

Newly Revised
*Intellectual
Freedom Manual*
Makes It Easier
to Find the Help
You Need

Trina Magi
trina.magi@uvm.edu



School librarians regularly face difficult intellectual freedom questions. What should you do if a parent complains about a library book? Is it a good idea to put grade- or reading-level labels on the outside of books or use labels to determine what students should read? Do children have First Amendment rights? The ALA *Intellectual Freedom Manual* provides answers and guidance.

The *Intellectual Freedom Manual* has been an essential resource for decades. Over time, it grew considerably in size and scope, containing official ALA policy statements on intellectual freedom and essays about the history of those statements. Based on feedback from librarians, the ninth edition has been revised and reorganized. The new topical arrangement makes it easier for busy librarians to find help quickly. Also, the historical essays were removed and published in a separate companion volume, *A History of ALA Policy on Intellectual Freedom: A Supplement to the Intellectual Freedom Manual*, making space in the manual for new content, including significantly more content for school librarians.

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What's Included

The book includes official ALA policy statements on intellectual freedom, including core documents such as the Library Bill



The library profession has a long history of defending and promoting freedom of expression and the freedom to read. School librarians and their supporters will find this new edition of the Intellectual Freedom Manual a valuable and easy-to-use resource as they continue this important work.

The manual is published under the direction of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. Additional information about intellectual freedom issues—and newly adopted and revised ALA policies—can be found on the ALA "Intellectual Freedom" website <www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom>. Also consider joining IFACTION, a news-only, no-discussion electronic list on intellectual freedom issues. Go to <lists.ala.org/sympa> and click "ALA Offices" and then "Office for Intellectual Freedom."

of Rights, The Freedom to Read, and Code of Ethics of the American Library Association; interpretations of those documents; and ALA Council resolutions. Developed by ALA members and ratified by the ALA Council through the association's democratic process, these policies articulate the library profession's values and best practices.

The book also includes guidelines, checklists, essays, and question-and-answer documents. For example, in this edition you'll find:

- "Issue at a Glance" pages, which highlight important points related to each of nine intellectual freedom issues, including points labeled "Especially for School Libraries"
- Practical, step-by-step instructions for responding to challenges to library resources, from oral expressions of concern through formal written complaints and public hearings, with special advice for school librarians

- An essay about intellectual freedom and young people, written by a retired school librarian with a wealth of experience
- An essay about labeling and rating systems, which are becoming more prevalent in school libraries
- Expanded content about Internet filtering, and advice about how you can work to protect intellectual freedom even if your school is required to install filters
- Expanded content about how to develop five essential policies to protect intellectual freedom in your library
- Information about copyright, including a new interpretation of ALA's Code of Ethics and an essay about the law regarding copyright
- Information about responding to requests from law enforcement
- An expanded "Glossary of Terms" to help you understand technical and legal terms

How It's Arranged

The new manual has three parts. Part 1, "Intellectual Freedom and Libraries," provides foundational information. It begins with an essay that defines intellectual freedom and explains how it applies to school, public, and academic libraries. Core intellectual freedom documents of ALA, such as Library Bill of Rights, are presented next, followed by practical information about how to create five library policies that support intellectual freedom: collection development and resource reconsideration, Internet use, use of meeting rooms and exhibit spaces, privacy and confidentiality, and user behavior and library use.

Part 2, "Intellectual Freedom Issues and Best Practices," contains nine chapters focusing on intellectual freedom issues:

- (1) Access to Library Resources and Services
- (2) Censorship, Challenged Resources, and Internet Filtering
- (3) Children and Youth
- (4) Collection Development and Management
- (5) Copyright
- (6) Meeting Rooms, Exhibit Spaces, and Programs
- (7) Privacy and Confidentiality
- (8) Visits and Requests from Law Enforcement
- (9) Workplace Speech

Each chapter begins with a summary called "Issue at a Glance," covering key concepts, points of law, additional resources, tips for various types of libraries, and questions for

reflection. "Issue at a Glance" is followed by relevant "Official ALA Policy Statements." Finally, each chapter includes "A Deeper Look"—one or more essays expanding on the issue. Many of the "Deeper Look" essays provide information about laws related to library operations. This information will help you understand your legal obligations, but it is not intended as legal advice. If legal advice or expert assistance is required, you should seek the services of a competent legal professional, such as your district's legal counsel.

Part 3, "Advocacy and Assistance," offers practical information about how to communicate about intellectual freedom, work with the media, lobby legislators, get help, and get involved in promoting and defending intellectual freedom.

The appendixes include an expanded "Glossary of Terms" and "Selected Bibliography."

How to Use the Manual in Your School Library

- *Refer to it when developing library policy*—Review the chapter "Creating Intellectual Freedom Policies for Your Library."
- *Turn to it for guidance when a question or problem emerges*—Consult the relevant chapter in "Intellectual Freedom Issues and Best Practices," review the tips in the chapter "Communicating about Intellectual Freedom," and consult "Where to Get Help and Get Involved" if you need additional help.
- *Use it to orient new library employees, volunteers, other educators, administrators, and board members*—Ask them to read "What Is Intellectual Freedom?" and "Core Intellectual Freedom Documents of the American Library Association."

- *Use it for professional development*—Consider having library staff and volunteers read the chapters in "Intellectual Freedom Issues and Best Practices," and schedule time to discuss the provided "Questions for Reflection." Some of the questions are easily answered after reading the chapter; others present more difficult ethical challenges that are likely to stimulate interesting discussions.
- *Use it to connect with other librarians and help promote intellectual freedom*—Read "Where to Get Help and Get Involved" to learn about organizations, committees, programs, and awards that focus on intellectual freedom.

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Trina Magi is a library professor at the University of Vermont in Burlington where she works as a reference and instruction

librarian. She is a member of the ALA Digital Content Working Group. She served as editor of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Manual, ninth edition, published April 2015. She has served on the intellectual freedom committees of the Vermont Library Association (chair 2006–2008), New England Library Association (chair 2012–2014), and American Library Association (2007–2011). She has also served as Vermont's representative on ALA Council and has won numerous awards for her advocacy of civil liberties and intellectual freedom.