

Whose Values? Results of the 2013 Survey of Challenges to Library Resources and Policies in Canada

Alvin M Schrader and Donna Bowman*

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The *Annual Challenges Survey* has been conducted on a voluntary basis since 2006 by the Intellectual Freedom Advisory Committee (IFAC), Canadian Library Association (CLA). The purpose is to shed light on challenges to materials, services, and policies that are experienced by publicly funded libraries across Canada in each calendar year, and how they respond to them. A challenge to library resources is an attempt to remove or restrict materials based on an objection by a person or group, in order to prevent or limit access; a challenge is not simply the expression of an opinion about the quality of a work. In the Canadian context, a policy challenge is an attempt to change normal access standards for library resources or services.

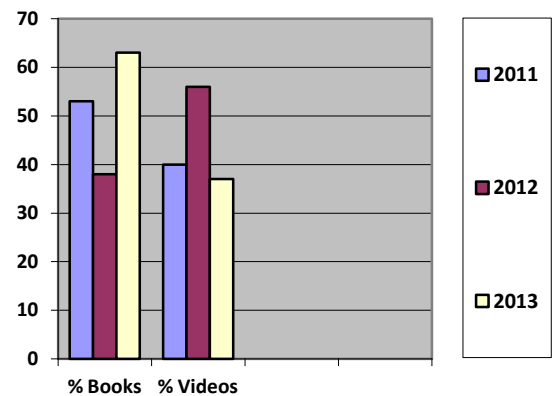
The 85 challenges reported in the 2013 survey occurred in 21 publicly-funded libraries in six provinces; these challenges were prompted by concerns that targeted works contained unacceptable or somehow objectionable content. Complainants typically demanded that titles be removed or restricted, or that changes be made to collection policies or service policies. These 85 instances amount to 4 challenges per reporting library in 2013, ranging from 1 to 10. In 2012, 14 libraries, all public, reported 73 challenges in three provinces, and the year before, 32 libraries, 90% public, reported 101 challenges across six provinces. Because the survey is strictly voluntary, it would be inaccurate to claim trending patterns from these figures as to whether challenges are increasing or decreasing over time.

All of the challenges in 2013 were experienced by public libraries with the exception of one instance in a post-secondary library and another in a K-12 school library. Libraries reporting challenges in the survey served a wide spectrum of municipal populations, from fewer than 20,000 people to more than 1 million. A total of 67 challenges targeted individual library materials and 18 were about library policies related to intellectual freedom and collection management principles. Challenged titles and policies are listed in the Appendix below.

In 2013, for the first time in the eight years of annual surveys, an unprecedented challenge was reported by a British Columbia public library to a “whole genre” of collection holdings. It was the third year in a row that a whole genre had been targeted somewhere in Canada, but this one focused on everything relating to a single individual: all titles published by or about cyclist Lance Armstrong prior to January 2013, when he finally admitted to illegal use of performance-enhancing drugs. Three months before that, as a result of what anti-doping authorities in the U.S. called “the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen,” the 41-year old had been stripped of all seven consecutive *Tour de France* titles and issued a lifetime ban from competition. With more than 30 books and videos implicated, the rationale for the challenge was “inaccuracy.” The same sort of challenge, but to a single title, was also reported on the other side of the country, in an Ontario public library, to a 2007 memoir by 2006 *Tour de France* winner (and dooper) Floyd Landis, who was the first cyclist to be disqualified for any reason since 1904.

For the first time in eight years of surveys, too, another category was added to the random array of whole genre challenges previously reported: “all teen first person shooter video games,” on the grounds of “violence, poor use of public funds, and not being educational.” That challenge, in another British Columbia public library, was made via e-mail directly to municipal councillors, rather than through appropriate library channels. A whole genre challenge in 2012 targeted adult horror films with “graphically violent images on their covers,” and in 2011, another challenge singled out “all graphic novels” for explicit sexuality and violence, with specific mention of 16 titles authored or illustrated by Jaime Hernandez in the *Love and Rockets* series. (Whole genre challenges are counted in the survey as library collection policy challenges.)

Many more books than videos were targeted in 2013. Some two-thirds of the 67 challenges to library materials (63%) singled out books, including audiobooks, e-books, comics, mangas, graphic novels, magazines, and language learning kits, while one-third were to videos (37%). The ratio was the reverse of the pattern found in the previous year’s survey, 38% books versus 56% videos, while



in 2011 books accounted for 53% and videos for only 40%.

A surprising finding in 2013 was that challenges to adult titles outnumbered those to children's works, regardless of format, by two to one. Of adult works singled out, more non-fiction than fiction books were challenged: 11 challenges to non-fiction titles and 8 challenges to fiction titles. Adult videos (unrated, 18A, R, NC17, PG or PG13, and 14A or 14+) accounted for 22 challenges. Of children's titles singled out, more picture books were targeted than all other children's works combined. There were 11 challenges to picture books, 3 challenges to non-fiction, 2 challenges to young adult works, and 3 challenges to videos.

