CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

OF CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS TO

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY

MEDIA CENTERS IN

OKLAHOMA

By

PATSY M. WAITS

Bachelor of Science
Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Weatherford, Oklahoma
1966

Master of Library and Information Science
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma
1984

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 1995

CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

OF CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS TO
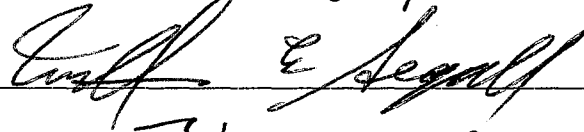
PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY

MEDIA CENTERS IN

OKLAHOMA

Thesis Approved:

_____
Thesis Advisor

_____

_____
William M.

_____

_____
Dean of Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with genuine gratitude that I thank my advisor, Dr. Bruce A. Petty. His words of encouragement, his patience, and his tolerance of my anxious phone calls demonstrated a concerned compassion. His mentorship and optimism epitomize a true professor. I am very appreciative to the other members of my committee, Drs. Gary D. Oakley, William M. Reynolds, and William E. Segall, whose wisdom, guidance, and advice I take with me.

To my husband, Gene "Coach" Waits, who made this a genuine team approach by sharing the commute time, classes, study time, and hours before our computers. You are the "Coach" in my hall-of-fame; my touchstone who kept me grounded and moving forward. "Don't walk in front of me, for I may not follow. Don't walk behind me for I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend." (Anonymous). You were there beside me every step of the way, Coach. Thank you.

Heart-felt appreciation goes to my parents, both of whom are deceased. It is they who taught me pride and perseverance. But most of all, they instilled in me the value of education and set me on my quest for learning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter I

Introduction

Like the zebra and its stripes, educational pedagogy has been marked with contextual objections as long as public education has existed. Censorship of what can and can not be read, heard, or viewed by students has been one of the prevailing hues on the educational palette. Unlike the zebra, equitable conclusions and solutions have never been distinctly black and white.

Censorship's history can be traced to 387 B.C. when Plato suggested expurgating Homer for the moral good of immature readers (Haight, 1970). This moral protection has continuously and traditionally been the guise used by would-be-censors to suppress unpopular ideas and unorthodox dogmas not accordant with the dominant class. According to Jansen (1991) censorship actually forms a surveillance, a mechanism for gathering intelligence that the powerful can use to tighten control over people or ideas that threaten to disrupt the established systems of order.

Haney (1960) felt Anthony Comstock, America's premier censor, was motivated by a concern to maintain social order. Newly arriving immigrants brought with them different reading materials, hobbies, rituals, and artistic works. From 1870 to 1915, Comstock confiscated and destroyed light literature containing perceived bad words and immoral situations to impose cultural restraints (Nilsen & Donelson, 1993). His methods formed the blueprint for contemporary activists. Soliciting influential people, he founded an organized group, lobbied for passage of federal legislation, and was appointed to a prominent commission. Morality masked Comstock's hidden objection -

submission by oppression.

In the 1950s, Joseph McCarthy became America's fanatic censor. Books were banned not because of the content, but because their authors were considered suspect (Broderick and Curley, 1985). Fear of Red Communists exploded into the McCarthy hearings which resulted in silencing voices and destroying careers and lives - submission by suppression.

Objections to public school resources appeared to stabilize in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Abbott (1987); Jenkinson (1986); and Reichman (1993) suggested sharp rises in the number of censorship attempts began after the 1980 presidential election. Chernick (1992) and DelFatore (1992) hypothesized that Ronald Reagan's election created a changing political mood that fueled militant, organized, local actions by long-suppressed conservative and religious groups.

Current evidence suggests objections have increased at alarming rates. Figure 1 illustrates compilations by People for the American Way (1994) delineating nationwide reported objections for the past three years. According to this data, attempts have increased by almost 23%.

Figure 1 Nationwide Reported Censorship Attempts by School Year

School Year	Attempts
1993-94	462
1992-93	395
1991-92	376
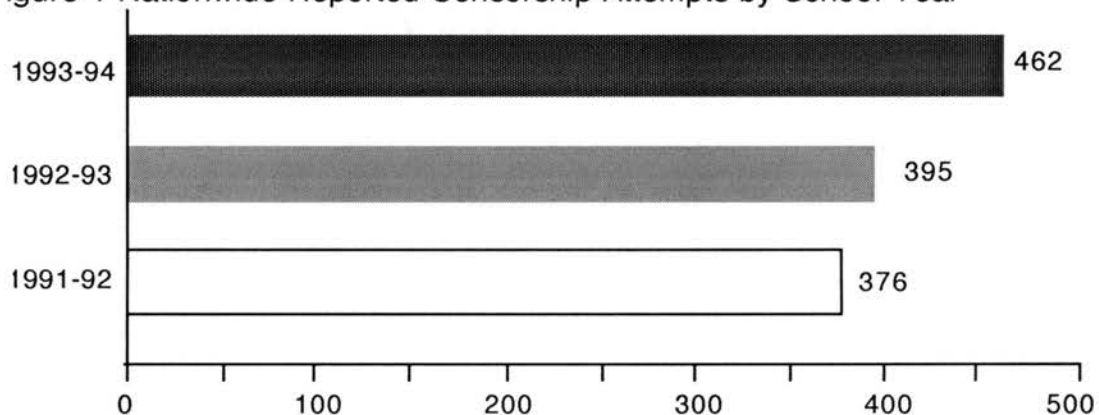
Burress (1989) theorized schools were the focal point of would-be-censors because literature used in schools had changed; library collections had grown in size; authors other than white Anglo-Saxon males were represented in

libraries; more realistic material was written specifically for children and teenagers; and the function of a library had broadened. He further proposed that education had become a scapegoat; people felt the public school had abandoned its major role of reinforcing society's values. The populate saw school and government actions as mistakes and they began to protest.

Gottlieb's (1990) suggestions for growing attacks included increased reading, greater number of students in school, and changes in the manner in which literature was taught. In support of his views, a 1986 survey conducted by the Commission on Academic Freedom and Precollege Education (Reichman, 1993) showed high school course offerings exceeded 1000 literature classes.

Fear of changes in technology, moral, cultural, racial, political and social class differences were reasons given by Chernick (1992). According to Apple & Christian-Smith (1991) issues were not 'simply' about the content of the books students found, or did not find, in their schools, the real controversy was a power struggle over where our society was and where it should be heading. These combined theories offer a latent conception for increased censorship activity - submission by exclusion.

If objections have increased and become more organized, rather than the past scenario of case-by-case situations, expanded activity has affected school library media center collections. Media specialists, feeling threatened and vulnerable, became skeptical and avoided adding resources which could be viewed as objectionable. To avoid controversy and community conflict, administrators covertly or overtly demanded removal of questionable items without following designed procedures. School board approved selection and reconsideration policies, the primary legal defense against censorship (Reichman, 1993; Hopkins, 1991; and O'Reilly, 1982), became more meaningful.

The Supreme Court's plurality decision in Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853, 866-67 (1982), ruled that "in light of the voluntary nature of school library use, a school board may not remove a book from a library to 'impose upon the students a political orthodoxy' or, more generally to inculcate community values in students" (Sendor, 1988, p. 7). The court further stated that the constitution does not permit the official suppression of ideas and a student's rights may be directly and sharply violated by the removal of books from the shelves of a school library. Though the court ruled against the board's capricious behavior, it strongly suggested the ruling might have been different if the board's action had been based on established school policy and guidelines.

Resolutions reached should be based on unemotional, sound policy and procedures that reflect the school's educational philosophy and curriculum objectives. James Longstreth, former Superintendent of Alachua County, Florida, reinforced the effectiveness and efficiency of this action. In his county, if a parent filed a complaint, the board compared the challenged book to the pedagogical goals set forth for the course. If they matched, the book stayed. In this manner, Alachua County avoided censoring books (Johnson, 1994).

Objections to library media center resources are unavoidable and inevitable. According to Williams and Dillon (1993) censorship is now, more than ever, a school-based phenomenon. Educators must actively defend intellectual freedom through evaluation of both sides of an issue not passively submit to individual or group whims (Manley, 1986).

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to develop a descriptive analysis of objections made to Oklahoma school library media center resources and to

assess the impact of these censorship attempts during the past three years. The primary objective was to formulate an accurate picture of what was really happening in Oklahoma school systems and what were the decision makers doing when a complaint was lodged. Was censorship a "real" problem worthy of dedicated time and attention, or was it insignificant and trivial? Were the objections officially reported and resolved through formal procedures or were they solved indiscreetly to avoid controversy? Who were the objectors? How were the objections resolved? Where were the objections occurring? What factors appeared to influence objections? What were the subjects of objections? Did objections result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the library media specialist?

A second purpose was to compare censorship in Oklahoma to national trends. The professional library literature, previous studies conducted, and past surveys between 1965 and 1993 mentioned Oklahoma in only thirteen of the over nine hundred references. The 1992 through 1994 issues of Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, the official American Library Association publication which tracks nationwide incidents, reported just two cases. People for the American Way in its yearly, episodic, narrative report included two challenges in Oklahoma during the 1992-93 school year, three in 1993-94, and five in 1994-95. Donelson (1985) felt protests frequently go unreported. He estimated that for every incident that gets into the media there are 50 to 100 objections that go unnoticed outside the immediate community. A strong suspicion existed that Oklahoma was not exclusive. Incidents were merely not being reported and knowledge of objectionable occurrences was being confined to the school site or more narrowly, known only by the school library media specialist.

A third reason for this study was a lack of empirical knowledge as it relates to censorship. Most studies according to Woods (1979) have been sketchy,

provided historical information, instances of court litigation, and listings of frequently censored titles. In view of the increased attempts, pragmatic information is needed concerning censorship as it is currently practiced and how it affects availability of resources in educational institutions. Hopkins's (1991) recommendation for geographical treatment for comparison to national trends further validated a need for this study.

A fourth purpose of this research was to investigate challenges which have occurred at both elementary and secondary schools in the same geographic locale. Previous studies have been limited to one or the other which did not allow for a comparative framework.

Objectives of the Study

The goal of this study was to provide educators with a descriptive, comparative, predictive blueprint for proactive, informed decision making and policy formulation. Media specialists, teachers, administrators, and school boards need to be well-prepared to handle censorship activity to better settle issues fairly, logically, and locally. A strong research-developed knowledge base will assist media specialists in understanding the objector's true purpose and motivation; their "hidden agenda" (Stover, 1994). This information will help the library media specialist deal objectively and openly with the objector without becoming defensive and threatened.

The questions addressed were:

1. Was there a relationship between community demographics and objections to media center materials?

2. Was there a relationship between the size of the student enrollment and the number of objections made to media center materials?

3. Was there a relationship between the size of the media center collection

and the number of objections to media center materials?

4. How frequently were objections occurring?

5. What were the topics to which objections were being made?

6. Who were the objectors and what were the common characteristics?

7. What was the final outcome to the objection?

8. Did a board-approved reconsideration policy result in greater retention of materials?

9. What action did the media specialist take when an objection occurred?

10. Did an objection result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the media specialist?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study offer therapeutic, supportive value for educators. Research findings from this study offer practitioners a chance to compare their personal and professional values and beliefs with others. Reichman (1993) said it is essential for school library media specialists to know what attitudes and forces exist in a given community or state and how these relate to national trends.

A clear understanding of the dispositional hierarchy of outcome decisions will maximize damage control for both the defender and the objector. As Gottlieb (1990) pointed out, censorship cases of tomorrow are affected by political choices made today. After being personally involved with two Florida public school censorship encounters, Johnson (1994) felt the most important lesson gleaned from the experiences was that rational arguments do not always work. What did work was empowerment by learning the language, procedures, policies and judicial decisions. Educators need to know what factors do make a difference.

