Censorship in K-12 School Libraries
An Annotated Bibliography

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**Introduction and Scope**

The following bibliography covers censorship in K-12 school libraries. Articles include information on censorship of library materials, self-censorship by individuals and schools, internet censorship, and selection policies. A study on self-censorship not in the library, but in the classroom by teachers, is also included to demonstrate that censorship issues affect all parts of schools. Information on this topic is not limited to public schools, but private institutions are included as well. Articles are published from 1991 to 2012; however, most articles were published after 2000, so that information is reflective of current issues. Sources were chosen from databases that are information science or education based due to the nature of the subject; however, law sources were also utilized due to the contested legality of certain aspects of this subject. All of the sources are from American publications.

**Description**

Censorship in K-12 school libraries is a controversial and sensitive topic that is specific to no one area of the United States. When most think of censorship, they most likely still think of challenges to books or materials and the censoring books and materials. Even though this has declined in recent years, it is still a prevalent issue. This includes not only challenges from a community but also the less reportable self-censorship that occurs not only by school librarians, but also by teachers and administrators as well. Most sources agree that a strong collection development or selection policy is of utmost importance. Probably the most controversial issue at the moment is internet censorship in schools due to the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Many questions have been raised over the legality of this legislation. Issues of both censoring of library materials as well as the internet revolve around minors’ rights to access information.

**Summary of Findings**

Despite the fact that censorship in K-12 libraries is such a prevalent topic both in library science and education, it is difficult to find information outside of opinion based articles, even
within peer-reviewed journals. With the wealth of opinion pieces, it can be difficult to sort through all of the noise, and find research based articles. Dresang (2006) confirms that there is very little scholarly, data-based research on this issue, and that most sources do tend to be philosophical in nature. This is why this study, which was originally looking solely at censorship of library materials, expanded to also include internet filtering and censorship.

Sources relating to the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) all tend to be recent, based on the fact that CIPA was not enacted until December 21, 2000 (Jaeger & Jan 2009). However, articles involving material censorship have a wide range of dates that are covered. It is much easier to find non-opinion based pieces when looking at CIPA than material censorship. This is somewhat surprising, but it may be due to the fact that articles on CIPA can be found in more abundance outside of library science and education journals than articles on material censorship. For example, a lot of sources on CIPA can be found in law journals, which may have more sources with subjective viewpoints, due to the fact that CIPA is a very sensitive issue among librarians and educators.

However, censorship either to materials or to the internet is very much intertwined with aspects of government and law. The battle over censorship has become a battle over First Amendment rights. Dresang (2006) states that:

The U.S. Constitution’s Bill of Rights protects freedom of expression of ideas. Attempts by the government or an agency of the government to subvert this freedom are regarded as censorship. A great many libraries are government agencies; thus, librarians in the protection of intellectual freedom become protectors of the freedom of expression principle laid out in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights. (p. 169)

Bucher and Manning (2007) define censorship of materials as having two types. These are censoring something when it is already on shelves, and censoring it by keeping it off of shelves in the first place. This second form would be self-censorship. Both Bucher and Manning(2007) and Freedman and Johnson(2000-2001) point out that censoring of materials, especially at the middle school level, can be detrimental to the development of critical thinking and the ability of individuals to learn to make judgments.

The Library Bill of Rights which was first adopted in 1939 and since revised 6 times, states “intellectual freedom as a foundational principle for libraries and librarianship.” (Dresang, 2006, p. 174) It has become a frequently referenced document; however, as Hopkins (1996) states, it
offers no legal protection. This is why it is once again agreed that a library’s best defense against a challenge is a well written and thorough selection and development policy. A solid selection and development policy is also important to help sway fears that lead to self-censorship. Freedman and Johnson (2000-2001) point out that “the distinctions between censorship and selection become blurred, and self-censorship becomes all too prevalent when there is not a school or district policy in place, or when the policy is weaker than the censorship forces (p. 357).

Even though when most people consider censorship, they may consider challenges from a community, the most practiced form of censorship is actually self-censorship. Ken Coley (2002), tried to find a method to test for self-censorship in school libraries. In his study in 2002 of Texas public high school libraries he found that 82% practiced self-censorship based on the parameters of his study. He also found that smaller libraries tended to be more conservative in their selection process than larger schools (2002, p.10).