Only one series was reported in 2013, a season of six episodes of a television series "Eastbound and Down"; the reasons given were offensive language and having "no redeeming qualities." In 2012, another television series, "Little Britain USA," was challenged, and the previous year four series were targeted: the Jaime Hernandez titles in the *Love and Rockets* series of graphic novels, mentioned above; Philip Pullman's trilogy *His Dark Materials*; one season of four episodes in the ITV series "Trial and Retribution"; and one season of nine episodes of "The War Years," volume 2, in "The Adventures of the Young Indiana Jones" television series. Several other series were reported in earlier surveys: Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy; the *Harry Potter* movie series of seven titles; Charlaine Harris's series of 10 novels entitled *The Southern Vampire Mysteries*, challenged four times in one year in the same library; *Negima! Magister Negi Magi*, by Ken Akamatsu, a manga series of 29 titles known in Japan as *Magical Teacher Negima!*; Cecily von Ziegesar's series of 15 titles, *Gossip Girl*, the inspiration for the "Gossip Girl" teen drama television series; and the Dark Horse manga series of 14 titles based on four of the *Star Wars* movies.

Out of 66 unique titles challenged in 2013, only one was targeted more than once, the 2011 video crime thriller "Killer Joe," directed by William Friedkin and starring Matthew McConaughey and Emile Hirsch, which was challenged twice, in the same Ontario public library. In other survey years, as well, the vast majority of works received only one challenge each, regardless of format and intended audience.

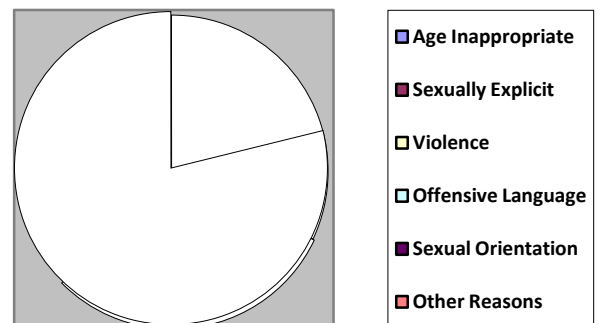
Reasons offered by complainants were almost as varied as the titles they singled out. There were on average some 2 reasons per challenge, whether to individual titles or library policies, similar to the 2012 ratio but lower than the 2.6 reasons on average in 2011. Reasons for challenges were frequently multifaceted. For example, the grounds offered for challenges to the

2002 children’s picture book *Spooky ABC*, by Eve Merriam and Lane Smith, were occult (religious viewpoint), violence, offensive, and being age inappropriate. Questions about the reasons offered for challenges, and the motivations and perceptions behind the reasons, are among the most important features of the annual survey.

Altogether, 155 reasons were given for the 67 challenges in 2013, underscoring the truisms that perception is in the eye of the beholder, and the author writes only half the book – just as the script writer writes only half the movie, the song writer composes only half the music; the painter paints only half the picture; and so on. As Alberto Manguel has observed of the act of reading itself, it is “conducted between the characters and the reader.” And, “We read what we want to read, not what the author wrote.” The author is absent.

An apt example of the reader’s role in interpreting text is the challenge to the 2012 video “ParaNorman,” directed by Chris Butler and Sam Fell, which was challenged for violence and age inappropriateness because of the jokes and themes raised, which were bullying, racism, fear, and violence. The complainant suggested that a more mature audience was appropriate than the PG rating indicated. By contrast, however, movie reviewer Rick Groen wrote that “ParaNorman” was a ghoulishly delightful exercise in stop-motion animation and a very good children’s tale: “But, beware, it’s not for the faint of heart. Kids should exercise extreme caution in only choosing adults mature enough to accompany them. That’s because the directors here are Brits with a wry sense of humour, a Grimm faith in the need of the young to confront the darker corners of their imagination, and a politically incorrect fondness for unpalatable truths” (*Globe and Mail*, August 17, 2012, R1).

While the grounds for challenges were typically multifaceted and complicated, they tended to concentrate into four major subject categories: age inappropriate, mentioned 32 times; sexually explicit, 24 times; violence, 19 times; and offensive language, 18 times. These four reasons accounted for 60% of all challenges. Remarkably, while trending over time is hard to discern in the actual number of challenges per year, these four grounds for challenges have predominated over several years. In the 2012 survey, the same top four reasons appeared in



identical ranking order, while the same four ranked differently in 2011: violence, sexually explicit, age inappropriate, and offensive language.

