Censorship: They call it freedom, but do we truly have it? 
An Annotated Bibliography

Lindsay McCutcheon
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Introduction and Scope

First Amendment rights, freedom of speech, intellectual freedom, censorship, or a banned book, we have heard all of these before and it is because they all relate to each other. You can’t talk about a book being banned without talking about someone’s First Amendment rights. The purpose of this bibliography is to see if we ever did have intellectual freedom. Censorship has been a battle fought for a while and it seems to only be getting worse. If it isn’t for a school board or administrator challenging a book, it is that we, ourselves, are self-censoring material. We selectively choose what to say, what to read, and as a media specialist we choose what books to buy, with the thought of what others may say in the back of our mind. It is the outcomes of previous situations that have put this fear or idea we have to protect “others” in our mind.

Description

Lukenbill and Lukenbill’s (2009) study says, “The literature of school library media censorship is vast, diverse, complex in its issues and frames of references, and raises many social, cultural, and political questions.” Studies have looked at all different aspects of censorship for many years now. Intellectual Freedom is termed as the right of individuals to seek and receive material from all points of view without restraint (American Library Association, 1997-2012). The library has the Library Bill of Rights to help govern them, but that leaves so much more left to one’s understanding when reading it. It does state in article III, “Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment” (American Library Association, 1997-2012). Severe censorship or a lack of knowledge is said to possibly cause violence, therefore, solely documenting censorship cases is not sufficient. Shield states that if we removed all media that is the only way to solve this problem and then at that point we could celebrate not knowing the violence we impose to reserve freedom (Shields, 1992).

Summary of Findings

There are numerous court decisions that are supposed to aide in guidance to answering questions that we have. One of the most influential cases on obscenity was Miller vs California. This case gave three criteria. One being would the average person find the work as indecent. Two being does the work portray sexual content, more applicably defined by the state law.
Three being whether the work lacks literary, scientific or political value. Another case in Massachusetts in 1978, the courts brought up the fact that a committee has a right to choose a book for a library, once the book was in the library it could not be taken out at will. However, now this idea seems to be lacking favor (Edwards, 1981).

Librarians have tried to share with the media the closing of the doors on information access by the government, but without the support of a well-known group, the awareness to the inroads of people’s freedom of choice. The values of conservative and liberal factions are increasingly separated by the arguments over forty year old fiction titles. Leo Tolstoy puts it best in his quote, “What matters is not what censors have done to what I have written, but what they have done to what I might have written.” The government puts it as unregulated freedom of expression would remedy all injustice (Shields, 1992).

In 2007, eight of the most challenged books were listed as juvenile. It is the choice of higher or high school level libraries to choose if they keep these books for leisureliness reading and it has been proven that leisure reading relates to success. It is said as a profession we need to know more about the trials a library faces when material is opposed to (Best, 2007)

What happens when one of the most requested books is the one the argument is over? Do you choose the title that you know your patrons would be interested in, or do you not purchase it because you know it will cause turmoil? There is a huge discussion of things being age-appropriate for children or above their maturity level, but what about when it is for adults? One of the most recent arguments is over E.L. James’s “Fifty Shades of Grey.” Many use the case argument that it is pornographic material and that they do not stock pornographic material (Bosman, 2012).

Bibliography

Entry 1:


Abstract:

There is no abstract available for this item.
Annotation: This site gives the legal definition of a challenge and a ban. It also quotes others on issues such as intellectual freedom, the fourteenth amendment, and freedom of speech. Links are provided to information on the First Amendment and Intellectual Freedom, as well as links and information on banned books.

Search Strategy: While browsing through the links on the NCAC website, I found a brief article on a Kid’s Right to Read Project’s reaction to a banned book in Arizona. In this article they referenced this group on the reference page of signing the opposition statement. So I found the website for the group listed.

Database: N/A

Method of Searching: Footnote Chasing; Referenced in:


Search String: After reading the article on the NCAC’s website I found a link to an article on the Kid’s Right to Read Project. In the reference section of this article The ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom was listed. I then went to the ALA’s website and went to their Advocacy Programs and went to the Office of Intellectual Freedom page, where I found the listed information.

Scholarly/Refereed Status: The Office of Intellectual Freedom is an Advocacy Group for censorship with the American Library Association. The American Library Association is a group created to provide leadership for the library and information science, therefore; they are a reliable source.

