefit from a firm institutional protocol. Although a few libraries experienced a high number of challenges, there is a wealth of resources available to them through the ILA, ALA, and the OIF. If more Idaho libraries took advantage of the resources on
challenges available to them, perhaps more challenges would be reported, allowing a more accurate representation of intellectual freedom issues in libraries both regionally and nationally.

References


Appendix A: Survey Email

*Please excuse duplicate postings*

We are currently researching censorship in Idaho’s public and K-12 libraries so we can better understand the climate of intellectual freedom reporting. To do this, we are gathering information about censorship challenges from public and school librarians and we need your help.

If you are a school librarian (all grades from K-12) or a public librarian, we encourage you to complete a short 15-minute survey which contains questions about your library’s challenge policies (formal or informal) and experiences you may have had with materials challenges.

Answers will be stored within a password protected program and maintained in a manner that will not link you to any identifying information.

Your response will help us to gain an accurate picture of how Idaho’s libraries serve their communities and establish a baseline of information that other researchers can use in future studies of access to information in Idaho. Please forward this survey to any relevant persons within your institution or other organizations.

If you are having trouble connecting to this survey, please copy and paste the following URL into your browser: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1GNUwxxhlCSrOvheAacbdBiYZmuBGiuR0E1WtKaHU/viewform.

Our survey will close on Friday, May 3rd at 5:00pm. Please direct any questions to kmonks@uidaho.edu.

Thank you for your help!

Kathleen Monks, Annie Gaines, and Caitlin Marineau
Appendix B: Survey Instrument

Informed Consent (will be presented to participants before the survey is taken).

Survey of Challenged Books in Idaho:
This survey is an attempt to gain information regarding library book challenges and related policies in the state of Idaho. Participants are also encouraged to provide policies or documents created that assist or govern the challenge process. Public and school librarians and library workers employed in Idaho are encouraged to participate.

Purpose of the research study:
The purpose of this survey is to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the history of and policies for challenges in the state of Idaho.

What you will be asked to do in the study:
You will participate in a brief survey (15-20 min.) which asks structured questions about book challenges in Idaho libraries.

Time required: 15-20 min.

Risks and Benefits:
There is no anticipated harm or risk associated with this study. While there is no direct benefit to the participant in the study, there could be benefits to the profession in terms of gaining an increased understanding of statewide procedures and experiences surrounding book challenges in Idaho.

Compensation:
There is no compensation for this survey.

Confidentiality:
Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. The names of individuals or institutions will not be collected as part of this survey. Any personal information will be password protected and accessible only to the research team. Your name or identifying information will not be used in any report.

Voluntary participation:
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.
Right to withdraw from the study:
You have the right to end the survey at any time without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:
Kathleen Monks, Assistant Professor/Reference and Instruction Librarian, University of Idaho Library, email: kmonks@uidaho.edu
Annie Gaines, Library Assistant, University of Idaho, email: againes@uidaho.edu
Caitlin Marineau, Library Assistant, University of Idaho, email: caitlinm@uidaho.edu

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:
University of Idaho, Institutional Review Board, IRB@uidaho.edu

Agreement:
By clicking continue you acknowledge that you agree to participate in this study.
Survey of Challenged Books in Idaho

Directions: This survey deals with challenges to library materials, and the results of those challenges, including removing the book from the library, or restricting it (restricting a book may mean placing age requirements on the book, requiring parental permission for check-out, or placing the book in a secure environment away from the regular stacks). The survey includes both multiple choice and short-answer questions. Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.

1. What type of library do you work for?
   a) Public library
   b) School library
   c) Special library
   d) Other, please specify: ________________________________

2. Which option best describes your position title?
   a) Library administrator
   b) Librarian
   c) Library assistant
   d) Other, please specify: ________________________________

3. Please explain your involvement with informally or formally challenged books.

4. Does your library have a formal written policy for how to deal with challenges?
   a) No
   b) Yes
   c) Not Sure

5. If yes, please explain the basic structure of the policy. If no, continue to question 8.
6. To your knowledge, has this policy changed over time?
   a) No
   b) Yes
   c) Not Sure

7. If yes, please explain any changes that have been made to your library’s challenge policy.

8. Who (library director, committee, district board, etc.) participates in the final decision to remove or restrict a book?