Higher education faculty can incorporate the findings into their curriculum objectives to better prepare and educate future school library media specialists, teachers, and administrators. According to Gottlieb (1990), lack of knowledge and naiveté of beginning personnel results in pressures from colleagues to avoid controversial material, thus, giving rise to self-censorship.

Assumptions Underlying the Study

A major assumption of this research was that Oklahoma public school library media centers were experiencing objections and the rate of occurrences was increasing. A possibility existed that objections were, in actuality, not increasing but other factors rendered a false impression of frequency increases. Library media specialists might have become more receptive to publicly reporting incidents as well as an expansion in the number of organizations which track and recount objectionable occurrences.

A second assumption was that school library media specialists were granted professional autonomy. Administrative personnel alerted the media specialist when an objection occurred and (s)he was a part of the decision making process.

A third assumption was that library media specialists reached decisions based on professional education and knowledge, not external or political factors.

Definition of Terms

The following terms, operationally defined by the author, applied to this study:

Alteration erasing, obscuring, or physically removing objectionable words or

other parts of a print or nonprint resource

<u>Censorship</u> denying user access to print and nonprint resources by purposefully and intentionally removing or not including a resource in a school library media center's collection

<u>Censorship Attempt</u> attempting to deny user access

<u>Formal Resolution</u> resolving an objection by applying the procedures defined in a board-approved selection and reconsideration policy; normally, the objector files a written protest, the resource is evaluated by an appointed reconsideration committee and the board reaches a decision by accepting or rejecting the committee's recommendation

<u>Intellectual Freedom</u> the that each individual has the right to freely obtain and read or view materials without restrictions by others (Chernick, 1992)

<u>Informal Resolution</u> resolving an objection without applying the procedures defined in a board-approved selection and reconsideration policy; a decision is made by an authority figure other than an officially appointed reconsideration committee

<u>Objection / Challenge / Complaint</u> an oral or written challenge questioning the presence or appropriateness of library media center material (Hopkins, 1991)

<u>Objector / Complainant</u> any member of the school staff or person outside the school who lodged a complaint against a library media center resource

<u>Outcome / Resolution</u> the final result of an objection made to a print or nonprint library media center resource; possible outcomes included, retention, restriction, removal, or relocation

<u>Pre-censorship</u> the decision not to acquire a resource based on reasons other than educational suitability or appropriate selection criteria (McDonald, 1993)

<u>Reconsideration policy</u> a written statement which outlined procedures for reevaluating a library media center resource when an objection was raised

Relocation removal of an item from a collection where an objection occurred and relocating it in a library serving a different (usually older) age level

Retention the item was considered suitable for all users and it was left on open shelves and readily accessible to all patrons

Restriction placing an item considered suitable for some students but questionable for others in a special collection or shelf with limited access; the resource could only be obtained through the library media specialist or other authority figure

Removal the item was considered inappropriate and it was removed from the library collection and was no longer available to the patron

Selection policy a written statement detailing the mission and purpose of the school library media center as well as the method and prescribed criteria for collection development

Self-censorship removing, restricting, or altering print or nonprint material for reasons other than routine collection maintenance.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation to this study was the lack of response and participation by the randomly selected sample. Validity required voluntary, truthful responses and the possibility existed that subjects spurned participation out of a desire to deny or obscure objectionable occurrences. Also, external and internal coercive forces may have biased true answers or participation.

Because all possible choices were not included in the survey, actual factors may not have been discovered. "Other" spaces included with each question allowed respondents an opportunity to express individual opinions which helped mitigate this limitation.

Another validity factor jeopardizing this research was geographical history,

as the subjects were dispersed throughout a large geographic area and extraneous events were not controllable. Unique problems and incidents at each school site influenced responses.

The distinctive experiences of each media specialist hindered validity. If a long duration of time had passed between the objection and survey completion, the media specialist would have had time to develop reflective attitudes. However, if the objection was current or relatively little time had passed, the media specialist probably responded differently. No true comparisons could be made as the data gathered was descriptive, not experimental.

Participation was affected because the survey was mailed in late spring when the end of the school year was approaching. Summer vacation, changes in personnel, and anonymity of the library media specialist prohibited follow-up.

Generalizability was confined to Oklahoma. Findings cannot be specifically applied to states outside the defined geographic locale.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II introduces the theoretical explorations of censorship by examining scholarly pedagogy along with individual and group ideology. Results of former studies by the Association for Indiana Media Educators (AIME) (1994), Bump (1980), Burress (1989); Busha (1972); Douma (1973), Fiske (1959); Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), McDonald (1993), Williams & Dillon (1993), Woods (1979), and Woods & Salvatore (1981) were analyzed for comparative, supportive evidence for each of the ten research questions.

The hypothesis of the relationship between objectionable occurrences and final resolution outcomes and selection practices of school library media specialists was developed through a careful review and analysis of the literature.

Chapter III describes the methodology and design utilized for this research. Subject selection, the research instrument, data collection, and data analysis are explained.

Chapter IV discusses the research methodology after the surveys were received. Data is analyzed and the findings of the study are presented.

In Chapter V, the major results of the study are summarized and the findings are compared to conclusions from previous studies. The most significant findings are summarized and recommendations for further research studies are rendered. Observations reached, but not supported, are submitted.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

The First Amendment to the Constitution is the canal gate designed to allow the ebb and flow of free speech and expression in the United States. Would-be censors, historically and continuously, attempt to erect levees to channel the flow in their desired direction. Rulings rendered by individual court cases illustrate even the courts have difficulty determining which gates to leave open and which gates to close. Censorship dilemmas become more clouded when public schools become the arena. Educators and parents work in tandem until a difference in value judgment occurs, then harmony dissolves into discord.

Williams and Dillon (1993) asserted obscenity (sexuality), blasphemy (religion), and sedition (politics) have traditionally composed the three main grounds for objections. They described censorship attempts as moral, authoritarian, conscious, and deliberate. They further asserted that restriction of free speech is a conflict between cultural classes and their perceived values.

Activist Groups for Censoring Materials

Naomi King, (1989), President of Parents' Alliance to Protect Our Children, said it is her organization's belief that any books, materials, and teachings that oppose the Judeo-Christian morality, values and ethics accepted by our founding fathers should be banned or used only to expose the errors of their content. She further reflected that society will decay when freedom of speech and rights become more important than the principles of distinguishing good from evil (1985).

Mel & Norma Gabler (1978), founders of Educational Research Analysts an organization that monitors and reviews textbooks used in public schools, purport education has changed from imparting factual knowledge, basic skills, and cultural heritage to an ideology of social change. They feel parents' confidence in schools has been tragically misplaced. Textbooks subtly undermine and indoctrinate students against American Judeo-Christian values. They urge parents to actively protest by citing line and page numbers of specific offensive statements, cultivate a friendly and continuous relationship with board members and candidates for the board, gain support from community leaders, and take the case to the media.

Gateways to Better Education, founded by Eric & Kim Buehrer (1994), has based their organization's philosophy on helping children develop spiritually, morally and academically while in public schools. They express concern that parents must not become activists but be active in their child's education by forming bridges with the schools. Their main objectionable concerns are "liberal" multiculturalism, guided imagery, the new age movement, global education, occult and self-centered moral lessons.

Wildmon (1995), American Family Association Vice-President, says organizations such as his must fight to restore Christian values as the norm for American society; not to object is to lose by default. Sex, violence, and profanity portrayed in media, especially television, music, and movies, are the organization's particular targets.

The Eagle Forum, a group led by Phyllis Schlafly that promotes traditional values, believes parents have the right to guide their child's education and should expect schools to provide factual knowledge and academic skills by encouraging excellence, not mediocrity. "Schools should not deprive children of their free-exercise-of-religion rights, or impose on children courses in explicit

sex or alternate lifestyles, profane or immoral fiction or videos, New Age practices, anti-Biblical materials, or 'Politically Correct' liberal attitudes about social and economic issues" (Eagle Forum, n.d.). Parents are urged to approach the school as a group and to affect school policy by electing school board members.

More than forty years ago, Childs (1952) chronicled some positive aspects of so-called pressure groups. He said they arise because they satisfy some social need and are an indispensable part of the community. Their objections stimulate public officials to formulate policy, hone intellectual competition, and force decisions to be made wisely. Their challenges bring out truth, reinforce the democratic tradition of conflict, and release hostility in a positive, safe manner.

Robert Boston, assistant director of communications for Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, pointed out the religious right learned in the '80s that working from the bottom up is the way to gain power. He added that a newly developed strategy was to target what he terms the "soft" middle, people who think censoring materials on controversial subjects is good ("Experienced Fighters," 1994).

Activist Groups Against Censorship

The National Coalition Against Censorship (1995), an organization whose main purpose is to fight the religious right in schools, argues the right has become increasingly organized by electing school board members, writing letters, making phone calls, attending board meetings, and circulating petitions. According to the Coalition, homophobia has replaced secular humanism as the religious right's main target. Books cause homosexuality or promote sexual activity is the right's premise behind these attacks.

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading

Association (n.d.) have joined forces to resist challenges made to public school classrooms. They believe all students have a right to materials and educational experiences that promote open inquiry, critical thinking, diversity in thought and expression, and respect for others. They urge educational communities to prepare locally, state-wide, nationally, and internationally for challenges by developing policy and formulating rationales for teaching challenged books.

Donelson (1993) pointed out that stifling parents is a temporary non-solution and warned that this approach would cause problems to get worse and the objectors more demanding. According to him, decisions should be reached honestly and impartially by adhering to a school board-approved reconsideration policy.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

Reichman (1992) defined intellectual freedom as the right of individuals to hold any belief on any subject and to convey these ideas in any form deemed appropriate. A second component of the definition was that society must be committed to the right of unrestricted access to information and ideas regardless of the communication medium used, the content of the work, and the viewpoints of both the author and receiver of information. Chernick (1992) described intellectual freedom as the principle that each individual has the right to freely obtain, read, or view materials without restrictions by others.

Intellectual freedom's antithesis is censorship. Cox (1979) and Jenkinson (1986) characterized censorship as any intentional act that prevents students from reading, viewing, or hearing any materials that some person deems objectionable for the purpose of protecting a preferred belief or attitude. Reichman (1993) and Woods (1979) further delineated censorship as the removal, suppression, or restricted circulation of materials, viewpoints, and

information on the grounds that these were morally or otherwise objectionable in the eyes of the censor. McDonald (1993) added removal was by any governing authority solely for the purpose of restricting materials from open, general access. Williams & Dillon (1993) defined censorship as seeking to regulate the behavior of others in accordance with fixed ideas of right and wrong. "If censorship is defined as removing from a title list, removing a book from classroom use, or removing a book from a library, it is clear that much of it occurs in today's school systems" (Burress, 1989, p. 28).

According to McDonald (1993), Helsberg (1994), and Williams & Dillon (1993) pre-censorship embodied conscious decisions to avoid purchasing or refusing to acquire materials that the librarian feared would spark public outrage. In their opinion, pre-censorship was more effective and spread a wider net than direct censorship because denial of resources was based on conceivable, not actual, occurrences. Self-censorship incorporated deliberate, controlled user access by restricting the resource's circulation to specific situations or individuals, or by separating the item from the general collection by placing it in designated, restricted areas. Modifying the item by removing or altering the material's offensive section was considered another form of self-censorship by McDonald and Jenkinson (1986). According to Cox (1979), the intent of a self-censor was to avoid temptation by protecting the user from attitudes or beliefs that might cause the user to look at something from a different viewpoint.