Although this study mainly sought to look at school libraries, it was also interesting to look at self-censorship by teachers as well. This is due to the fact that often libraries acquire materials to support curriculum. However, it was found in a study by Freedman and Johnson (2000-2001) that teachers purposefully decide not to include certain books or discuss certain topics in their classroom for fear of facing repercussions from the community, even though the students may want to talk about certain issues or topics.

It is widely agreed that a selection policy has found to be the best defense against a challenge; however, it is also important for librarians to be familiar with court rulings and issues of legality relating to censorship. A study by Lukenbill and Lukenbill (2007), found that librarians were not fully informed on issues concerning the First Amendment and the rights of their students. This is why this study sought to include law sources because it is important to understand fully any and all legal issues involved related to censorship.

It is also important to note that censorship and challenges are not just issues in public schools. Even though private schools are given more autonomy because they do not receive federal funding and people choose to send their children to these schools, there are still challenges to materials that happen. However, unlike public institutions, there is little research in regards to private schools. It was found that private schools, just as in public schools, those with board-approved selection policies fared better in challenges than those without (Franklin, 2008).
Barbara Weathers (1991) in her article “CLA Selection Guidelines: How to Choose Materials for Parish and School Libraries” also discusses how important it is to develop a selection policy, and how this is the best defense against challenges. Weathers also discusses how important it is that the policies reflect the community. Marjorie Rosenthal (1994), agrees that public relations is especially important when dealing with religious institutions in her article “The Chosen Book.”

Perhaps the most highly contested hot topic revolving around censorship right now, is internet censorship. Despite material censorship, which has been around since writing began, the internet is relatively new. Even newer is the use of the internet in public schools as a result of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Rodden, 2002-2003). With this act, public schools receive federal funding to have computers and internet access. However, the presence of the internet in schools has caused some problems in relation to students being able to access inappropriate material. This has led to the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which requires schools to provide filters on computers, if federal funding is used to provide those computers. Just like the censorship of materials, it has become a question of First Amendment rights, and the legality of the act has been in question. Hall and Carter (2006) note that the internet is the latest technology to start a new debate of free speech protection. Jaeger and Yan (2009) note that 100 percent of public schools, when their study was conducted, adhere to CIPA; therefore, every public school student is affected, which makes this such an important topic of discussion.

There is definitely a need for future research in this field. This includes further research on the effects of CIPA as more years pass. Additionally, most likely the world will never see an end to the challenging of materials because opinions and beliefs will always find a way to conflict; therefore, there should continue to be research on material censorship. Furthermore, even though it is enlightening to discuss philosophically the problems or benefits of censorship or filtering, there needs to be concrete research to support any points. This could include qualitative or quantitative data, both of which have been utilized for this study. Even though it may not work with all individuals, the best way to convince those who are compelled to challenge materials or sympathize with those who do, is with arguments supported by significant research.
Bibliography

Entry: 1


Abstract: “Although some music lyrics and television content may indicate an overall easing of censorship in U.S. society, authors, educators, young people, and all other individuals who value free access to information continue to face the threat of censorship from people who try to impose their value systems on others. While censorship can affect any type of communication (print and electronic) at any grade level, it presents a special problem in the upper elementary and middle school grades. Children at this level are developing cognitively, physically, and psychosocially. Young adolescents need to be aware of the problems caused by censorship and must support and protect intellectual freedom. This article examines the difference between censorship and intellectual freedom, identifies the most common forms of censorship, and explores the reasons that materials are currently challenged in schools. Finally, it looks at ways that educators can proactively prevent censorship and respond to censorship challenges. (Contains 3 tables.)”

Annotation: This article is unique because it looks at censorship in relationship to upper elementary and middle school levels. Bucher is a school librarianship professor at Old Dominion University in Virginia and Manning is an education professor at Old Dominion University. They have written several other books and articles together. Although in this article the opinion of both Bucher and Manning is clear, their argument is well researched. The article is current, and it reads very easy. A useful portion of the article is a list of organizations that support intellectual freedom, so that educators know of sources to find additional information on the subject.