Entry 2:


Abstract: Academic libraries often serve as the protectors of challenged books. Pressure on public libraries to remove controversial works can and often does result in the restriction of access or removal of the work from those libraries shelves. Academic libraries, however, operate with a stronger sense of academic and intellectual freedom. To analyze how well academic libraries do in acquiring and making available books which appear on the American Library Association's Challenged Books list, the list for 2007 was analyzed in WorldCat to determine the number and overall percentage of academic libraries holding the titles. Overall, 29.94% of the libraries holding challenged books were academic libraries. (Contains 39 endnotes and 7 tables.)
Annotation: This research looks at the number of academic libraries that hold challenged books. This study was done by looking at the most challenged book list of 2007. The Midwest was found to hold the most copies of the titles in almost every book. Holding challenged books by academic libraries is said to support the ideas of “intellectual freedom.”

Search Strategy: I used ERIC database and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. When it pulled up articles, I browsed through the abstracts and found that this article related to my topic. I then clicked on the ERIC full text link for this article.

Database: ERIC → ERIC THESAURUS → ERIC

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary Search

Search String: ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors: “Censorship”) and (Publication Type: “Journal Articles” OR Publication Type: “Collected Works General”) and Full-Text Available and Peer Reviewed
Publication Date: 2000-2012

Scholarly/Refereed Status: ERIC database found Education Libraries to be a “peer reviewed” journal.

Entry 3:


Abstract:

There is no abstract available for this article.

Annotation: EL James’s “Fifty Shades of Grey” has been a very controversial book in many different places. This New York Times article shows the debate in libraries over whether to stock the book because of the high volume of request for it, or to stick to the ban on no-erotic books. A representative from the National Coalition Against Censorship mentions in most cases, “removing a book is to stop a kid from seeing it.” The reason this is an odd occurrence is because this is removing an adult book and sending a message to adults about what they are reading.

Search Strategy: I was actually reading the New York Times for work. I found an article on “50 Shades of Grey” and decided to read it, because I knew how controversial this book has been. After reading the article I realized it was very fitting to this topic.

Database: N/A
Method of Searching: Browsing

Search String: New York Times, Browsing Articles, Selection of article on “50 Shades of Grey”

Scholarly/Refereed Status: Ulrich’s considers The New York Times to “Reports on regional, national, and international news events. Analyzes important current issues. Features articles on business, science, sports, the arts, computers, and fashion, dining, and entertainment.” The New York Times Company is a leading global, multimedia news and information company with 2011 revenues. Their website states “the Company’s core purpose is to enhance society by creating, collecting and distributing high-quality news, information and entertainment.”

Entry 4:


Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the potential of measuring the holdings of a school library young adult book collections and indications of self-censorship that might be practiced by the school library media specialist. The method employed, analysis of title ownership through examination of the school's OPAC, was an attempt to move away from questionnaires and interviews which might not allow for an objective description of selection decisions and acquisition practices. A pool of recent, potentially controversial young adult books that had also received supporting reviews, awards, or recommendations for inclusion on reading lists was established. A small, random sample of high schools in Texas that are part of the state's online union catalog system was determined. Specific titles were searched in each school's OPAC to determine ownership. Based on one factor, not owning at least 50 percent of the controversial titles in the pool tested, the researcher concludes that over 80 percent of the schools in the study show signs that self-censorship has occurred during the collection development process. The researcher acknowledges the limitations of the study and suggests other factors that should be taken into account before conclusive judgment can be made that deliberate self-censorship is widely practiced. An agenda for further research and study on censorship issues is outlined.

Annotation: This article discusses a study done looking at young adult books in school libraries to measure self-censorship by looking at the catalog rather than doing an interview or survey. Self-censorship being whether a librarian knowingly or unknowingly select books that they think may be challenged or cause a discussion to be close. It describes the difference between “selectors” and “censors.” Another topic discussed in this article is that most books written for teenagers or young adults are reviewed by adults who have a hard time confronting what really goes on in society.
Search Strategy: I started my search in Dialog in the Library Literature and Information Science database. I did a keyword search for “book censorship” within 10 words of each other. After that I pulled up the full record for the items shown. I found this listing and saw that it would apply, so I went to Hagerty Library and found the Library Literature and Information Science database and found the School Library Media Research, which is where Dialog said this article was found. I went to 2002 and to Volume 5 which is where Dialog said this full text was found. I selected the name of this article and clicked on the “Get it” link to find the full text.