Ranking fifth in grounds for challenges in 2013 were 10 works about minority sexual orientation, the most in any survey year. One challenge was to *Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men and Women*, by Bob Davies and Lori Rentzel, a 20-year-old book that promoted the discredited religious ideology of ex-gay reparative therapy (“pray-away-the-gay” and marry-the-opposite-sex cure), on the grounds of inaccuracy, insensitivity, and opposition to a discredited theory of mental illness; the library endorsed the complainant’s reasons and removed the item, indicating as well that it would have soon been weeded in any event because of poor use.

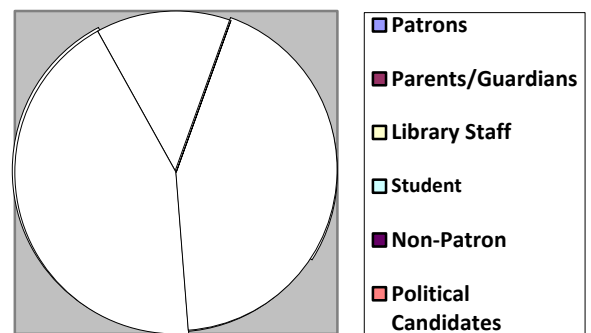
The video “Killer Joe” was challenged for its classification (rating), on the grounds of homosexuality and explicit sexuality; the decision to maintain the current approach prompted two further challenges to the same library’s collection management policies on video ratings. The previous year’s survey also recorded several challenges to a 2009 gay-themed film (2011 video release) entitled “I Love You Phillip Morris,” directed by Glenn Ficarra and John Requa and starring Jim Carrey and Ewan McGregor. Two other adult works were also singled out in 2013: *How Evan Broke His Head and Other Secrets*, by Garth Stein, which the complainant requested be removed from the library’s collection for “gross sexuality” and “alternative sexuality”, as well as for offensive language and being “age inappropriate” for adults, ; and, the e-book *Snowbound in Nowhere*, by Andrew Grey, to which the complainant wanted an “explicit sex” warning label attached, and when that failed, challenged the library’s general collection management policy on not labelling graphic content in adult fiction.

The same-sex children’s picture book *Daddy's Roommate* by Michael Willhoite, published almost 25 years earlier, was challenged on the grounds that the book “presents homosexuality as normal, acceptable and even moral.” Surveys before 2012 also reported frequent challenges to gay-themed books and magazines, notably, *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell, challenged four years in a row from 2006 until 2009. *The Sissy Duckling*, by Harvey Fierstein, was challenged in 2011, *Uncle Bobby's Wedding*, by Sarah S. Brannen, in 2010, and *King and King*, by Linda de Haan, and *My Princess Boy*, by Cheryl Kilodavis, in earlier surveys.

Other grounds for complaints in 2013 were 9 for inaccuracy, 7 for nudity, 6 about insensitivity, 5 about sex education, four each for sexism, general offensiveness, and religious viewpoint, including one for a "traditionalist" viewpoint on marriage and another on the history of Halloween as connected with the devil, and not being educational. Three or fewer complaints were reported on the grounds of racism, political viewpoint, anti-ethnicity, child sex abuse, and the occult.

Quite a few challenges in 2013 were reported to much older titles, including the audiobook version of the adult novel *A Kiss Remembered* by Sandra Brown (1983), several children's videos such as "The Best of Dr. Seuss" (2000) with his 1942 story "Horton Hatches the Egg" and "Grimm's Fairy Tales," and a number of children's picture books such as Dr. Seuss's *If I Ran the Zoo* (1950) and *Hop on Pop* (1963), *Alligators All Around: An Alphabet* (1962) by Maurice Sendak, *Daddy's Roommate* (1990) by Michael Willhoite, *Lizzy's Lion* (1984) by Dennis Lee, *What a Truly Cool World* (1997) by Julius Lester, *Spooky ABC* by Eve Merriam and Lane Smith (2002, a revised edition of *Halloween ABC* published in 1987), *Me, Myself, and I: All About Sex and Puberty* (2002) by Louise Spilsbury and illustrated by Mike Gordon, and *Made with Love: How Babies are Made* (2003) by Kate Petty and illustrated by Charlotte Middleton.

Six in ten challenges called for the removal of titles from libraries (52 complaints or 61%). Two of the more unusual challenges included a complainant who singled out the adult fiction title *Styx*, by Sherrilyn Kenyon, for being sexually explicit. The complainant stated, "Repeated sexual and physical abuse of young boy, causing adult psychological trauma. Materials should be identified as containing explicit child sexual abuse and not a 'paranormal romance'. I have paid replacement cost for the novel and will burn it to save others from being exposed to this material." Another complainant stated that *Deadly Sins*, by Thomas Pynchon, Mary Gordon, Gore Vidal, John Updike, Joyce Carol Oates, Richard Howard, A.S. Byatt, and William Trevor glorified sin: "The book entices and encourages people to actually commit the sins listed in the book, and any book that would encourage and glorify sin does not belong in a Christian's life or anybody else's life."