Search Strategy: I selected ERIC because it is an education database, and I thought that it would have many articles pertaining to my subject. Also,
within ERIC, there is the option to narrow a search based on education levels, which is a very helpful approach. I limited my search to all education levels from K-12. I also limited dates from 2000-2012. I indicated that all results should be peer-reviewed, and that results needed to be journal articles or research reports. I began with a basic keyword search using library* and censor* to find possible descriptors. I was familiar with how to use ERIC’s thesaurus, and found that controlled vocabulary is the easiest way to search ERIC. I started a search with the descriptors “censorship” and “academic freedom” and “school libraries.” However, I found that in the thesaurus it indicated that “academic freedom” was to “use for teaching freedom.” Therefore, I tried “intellectual freedom,” which the thesaurus indicated as having to do with “access to ideas,” “freedom to read,” etc. I then searched using the thesaurus descriptors “intellectual freedom” and “school libraries” and “censorship.” I limited my search as before and received too few results. I, therefore, removed the keyword “school libraries” and found some usable sources. ERIC did not have full text to this journal, but I was able to find it online at Hagerty Library in Academic OneFile.

**Database:** ERIC

**Method of searching:** Controlled Vocabulary

**Search String:** “Intellectual freedom” and “censorship”

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** I specified that ERIC only locate peer-reviewed articles, but I also double-checked in Ulrich’s, and Ulrich’s indicated that it is a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal.

**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 is significant because it presents a method to test whether SLMS are practicing self-censorship. It is a well thought out research article that is easy to follow. It offers a lengthy literature review as well as detailed sections on methods, data collection, and analysis of results. Coley stays neutral on the subject by not offering any of his opinions on self-censorship. He does recognize the limitations of his study, and he recommends ways that it could
be improved or repeated. The article is fairly recent; therefore, the results that Coley found are not out of date. This article is not only informative because of the research results, but also because of the method that could be used again for another study.

**Search Strategy:** I selected Library Literature and Information Science because I had success finding relevant articles with it during my first searches. I replicated the keywords that I had used to find sources in my first search on school libraries/school media centers and combined it with self-censorship. There was no need to further narrow down my search from this initial search string because I received a manageable number of relevant results. I used Dialog to search Library Literature and Information Science, and the full-text was not available. I was able to locate it through the Hagerty Library using Library Literature and Information Science Full-Text (H.W. Wilson) through EBSCOhost. I also found that this journal is only available online in HTML format.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science [Dialog].

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:** s (school()librar? or school()media()center?) and (self()censor?)

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed.

**Entry:** 3


**Abstract:** “What is the state of intellectual freedom and libraries in the early twenty-first-century digital environment? This question is addressed largely in relation to public and school libraries,
where more than 90 percent of documented challenges exist and at which most legislative and judicial actions relevant to intellectual freedom and libraries are directed. Analyses of changing perceptions of the intellectual-freedom leadership role of women and children; of the relevant policy documents of the American Library Association; of recent legislation and judicial decisions, focused on both books and the Internet; and of the current public perception of libraries as a public good reveal the complexities and tensions that exist in the answer to this question. One possible explanation for the current state of intellectual freedom and libraries is offered through application of radical-change theory. Changes in research, education, and practice are suggested based on the conclusions from these analyses.”

**Annotation:** This article is significant because it is a well-researched article that seeks to explain current issues and trends, and it is very thorough in its argument. Dresang, who is a professor at the University of Washington, is also very thorough in providing a wealth of background information related to intellectual freedom to help support her argument. The article is fairly recent, which is important because Dresang is discussing the *current* state of intellectual freedom. Dresang also does not discuss her opinion on intellectual freedom, so the article is in no way bias.

**Search Strategy:** I read “A Private [School] Matter: The State of Materials Challenges in Private College Preparatory School Libraries in the Southeast United States” by Renee E. Franklin. In this article Franklin discusses Dianne McAfee Hopkins, who conducted what Franklin views as the most inclusive research on challenges in school libraries in 1989, 1990, and 1991. I decided to do a citation search in Web of Science to find other authors who cited her work. I found this article, and I was able to access the full text on JSTOR through the Hagerty Library Website.

**Database:** Web of Science

**Method of Searching:** Footnote chasing

**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. (Contains 6 tables, 1 figure and 2 notes.)”

**Annotation:** Renee E. Franklin is an Assistant Professor at the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University, and she noticed the lack of research involving challenged materials in private schools. She mainly cites the work of Dianne Mcafee Hopkins who conducted
groundbreaking research on this subject for public schools. This article is a great source because there is little information on private school challenges and censorship. A limitation of the study is, however, that it studies only one region of the U.S. Franklin states that a larger study or similar studies should be conducted. Franklin’s article is a well laid out research article that clearly presents all variables, methods, and results. It is a good source for quantitative analysis, and it is free from any types of opinions or bias on the subject.