Hopkins (1991) defined a challenge to school library resources as an oral or written objection to the presence or appropriateness of the material in the school library media center collection. She outlined outcomes to the challenges could result in retaining, restricting, or removing the material. McDonald (1993) considered a challenge to be a formal written expression of concern filed with

the librarian or another school official. People for the American Way (1993) emphasized challenges are not outright censorship, but attempts to remove or restrict materials.

Results and Findings of Major Censorship Studies

Fiske (1959) conducted the first comprehensive censorship study using twenty-six California communities, selected on the basis of size, rate of growth, ethnic composition of the population, geographic location, and type of service. The purpose was to determine restrictions being imposed on public and school librarians both by citizens and themselves. Her conclusions were: low self-esteem of the librarian led to less support of intellectual freedom principles; a positive relationship existed between the use of a materials policy and retention of challenged materials; librarians new to the profession tended to be less restrictive; the librarian who felt subordinate to his/her administrator was more restrictive; the presence of an extremist group made it more likely that any challenge would be taken seriously; and there was a positive relationship between librarians with higher degrees of professional training and anti-censorship. Although her findings were geographically limited, Fiske set the pattern for all future studies and some of her qualitative results are still applicable today.

Busha's (1972) study was limited to public libraries in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Like Fiske (1959), a correlation existed between librarians who accepted authority and their attitude toward selection of materials. Unlike Fiske (1959), there was a correlation between community size and intolerance of censorship; larger communities had less tolerance for censorship. Other conclusions were: male librarians and library directors were less tolerant of censorship; the higher the educational level, the less tolerance;

and 14% of the librarians were sympathetic to censorship.

A study conducted by Douma (1975) targeted school English departments and the relationship between schools with written policies and the occurrences of book removal. He concluded written book selection and complaint policies inhibited censorship, especially if they contained American Library Association and National Council Teachers of English recommendations. Restricted to English departments, his study had limited application to school media centers.

Librarians in North Central Association accredited high schools in west central states were investigated by Bump (1980) to determine if the selection patterns of librarians were influenced by a book's controversial content. He determined librarians were not influenced by censorship incidents in other locations if the books were already in the collection. The appropriateness of the book to curriculum needs influenced their decision more than potentially objectionable topics. However, his data did suggest librarians were less likely to select books they found personally offensive.

Woods (1979), using issues of Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom as his source, provided a thorough investigation of characteristics, court litigation, and targets of censors by combining major, generalizable studies and surveys conducted from 1966-1975. Major conclusions were: there was a large disparity between censorship in the 1960s and 1970s; although censorship was widely scattered throughout the United States, pockets existed which were well above the average; censorship in educational institutions increased from 43 items in 1966 to 563 in 1975; most censorship incidents were directed toward books; public schools accounted for 62% of all educational censorship; administrators were responsible for 51.7% of the attempts within educational institutions; and a majority of censorship attempts were successful, resulting in restricted access. His report concluded with a listing of the most frequently censored titles and

fifteen subjects most often attacked.

Woods and Salvatore (1981) conducted a study of self-censorship practices by librarians who were members of the American Association of School Librarians. Results of their survey indicated librarians avoided challenges by either not purchasing or restricting accessibility to controversial titles.

McDonald's (1993) regionalized 1987 study examined relationships between the librarian's education, age, years of experience, institutions of educational preparation, professional memberships, location of school district, and size of school served and the librarians' attitudes toward intellectual freedom and censorship in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Educational preparation and size of school served were found to be significant factors. Librarians in schools with enrollments in excess of 1000 students were more conscious of intellectual freedom than those in schools with fewer than 500 students. No significance was found between age, location of school district, and years of experience. McDonald concluded that knowledge of professional principles did not guarantee their application. Slightly over one-third of the respondents agreed with restricting access and one-fourth felt books in a secondary school library should reinforce family values. School librarians showed restrictive attitudes toward selection of resources, responded to perceived influences in selection decisions, and were reluctant to provide unrestricted collection access. Her results substantiated findings of Douma (1973) and Fiske (1959) that requests to restrict information which came from within the school were more likely to be successful than requests initiated from outside the school.

A synthesis of seventeen different surveys dealing with books which were the targets of would-be censors was compiled by Burress (1989). Results included tables of most frequently censored titles with the dates, initiator,

location, and outcome of occurrences. School media centers were included.

The 1990 national research conducted by Hopkins (1991) had many direct implications for school library media centers. Her study looked at the outcomes to challenged materials in terms of retention, restriction and removal, and identified key factors which influenced outcomes for secondary public school libraries in the United States. Geographically, the lowest rate of retention by region was in the South. Factors which resulted in higher retention rates were: following board-approved policies; assistance within the district; larger school enrollment; support of the principal; support of teachers; parent-initiated challenges; and written complaints. No relationship between size of community and outcome was found. Like Busha (1972) and Fiske (1959), increased formal education resulted in less restrictive attitudes by the librarian but it had no effect on the outcome of challenges. The less the sense of status and the more pressure the librarian felt, the more tolerant of censorship (s)he became.

A study by Carlson (1991) and a group of parents in her community analyzed dominant themes in 45 young adult books randomly selected from major lists of books recommended to librarians. According to their results, absent or bad fathers, marriage was boring and dangerous, parents and kids don't get along half of the time, clergy are bumbling hypocrites, the spirit world helps more than it hurts, teens can solve their problems without God's help, sex outside of marriage wasn't wrong unless it was forced, death, and profanity were the dominant themes in 70% of the books. They objected to the presence of these books because students considered anything on school shelves as official knowledge. They further argued these books left out what parents had worked hard to teach their kids.

In its annual survey, the Association for Indiana Media Educators [AIME] Intellectual Freedom Committee (1994) found the nine out of ten districts that

had board-adopted selection and/or collection development policies remained unchanged from the previous year. The overwhelming majority of complaints (92%) were still coming from individuals, but overall, the number of schools receiving patron complaints resulting in written challenges went down slightly. Approximately one-fourth of the librarians responded they did treat questioned or challenged materials differently from other resources in their collection. Young adult books were challenged more than primary and intermediate levels. Inappropriate language accounted for 22% of the objections, sexuality 20%, and violence 12%. Witchcraft, Satan worship, and other supernatural or occult-related topics comprised almost one-third of the topics challenged. Fifty-eight percent of the materials were retained, 24% were removed, 14% were restricted, and 4% were awaiting further action. Only 4% of the objections had been reported to the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom.

International comparisons can be drawn from the work of Williams & Dillon (1993) whose findings suggested challenges in Australia were common and showed little frequency change over the past five years. Sixty-eight percent of the challenges resulted in removal, restriction or alteration. Weak and ineffective selection policies were often non-existent and those which did exist were often unwritten, developed without collaborative efforts, and not endorsed by the school. They further found that parents were responsible for the largest number of challenges but the second largest number of objections emanated from within the school itself. Two-thirds of the objections were made on the grounds of morality, obscenity, and profanity.

Jenkinson (1994) replicated the same survey he previously conducted in 1984 to determine the who, what, why, and with what results school library materials in Manitoba, Canada, were being challenged. He concluded challenges had increased by 20% in urban areas and almost 50% in rural

areas over the decade. Books were the most frequently challenged format. Topics of profanity and explicit sex had seemingly been replaced by materials containing elements of witchcraft, supernatural and/or violence, especially in the rural areas. Selection policies did appear to reduce the percentage of materials removed and played a role in increasing the percentage of materials retained. They made little difference when the final outcome resulted in restriction or alteration. Regardless of the presence or absence of policies, rural libraries had more material removed than urban libraries. One variation from previous restriction results was a trend to move materials to another library rather than restricting them in the existing collection. Jenkinson examined materials after they were purchased and did not directly look at practices of librarians in the selection process. Comments from respondents did indicate pre-censorship.

Localization of the study limited the generalizability of AIME (1992), Bump (1980), Busha (1972), Carlson (1991), Fiske (1959), Jenkinson (1994), McDonald (1993), and Williams and Dillon (1993). Busha's results were restricted to public libraries while Douma's (1975) findings were applicable only to English departments. A major weakness in the studies of AIME, Burress (1989), Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson, Williams & Dillon, and Woods (1979) was the failure to examine what influenced the librarian's decision before purchasing the material. Burress and Woods combined generalizable studies and surveys from the field literature to reach conclusions, but their studies were confined to title and subject targets, frequency, court litigation, and outcomes. Bump excluded all non-North Central Association accredited school sites and Woods & Salvatore (1981) excluded all librarians who were non-members of the American Association of School Librarians. Hopkins's findings were generalizable only to secondary schools.

Hypothesis

Based on the limitations in these major studies; the recommendation of Hopkins (1991) that research needs to be based on geographic regions; the lack of qualitative research available (Woods, 1979); increased occurrences of censorship as reported by American Libraries ("Daddy's Roommate," 1995), Attacks on Freedom to Learn (1994), and People for the American Way (1994); and a void in the studies addressing correlations between occurrences of objections and resolution outcomes and the selection processes of school library media specialists, the following hypothesis was formulated:

If objections to the presence or appropriateness of library media center resources have occurred during the past three years, then there is a relationship between these occurrences and final resolution outcomes and the selection procedures of library media specialists in Oklahoma public school library media centers.

Specific Questions Examined

1. Was there a relationship between community demographics and objections to media center materials?

2. Was there a relationship between the size of the student enrollment and the number of objections made to media center materials?

3. Was there a relationship between the size of the media center collection and the number of objections to media center materials?

4. How frequently were objections occurring?

5. What were the topics to which objections were being made?

6. Who were the objectors and what were the common characteristics?

7. What was the final outcome to the objection?

8. Did a board-approved reconsideration policy result in greater retention of materials?

9. What action did the media specialist take when an objection occurred?

10. Did an objection result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the media specialist?

Chapter III discusses the research methodology and the design of the study. Development of the research instrument is introduced and the selection of the subjects is detailed. The collection and analysis of the data is outlined.

Chapter IV discusses the research methodology after the surveys were received. Data is analyzed and the findings of the study are presented.

In Chapter V, the major results of the study are summarized and the findings are compared to conclusions from previous studies. The most significant findings are summarized and recommendations for further research studies are included. Observations reached, but not supported, are discussed.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

This section includes the purpose and design of the study. Exclusions and inclusions of the target population are defined. The development of the survey questionnaire instrument is explained and methods for validation are included. Selection of the sample and how it was chosen from the target population is detailed. The research design and analysis of data is outlined.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the frequency of objections against the appropriateness and presence of library media resources and the impact of these objections on final outcome resolutions and the selection processes of school library media specialists in Oklahoma public schools.

Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was used to collect and synthesize the data. Ten specific research-based questions were developed. They were:

1. Was there a relationship between community demographics and objections to media center materials?
2. Was there a relationship between the size of the student enrollment and the number of objections made to media center materials?
3. Was there a relationship between the size of the media center collection and the number of objections to media center materials?
4. How frequently were objections occurring?

5. What were the topics to which objections were being made?

6. Who were the objectors and what were the common characteristics?

7. What was the final outcome to the objection?

8. Did a board-approved reconsideration policy result in greater retention of materials?

9. What action did the media specialist take when an objection occurred?

10. Did an objection result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the media specialist?

Design of the Study

This study surveyed a random sampling of all public school library media centers in Oklahoma during the spring of 1995. The subjects were asked to respond to a survey questionnaire designed to assess objectionable occurrences during the past three school years of 1992-93, 1993-94, and 1994-95.