Database: Dialog → Library Literature and Information Science → School Library Media Research

Method of Searching: Keyword Searching

Search String: Dialog- b 438; s book (10w) censorship= s1; t s1/9/1-12. Read full records listed, article seemed appropriate. Went to Hagerty’s database search and went to Library Literature and Information Science database. I then went to the School Library Media Research database and found the 2002 volume and issue. I then selected the article listed in Dialog and clicked on the HTML full text link.

Scholarly/Refereed Status: Ulrich’s Web considers School Library Media Research to be a “refereed, scholarly journal.”

Entry 5:

Abstract:
There is no abstract available for this item.

Annotation: This article provides examples of court cases and their decisions about banning books or book use in school. This article shows that the outcome of many court cases is the decision that even if a book is related to school matters and for an appropriate age group, if the school board says it is not acceptable, the board’s decision is what goes. The final outcome is summed up as the students have a “right to read”, but school boards have the right to decide the curriculum.

Search Strategy: I went to Dialog and pulled up the Social SciSearch database. I began the search by doing a keyword search for book censorship. I then pulled up the full records for the results. I found this article was in The English Journal. I then went to get the full text. I went to the Social Science database and searched for “book censorship” in subject and “Edwards, J.” in
the author. This article came up, when I pulled it up I followed the link at the bottom to JSTOR for the fulltext.

**Database:** Dialog $\rightarrow$ Social SciSearch $\rightarrow$ Social Sciences Citation Index (ISI)

**Method of Searching:** Keyword Search

**Search String:** Dialog- b 7; s book(10w)censorship= s1; t s1/9/1-13. Read full record, looked like it would be applicable. Went to Hagerty databases and found Social Sciences Citation Index. Searched for “book censorship” in keyword and “Edwards, J” in author.

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** *Ulrich’s Web* considers *The English Journal* to be a “refereed, scholarly journal.”

**Entry 6:**


**Abstract:**

There is no abstract available for this item.

**Annotation:** Here the definition of intellectual freedom is given. Also, the strategies of people to remove a book without challenging it are given, or how one may not select to get a book because of the distress of the possibility of risking their job. This article discusses that the key to this education of literacy for the children. It is the media specialist and the teachers job to teach them how to use, evaluate, or reject information.

**Search Strategy:** I found this article browsing through the references listed in “Censorship? What do School Library Specialist Truly Know?” I followed the link in the footnote and realized the article related.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote Chasing. Referenced in

Search String: Eric database search found article “Censorship? What Do School Library Specialist Truly Know?” This article’s footnotes led me to this article’s link.

Scholarly/Refereed Status: This was in an issue of the Illinois Libraries and is a researched article that has references listed.

Entry 7:


Abstract: Materials challenges and censorship occur often in public and private educational settings. Private schools and their library media centers are not subject to the First Amendment but research reported in this article examines the state of challenges to materials held in private schools media centers in the southeast United States as a way to gauge the frequency and outcomes of materials challenges in these institutions. The study builds on previous research of challenges in public schools as a framework to examine the types of challenges to materials in private college preparatory school libraries in the southeast, the outcomes of the challenges, and the factors that influenced the outcome of the challenges. The author reports the results of a quantitative study wherein data were collected via a four part electronic survey with items that pertained to media center materials challenges that occurred during the 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05 school years. The article discusses the state of challenges to private college preparatory schools in light of previously identified challenge outcome factors and includes suggestions for future inquiry in the topic area.

Annotation: Here it is discussed that private schools and their libraries are not under the First Amendment if they are not funded by the government. Hopkins looks at items challenged in a private college setting and the outcomes. This study showed that when the challenge was initiated by the principal or board it was removed.

Search Strategy: I used ERIC database and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. When it pulled up articles, I browsed through the abstracts and found that this article related to my topic. I then clicked on the ERIC full text link for this article.

Database: ERIC → ERIC THESAURUS → ERIC

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary Search

Search String: ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors:"Censorship") and (Publication Type:"Journal Articles" OR Publication Type:"Collected Works General") and Full-Text Available and Peer ReviewedPublication Date:2000-2012
**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** ERIC database shows *School Library Media* to be a “peer reviewed” journal.

**Entry 8:**


**Abstract:** Understanding what motivates people to challenge books and how community members react to these challenges can help librarians find better ways to work with challengers to come to equitable solutions. This study focused on the motives behind challenges to the acclaimed children's book "And Tango Makes Three" and the reasoning given by those who opposed these challenges. Qualitative content analysis was done on newspaper and library journal articles that discussed challenges to the book. Analysis revealed five major themes: third-person effect, parental rights, scarcity, First Amendment rights, and diversity.