**Search Strategy:** I selected Library Literature and Information Science because it contains many articles related to the topic that I am studying. This was my first search, and I decided to do a keyword search with Dialog because using keywords allows me to manipulate my search and make it very specific. This is important because censorship is a very broad topic. I also limited the date to 2007 to 2012 to keep the articles as current as possible, and I was able to find a large enough number of results, so that I did not have to expand the date any farther. The full text was not available for this article on Dialog or in the Hagerty Library. I was able to find it online, so that I did not have to request it through inter-library loan. I also found that this journal is only available online.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:**
- s (school()librar? or school()media()center?)
- s challeng?
- s s1 and s2
- s s3 and censor?
- s py=2007:2012
- s s4 and s6

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article was published in is listed in
Entry: 5


Abstract: “Through the window of literature, students have immediate access to the experiences of others beyond their own families, friends, neighbors, classmates, and teachers. Freedman argues that when teachers abandon their right and responsibility to select literature, they sacrifice their students to protect themselves.”

Annotation: This article is significant because it reveals that self-censorship is prevalent in school classrooms as well as school libraries. Freedman, who is a professor of Literacy Studies at Western Michigan University and Johnson, who is the Director of the School of Education at University of Cincinnati conducted a study in which they had middle school teachers read a possibly controversial book and middle school students read the same book, and they compared their responses. This article shows clearly how easy it is to practice self-censorship and the motivations behind it. The study is fairly current, so the prevalent opinions and attitudes of the modern day are present. The authors are trying to prove a point that self-censorship is wrong, so there is opinions on the matter stated, but the statements are supported by research. An inherent weakness in this study is that it should be repeated with a larger or more diverse group of individuals.

Search Strategy: I read the article “Commentary: Censorship in Three Metaphors” by Fenice B. Boyd and Nancy M. Bailey. Even though this article did not fit the specifications of this project, the Freedman and Johnson article is cited in the reference section. I first looked up the journal in Ulrich’s. I then
searched the journal in the e-journal section of the Hagerty website, and it was available in ProQuest.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote chasing

**Search String:** Referenced in:

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed.

**Entry:** 6


**Abstract:** “The use of Internet filters in public classrooms in the USA has been intensely debated, both in terms of its effectiveness and legality. The debate pits concerns to protect students from indecent material against issues of unconstitutional censorship. This paper examines the legal issues addressed in various rulings by the US Supreme Court pertinent to issues raised in the debate over the constitutionality of filtering in the classroom. The rulings and opinions offer valuable insights into the legal issues raised in this debate.”

**Annotation:** This article is unique because it discusses both the reasons why the Supreme Court ruled as it did in relation to the constitutionality of CIPA, as well as the opposing side’s
argument. Hall from Boise State University and Carter from Brigham Young University appear to be objective in their analysis. The article is current as well, which is very important when discussing law and current events. It is a good source for anyone seeking to learn more about the legal decisions that play a role in censorship and intellectual freedom because it is extremely thorough and well researched. The authors also divide the article by subheadings so that it is very easy to read, and it addresses all facets of the argument, as well as prevalent concerns that each side has over these rulings.

**Search Strategy:** I read “One Law with Two Outcomes: Comparing the Implementation of CIPA in Public Libraries and Schools” by Paul T. Jaeger and Zheng Yan, and this article was cited in the reference section. I looked up the journal on Ulrich’s and found that it is scholarly and peer-reviewed. I then searched for the journal in the Hagerty Library website, and Hagerty does not carry this journal. I was able to find the full-text of the article at academia.edu, so that I did not have to use inter-library loan.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote chasing

**Search String:** Referenced in:

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed
Entry: 7


Abstract: “Uses national guidelines, collection development texts, and the intellectual freedom literature to assess the practical value of the Library Bill of Rights in school library settings. Discussion focuses on invoking the statement as support when dealing with challenges to the collection. Appendixes include the Library Bill of Rights itself and American Library Association’s interpretive comments on it.”

Annotation: This article is unique because Hopkins, instead of just providing information on what the Library Bill of Rights is, investigates the value of it. One thing that she finds is that schools that include the Library Bill of Rights in the materials selection policies retain more challenged materials. Although this article was published in 1996, the information in it does not involve any type of technology, therefore, it is not out of date. Dianne Hopkins is a leader in information science research, and her studies tend to be cited often. In this article she discusses her study results and other studies as well. Her conclusions are backed up by research, and she logically assesses the use of the Library Bill of Rights and the School Library Bill of Rights. She also includes a brief explanation and history of each of these documents, as well as published interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.