The time span was limited to the last three years because too large a time span might have skewed the findings and the intent of this research was to fashion a contemporary descriptive analysis. An expanse of years was used in an attempt to include parents of all students who might be moving into or out of grade levels and to include incoming and outgoing school personnel. If only one year had been used, subjects might have been missed. Too, three years facilitated obtaining averages.

The study was limited to public school library media center resources. Textbooks and regular classroom curriculum resources were excluded. Though the professional literature indicated these materials were subject to strong criticism, they were not the intended focus of this study.

Private schools, vocational-technical schools, and parochial schools were

excluded. The focal point of this study was to describe what was occurring, how often it was occurring, who was causing these events to occur, why was it occurring, and what was occurring after objections were made to public school library media center resources.

The entire state was used so that no geographic locale would be excluded. Subjects included representation from varying school, district, and community sizes. Complete representation was the aim of this study.

All grade levels were included to create comparative data. Previous studies had been limited to either secondary or elementary schools. It was the opinion of the researcher that to exclude a range of grades would not result in a complete picture of what was actually occurring.

Part-time and full-time school library media specialists (or persons serving in that designated position) were selected as survey respondents. They were the individuals who normally dealt directly with objections made to school library media center materials and they were the personnel responsible for selection and deselection of library media center resources.

For purposes of this study, a self-developed survey questionnaire format was developed to gather the necessary information to create a descriptive analysis of what was occurring at the different school sites. A true experimental research design was not feasible nor did it lend itself to this study.

Development of Research Instrument

After a review of the literature, a questionnaire survey was developed by the researcher which allowed comparisons to previous research findings. Specific research-based questions of special interest were targeted. Demographic information about the school site was included to develop comparative information on each of the ten specific questions.

Reliability and validity of the questionnaire was established by field testing it with randomly selected University of Central Oklahoma library science faculty and library science students, some of which were practicing Oklahoma public school library media specialists. Any practicing public school library media specialist used in the field testing of this survey was eliminated from participation in the study to prevent any rearrangement interaction. Suggestions were solicited from Oklahoma State University higher education faculty to refine the questions.

The result was a five page, 38 question survey questionnaire. Each question provided research based multiple choice answers from which the respondent was to choose appropriate responses. Each question contained an open-ended response of "Other" for respondents to add information not included in the question. The final question invited respondents to add any additional comments or suggestions they wished to make.
See Appendix A.

Selection of Subjects

Selection of the subjects was begun by developing a master data base of all individual Oklahoma schools sites as identified by the 1994-95 *Educational Directory*, published by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

For equitable representation from all levels of public schools, individual sites, not districts, were used. If the sample had been taken from only school districts, many sites would have been eliminated from the sample. For example, one district had twenty-six individual schools. If the sampling had been a district sample, it would not have reflected objectionable occurrences to individual schools. The focus of this research was to describe occurrences at all levels of public schools at all sizes of districts.

The second stage of identifying the sample involved establishing, whenever possible, a contact name for each school library media center. The researcher was of the opinion that having a contact name would strengthen the results and return rate. If an identified name was used, the survey was more likely to be routed to that person and be completed by the appropriate personnel.

An eighty-five page master printout with 1540 entries obtained from the State Department of Education Communication Section identified librarians and other parties requesting to be on the State Department of Education Library Resources Division mailing list. The list was culled by eliminating:

•private and parochial schools

•repetitive entries of personal and school addresses and librarians serving multiple schools in the same district

•individuals who did not directly serve as a school library media specialist i.e. college professors, retired media specialists, state department of education employees

•school addresses of schools which had merged or were no longer in existence

•those which the list identified as classroom teachers

•any library media specialist who participated in the field testing of the survey questionnaire design.

Three-hundred-five entries were eliminated, leaving 1,235 names of librarians, generic listings of "Librarian", and in a few instances, a personal name with the title of principal. The principal's name was eliminated when a corresponding librarian's name was found for individual school sites. If no corresponding librarian's name could be found, the name of the principal was left on the list as a contact person. When identifiable from the Communication Section list, the name of the librarian or other appropriate personnel at the

individual school site was entered into the data base as the contact person.

All sites were left on the master data base, even though in cases of small school populations, one individual served as the library media specialist at the elementary, middle or junior, and senior high schools. If the site was in the random selection, the survey was addressed to the library media specialist, indicating the specific school level which was part of the sample. For example, if Jane Doe served as library media specialist at Hello Grade School, Hello Middle School, and Hello High School, but the Hello Middle School was the site that was selected in the random selection, then the survey was addressed to Jane Doe, Hello Middle School.

A final master data base of 1,848 school sites and identifiable contact names, including elementary, middle, junior and senior high schools, was defined as the total population. In order to ensure a response rate of at least 10% of the total population (which would have been 185), the researcher decided to select one-third of the total population as the sample size. From the final master list, 610 subjects were randomly selected as the sample from the total population. The sample included 308 elementary schools, 54 middle schools, 39 junior high schools, and 209 high schools.

Contact names had been identified for 83% of the sample. If no contact name had been identified, the survey was addressed to "Library Media Specialist". The researcher did not attempt to contact the school to obtain contact names to avoid any reactive arrangement.

Data Collection

The survey questionnaire was mailed to each subject in the sample. A brief cover letter explaining the purpose of the study was included. See Appendix B.

The subjects were told they were being requested to participate in a survey

to assess the current status of objections raised to the presence or appropriateness of school library media center resources. The only definition provided for the terms used in the survey was for the term "Objection". An objection was defined as an oral or written challenge questioning the presence or appropriateness of library media center materials. It could have been initiated by any member of the school staff as well as persons outside the school.

The survey was designed to reach overall conclusions about library media specialists' practices and attitudes toward collection development, regardless of whether an objection had been experienced or not. After question 13, the media specialist was directed to proceed to question 38 if there had been no objection to media center resources during the past three years.

Subjects were given a two-week time period as a deadline for returning the survey. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included to facilitate the respondent's ease of return.

No follow-up mailings or interviews were conducted because the survey was mailed in late spring when the end of the school year was approaching. Summer vacation, changes in personnel, and anonymity of the library media specialist prohibited follow-up.

Analysis of Data

Subject responses were tallied and converted to tables and graphs. Raw numbers were converted to percentages. When applicable, the data was subdivided into grade level, collection size, and/or school size.

The percentages were evaluated, comparisons were made, and conclusions were drawn for each of the ten questions. The most significant findings were acknowledged. Results were presented in narrative form and the findings were compared against the hypothesis.

The results of this study will provide descriptive, predictive data for school personnel, enabling them to anticipate censorship problems and develop a proactive plan of action which is fair to all involved. The findings of this study will also enable library and information science educators to provide improved instruction for future school media specialists.

Chapter IV discusses the research methodology after the surveys were received. Results of the study are presented and the most significant findings are submitted.

In Chapter V, the major results of the study are summarized and the findings are compared to conclusions from previous studies. The significant findings are summarized and recommendations for further research studies are rendered. Observations reached, but not supported, are submitted.

Chapter IV

Research Findings

Introduction

This section includes the methodology used to analyze the results and respondent characteristics are described. Tables and graphs are used to present the raw data tabulated from the surveys. Raw data is converted to percentages for each question. The results for each question are analyzed and significant findings are presented.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop a descriptive analysis of objections raised against the appropriateness or presence of public school library media center materials in Oklahoma for the past three school years. The study was to test the hypothesis that objections have occurred during the past three years, and there is a relationship between these occurrences and final resolution outcomes and the selection procedures of library media specialists in Oklahoma public school library media centers. In order to test the hypothesis, ten specific questions were addressed.

Methodology

Information was collected by mailing a five page, 38 question, researcher developed survey to each subject in the sample. The 610 member sample was chosen by random selection from all identified Oklahoma school sites.

From the 610 surveys mailed, 291 or 47.7% were returned. One survey was returned as undeliverable, one was returned with a note that the media

specialist to which it was addressed was no longer there, and one was returned incomplete with a note of explanation that the school served a special needs clientele and contained no media center and did not have a library media specialist. This reduced the sample population to 607.

Five of the responses were eliminated from the study. One survey was completed with district, not site information. Another survey was sent to a specific site, but the library media specialist served five different schools and she indicated the information would be more interesting for one of her other sites, even though it was not the site in the random sampling. Two surveys were returned with no questions completed. A fifth survey had only a few questions answered.

After eliminating the inappropriate responses, 283 responses were applicable to this survey. The response rate from the sample was 46.6%.

In sixty-two instances, the survey was sent to a specific school site as identified by the *Educational Directory* but the responses were more inclusive than the targeted school site. For example, the survey was directed to Hello Middle School but the responding library media specialist indicated (s)he also served Hello Elementary and Hello High. These responses did not taint the random sampling. In actuality, it expanded the sample. These responses were put into a third category and treated separately. Their responses were included in the cumulative results.

Survey responses were divided into two groupings: those sites which had experienced objections and those sites which had not.

Table I. Summary of Objections and Nonobjections by Responding Sites

	Objections		Nonobjections	
	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Elementary	63	22	61	22
Secondary	27	10	70	25

Combination	32	11	30	10
Total	122	43%	161	57%

As Table I shows, a total of 122 respondents had experienced objections in the past three school years. One-hundred-sixty-one had not experienced an objection.

Grade Level Definitions

Thirty-five different grade level combinations responded. According to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, an elementary school is any combination of grades P-8 containing a fifth grade. i.e. grades 4-8 are considered elementary because a fifth grade is included. A secondary school is any combination of grades 6-12 containing a 6th grade. i.e. grades 6-8 are considered secondary because a fifth grade is not included but a sixth grade is.

Although the State Department of Education does not recognize any site as a P-12 or K-12 school, a third category of "Combination" schools was created for the sixty-two respondents who indicated they served all inclusive grades.

Respondents were sub-divided into two categories of grade levels using the State Department of Education's guidelines to separate elementary from secondary schools. A third category was created for those schools which were inclusive of P-12 combinations.

The three grade level categories were defined as:

(1) Elementary school:

any school with combinations of P-8, containing a fifth grade.

•Fifteen grade level combinations were defined as elementary schools:

P-2; P-5; K-2; K-3; K-4: K-5; K-6; K-8; 1-5; 1-6; 2-3; 4-5; 4-6; 5-6; and 5-7

(2) Secondary school:

any school with combinations of 6-12 with no grade lower than 6th.

•Eleven grade level combinations were defined as secondary schools:

6-7; 6-8; 6-10; 6-12; 7-8; 7-9; 7-12; 8-12; 9-12; 10-12; and 11-12

(3) Combination school:

any school serving both elementary and secondary students at one site

which responded as serving P-, K- or 1-12.

•Three grade level combinations were defined as combination schools:

P-12; K-12; and 1-12.

Applying these definitions:

• one-hundred-twenty-four or 44% of the sites were elementary schools

•ninety-seven or 34% of all respondents were secondary schools

•sixty-two or 22% were combination schools of P-12.

These definitions of elementary, secondary, and combination will be used

throughout the rest of this study. Results were tallied according to the three

grade level divisions.

Characteristics of the Respondents

Subjects were Oklahoma full- or part-time public school library media

specialists, or the person serving in that designated position, who were chosen

by a random selection to participate in this study. Private schools, vocational-

technical schools, and parochial schools were excluded. Materials subject to

objections were limited to resources found in the school library media center.

Figure 2 reflects that responses were received from 90% of all the counties.

Responses represented all geographic areas of the state and included varying

school sizes, districts, student enrollments, and communities.

Figure 2 Survey Respondents by County

*One site was unidentifiable

Survey Results

The following section presents the tallied data collected from the survey results for each of the ten questions. Raw numbers were converted to percentages and the percentages were evaluated, comparisons were made, and conclusions were drawn for each question. The most significant findings were acknowledged.