While these censorious attitudes, and demands for outright banning in many cases, may surprise most Canadians, who take free speech and unfettered access in public institutions for granted, there is a small strata of Canadian society that would like to dictate what reading, viewing, and listening materials their fellow citizens should be able to access through publicly-funded libraries, whether those are public, post-secondary, or school libraries. An informal web-based poll reveals support for these types of censorious attitudes. When the Ottawa Public Library announced it had received 11 challenges to titles in 2013, 10 calling for bans, more than 3% of the over 3,200 poll respondents agreed with all of the requested bans, and another 11% thought at least some of the demands were appropriate (“Ottawa library's 11 requests to remove books, DVDs,” CBC News, May 3, 2014, cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-library-s-11-requests-to-remove-books-dvds-1.2629981).

While most library users do not give censorship a second thought, it is worthwhile for all of us to keep in mind a slogan popularized by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the British Columbia Library Association some years ago: *There's something in my library to offend everybody*. What this conveys is that in each of us is a core belief system that can eventually be offended, given enough time and enough provocation.

One in four complainants (22) requested relocation, reclassification, or a change in video ratings and locations. Six requested warning labels. One complaint was about misleading artwork on a video cover, suggesting it be changed, which the library accommodated.

In the area of policy challenges, 14 of the 18 were linked to previously unsuccessful attempts to have items removed from collections outright. Alternatively, a few complainants wanted to have age-based lending conditions imposed for books, graphic novels, or videos; to have video ratings made more restrictive and shelf locations changed; or to have content warning labels attached to materials. The inclusion of questions about challenges affecting intellectual freedom in relation to library resources and services is a unique feature adopted in the Canadian survey in 2007.

Careful reviews by library staff resulted in no change to the status of materials or policies in some nine out of ten instances (87%), including the demand for a ban on teen “first person shooter video games.” In the Armstrong whole genre collection policy challenge, four titles were removed out of some 30 or more. Two were adult books likely to be of little further interest, because they prescribed success measures at odds with Armstrong's doping admission, and two

were aspirational youth books, one highlighting sports role-models for children and another focusing on the qualities of his formerly inspiring achievement. In the Landis challenge, after much consideration, the library decided to retain the title “as it provides a version of events at a certain point in time” regarding Landis’ role and might be useful in tracing the history of denials and cover-ups.

One challenge was to a library’s room rental policy and sought to prohibit a controversial anti-transgender speaker from giving a talk, and another was to a public library’s election materials display, which included election promises that two candidates apparently had wanted to rescind. Neither demand was accommodated.

Five titles were reclassified and relocated, and one video policy challenge of works rated PG, which was linked to the individually challenged “Hey, Hey, It’s Esther Blueburger,” leading to its relocation from the children’s collection to the adult collection. The result of one challenge, to the misleading cover of the “Grimm’s Fairy Tales” video was to replace the artwork. In another, a “mature content” label was added to the adult French erotic novel *Vers Chez Les Blancs* by Philippe Dijan. In one other instance, a postsecondary library restricted access to a magazine title. Two titles were removed outright, one from a public library, the already mentioned *Coming Out of Homosexuality*, and the other from a K-12 school library, the graphic novel *The Walking Dead*, which had a 17+ reading level designation. As was the case with previous surveys, most challenges were resolved quickly, even the same day or generally within a month. Some libraries have time limits on challenge decisions and communications back to a complainant.

Professional core values, together with library missions and policies, particularly collection development criteria for selecting materials for acquisition, require a fine balance be struck between respect for complainants’ views and respect for library intellectual freedom principles and the reading public’s right to access constitutionally protected materials and information. It goes without saying that these two, sometimes competing, interests will create persistent tensions. As Marie DeYoung, CLA President and University Librarian at Saint Mary’s University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, commented,

“One of the cornerstones of our profession is the strong commitment to ensuring material is available without censure. This survey affirms our responsibility to

support libraries as they provide Canadians with the opportunity to access the widest possible range of materials. It also validates the role of effective and informed advocacy by librarians and libraries. Thank you to the Committee for producing the report and to everyone who stood up to censorship, in all its manifestations.”

The *Annual Challenges Survey* is a voluntary survey sponsored by the CLA, so readers are cautioned that the self-reports described here represent a subset of challenges that occur. In fact, the American Library Association (ALA) has estimated that there may be as many as 4 or 5 unreported challenges for every challenge that is reported to them (“Frequently Challenged Books,” Office for Intellectual Freedom, on ALA’s website, <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/banned/frequentlychallenged>; <http://librarianinblack.net/librarianinblack/2011/03/bookchallenges.html>). This under-reportage phenomenon is thought to be greater in Canada.