Search Strategy: I selected ERIC because it is an education database, and I thought that it would have many articles pertaining to my subject. Also, within ERIC, there is the option to narrow a search based on education levels, which is a very helpful approach. I limited my search to all education levels from K-12. I also limited dates from 2000-2012. I indicated that all results should be peer-reviewed, and that results needed to be journal articles or research reports. I began with a basic keyword search using library* and censor* to
find possible descriptors. I was familiar with how to use ERIC’s thesaurus, and found that controlled vocabulary is the easiest way to search ERIC. I started a search with the descriptors “censorship” and “academic freedom” and “school libraries.” However, I found that in the thesaurus it indicated that “academic freedom” was to “use for teaching freedom.” Therefore, I tried “intellectual freedom,” which the thesaurus indicated as having to do with “access to ideas,” “freedom to read,” etc. I then searched using the thesaurus descriptors “intellectual freedom” and “school libraries” and “censorship.” I limited my search as before and received too few results. I, therefore, removed the keyword “school libraries” and found some usable sources. ERIC did not have full text to this journal, but I was able to find it online at Hagerty Library in Academic OneFile.

**Database:** ERIC

**Method of searching:** Controlled Vocabulary

**Search Strategy:** “Intellectual freedom” and “censorship”

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** I specified that ERIC only locate peer-reviewed articles, but I also double-checked in Ulrich’s, and Ulrich’s indicated that it is a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal.

**Entry: 8**

Abstract: “Though the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) established requirements for both public libraries and public schools to adopt filters on all of their computers when they receive certain federal funding, it has not attracted a great amount of research into the effects on libraries and schools and the users of these social institutions. This paper explores the implications of CIPA in terms of its effects on public libraries and public schools, individually and in tandem. Drawing from both library and education research, the paper examines the legal background and basis of CIPA, the current state Internet access and levels of filtering in public libraries and public schools, the perceived value of CIPA, the perceived consequences of CIPA, the differences in levels of implementation of CIPA in public libraries and public schools, and the reasons for those dramatic differences. After an analysis of these issues within the greater policy context, the paper suggests research questions to help provide more data about the challenges and questions revealed in this analysis.”

Annotation: This article is unique because it compares and contrast CIPA in public schools and public libraries, and creates a good overview of what CIPA is, and what are its affects both positive and negative. Jaeger from the University of Maryland and Yan from the University of Albany thoroughly provide both sides of the issues revolving around CIPA. The article is current and all arguments made are very well researched. The article answers many questions that may arise when an individual is looking into CIPA. There is a suggestion for further research on this topic.

Search Strategy: I selected Library Literature and Information Science because I had success finding relevant articles with it during my first searches. I replicated the keywords that I had used in my first search to find sources on school libraries/school media centers and combined it with internet or online. There was no need to further narrow down my search from this initial search string because I received a manageable number of relevant results. I used Dialog to search Library Literature and Information Science, and the full-text was not available. I was able to locate it through the Hagerty

**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 predictive 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. (Contains 7 tables.)”

**Annotation:** This article is significant because it is an excellent source of quantitative data regarding library censorship in schools, and it is also fairly recent. Although the study involves a sample population from Texas, the author suggests that this study has wide implications and could be applied in many places. The study is lengthy, but well organized and very readable. The authors, Bernard Lukenbill, who is a professor at the iSchool at University of Texas and James Lukenbill, who is Senior Manager, Data/Analytics, Affiliated Computer Services in Austin, also includes extensive background information on the subject, as well as a literature review, and a lengthy discussion on the results. The methods of the study are thoroughly explained, so that the study can be easily repeated. The authors appear to be more on a search for quantitative data to provide them with information, as opposed to proving a point, so the article does appear to be free from bias.

**Search Strategy:** I selected ERIC because it is an education database, and I thought that it would have many articles pertaining to my subject. Also, within ERIC, there is the option to narrow a search based on education levels, which is a very helpful approach. I limited my search to all education levels from K-12. I also limited dates from 2000-2012. I indicated that all results should be peer-reviewed, and that results needed to be journal articles or research reports. I began with a basic keyword search using library* and censor* to
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Database: ERIC

Method of searching: Controlled Vocabulary

Search Strategy: “Intellectual freedom” and “censorship”

Scholarly/Refereed Status: I specified that Eric only locate peer-reviewed articles, but I also double-checked in Ulrich’s, and Ulrich’s indicated that it is a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal.