Question 1

1. Was there a relationship between community demographics and objections to media center materials?

Using the three areas of population as defined by the United States Department of Commerce (1992), sites were subdivided into (1) metropolitan with minimum populations of 50,000; (2) urban with populations between 2500 and 49,999; and (3) rural with populations less than 2500. Twenty secondary, 41 elementary, and one combination sites qualified as metropolitan. Forty-seven secondary, 62 elementary, and two combination sites were categorized as urban. Rural sites were composed of 30 secondary, 21 elementary, and 59 combination sites.

Figure 3 Objections by Population Distribution

Distorted schema because only one site matched this description.

Figure 3 shows urban elementary schools were the most frequent targets of objectors and they were 3 times more likely to experience challenges than metropolitan secondary schools. Rural elementary schools were slightly more susceptible to challenges than rural combination sites. Secondary metropolitan schools experienced the fewest objections.

Figure 4 Number of Reported Objections by County
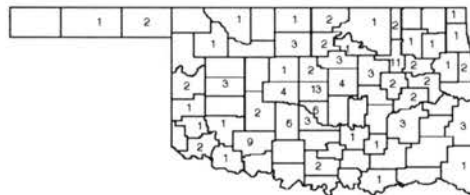
Figure 5 Number of Grade Level Reported Objections by County
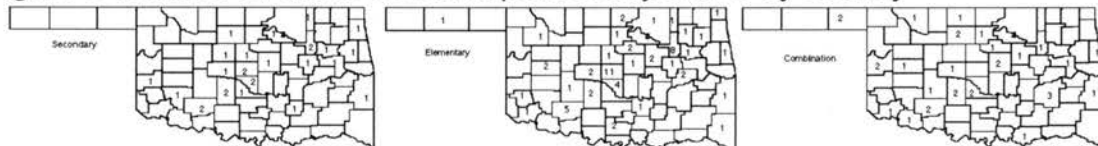
Densely populated counties appeared to have greater frequencies of objections because of the large numbers of schools in those counties. However, when a percentage basis comparison was made between the total number of responding sites in Figure 2 with the number of sites reporting objections in Figure 4, areas of frequency concentration evolved, but no significance was

found between population density and number of objections. For example, 13 out of 31 (41.9%) of all respondents in densely populated Oklahoma County had experienced an objection, while 6 out of 6 (100%) of the respondents in sparsely populated Grady County had experienced objections.

A more representative picture of objection frequency was reached by using this percentage basis analysis. Figure 6 shows the counties in which more than 50% of all responding sites had experienced objections.

Figure 6 Counties with More than 50% of the Sites Experiencing Objections
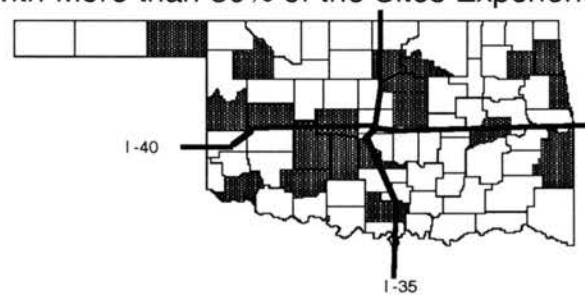
Using interstate highways as division lines for dividing the state into four sections, concentrations of objections were revealed in the southwestern and northeastern quadrants with counties generally adjacent to each other. This data might suggest collaborative networking in geographic pockets. One-third of the counties were eastern and western state boundary counties that might imply neighboring state influence.

Characteristic profiles of these counties showed the median age was 34.1, 27.1% of the population was under 18, and 85.4% of the population was white. All three categories were above the 1990 state averages. More than two-thirds had a larger than average white population and nine out of ten people in 41% of the counties were white.

Figure 7 Grade Level Objections by Counties with More than 50% of the Sites Experiencing Objections
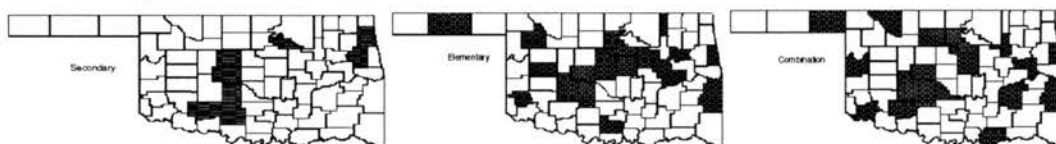
As can be seen in Figure 7, secondary objections were primarily localized to the western, central section; elementary objections were scattered but concentration was in the center; and combination objections were dispersed throughout. In two counties, over 50% of the sites experienced objections at all three grade levels

Conclusions

The results revealed urban elementary sites appeared to be the most vulnerable to objections, metropolitan secondary schools the least. Rural secondary and combination library media centers experienced more objections than metropolitan and urban equivalents. Objections were dispersed throughout the state, but the heaviest concentrations were in the southwestern and northeastern zones.

Question 2

2. Was there a relationship between the size of the student enrollment and the number of objections made to media center materials?

School enrollments were subdivided into six categories: 1-300, 301-500, 501-800, 801-1100, 1101-1400, and 1400+. Of the 283 responding sites, 124 were elementary, 97 were secondary, and 62 were combination. Thirty percent of the sites had enrollments of 1-300, 37% had enrollments of 301-500, 21% had enrollments of 501-800, 7% had enrollments of 801-1000, 3% had enrollments of 1101-1400, and 2% had enrollments greater than 1400.

Figure 8 Summary of Objections and Nonobjections by Student Enrollment

Elementary School Sites

Enrollment

1-300 59% had NO objections 41% had objections

301-500 52% had NO objections 48% had objections

501-800 33% had NO objections 67% had objections

801-1100 25% had NO objections 75% had objections

Secondary School Sites

1-300 85% had NO objections 15% had objections

301-500 75% had NO objections 25% had objections

501-800 57% had NO objections 43% had objections

801-1100 83% had NO objections 17% had objections

1101-1400 75% had NO objections 25% had objections

1401+ 33% had NO objections 67% had objections

Combination School Sites

1-300 50% had NO objections 50% had objections

301-500 43% had NO objections 57% had objections

501-800 58% had NO objections 58% had objections

801-1100 75% had NO objections 25% had objections

*1101-1400 100% had NO objections 0% had objections

*Note: Only one reporting site

Based on raw number responses, the percentages in Figure 8 indicate elementary library media centers showed a general pattern of gradually increasing numbers of objections as student body size increased. Seventy-five percent of the centers with the largest student bodies had experienced at least one objection but only 37.5% of the smallest sites had at least one objection. Almost the reverse pattern developed for combination library media centers; as their enrollments grew, the number of sites experiencing objections decreased.

Enrollment was not a significant factor at the secondary library media centers except at the 501-800 and 1401+ levels. About one-and-a-half out of every four sites with student bodies of 501-800 had experienced an objection. Every 2 out of 3 sites with the largest enrollments had experienced an objection. However, this data was somewhat skewed because only 6% of the secondary sites had enrollments of 1400+.

Table II Number of Grade Level Sites and Objections by Enrollment

	1-300		301-500		501-800		801-1100		1101-1400		1400+	
	Sites	Obj	Sites	Obj	Sites	Obj	Sites	Obj	Sites	Obj	Sites	Obj
Sec	4	11	6	14	9	20	2	2	2	7	4	7
Elem	15	26	27	63	18	36	3	5	0	0	0	0
Comb	11	19	13	25	7	26	1	4	0	0	0	0
Total	30	56	46	102	34	82	6	11	2	7	4	7
Ratio	1.866		2.217		2.411		1.833		3.500		1.750	

Comparing the data in Table II on a ratio basis, schools with enrollments of 1400+ had the smallest ratio of objections. Four sites had 7 objections which yielded a ratio of 1.750 objections per site. Disregarding sites with enrollment of 1101-1400 to avoid distortion, sites with enrollments of 501-800 had the largest ratio of objections at 2.411 per site.

Conclusions

Overall, enrollment was significant in relation to the number of objections experienced by school library media centers. Based on raw number responses, as enrollment increased at the elementary level, so did objections. At the combination sites, the opposite was true. As enrollments grew, objections decreased. Enrollment was significant at the secondary level when the enrollments were between 501-800 and more than 1400. Both of these levels experienced more objections.

If the data is viewed from a ratio basis of objections per site based on enrollment, the largest sites and the smallest sites at all grade levels had the least number of objections. Schools with enrollments of 501-800 had the largest ratio with 2.41 per site.

Question 3

3. Was there a relationship between the size of the media center collection and the number of objections to media center materials?

The results of this question were analyzed in two different manners. Four sites did not report collection size data.

The first analysis was achieved by pairing student enrollment with collection

sizes. Using the Oklahoma State Department of Education Library Media Section guidelines which correlates student enrollment with collection development, collection sizes were subdivided into three levels: (1) functional (2) good and (3) excellent. Functional collections ranged from less than 1000 to 10,806 items, good ranged from no fewer than 5000 to no more than 17,208, and excellent ranged from 5001 to 20,000+.

Table III   Objections by Collection Size and Student Enrollment

	Functional				Good				Excellent			
	Objection		Nonobjection		Objection		Nonobjection		Objection		Nonobjection	
Enrollment	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1-300	10	33	20	67	9	38	15	62	11	38	18	62
301-500	7	39	11	61	21	46	25	54	17	45	21	55
501-800	13	68	6	32	15	56	12	44	6	43	8	57
801-1100	3	60	2	40	2	18	9	82	1	33	2	67
1101-1400	1	33	2	67	0	0	3	100	1	33	2	67
1400+	1	100	0	0	1	100	0	0	2	50	2	50
Total	35	46	41	54	48	43	64	57	38	42	53	58

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

The findings in Table III indicate functional collections encountered a slightly higher percentage of objections (46%) than good and excellent collections, but no significant differences can be found between the levels. Disregarding the 1101 to 1400+ collections to avoid skewing the data, functional and good collections with 501-800 students received the most number of objections. Overall, nonobjections exceeded objections regardless of enrollment and collection size.

The second analysis was achieved by disregarding student enrollment and using only raw data. Collection sizes were divided into small, medium, and large collections. Small collections contained up to 4999 items, medium collections contained 5000 to 8999 items, and large collections contained more than 9000 items.

Table IV   Percent of Objections by Collection Size

Collection Size	Sites Experiencing Objections	Sites NOT Experiencing Objections
1-4999	37%	63%

5000-8999	51%	49%
9000+	42%	58%

The data in Table IV indicates more objections occurred when collection sizes ranged from 5000 to 8999. Small collections had the least number of objections. The percentages in Table V substantiate that medium sized collections of 5000 to 8000 items endured the most number of objections regardless of the grade level.

Table V. Percent of Objections by Collection Size and Grade Level

Collection Size	Nonobjections			Objections		
	Elementary	Secondary	Combination	Elementary	Secondary	Combination
500	2			1	0	2
1000	2	1	2	2		
2000	3	2	3	2		
3000	3	4	2	5		2
4000	9	6	9	3	5	8
5000		1		2		
6000	5	8	2	5	5	2
7000	7	5	5	11		6
8000	4	5	2	5	4	8
9000	5	5	6	4	4	3
10000	2	10	5	3	2	6
11000	2	5	3	2	1	4
12000	2		3	2	2	
13000	1	4		2		
14000		4	3	1	1	5
15000	1	2			2	2
16000		2	2			
17000					1	
18000		1			1	
20000		4			1	3
N.R.	1	2	2	1		
Total	49%	71%	49%	51%	29%	51%

Conclusions

Schools with enrollments of 501-800 and media centers with medium size collections of 4000 to 8000 items appeared to be the most susceptible to objections. Whether analyzed from state department guidelines, raw data, or percentages, objections significantly occurred more often at this range.

