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Primary Subject: Librarianship:

Philosophy, Values, and

Issues/Ethics

Secondary Subject: Acquisitions

and Collection

Management/Collection

Development, Theory and Practice

Public Library Collections in the Balance

Censorship, Inclusivity, and Truth

Jennifer Downey

Foreword by James LaRue

1 VOLUME

This book addresses contemporary issues in censorship and intellectual freedom and can serve as an invaluable resource for librarians and other library staff and as an eye-opening read for MLIS students. It covers the waterfront of intricate and thorny issues regarding intellectual freedom, including determining strategies for patron privacy, deciding how to filter public computers, handling challenges to items in a collection, and recognizing and eliminating under-the-radar self-censorship during collection development and weeding. Readers will also gain an understanding of the perils of over-reliance on community assessments and other evaluative tools and consider important concerns of public library employees, such as whether to restrict borrowing privileges of R-rated movies and M-rated video games to patrons of various ages, and the legalities that surround these questions.

Each chapter blends instructive background narrative with practical advice, research findings, and relevant information about librarianship's professional guidelines, including the ALA's Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. Vignettes, "what would you do?" examples, effective nonconfrontational techniques for conflict resolution, and lists of tips and traps help readers to think critically about their own biases and rehearse possible responses to controversial situations. Librarians, library staff, and MLIS students can use this book for personal professional development, as supplemental reading for MLIS courses or professional training workshops, or as a resource for library policy-planning discussions.

FEATURES

Helps librarians and students better understand the intellectual freedom issues and controversies most common to public libraries and put them into the context of real-world situations

Challenges readers to examine their professional and personal feelings on controversial topics fairly and thoughtfully, with the intent of evolving the library profession

Offers a big-picture approach covering the many facets of censorship (including the seldom-discussed issue of self-censorship) and presents information on alternative review sources and publishers in order to develop well-balanced collections

Serves as a continuing education source on a rarely discussed but often-encountered topic

Jennifer Downey, MLIS, is reference librarian at Rancho Cucamonga Public Library. She holds a Master of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University as well as a Master of Science in counseling from Canisius College. Prior to her library career, she spent 10 years as a social worker, providing services to at-risk children and families. Downey is the winner of the 2005 Progressive Librarians Guild's Miriam Braverman prize and has been awarded several grants, allowing her to enhance public library services to underrepresented groups.