Entry: 10


Abstract: The introduction of the internet into public schools thanks to the Telecommunications Act has increased resources available to students; however, inherent problems have become
evident as internet usage in public schools increases. The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was signed into law by President Clinton in December of 2000 as a way to protect students from much of the harmful online materials. This act brings forth many legal questions, such as, what material should and should not be blocked, and who should be making this decision. This study sought to determine whether CIPA is taking away parents’ constitutional right to make these decisions and raise their children as they see fit. This study sought to explain legal questions about CIPA and outline whether or not CIPA intrudes on parental liberty.

**Annotation:** This article is unique because it is outlined so that each question raised regarding legality is addressed as “Pro-parent,” or “Pro-state.” This creates an unbiased article that present all sides of the argument as to whether or not CIPA is taking away parent’s constitutional rights. This article is very thorough in its evaluation, however, certain facts and figures, such as internet usage in homes, is a bit out of date. This article also provides thorough background information on earlier statutes regarding the internet and protecting minors, as well as prior cases that have been used both against and in defense of upholding CIPA. This article is significant to this study because CIPA is an area of censorship that is current and controversial, and it is important to understand both sides of the arguments and the basis in law in order to make an educated assessment of the situation.

**Search Strategy:** I read “One Law with Two Outcomes: Comparing the Implementation of CIPA in Public Libraries and Schools” by Paul T. Jaeger and Zheng Yan, and this article was cited in the reference section. I looked up the journal on Ulrich’s and found that it is scholarly and peer-reviewed. I then searched for the journal in the Hagerty Library website, and found the journal was available through HeinOnline.

**Database:** N/A

**Method of Searching:** Footnote chasing
Search String: Referenced in:

Scholarly/Refereed Status: The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed

Entry: 11


Abstract: “The issue of intellectual freedom and its maintenance under the onslaught of those whose personal priorities and agendas dictate the censorship of library materials, is not one that is confined to any one type of institution. Challenges to textbooks and library books have increased alarmingly in the last few years in public and private, religious as well as secular, schools and libraries in our society – to the point where librarians must question the possibility of controversy in titles on the holocaust, along with the more traditional confrontations over sex and witchcraft.”

Annotation:
This article is unique because it offers insight into selection in a Jewish School. Jewish and Catholic schools are the majority of religious private academic institutions in the U.S., so it is important to take a look at selection, challenges, and censorship in these types of institutions. Rosenthal, who is from the University of Long Island School of Library and Information Science, not only takes a look at selection in a Jewish school, but also at many books that have
been challenged or banned in the U.S. because each deals with the holocaust or Judaism. This article is not very current, but it is the most current one that could be found specifically on this subject. Additionally, this article does not exhibit any form of bias.

**Search Strategy:** I selected Library Literature and Information Science because I had success finding relevant articles with it during my first searches. While looking through the descriptors from my previous search I discovered “policy” as a descriptor, so I decided to modify my original search statement. I replicated the keywords that I had used to find sources on school libraries/school media centers and censor in my first search and added policy. There was no need to further narrow down my search from this initial search string because I received a manageable number of relevant results. I used Dialog to search Library Literature and Information Science, and the full-text was not available. I was able to obtain the article through inter-library loan.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:** s (school()librar? or school()media()center?) and censor? and polic?

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed

**Entry: 12**

Abstract: “The article covers the relationships between school librarians and school principals. Citing past studies, the article states that a majority of school principals do not value the work of school librarians in regard to lesson planning with teachers and curriculum development. The article presents data from a survey of school administrators who had been recognized for supporting school library programs. Results from this survey provided information on strategies for principal support of library programs and school librarians, strategies for school librarians to use to gain support from their principal, and feedback on preparation programs for school administrators and library programs. The article concludes that effective library programs depend on collaboration between librarians and principals.”

Annotation: This article is significant for this study because several other sources state how important it is for a librarian to have support from administration both in developing a selection policy and during a challenge to material. This article is a great source of qualitative data on the relationship between principals and librarians, and provides many charts to illustrate the findings. Additionally, it is very recent, and no type of bias is present. It is also very readable, and explains very clearly the methodology used to collect this data.