**Annotation:** This article discusses why people challenge books. In detail, it discusses why people challenged, “And Tango Makes Three.” The idea of how one may feel things affect themselves and how they feel they would affect others is deeply discussed. Mentioning that someone may feel media content doesn’t truly affect them, but may affect other people's children or others. The fact that when you ban a book, the scarcity, makes a child twice as likely to read the book even though this is the opposite reaction the censors are hoping for, it is the reality. The book this article is based on is one of the most challenged books for a few years in a row, because many said it was based on the idea of “homosexuality”. This article looks at the challenges and the reasons for these challenges.

**Search Strategy:** I used ERIC database and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. I browsed the articles this search pulled up and from the abstract decided this article would be a good fit.

**Database:** ERIC ⇒ ERIC THESAURUS ⇒ ERIC

**Method of Searching:** Controlled Vocabulary Search

**Search String:** ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors:"Censorship") and (Publication Type:"Journal Articles" OR Publication Type:"Collected Works General") and Full-Text Available and Peer ReviewedPublication Date:2000-2012

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** ERIC database has the *School Library Media Research* listed as “Peer Reviewed”.


Entry 9:


**Abstract:** Censorship of school library collections has risen significantly in the last few decades, and such attacks are increasing. American courts have ruled that students in schools have First Amendment rights and some degree of freedom of speech. Courts also have ruled that students have the right to information and to learn and discuss issues of importance within the context of their schools and libraries. This study sought to determine the knowledge levels of a sample of school librarians concerning what they know about and how they support important court rulings that affect students' First Amendment rights. The study also sought to determine predictive behaviors of these librarians in protecting students' First Amendment rights. Basically the study found that the level of knowledge concerning legal rulings is low, but that school librarians in principle support students' rights to information, and that they are willing to advocate for those rights within the confines of their positions. Data also revealed that certain personal and demographic characteristics determine predicative behaviors. The study concludes with suggestions for redefining school librarianship education, emphasizing school library media specialists' professional responsibility to understand freedom of speech issues, laws, and court rulings.

**Annotation:** This study by Lukenbill and Lukenbill seems to bring up the indication that in the coming times librarians will have to be more insistent to protect free speech rights of their patrons. This article touches on the literature on school library media censorship. The complication in the matter of censorship is that fact that student’s first amendment rights are to be protected, but a specific level of education is supposed to be reached. School boards often become this sounding board and there is pressure placed on them by local beliefs and values.

**Search Strategy:** I used ERIC database, because I knew it would have relevant material and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. I browsed the articles this search pulled up and from the abstract decided this article would be a good fit.

**Database:** ERIC ➔ ERIC THESAURUS ➔ ERIC

**Method of Searching:** Controlled Vocabulary Search

**Search String:** ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors:"Censorship") and (Publication Type:"Journal Articles" OR Publication Type:"Collected Works General") and Full-Text Available and Peer ReviewedPublication Date:2000-2012
**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** ERIC database has the *School Library Media Research* listed as “Peer Reviewed”.

**Entry 10:**


**Abstract:** Critical thinking and academic freedom are enduring tenets of the liberal ethos of higher education. However, whereas the former is normally considered as a learning process for students, the latter tends to be understood as a license for the professoriate. If understood as rights and responsibilities pertaining to teachers and learners alike, the terms of inquiry and expression may be conflated within a single conceptual framework, serving not only the needs of the higher education community, but the progress of wider society. Referring to academic climates on both sides of the Atlantic, this paper argues that universities are failing to cultivate debate on contemporary issues, as the learning environment is stifled by ideological rectitude. The author appeals for a reinvigoration of critical thinking and academic freedom in higher education.

**Annotation:** Here McCrae talks about “academic freedom,” and ideological assumptions, and implications on teaching. They discuss at higher institutional levels you should be able to write and say what you feel without implications. Freedom of speech will not be as strongly taught in a school, if the teacher is not allowed to have it in their writing.

**Search Strategy:** I used ERIC database and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. When it pulled up articles, I browsed through the abstracts and found that this article related to my topic. I then clicked on the ERIC full text link.

**Database:** ERIC ➔ ERIC THESAURUS ➔ ERIC

**Method of Searching:** Controlled Vocabulary Search

**Search String:** ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors:"Censorship") and (Publication Type:"Journal Articles" OR Publication Type:"Collected Works General") and Full-Text Available and Peer Reviewed Publication Date:2000-2012

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** ERIC database has the *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* listed as “Peer Reviewed”.

Entry 11:


Abstract:

There is no abstract available for this article.