Question 4

4. How frequently were objections occurring?

The sample was asked to indicate the number of objections by school year

to library media center resources during the past three years. Respondents reported a total of 265 objections. There were 81 objections in 1992-93, 102 in 1993-94, and 82 in 1994-95.

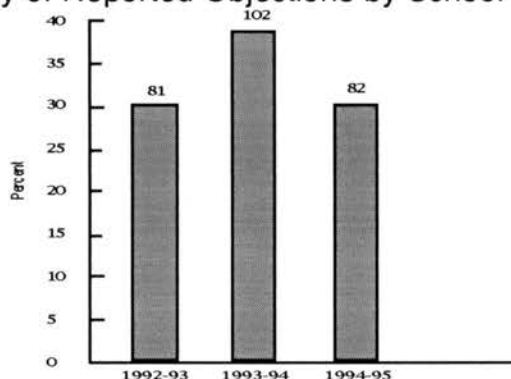Figure 9 Summary of Reported Objections by School Year

Figure 9 reveals objection frequency appeared to remain constant except for the 1993-94 school year when objections increased by 26%. In 1994-95, frequency reverted to almost identically the same number of 1992-1993 incidents.

Table VI. Grade Level Changes in Frequency of Objections by School Year

	Change in frequency of objections between 92-93 and 93-94	Change in frequency of objections between 93-94 and 94-95	Change in frequency of objections between 92-93 and 94-95
Elementary	+ 44%	- 19%	+ 17%
Secondary	+ 14%	- 33%	- 24%
Combination	+ 8%	- 8%	0%
All Levels	+ 26%	- 20%	+ 1%

Table VI provides a comparative representation of what occurred by grade level. In 1993-94, all grade levels experienced increases but elementary objections rose by a significant 44%. For the three year time span, elementary objections increased by 17%. Secondary objections decreased by 24% and combination sites had no change in frequency.

Table VII Total Number of Objections by Grade Level and School Year

Year	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	Total	Total

	Number	Number	Number	Number	Percent
Elementary	36	52	42	130	**49**
Secondary	21	24	16	61	**23**
Combination	24	26	24	74	**28**
Total	81	102	82	265	**100**

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

The percentages in Table VII reflect that almost half of all objections (49%) occurred at elementary library media centers. Combination library media centers experienced slightly more objections than secondary. The least number of objections occurred at secondary library media centers.

Figure 10 Occurrences of Objections and Nonobjections by Grade Level
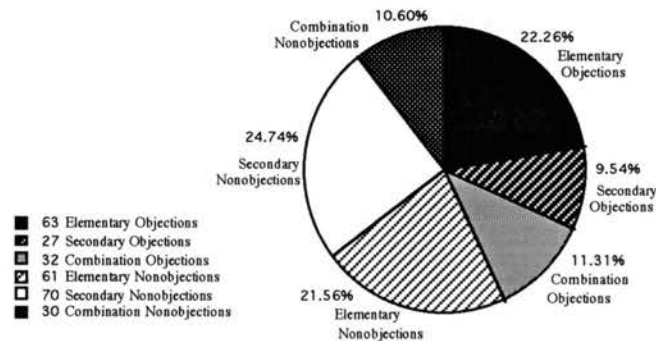
Of the 283 responding sites, 57% of the library media centers had not experienced an objection in the last three years. Objections exceeded nonobjections at both the elementary and combination library media centers, but the difference was insignificant. Nonobjections at the secondary level were two-and-a-half times greater than objections.

Conclusions

From 1992-93 through 1994-95, objections to library media resources increased by a slight 1%. Elementary library media centers had the only frequency increase with a 17% rise in incidents. Frequency of secondary objections decreased by 24%. There was no change in frequency at the combination media centers.

Elementary library media center sites experienced more objections than

nonobjections. Almost half of all objections occurred at elementary library media centers. Secondary library media centers experienced the least number of objections.

Question 5

5. What were the topics to which objections were being made?

A list of 49 topics was included in the survey. Library media specialists were asked to check all topics which had been subjects of objections at his/her site. No definition of the terms was given. "Other" spaces allowed respondents to add topics not listed. Some "Other" responses were single topic responses and they were not included in the results. Others were combined with the topics provided in the survey. A total of 304 different responses were given. Elementary responses accounted for 152, secondary for 62, and combination for 92.

Figure 11 indicates profanity was the most frequently cited objectionable topic at all library media centers. Inappropriate grade or age level and explicit sex were the next group of topics most frequently reported. Nudity, occult, supernatural, and witchcraft comprised the third largest group.

Figure 11 Summary of Subjects of Most Frequent Objections at All Sites
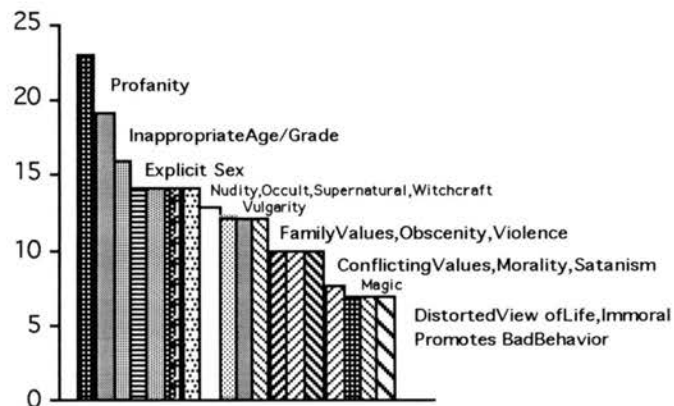
As can be seen in Table VIII, explicit sex and profanity were the most frequent topics of objection at the secondary library media centers.

Inappropriate grade/age, vulgarity, and witchcraft were the second largest group of unsuitable content. Objectors at the secondary level appeared to focus on less diversity and converged on specific topics more than the other grade levels.

Like the secondary level, profanity and inappropriate grade or age level were the most frequent subjects at elementary library media centers. Supernatural was also at the top of the list at this level. Scary content (monsters and ghosts) and holidays were topics unique to elementary schools.

The focus of inappropriate topics at the combination library media centers switched to explicit sex and the occult. Obscenity, Satanism, and vulgarity were the second largest group.

Table VIII Comparison of Objectionable Topics by Grade Level

Subject	Elem	Sec	Comb	Subject	Elem	Sec	Comb	Subject	Elem	Sec	Comb
Adoption	1	0	0	Inappropriate	11	5	3	Prom Behavior	4	0	2
AIDS	3	0	0	Incest	0	0	1	Racism	0	0	2
Anti-Family	1	1	0	Literary Merit	3	0	1	Religion	2	0	2
Anti-War	1	0	0	Magic	3	2	3	Satanism	2	3	5
Conflict. Values	5	3	2	Morality	4	2	4	Scary	5	0	0
Depressing	3	1	1	Multiculturalism	1	0	0	Secular	0	0	1
Distorted Life	3	3	1	Mythology	4	1	0	Self-esteem	0	0	1
Drugs	1	0	0	New Age	3	0	1	Sex Education	5	0	1
Ecology	1	0	0	Nudity	8	2	4	Sexism	0	0	1
Explicit Sex	1	7	8	Obscenity	5	2	5	Social Values	5	0	1
Family Values	4	4	4	Occult	4	2	8	Suicide	0	1	0
Holiday	1	0	0	Parent Disrspt	5	0	1	Supernatural	11	0	3
Homosexuality	3	1	2	Poor Language	1	0	0	Val. Clarification	1	0	0
Human Repro	4	2	1	Political Views	0	0	1	Violence	7	2	3
Immoral	3	0	4	Pornography	0	2	0	Vulgarity	3	5	5
Inaccurate	0	0	2	Profanity	12	7	4	Witchcraft	6	5	3

Conclusions

Profanity, inappropriate age/grade, explicit sex, nudity, occult, supernatural, and witchcraft were the most frequent topics of objections. Together, this group accounted for 70% of the challenged subjects. At secondary library media centers, explicit sex and profanity were the most frequent subjects. Profanity, inappropriate grade/age, and supernatural were the focus of complaints at elementary library media centers. Explicit sex and the occult were the centers of criticism at combination library media centers.

Topics appeared less diverse and more focused on single areas at the secondary sites. Scary content and holidays were unique to elementary library media centers. Over half of the topics provided in the survey had no objections at all. None of the sites reported abortion, anti-government, death education, evolution, or global education. Inaccurate content and literary merit accounted for less than 2% of the reasons for challenges. Patrons appeared to be more concerned with particular subjects or themes than accuracy of content or perceived quality.

Question 6

6. Who were the objectors and what were the common characteristics?

To build a typical objector profile, the survey included six questions about objector characteristics. Objector information requested included: relationship to the school system, who the objector represented, frequency of complaints, gender, age, and educational background. "Other" spaces were provided for respondents to supply information not included in the survey.

Table IX Relationship of Objector to School

	Elementary	Secondary	Combination	Total	Percent
Parent(s)/Guardian(s)	42	15	16	73	48
Teacher in School	14	2	8	24	16
Community Resident	4	6	2	12	8
Principal	4	5	4	13	8
Student	1	4	2	7	5
Minister/Church Rep.	3	0	2	5	3
Superintendent/District Admin.	1	1	2	4	2
School Media Specialist	3	0	0	3	2
Conservative Organ/Group	2	0	0	2	1
School Board Member	1	0	1	2	1
Grandparent of Student	1	0	0	1	1
Minority Group	1	0	0	1	1
Substitute Teacher	0	1	0	1	1
Superintendent's Wife	0	0	1	1	1
Support Personnel	0	0	1	1	1
Teacher's Aide	0	0	1	1	1

Almost half of all complainants were parents. Parents of elementary students were the most representative with 54%, slightly decreasing to 44% at the secondary level, and the least active at the combination level with 40%.

School employees, students, and other persons directly involved with school activities accounted for over one-third (38%) of all objections. Teachers were the complainants at combination centers in 20% of the incidents, 18% at elementary centers, and only 6% at secondary centers.

Secondary library media centers showed different patterns. Community residents were three times more likely to be the originator of the complaint. Principal activity increased slightly but student involvement increased by a significant 80%. Ministers/church representatives and media specialists were not the source of any complaint at the secondary sites.

Less than 2% of the objectors acknowledged affiliation with organized groups. Those few incidents were at elementary library media centers. Objectors overwhelmingly stated they represented only themselves.

The complainant was a repeat objector in about one out of every ten incidents. Lodging a second and third complaint at the same library media center was the most frequent pattern for repeat objectors. In one situation, the objector had lodged three previous complaints.

Figure 12 Objector Gender
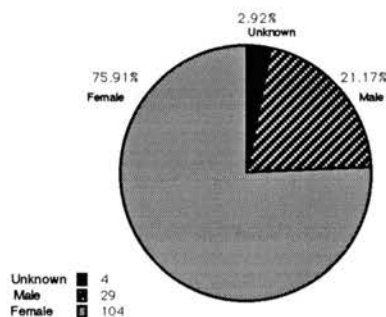
Females were the dominant objectors, accounting for more than 75% of the complainants. The differences in Figure 13 reveal female objectors served a greater diversity of roles. Male superintendents were slightly more involved but no male teacher protested. Female community residents, library media specialists and teachers initiated far more protests than male.