Search Strategy: I decided to search Library Literature and Information Science outside of Dialog to experiment with other ways that I could limit a search. Library Literature and Information Science Full Text is available through EBSCOhost. I began with an advanced search and limited the search to include only scholarly, peer-reviewed journals, and the date was limited to 2000-2012. I also specified that publication type should be an academic journal, and the document type should be an article. I also indicated that my search mode would be Boolean/phrase. I replicated the keywords that I had used to find sources on school libraries/school media centers and then began by only adding censor*, as a way to initially gauge the type of sources I would retrieve. I retrieved far too many results to manage, but then found that EBSCO host offers a way to narrow my search by subject with options on its sidebar. I narrowed down the subjects until I was able
to retrieve a manageable number of relevant results. I was able to locate a relevant result in this initial search, and the full text was available.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science Full Text (H.W. Wilson) [EBSCOhost]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:** school librar* OR school media center AND censor*
Narrow by Subject: - Libraries & schools
Narrow by Subject: - Librarians
Narrow by Subject: - Internet in school libraries
Narrow by Subject: - School libraries -- Aims & objectives
Narrow by Subject: - School librarians
Narrow by Subject: - School libraries

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed.

**Entry: 13**


**Abstract:** “This article presents the results of a research project centered on challenged books, which was used with a twelfth-grade class of mixed ability levels. The study of banned books provided the students an opportunity to engage with literature on a number of levels, generating text-to-self connections by involving students in a discussion centered on their own rights. Over the course of the project, systematic research proved student engagement and intellectual growth; this proof went beyond anecdotal evidence of the project's impact on students. Evidence generated by the students demonstrated that they were capable of insight into text and that they
saw the value of access to a range of materials. Because the nature of the assignment was a sharp departure from the established course of study, that data demonstrating intellectual growth was important in confirming the relevance to the English curriculum of a study of censorship. Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a theoretical framework with origins in the medical field; EBP offers a range of opportunities to explicate the work of information specialists. As a research paradigm, EBP is concerned with outcomes rather than outputs, using data from professional practice to support theories developed by qualitative methods. In education evidence-based models provide a framework for action research in the classroom. This study uses EBP in the high school context to support an increasing emphasis on intellectual freedom issues, a core value of the school library media program. The results reveal the need for a school-wide systematic approach to instruction in censorship and intellectual freedom issues valuable to 21st century learners. (Contains 2 figures.)”

**Annotation:** This article is unique because it uses evidence based practice (EBP) to determine how students feel about challenged or banned books. The study is current, so it does reflect modern attitudes. Additionally, the author is very concise in the study and leaves out personal opinions or reflections on the material; therefore, it is not bias in any way. It is relevant to this study because it is important to note that students are able to learn and analyze materials and make judgments about them. Stephens utilizes graphs to help display her findings.

**Search Strategy:** I selected ERIC because it is an education database, and I thought that it would have many articles pertaining to my subject. Also, within ERIC, there is the option to narrow a search based on education levels, which is a very helpful approach. I limited my search to all education levels from K-12. I also limited dates from 2000-2012. I indicated that all results should be peer-reviewed, and that results needed to be journal articles or research reports. I began with a basic keyword search using library* and censor* to find possible descriptors. I was familiar with how to use ERIC’s thesaurus, and found that controlled vocabulary is the easiest way to search ERIC. I started a search with the descriptors “censorship”
and “academic freedom” and “school libraries.” However, I found that in the thesaurus it indicated that “academic freedom” was to “use for teaching freedom.” Therefore, I tried “intellectual freedom,” which the thesaurus indicated as having to do with “access to ideas,” “freedom to read,” etc. I then searched using the thesaurus descriptors “intellectual freedom” and “school libraries” and “censorship.” I limited my search as before and received too few results. I, therefore, removed the keyword “school libraries” and found some usable sources. ERIC did not have full text to this journal, but I was able to find it online at Hagerty Library in Library Literature and Information Science Full Text (W.H. Wilson) through EBSCOhost.

Database: ERIC

Method of searching: Controlled Vocabulary

Search Strategy: “Intellectual freedom” and “censorship”

Scholarly/Refereed Status: I specified that Eric only locate peer-reviewed articles, but I also double-checked in Ulrich’s, and Ulrich’s indicated that it is a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal.