The bilingual *Annual Challenges Survey* is now in its eighth year, inspired by two precursors, the Edmonton Public Library’s challenged materials spreadsheet, and the confidential database maintained since 1990 by the ALA, whose online challenge reporting form can be found at <http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/challengeslibrarymaterials/challengereporting/onlinechallengeform/index.cfm>.

The goals of CLA’s *Annual Challenges Survey* are to document objections to materials and policies in publicly-funded Canadian libraries, in order to educate the Canadian public about library collection management principles; to inform the Association’s policy and advocacy work for intellectual freedom; and, to help library staff deal in a professional manner with difficult issues surrounding uncensored library access. It is important to be able to share information and learning with all Canadians, as well as with professional colleagues, on how challenges are handled and resolved, particularly those instances in which materials are withdrawn from library collections and those policies impacting library intellectual freedom are revised. The *Survey* also provides an opportunity for libraries to demonstrate their commitment to accountability to their users, stakeholders, elected officials, and the general public.

The Committee encourages all librarians and library administrators in all publicly funded library sectors to contribute data to future surveys when they experience resource or policy challenges. Only one school library participated in the 2013 survey, and it is hard to believe that in all of the 14,000 or so school libraries in Canada, only one challenge occurred across the entire country in a calendar year. Many large urban public libraries also do not contribute data, even though it is likely that at least some of them experience challenges on a fairly regular basis. As examples of public accountability and institutional transparency, Committee Convenor Alvin Schrader strongly endorses the release by local libraries of an annual report of the collection challenges they receive. In 2013, three institutions are known to have done so, Toronto Public Library, Ottawa Public Library and Edmonton Public Library (“Toronto library asked to ban 'violent' Dr. Seuss book Hop on Pop,” by Lauren O'Neil, CBC Community Blog, April 30, 2014, cbc.ca/newsblogs/yourcommunity/2014/04/toronto-library-asked-to-ban-violent-dr-seuss-book-hop-on-pop.html); “Ottawa library's 11 requests to remove books, DVDs,” CBC News, May 3, 2014, cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-library-s-11-requests-to-remove-books-dvds-1.2629981); “Edmonton library deals with regular challenges to pull items from shelves,” by Ryan Tumilty, *MetroNews*, March 6, 2014, <http://metronews.ca/news/edmonton/964475/edmonton-library-deals-with-regular-challenges-to-pull-items-from-shelves>).

The Committee reiterates, as we have in previous reports, that local institutions are not identified in any way in our reports or publicly accessible documents, following a 2011 CLA Executive Council policy endorsement of confidentiality of identifying data about institutions and municipalities. Identifying data are collected only for statistical purposes, verification of authenticity, and follow-up with reporting agencies when needed. Permissible geographic and jurisdictional disclosures are as follows: province or territory; type of institution (school, post-secondary, public, etc.); and type of complainant.

As in previous years, survey results are widely shared with the Canadian public, CLA membership, other library workers and advocates, the Freedom of Expression Committee of the Book and Periodical Council, its annual *Freedom to Read Week Kit*, the Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association (ALA OIF), and the Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA FAIFE).

Public access is available free of charge on the CLA website to the complete set of annual databases of challenged titles and policies, together with annual reports summarizing the results of the surveys

www.cla.ca/source/members/committeelist.cfm?committee=IF&Section=Committees). Further inquiries about the annual survey may be directed to Alvin M. Schrader, currently CLA/IFAC Convenor, at alvin.schrader@ualberta.ca.

** Alvin M. Schrader and Donna Bowman are colleagues on the Canadian Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Advisory Committee. Thanks to several Committee members for helpful comments on an earlier version of this report, as well as to Sandra Anderson, editor extraordinaire and Librarian for the Alberta Teachers' Association. An abbreviated version of this report is available under the title "Fine Balances and Persistent Tensions," published in the 2015 Freedom to Read Week Kit by the Book and Periodical Council.*

**List of Challenges to Resources and Policies
Reported by Publicly-Funded Canadian Libraries, 2013**

Challenges are listed alphabetically, categorized by number of challenges per item. Note that slightly corrected bibliographic data are recorded here from what was originally supplied by library officials who contributed to the 2013 Survey.