Figure 13 Objector Gender and Relationship to School
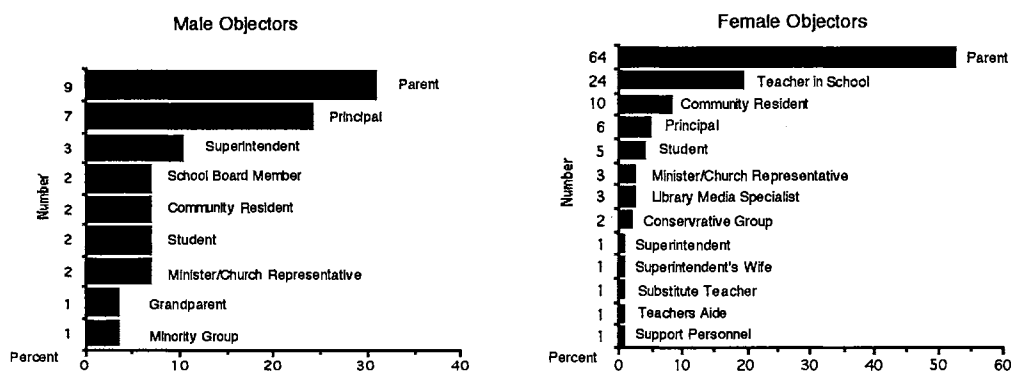
Ages of objectors ranged from 11 to 60. People between 26 and 45 accounted for 80% of all objectors. The median age was 36 to 40. Only one person was over 56 and none were between the ages of 21-25.

Table X Objector Ages

Age Range	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	Unknown	No Response
Secondary	1	3	0	4	4	4	10	2	2	0	2	0
Elementary	0	0	0	11	22	18	8	1	1	0	5	3
Combination	1	1	0	6	3	18	3	1	2	1	2	0
Totals	2	4	0	21	29	40	21	4	5	1	9	3
Percent	1	3	0	15	21	29	15	3	4	1	6	2

Table XI shows eighty-seven-and-a-half percent of the objectors with post-graduate education, were administrators (13), teachers (6), and library media specialists (2). Two parents and one community resident had post-graduate experience. Sixty-two percent of those with a college education were administrators (2) and teachers (16). Nine parents and two ministers/church representatives had completed college. Only 1 out of every 4 objectors with college and post-graduate education was someone outside the school system.

Of the known objector educational levels, 43% had not attained schooling beyond a high school degree. Factoring out directly school related personnel, only 14% of the total complainants completed education beyond high school.

Table XI Educational Level of Objectors

Education	Non-High School	High School	College	Post-Graduate	Unknown
Secondary	4	7	7	5	10
Elementary	0	13	14	9	31
Combination	3	13	8	10	5
Total	7	33	29	24	46
Percent	5	24	21	17	33

Conclusions

Almost half of all objectors were parents. People who had direct affiliation with the school composed the second largest group of objectors. Parents were the most involved at elementary library media centers. Community resident, college-educated parent, and student complaints increased at secondary sites. Combination sites had a diversity of objectors. Group affiliation was minuscule.

Every four out of five objectors was female. The greatest majority of complaints were single incident episodes by individuals between the ages of 36 and 40 whose educational level rarely exceeded a high school degree.
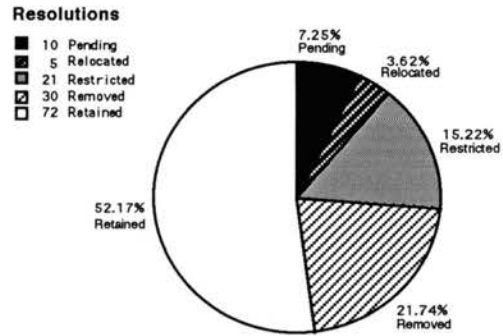
Question 7

7. What was the final outcome to the objection?

Respondents were asked to give the final outcome to the most recent objection made at the school site. Response choices provided by the survey were: the material was retained on open shelves; (2) the material was restricted; (3) the material was removed from the collection; (4) the issue is pending and remains unresolved; and (5) "Other" (Please Specify). Relocation of the resource to an older age library's collection was a fifth outcome added to the results due to the frequency of this response in the "Other" category.
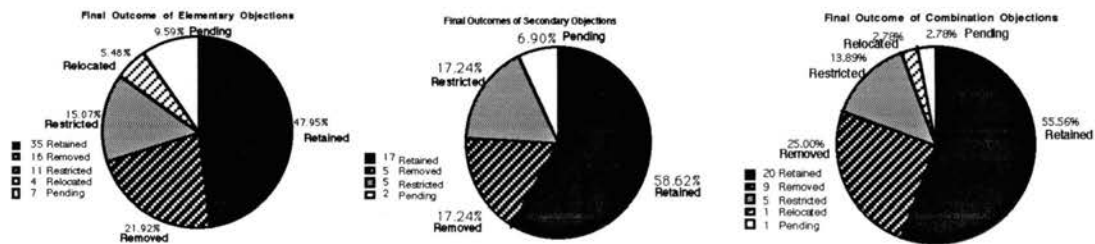
Outcomes were given for 138 incidents because eight sites experienced simultaneous, multiple objections. Elementary library media centers sites provided 73 resolutions, secondary schools had 29, and combination sites had 36.

Figure 14 Summary of Final Outcomes

Resolutions

- 10 Pending
- 5 Relocated
- 21 Restricted
- 30 Removed
- 72 Retained

7.25% Pending
3.62% Relocated
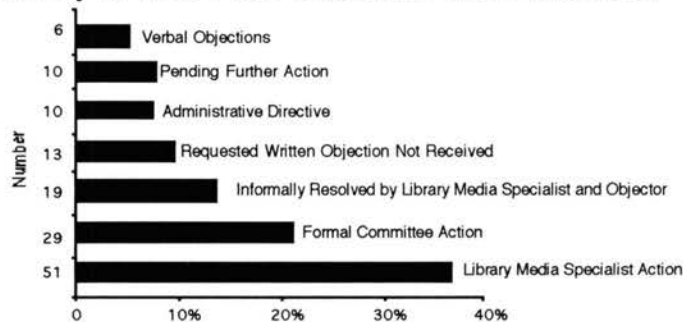15.22% Restricted
21.74% Removed
52.17% Retained

More than half of all the challenged resources were retained on open, unrestricted shelves. Items were removed in about one out of every five attempts. Almost as many resources were restricted or relocated as were removed.

Figure 15 Final Outcome by Grade Level

Final Outcome of Elementary Objections
9.59% Pending
5.48% Relocated
15.07% Restricted
47.95% Retained
21.92% Removed
- 35 Retained
- 16 Removed
- 11 Restricted
- 4 Relocated
- 7 Pending

Final Outcomes of Secondary Objections
6.90% Pending
17.24% Restricted
58.62% Retained
17.24% Removed
- 17 Retained
- 5 Removed
- 5 Restricted
- 2 Pending

Final Outcome of Combination Objections
2.78% Relocated
2.78% Pending
13.89% Restricted
55.56% Retained
25.00% Removed
- 20 Retained
- 9 Removed
- 5 Restricted
- 1 Relocated
- 1 Pending

As Figure 15 indicates, secondary library media centers retained 10% more of its items than elementary sites. Combination library media centers had the largest number of items removed. Other resolutions did not differ significantly by grade level.

Figure 16 Summary of How Final Outcomes Were Resolved

Number
6 — Verbal Objections
10 — Pending Further Action
10 — Administrative Directive
13 — Requested Written Objection Not Received
19 — Informally Resolved by Library Media Specialist and Objector
29 — Formal Committee Action
51 — Library Media Specialist Action

0   10%   20%   30%   40%

More than one third of all decisions were made by the library media specialist. Only 21% of the decisions were made by formally adhering to the

reconsideration policy procedures.

Table XII Final Outcomes by Method of Resolution

	Retained	Removed	Restricted	Relocated	Pending	Total
Pending					10	10
Formal committee action	15	7	6	1	0	29
Written objection not received	18	0	0	0	0	18
Verbal objection	6	0	0	0	0	6
Informally resolved	13	0	0	0	0	13
Administrative directive	0	6	2	3	0	11
Media specialist decision	20	9	9	1	0	39
Media specialist agreed w/objector	0	8	4	0	0	12
Total	72	30	21	5	10	138

Raw Number Responses

More than half of the retentions resulted from no formal written objection being submitted or the library media specialist decided to retain the item without taking further action. Fifty-seven percent of the time when the item was removed, the library media specialist reacted to the objection by removing the item without consulting anyone or requesting further action. One out of every five items was removed at the instruction of a superintendent, principal, or school board member. In two instances of removal by formal committee action, one objector was the superintendent and the other was a teacher, student, parent collaborative.

Table XIII Detailed Analysis of How Final Outcomes Were Determined

Raw Number	Percent	How Determined
29	21	Formal committee
18	13	Requested written objective never received
16	11.5	LMS made independently made the decision
13	9	Informally resolved through discussion, etc.
12	8.5	LMS agree with objector
7	5	LMS temporarily removed the item
7	5	Principal directive
6	4	LMS put in special collection
6	4	Verbal objection
4	3	LMS did not notify anyone
4	3	Objector's child was limited from reading or checking out book
3	2	Superintendent directive
2	1	LMS required parental permission for child to check out or view
2	1	LMS altered content

1	1	LMS reclassified book to different collection or location
1	1	Principal informally resolved
1	1	LMS restricted the item to media center use only
1	1	LMS returned the book to the company
1	1	LMS provided a reading list for the child of the objector
1	1	School board member directive
1	1	Aide and objector reevaluated
1	1	LMS temporarily pulled the book to reevaluate
1	1	Parent refused to return the book

Outcomes reached by committee decision were almost identical to overall results. Over half of the items were retained, about a fourth removed.

Figure 17 Final Outcomes by Formal Committee and Administrative Action
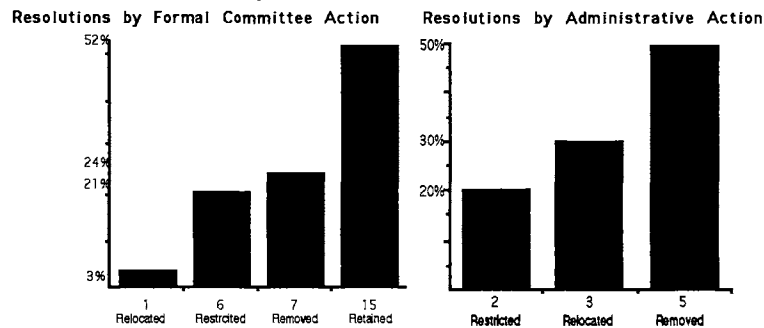
Outcomes determined by administrative action significantly differed from committee action as the data in Figure 17 shows. When the outcome was determined by administrative staff, half of the resources were removed, less than a third were relocated, and a fifth were restricted. None were retained.

Table XIV Final Outcomes by Collection Size

Collection Size	Objections	Retained	Removed	Restricted	Relocated	Pending
500	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
1000	3	33 1/3%	0%	33 1/3%	33 1/3%	0%
2000	3	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3000	7	14%	29%	14%	14%	29%
4000	17	53%	29%	6%	6%	6%
5000	5	40%	20%	40%	0%	0%
6000	14	50%	7%	14%	0%	29%
7000	18	56%	28%	11%	0%	5%
8000	15	47%	20%	13%	13%	7%
9000	15	40%	33%	27%	0%	0%
10000	10	60%	30%	10%	0%	0%
11000	9	67%	22%	11%	0%	0%
12000	4	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
13000	2	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
14000	6	50%	16 2/3%	16 2/3%	0%	16 2/3%
15000	3	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%
17000	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

18000	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
20000	3	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
No Response	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

Disregarding all response sites with three or fewer responses to avoid skewing the results, collections of 12,000 had the highest retention rate and collections of 9000 had the largest removal rate. Collections of 6000 were the only significantly deviating pattern, but almost a third of the objections in this category remained unresolved which would affect all outcomes.