Entry: 14


Abstract: “A selection policy is an essential document for the efficient running of any library, even one in a local school or parish. The policy sets the library’s goals and directions, as well as the justification for its contents. In normal day-to-day operations, it is a guide to building a good,
solid collection. In the time of intellectual challenge it serves and resource and rationale. Whether for an entire diocese or a specific school or parish, the selection policy assures that the library is tailored to local sensitivities and needs.”

**Annotation:** This article is unique because it addresses specifically challenges in Catholic school libraries. It is important when looking at challenges and selection policies to explore all types of academic institutions because so many youth do not attend public schools, and looking strictly at public schools would create too narrow of a picture. This article also does not exhibit any form of bias. However, the article is not very current, but it does not deal with technology in any way, which would make it extremely out of date. The article does have an example of a well-done “objection to content form” that could be utilized in any school.

**Search Strategy:** I selected Library Literature and Information Science because it contains many articles related to the topic that I am studying. This was my first search, and I decided to do a keyword search with Dialog because using keywords allows me to manipulate my search and make it very specific. This is important because censorship is a very broad topic. I also limited the date to 2007 to 2012 to keep the articles as current as possible, and I was able to find a large enough number of results, so that I did not have to expand the date any farther. The full text was not available for this article on Dialog or in the Hagerty Library. I was able to obtain it through interlibrary loan.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:**

- s (school()librar? or school()media()center?)
- s challeng?
- s s1 and s2
- s s3 and censor?
Entry: 15


**Annotation:** “The writer discusses schools' reliance on filtering to address Internet misuse and the need to prepare students as effective users of online information. She discusses concerns about the heavy reliance on filtering as well as legislative provisions and liability concerns. She then suggests strategies for managing Internet use in schools. She concludes that school librarians as information literacy specialists have a critical role to play in transforming school policies and empowering students to effectively deal with online environments.”

**Abstract:** This article is important because it discusses many concerns that schools and librarians have regarding CIPA. Although the viewpoint of Nancy Willard, who is the Director of the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use is clear, her arguments are well-researched. This article is relevant because it brings to light concerns that many may have. The article is also current, which is important because it is discussing the use of technology in schools.

**Search Strategy:** I selected Library Literature and Information Science because I had success finding relevant articles with it during my first searches. I replicated the keywords that I had used to find sources on school libraries/school media centers in my first search and combined it with internet or online. There was no need to further narrow down my search from this initial search string because I received a manageable number of relevant results. I used Dialog to search Library Literature and Information Science, and the full-text was not available. I was able to locate it through
the Hagerty Library using Library Literature and Information Science Full Text (H.W. Wilson) through EBSCOhost.

**Database:** Library Literature and Information Science [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Keyword

**Search String:**
- s (school()librar? or school()media()center?) and (censor? or filter?) and (internet or online)
- s py=2009:2012
- s s1 and s2

**Scholarly/Refereed Status:** The journal that this article is published in is listed in Ulrich’s as a scholarly/academic journal that is refereed.

Conclusion and Personal Statement

Intellectual freedom is a value that most librarians share. Censorship is an issue that is very important to libraries and librarians, and I was excited to delve deeper into it. This assignment helped me to really understand the concept of censorship and the issues surrounding it. Before this, I only had a vague understanding of the issues, and now I feel like I just went through a crash course on the subject. But it is such an important issue, so I am very glad I chose this topic. What I found the most interesting was the legal reasoning behind CIPA, and the rationale behind both sides of the argument.

However, this project not only helped me learn more about censorship, but it also allowed me to learn more about research and methods of searching by breaking down the step-by-step process of research methods and source evaluation. Although I had done much research throughout my undergraduate career, I now realize many of my shortcomings in the past. To
begin with, I realized that many times in past research I had utilized trade magazines, under the impression that they were journals simply because they had the word journal in the title. I also became aware of how many articles, even if they are in scholarly journals, may be more opinion based. This assignment also helped me have a more concrete understanding of how to navigate through different search engines. This will be a skill that will help me no matter what search engine I may be confronted with in the future.

This assignment, although frustrating at times, was a very helpful project that will without a doubt help me with research in the future. It has made me more discerning when choosing articles. Even though only a small summary of findings was written on the sources that were found, I feel as if I wrote a whole research paper because of the amount of knowledge I have gained on this topic. The knowledge I have gained on the topic as well as the research process have made me better informed as I go forth in my education and career. I now have a greater understanding of two very important parts of the library profession, and the knowledge I have will help me in all future projects and undertakings.

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.

Marie Cirelli  5/30/12