Series – 1 challenge:

“Eastbound and Down,” DVD (TV series of 6 episodes, first season)
- reasons: offensive language [No redeeming qualities.] [NS]

Individual items – 2 challenges each:

“Killer Joe,” DVD, directed by William Friedkin, starring Matthew McConaughey and Emile Hirsch
- reasons: sexually explicit, homosexuality [Change DVD rating.] [ON]

Individual items – 1 challenge each:

100% Me, by Elinor Greenwood

- reasons: sex education, sexually explicit, age inappropriate [BC]

Alligators All Around: An Alphabet, by Maurice Sendak

- reasons: racism [The book contains racist caricatures of Indigenous peoples under the 'I' section. It also reads 'Imitating Indians'.] [BC]

Allure magazine (December 2012 issue)

- reasons: nudity, sexism, age inappropriate [Do I see any nude males covers with testicles exposed? No! Are they (publishers) selling ideas or exploiting images of women? Sexism in body nudity in public domains! Seriously consider pre-adult exposure to the covers.] [AB]

“Andrei Rublev,” DVD, directed by Andrei Tarkovsky, starring Anatoly Solonitsyn and Ivan Lapikov

- reasons: violence [3 scenes of extreme cruelty to horses. Add an explicit warning as to content.] [BC]

“The Aristocrats” DVD, directed by Paul Provenza, starring George Carlin and Don Rickles.

- reasons: offensive language, violence, sexually explicit [The 'joke' in this movie explicitly discusses: incest, sodomy, pedophilia, bestiality, etc. and describes itself as 'unspeakable obscenity'. Provide a warning.] [BC]

“The Best of Dr. Seuss,” DVD, directed by Chuck Jones

- reasons: violence; age inappropriate [A fish shoots himself in the head in “Horton Hatches the Egg.”] [AB]

Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men and Women, by Bob Davies and Lori Rentzel

- reasons: inaccuracy, insensitivity, homosexuality [Promotes the view that homosexuality was an illness and espoused a discredited theory that it could be 'cured' by prayer and marriage.] [BC]

Complete Hindi, language learning kit, by Rupert Snell

- reasons: inaccuracy [Many grammatical inaccuracies and suggests that Hindi and Urdu are paired languages.] [ON]

“Compliance,” DVD, directed by Craig Zobel, starring Ann Dowd, Dreama Walker, and Pat Healy

- reasons: nudity, age inappropriate [Change the rating.] [ON]

Daddy's Roommate, by Michael Willhoite

- reasons: homosexuality, age inappropriate [Book presents homosexuality as normal, acceptable and even moral.] [ON]

“Darwin: The Voyage That Shook the World,” directed by Steve Murray

- reasons: inaccuracy [Claims Darwin was not organized. You can hold whatever opinion you like but you cannot alter the facts to suit your opinion.] BC]

Deadly Sins, by Thomas Pynchon, Mary Gordon, Gore Vidal, John Updipke, Joyce Carol Oates, Richard Howard, A.S. Byatt, and William Trevor

- reasons: glorifies sin [The book entices and encourages people to actually commit the sins listed in the book, and any book that would encourage and glorify sin does not belong in a Christian's life or anybody else's life.] [AB]

Docteur Dog, by Babette Cole

- reasons: age inappropriate [Smoking, teen smoking, including pictures; scratching private areas to describe taking care of one's health, including picture/illustration; bathroom humour, could be objectionable. Remove or add a label.] [BC]

“An Easter Bunny Puppy,” DVD, directed by David DeCoteau (as Mary Crawford)

- reasons: age inappropriate [Reference to murder within the first three minutes. Reference to Ancient Egyptian fertility rites at about 30-minute mark. Funny for adults, not 3-7 year olds. It's a narrative of nothing that has to do with the title. Just move to adult section and mark PG, not G rating.] [AB]

The Facts on Halloween, by John Ankerberg, John Weldon, and Dillon Burroughs

- reasons: religious viewpoint [Library staff member objected to the history of Halloween as connected with the devil, alleging it demonstrated a pro-religious bias.] [ON]

“Fantastic Mr. Fox,” DVD, directed by Wes Anderson, based on a novel by Roald Dahl, starring George Clooney, Meryl Streep, and Bill Murray (2009)

- reasons: violence, offensive language, age inappropriate [Included guns and offensive language, not appropriate for children age 6.] [BC]

“The Favourite Game” (aka “Le Jeu de L'ange”), DVD, directed by Bernar Hébert, adapted from Leonard Cohen's first novel

- reasons: nudity [ON]

Fifty Mighty Men, by Grant MacEwan

- reasons: insensitivity, racism [AB]

“Grimm's Fairy Tales,” DVD [4 classic tales]

- reasons: violence, age inappropriate [Replace misleading DVD cover illustrations depicting violent actions.] [AB]

GQ magazine (December 2012 issue)

- reasons: nudity, sexism, age inappropriate [Do I see any nude males covers with testicles exposed? No! Are they (publishers) selling ideas or exploiting images of women? Sexism in body nudity in public domains! Seriously consider pre-adult exposure to the covers.] [AB]

Head to Toe Guide to You, by Sarah Wassner Flynn

- reasons: sex education, sexually explicit, age inappropriate [BC]

“Hey, Hey It's Esther Blueburger,” DVD, directed by Cathy Randall

- reasons: age inappropriate [Too mature for children’s section – Ontario Film Review Board rating was PG, Motion Picture Association of America rating was PG-13.] [ON]