9. Does your library track past formal challenges?
   a) No
   b) Yes
   c) Not Sure

10. Does your library notify any outside sources when a book is challenged? (select all that apply)
    a) ALA Intellectual Freedom Office
    b) Idaho Library Association’s Intellectual Freedom Committee
    b) Local news outlets
    c) Local or state library association
    d) Other, please specify:___________________
    e) We do not notify any outside sources of library challenges

11. Has your library ever sought assistance from an outside source when dealing with a book
challenge?

a) ALA Intellectual Freedom Office
b) Lawyers
c) Local or state library associations
d) Other, please specify: _________________________
e) We have not sought assistance from a source outside of our library when dealing with a book challenge.

12) To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many formal book challenges has your library dealt with in the past 3 years? (If you do not know, please indicate)

13) To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many of these challenges resulted in a book being restricted or removed from the library? (If you do not know, please indicate)

15) Would your library be willing to share its book challenge policy with us? (If yes, please paste policy or include a link to your online policy below. We also welcome policies submitted by email to kmonks@uidaho.edu. Aspects of submitted policies may be included in our publication; identifying information will not be included.)

16) Please share any further comments or anecdotes regarding your experiences with book challenges below:

Appendix A
Here are search screen visuals for CDM. The first image is the initial search result at University of Washington Library website of its CONTENTdm digital collections:
http://content.lib.washington.edu/index.html

Sample of search result for “Mask”.

Sample of details for record #2 selected above. The digital image is above and the descriptive metadata is displayed below.
Tsimsian carved face mask, British Columbia, 1912

Title
Tsimsian carved face mask, British Columbia, 1912

Photographer
Emmons, George Thornton

Date
1912

Notes
Carved mask of wide-mouthed face; seven 'spokes' extend from the face, with hunks of hair extending from the spokes. Displayed on wooden platform next to exterior wall.

Subjects
Still life photographs--British Columbia; Wood carvings--British Columbia; Tsimsian Indians--Arts & crafts; Masks

Location Depicted
Canada--British Columbia

Object Type
Photographs

Negative Number
NA3403

Digital Collection
American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Images

Collection
George Thornton Emmons Collection no. 131

Repository
University of Washington Libraries. Special Collections Division

Ordering Information
To order a reproduction, inquire about permissions, or for information about prices see:
http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcollections/services/reproduction-info
http://content.lib.washington.edu/aipwm/copyrights.html

Restrictions

Transmission Data
Image/JPEG
Appendix B

Here are search screen visuals for CP. The first image is the initial search result at Arlington Public Library’s website (Arlington, Virginia) of its Content Pro digital collections:

Sample of search result for “airplane”. The display shows a thumbnail with the photo obscured partially by the title.

Then, when the image is clicked on there is a larger image displayed with the descriptive metadata below.
"Orville Wright and his World Record-breaking Aeroplane, Fort Myer, Va."

Title: "Orville Wright and his World Record-breaking Aeroplane, Fort Myer, Va."

Publisher: B.S. Reynolds Co.

Subject: Wright, Orville
Airplanes
Fort Myer

Description: Image of Orville Wright flying his airplane at Fort Myer, Virginia.

Contributor: Dorothy Daniel

Identifier: Airplane postcard

Source: Dorothy Daniel Postcard Collection

Type: Image

Format: Postcard
black and white
3 1/2 in. by 3 1/2 in.

Spatial: Arlington County (Va.)

Temporal: 1900s
1910s

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Rights Holder: Virginia Room, Arlington Public Library

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