Annotation: This article shows “A Kids Right to Read Project’s” response to a Pennsylvania libraries removing of “The Dirty Cowboy.” They say that removing this book stops many children from reading this greatly acclaimed book. The ones who fought for the removal of the book say it shows “partial nudity.” Attached in this article is a copy of the letter written to School Board of this school.

Search Strategy: While reading the article on “50 Shades of Grey” in the New York Times, I saw the mention of the National Coalition Against Censorship and went to their website. On their website I found news articles and browsed through those articles. I found this article and while browsing through it realized it was about an argument over censorship.

Database: N/A

Method of Searching: Browsing

Search String: National Coalition Against Censorship’s website. News Tab. Selected Link for “Reaction to "The Dirty Cowboy" Stinks of Censorship”

Scholarly/Refereed Status: The NCAC is a group started that joined with other groups aim to protect the First Amendment rights. They fight for free expression. This article is from their site and is a firsthand letter written to a Pennsylvania County School Board.

Entry 12:


Abstract:

There is no abstract available for this item.

Annotation: This article brings up the idea that religious groups are more involved in the public education system, and their battle to leave the public education system, but on another side to govern the public education system. A big debate is still the idea of creationism, which has set state science standards. The article also talks about come specific books and censorship,
especially battles that have occurred over the Harry Potter books.

**Search Strategy:** While browsing through the references of the article “Censorship?...” I found the article listed and followed the link to it.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote Chasing. Referenced in: 

**Search String:** Eric database search found article “Censorship? What Do School Library Specialist Truly Know?” This article’s footnotes led me to this article’s link.

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** This article was found on a site that was created to help make sure that every American has equality, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion and this article was found on their website.

**Entry 13:**


**Abstract:** This paper explores student self-censorship within an online learning environment. Self-censorship in group activity can be seen as a two-edged sword. While it can be advantageous that a student censor personal frustration and angst when working with others, if the self-censorship impacts on the cognitive contribution a student makes then this may significantly impact upon the overall quality of the group's collective knowledge artefact. This paper reports on a study where it was found that students had self censored both their feelings and ideas as they collaboratively worked together. (Contains 1 footnote and 3 tables.)

**Annotation:** Roberts and Nason’s study showed that cooperation of collections of people could have both positive and negative properties. This was found when groups posted one opinion in their personal journal statements, and said something different in the group discussion areas. This is considered to likely be due to wanting to not start a disagreement, so participants self-censored.

**Search Strategy:** I used ERIC database and went to the Thesaurus. I looked up censorship in the Thesaurus. This showed me that the word “censorship” is controlled vocabulary, I clicked on the link on the word and it searched “Censorship” for me. When it pulled up articles, I browsed through the abstracts and found that this article related to my topic. I then clicked on the ERIC full text link.
Database: ERIC \(\rightarrow\) ERIC THESAURUS \(\rightarrow\) ERIC

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary Search

Search String: ERIC, ERIC Thesaurus search “censorship”, (Thesaurus Descriptors:"Censorship") and (Publication Type:"Journal Articles" OR Publication Type:'Collected Works General') and Full-Text Available and Peer ReviewedPublication Date:2000-2012

Scholarly/Refereed Status: ERIC database considers Journal of Learning Design to be a “peer reviewed” and “scholarly” journal.

Entry 14:


Abstract:

There is no abstract available for this article.

Annotation: This article is a review of four different articles. These articles include; Annabel Patterson’s “Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England,” Diana Woodward’s “Intellectual Freedom,” Robert Goldstein’s “Political Censorship in the Arts and the Press in Nineteenth-Century Europe,” and Michael Pollak’s “Sense and Censorship: Commentaries on Censorship Violence in Australia.” Discussion in this article hits on librarians reactions to the federal government’s limiting their access of open access information. The ALA’s “Lacy Report” is also discussed in the article, looking at it from its creation to a few years in.

Search Strategy: I started my search in Dialog. I went to the Library Literature and Information Science database. I did a keyword search for “book censorship” within 10 words of each other. I then pulled up the full record for all of the items found. I read the full record and found the ones that applied. I found this article and went on to find the full record. I went to the Hagerty Library and went to the Library Literature and Information Science database. The Dialog record showed this was in the Library Quarterly, so I pulled up the volume and issue of this journal listed on the Dialog record to find this article. I chose the “Get it- Full text” and from there I selected the JSTOR full text listed.