Hop on Pop, by Dr. Seuss

- reasons: violence [Children hop on their father, are encouraged to use wanton violence against their fathers.] [ON]

"Hope Springs," DVD, directed by David Frankel, starring Meryl Streep, Tommy Lee Jones, and Steve Carell

- reasons: sexually explicit, offensive, age inappropriate, not educational [Far too much sexual content for a 14+ rating; and was a comedy about an older couple.] [BC]

How Evan Broke His Head and Other Secrets, by Garth Stein

- reasons: homosexuality [‘alternative sexuality’], sexually explicit [‘gross sexuality’], offensive language, age inappropriate [AB]

If I Ran the Zoo, by Dr. Zeuss

- reasons: racism [BC]

In the Shadow of the Glacier, by Vicki Delaney

- reasons: inaccuracy [Incorrectly named areas (e.g., ‘Grey Point’ for Point Grey) and printing errors.] [BC]

It's a Book, by Lane Smith

- reasons: age inappropriate, offensive language [A children's book with the last line, 'It's a book, jackass' is not appropriate for 2-6 year olds. I don't want my 6-year-old to repeat that line at school and get a detention. The concept and the rest of the language is adorable, funny, and appropriate, but the subversive twist at the end makes it a picture book for grown-ups.] [AB]

Je déteste l'école, by Jeanne Willis

- reasons: age inappropriate [Illustrations scared grade 4 child (and patron herself).] [ON]

Killing Kennedy: The End of Camelot, by Bill O'Reilly

- reasons: inaccuracy [Book contains falsehoods because it concludes Kennedy was killed by Oswald alone and not through a conspiracy.] [ON]

A Kiss Remembered (audiobook), by Sandra Brown

- reasons: sexism, sexually explicit [Book is obscene and offends current sexual morality.] [ON]

Lizzy's Lion, by Dennis Lee

- reasons: violence [Patron was upset to find a violent and disturbing book in a children's library which is a ‘safe place’.] [ON]

Made with Love: How Babies are Made, by Kate Petty, illustrated by Charlotte Middleton

- reasons: age inappropriate, sex education [Relocate to parenting collection.] [SK]

Me, Myself, and I: All About Sex and Puberty, by Louise Spilsbury, illustrated by Mike Gordon

- reasons: sex education, sexually explicit, age inappropriate [BC]

“The Muppets' Wizard of Oz,” DVD (TV), directed by Kirk R. Thatcher

- reasons: age inappropriate [Opening scene is graphic depiction of a house being destroyed and sucked up by a tornado and then dropped.] [AB]

The Natural Family: A Manifesto, by Allan Carlson and Paul T. Mero

- reasons: religious viewpoint, insensitivity [ON]

Never Fück Up, by Jens Lapidus

- reasons: offensive language [Title "Never f*ck up" with asterisk is blatant and offensive.] [AB]

“ParaNorman,” DVD, directed by Chris Butler and Sam Fell

- reasons: violence, age inappropriate [Jokes and themes raised (bullying, racism, fear, violence) for a more mature audience than PG rating.] [MN]

Positively False: The Real Story of How I Won the Tour de France, by Floyd Landis

- reasons: inaccuracy [Written by Landis to refute doping charges but he later recanted, rendering the information in the book out-of-date and inaccurate.] [ON]

Puberty Girl, by Shushann Movsessian

- reasons: sex education, sexually explicit, age inappropriate [BC]

“Red State,” DVD, directed by Kevin Smith, starring Melissa Leo and John Goodman

- reasons: offensive language, violence, sexually explicit [Perhaps any new DVD with an 'R' rating should be checked before being processed and added to the collection.] [BC]

Rolling Stone magazine (August 2013 issue, cover image of Boston Marathon bomber)

- reasons: insensitivity [To idealize this man, this bomber, who blew people up is an affront to the people of Boston and all humane people of the world.] [BC]

“Shame,” DVD, directed by Steve McQueen, starring Michael Fassbender and Carey Mulligan

- reasons: nudity, sexually explicit [ON]

The Skin Map [part of a series], by Steven Lawhead

- reasons: religious viewpoint [Relocate because nothing in the book earned the designation of a Christian fiction sticker.] [SK]

Small Steps (audiobook), by Louis Sachar

- reasons: age inappropriate, violence [Objection to detailed section about attempted murder of a young girl. Relocate from junior to teen collection.] [BC]

Snowbound in Nowhere, e-book, by Andrew Grey

- reasons: homosexuality, sexually explicit [Attach a label warning of explicit sex.] [ON]

Spooky ABC, by Eve Merriam and Lane Smith

- reasons: occult, violence, age inappropriate, religious viewpoint, offensive [Violence and mention of Devil were found to be offensive. Letters 'D' and 'I' poems not very appropriate for kids to read, and quite honestly the whole book was not ok to read to a child of any age really. I don't know if it would be useful to another child. Many other alphabet books available. This one just seemed bad all across the board.] [BC]

Styx, by Sherrilyn Kenyon

- reasons: sexually explicit [Repeated sexual and physical abuse of young boy, causing adult psychological trauma. Materials should be identified as containing explicit child sexual abuse and not a 'paranormal romance'. I have paid replacement cost for the novel and will burn it to save others from being exposed to this material.] [AB]

Teach Yourself Gulf Arabic [language learning kit], by Jack Smart and Frances Altorfer.

- reasons: inaccuracy, offensive [Title and term Arabian Gulf are incorrect – should be Persian Arabic and Persian Gulf.] [AB]

“That's My Boy,” DVD, starring Adam Sandler and Vanilla Ice

- reasons: sexually explicit [Humourous treatment of teacher having sex with underage student is an expression of sick and illegal behaviour which is not acceptable in our society. The patron watched only the first ten minutes of the film.] [ON]

The Untold Story of Milk, by Ron Schmid

- reasons: inaccuracy [Incorrect scientific information about raw vs. pasteurized milk.] [BC]

Vers Chez Les Blancs, by Philippe Djian

- reasons: sexually explicit [Just pornography.] [BC]

The Walking Dead [part of a comic book series], by Robert Kirkman, Tony Moore, and Charlie Adlard]

- reasons: violence, offensive language [profanity], age inappropriate for K-12 school [rated 17+ book] [AB]

The Way I Am, by Eminem

- reasons: nudity, sexually explicit, not educational [Rude and inappropriate because book contained pictures of "half-naked girls dancing on a pole topless. I think libraries should have friendly pictures and not inappropriate pictures. Sexual photos are just improper for readers to see.] [BC]

What a Truly Cool World, by Julius Lester

- reasons: anti-ethnicity, offensive language [Poor grammar and 'stereotypical' black language in portraying African Americans.] [ON]

What Is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense, by Sherif Girgis, Ryan T. Anderson, Robert P. George

- reasons: religious viewpoint, insensitivity [Written from a 'traditionalist' viewpoint.] [ON]

"World's Greatest Dad," DVD, directed by Bobcat Goldthwait, starring Robin Williams

- reasons: sexually explicit offensive language [Sexually suggestive situations (masturbation) and cursing.] [ON]

Unnamed magazine

- reasons: sexism [NS]

Unnamed title of Arabic book on history and geography

- reasons: religious viewpoint, political viewpoint [ON]

Policy challenges:

Collection management policy in a BC public library relating to all titles about or by cyclist

Lance Armstrong prior to January 2013 when he confessed publicly to doping, following the US anti-doping agency's decision in August 2012 to strip him of all his Tour de France titles for dishonesty, amounting to some 30+ books and DVDs

Collection management policy in a BC public library relating to all teen "first person shooter video games" on the grounds they are not educational and do not support curriculum

Display policy in an Alberta public library relating to candidate election materials, such as brochures, business cards, and a slide show with key election promises, claiming the display might be prohibited under the City's election bylaw and requesting election materials be destroyed

Library rental room policy in a BC public library sparked by a speaker's negative statements about transgendered people and legalization of prostitution, demanding the speaker be banned.

Policy in an Ontario public library of failing to add a warning label to books containing graphic content and explicit sex – linked to individually challenged e-book *Snowbound in Nowhere*

Policy in a BC public library of showing a PG video in the children's summer programming – linked to individually challenged video "Fantastic Mr. Fox"

Policy challenged seven times in four Ontario and BC public libraries of appropriate video classification, failing to review content, or failing to add an explicit warning label to R rated videos, 18A videos, or other adult videos, but just following the Motion Picture Association of

America or the Canadian Motion Picture Association ratings – linked to individually challenged videos “The Aristocrats,” “Red State,” “Andrei Rublev,” “Compliance,” “Hope Springs,” and “Killer Joe” (challenged twice)

Policy in an Ontario public library of using Ontario Film Board video ratings for DVDs instead of ratings by the Motion Picture Association of America – linked to individually challenged video “Hey, Hey, It’s Esther Blueburger”

Policy in a Manitoba public library of following official video ratings for classification and shelving instead of recognizing that a PG rating indicated a more mature audience – linked to individually challenged video “ParaNorman”

Policy challenged three times in two Alberta public libraries of video classification and shelf location – linked to individually challenged videos “Easter Bunny Puppy,” located in the J (juvenile) section for 8-12 year olds, “The Muppets’ Wizard of Oz,” noting the Motion Picture Association of America rated it as TV-PG while the library placed it in the J (Juvenile) section for 8-12 year olds, and “The Best of Dr. Seuss”