Database: Dialog \(\rightarrow\) Library Literature and Information Science \(\rightarrow\) Library Quarterly

Method of Searching: Keyword Searching

Search String: Dialog- b 438; s book (10w) censorship= s1; t s1/9/1-12. Read full records listed, article seemed appropriate. Went to Hagerty’s database search and went to Library
Literature and Information Science database. I then went to the Library Quarterly database and found the April 1992 volume and issue. I then selected the article listed in Dialog and clicked on the “Get it” link and chose the JSTOR full text link.

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** *Ulrich’s Web* considers *The Library Quarterly* to be a “refereed, scholarly journal.”

**Entry 15:**


**Abstract:** Noting that teacher education students are unfamiliar with the censorship issue, this paper discusses three kinds of censorship the pre-service English teacher can be expected to face, and suggests ways to prepare them to recognize and remedy anticipated problems. The essay identifies the first kind of censorship as that imposed by English teachers, librarians, and parents who reject adolescent fiction and popular teen magazines as less worthy reading material than the traditional canon. The essay advocates using individualized reading programs to counter such canonical censorship, and recommends seeking assistance from the school librarian for information about good new books and writers. Second, the essay identifies teachers’ self-censorship resulting from more experienced colleagues’ advice to avoid certain lesson plans judged too "difficult" or too controversial with parents. The essay again recommends seeking the advice of school librarians, who will have the best sense of what students like to read, and what their parents will object to. Finally, the essay identifies the censorship efforts of groups from outside the school, and notes that most students training to be teachers are unaware of the motives and scope of book censorship groups. The essay recommends initiating in-class debates on the subject, and inviting a librarian to share experiences in negotiating such objections to book selection.

**Annotation:** Small talks a lot about the college student’s idea of what censorship is and their “memories” of people telling them what to read. He talks about how English teachers and librarians we shouldn’t censor or reject books kids are reading. He considers when we reject what a teenager is reading they may feel we reject them. He also shares that the librarian and the English teacher are the only ones in a school setting who have experienced what effect literature could have on a teenager.

**Search Strategy:** I started my search in Dialog in the ERIC database. I did a keyword search for “book censorship” within 10 words of each other. After that I pulled up the full record for the items shown. I found this listing had a full text link and saw that it would apply, so I went to link and found the article.

**Database:** Dialog → ERIC
Method of Searching: Keyword Searching

Search String: Dialog- b 1; s book (3w) censorship= s1; t s1/9/1-43. Read full records listed. I
found this article with a full text link and followed the link to the article.

English Teachers who have an annual meeting and this is a paper that was presented by an
English Professor from Virginia Tech at this convention.

Conclusion and Personal Statement

After this paper, I feel that there are hardly ever any instances that we are not influenced
by censorship. We either have someone telling us that what we are reading is not appropriate, or
would not be appropriate for others, or if not that we are stuck thinking that what we are reading
or choose to buy as a librarian could cause us to lose our job. Even though, we are said as school
district employees to have freedoms we have to leave our freedoms outside the building, often
because of our fears. Our fear of a parent’s reaction, a child’s reaction, or a community’s
reaction is what considers our actions. So not only are we censored, we often self-censor. We
self-censor our responses and our choices. We can’t rely on the fact even that the law would
allow it, because these studies have gone to show that the school board has the final say and the
school board has to deal with the pressure from the community. There isn’t a single school
board member who could say that they aren’t influenced by the community.

The Library Bill of Rights is a great starting point. It is a good set of standards to make
sure we follow, but there is a lot that isn’t explained in that. Who says to what level it is
acceptable to challenge censorship? Or you also run the risk of maybe refusing someone the
right to use the library, because of how they are acting and they may say it was something
different. We are told to make sure we have information on all historical access, but then a
fictional book about war is challenged, because of too much violence. There is no clear line and
too much left in the hands or a certain person or groups opinion. I wish I could say that
problems with book censorship were of the past and we were taking steps toward having all of
our First Amendment rights, but I think we are taking steps in the opposite direction. There are
more books challenged year by year. I feel that the fact of the major arguments over whether
libraries that service adults should stock “50 Shades of Grey” goes to prove that censoring is
getting worse. As Vintage said in the New York Times article, “essentially is saying to the
library patron, we will judge what you read (Bosman, 2012).”
I certify that:

- This assignment is entirely my own work.
- I have not quoted the words of any other person from a printed source or website without indicating what has been quoted and providing an appropriate citation.
- I have not submitted this assignment to satisfy the requirements of any other course.

Signature  Lindsay D. McCutcheon
Date       June 8, 2012