Grade level combinations were analyzed in Table XV to determine if different grade levels had different outcomes. To avoid skewed data, any site with three or less responses was disregarded.

Table XV Final Outcomes by Grade Level Combinations

Grade Level	Objection	Retained	Removed	Restricted	Relocated	Pending
P-2	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
P-5	1	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
K-2	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
K-3	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
K-4	2	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
K-5	21	52%	10%	14%	0%	24%
K-6	22	41%	27%	23%	4.5%	4.5%
K-8	11	36%	46%	18%	0%	0%
1-5	2	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1-6	2	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%
2-3	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4-5	1	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
4-6	5	60%	20%	0%	20%	0%
5-6	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
5-7	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6-7	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
6-8	4	25%	25%	0%	0%	50%
6-10	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6-12	4	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
7-8	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7-9	3	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
7-12	6	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%
8-12	1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9-12	5	40%	20%	40%	0%	0%
10-12	2	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
11-12	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
P-12	7	29%	29%	29%	0%	13%
K-12	29	62%	24%	10%	4%	0%

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

Library media centers serving grades 7-12 appeared to have the largest retention (83%) and the lowest removal rates (17%). Grades K-8 appeared to

develop just the opposite pattern. This level had a low retention (36%) but a high removal rate (46%).

<u>Conclusion</u>

Slightly more than half of all challenges resulted in the item being retained on open, unrestricted shelves. Resources were removed 21.74% of the time. More than three-fourths of all the items were removed without following formal policies. When an administrator was the objector, no item was retained.

The majority of the outcomes were determined by the library media specialist. The library media specialist retained the item 39% of the time, removed the item 33% of the time, restricted the item 26% of the time, and relocated the item 2% of the time.

Generally, larger collections appeared to have more retentions and smaller collections were more susceptible to removals. More items were retained at secondary library media centers and more were removed at combination sites. More items were retained at the 7-12 grade level combinations. K-8 grades had the most number of removals.

Question 8

8. Did a board-approved reconsideration policy result in greater retention of materials?

When asked if the school had a board approved procedure to handle questionable materials, 92% of all respondents said "Yes"; 8% responded "No". One survey did not include a response to the question. Ninety-four percent of the respondents experiencing objections had board-approved policies.

In response to the survey's question on how the objection was initiated, 79% of the library media specialists stated the objection originated as a verbal request. Only 14% of the requests were submitted as a formal written objection. Two were informally written requests and five protests were made directly to the

principal. Two surveys did not include a response to this question.

Survey respondents were asked if (s)he had been asked to remove a book or other resource during the past three years. Seventy-one percent of all respondents stated no one had requested removal of a media center resource. Of the 122 sites that had experienced objections, 82 sites had been asked to remove an item. The remaining 40 requests were for reevaluation of material, limiting the child's reading/viewing, and restricting the item's access.

Table XVI Requests to Remove Resources at Sites Experiencing Objections

Grade Level	Raw Number Responses	Number of Respondents Asked to Remove an Item	Percentage of Respondents Asked to Remove an item
Secondary	27	19	70
Elementary	63	43	68
Combination	32	20	63
Total	122	82	67

Table XVI reflects removal requests were slightly higher at secondary library media centers. Overall, slightly more than two-thirds of the objectors requested removal of materials.

Figure 18 Summary of Resolution Outcome and Policy Use
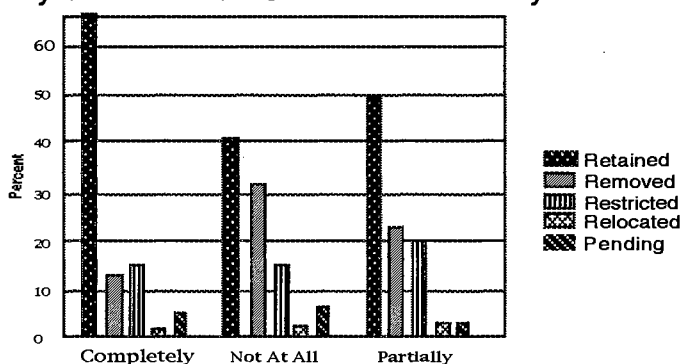
As Figure 18 shows, 66% of the resources were retained when the reconsideration policy was completely followed. Only 12% were removed. Removals rose to 33% and retentions dropped to 43% when policy was not followed at all. Partial use of the reconsideration policy resulted in 49% retention and 23% removal.

Formal reconsideration policies were completely followed in slightly less than one third of all incidents. Almost one-fourth of the time, policies were not used at all.

Table XVII Grade Level Reconsideration Policy Use

	Not at All		Partially		Completely		Not Apply		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Elementary	14	22	17	27	23	37	3	5	6	9
Secondary	10	37	9	33	5	19	0	0	3	11
Comb	5	16	13	41	11	34	1	3	2	6
Total	29	24	39	32	39	32	4	3	11	9

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

Elementary library media centers followed policy procedures more than any other level but the policy was completely used in only 37% of the incidents. Secondary media centers had the least complete use of policies. At combination sites, partial use of policy was the dominant practice.

Table XVIII Reasons Given for Not Using Policy At All

Raw Number	Reason
10	Administrative directives
13	Media specialist determined outcome
4	Informally resolved
2	Verbal objections

Table XIX Reasons Given for Partial Use of Policy

Raw Number	Reason
3	Administrative directives
19	Media specialist determined outcome
2	Informally resolved
7	Verbal objections
5	School board rejected committee decision
1	School board accepted committee decision out of fear of ACLU
1	Superintendent was objector
1	Decision is pending

Results of Table XVII and XIX show the main reason policies were either partially followed or not used at all was because the media specialist made the

decision. In 19% of the cases, the outcome was an administrative directive.

Survey question 34 asked media specialists to give their opinion as to what degree the presence of a board approved reconsideration policy affected the outcome of the objection.
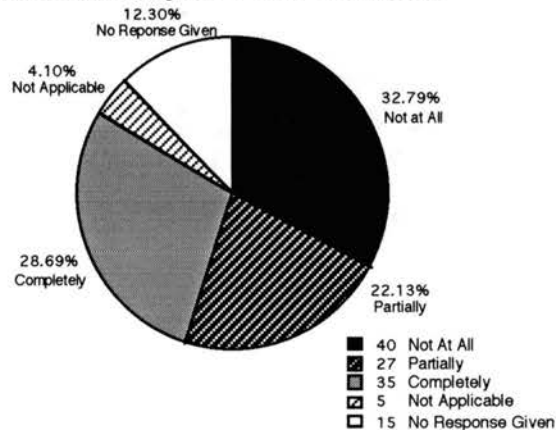
Figure 19 Summary of Effect of Policy on Final Outcome

12.30%
No Reponse Given

4.10%
Not Applicable

32.79%
Not at All

28.69%
Completely

22.13%
Partially

■ 40 Not At All
▨ 27 Partially
▨ 35 Completely
▨ 5   Not Applicable
□ 15 No Response Given

Figure 19 shows respondents indicated reconsideration policies partially or completely affected the outcome of the objection slightly over half of the time. If "No Response Given" and "Not Applicable" answers were factored out to paint a clearer picture, polices did affect outcomes in three out of every five circumstances.

Survey question 35 asked respondents to express their opinion on the affect of a board-approved reconsideration policy and the retention of questionable material.

Figure 20 Effect of Policy on Retention of Challenged Resources

14.75%
No Reponse

4.92%
Not Applicable

37.71%
Yes

42.62%
No

■ 46 Yes
▨ 52 No
▨ 6   Not Applicable
▨ 18 No Response
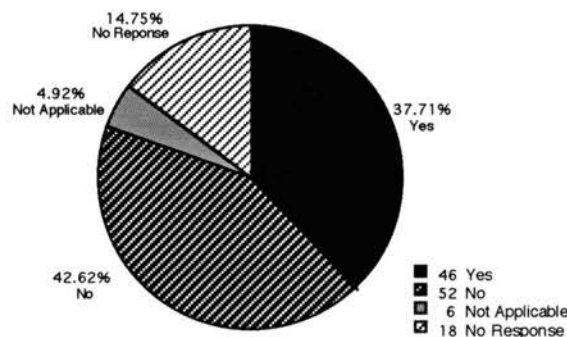
The data in Figure 20 indicated a slight majority of media specialists did not feel policy use affected retention. A detailed analysis of retention outcomes was constructable.

Retentions by Formal Action

Fifteen items were retained by formal committee action and the committee's decision was accepted by the school board. In one case, the board accepted the committee's recommendation over the principal's objection. In two separate instances after the board's action, retained items were checked out by the objecting parties and "lost" [never returned]; one by a parent, one by a teacher.

Retention by Informal Action

Eighteen retentions were resolved informally. In four cases, the parent requested his/her child not be allowed to check out or read the item but did not request the resource be removed from the collection. In another situation, the child was provided with an appropriate reading list. In 72% of the cases solved informally, casual visits, explanations, and/or copies of professional reviews satisfied the objector.

Other Retention Action

In 1 out of 5 situations, no further action was taken because the requested formal written objection was never submitted by the complainant, or the library media specialist independently decided the resource's fate. In two situations, the library aide and the library media specialist agreed with the objectors, but the items were retained because the resource had literary merit and supported the curriculum. One library media specialist did not notify anyone. In two other cases, the library media specialist reevaluated the item and determined it added value to the collection. Library media specialists retained two items by altering the resource content. In seven cases, the library media specialist temporarily removed the item.

In one instance involving four items, the school's selection policy was rewritten by the board during the action. One item was retained but the media specialist felt retention was a token gesture to show the board's support of her. Two of the items were restricted and one was removed.

Conclusions

The results showed that when reconsideration policies were completely followed, two-thirds of the items were retained and slightly over 10% were removed. Complete adherence to policy procedures significantly improved retention. When not used at all, retention dropped and removals increased.

Data revealed policies were completely followed only 32% of the time. In 24% of the situations, the policy was not used at all. Elementary and combination library media centers completely employed policy procedures almost twice as much as secondary centers.

An overwhelming majority of the requests were initiated as informal, verbal requests. Thirty-eight percent of the library media specialists did not feel reconsideration policies affected retention and 33% were of the opinion that policies did not affect the outcome of the objection. However, more than half of the time, the library media specialists individually determined the outcome. In twenty-five percent of the cases when policy was not used at all, administrative demands prevented the policy's use.

Question 9

9. What action did the media specialist take when an objection occurred?

Survey question 27 asked the respondent what action was taken when an objection arose. Respondents were requested to indicate all actions taken as simultaneous actions were appropriate.

Table XX Action Taken When an Objection Was Raised

	Total Responses	Percent of Respondents
Did not notify anyone of the objection	18	15

Formally reported the objection to the principal	24	20
Informally notified the principal	45	37
Informally visited with the objector	59	48
Requested formal written objection from the objector	36	30
Other	29	24
No Response	3	2

Percentages were calculated on a total of 122 respondents, not total responses.

Fifty-seven percent of all the library media specialists in Table XX either informally or formally notified the principal, while 15% did not notify anyone. Not quite half of the complaints resulted in informal visits with the objector. The objector was requested to submit a written objection 30% of the time.

"Other" responses provided some specific actions taken by the library media specialist. Responses included: gave the objector the state department's phone number, provided a reading list for the student, limited the child's checkout, notified the library media specialist, read the book, contacted a more experienced library media specialist, did what my principal told me to do, and returned the book to the company. None of the "Other" responses developed as a predominant action. A small number (2%) indicated the item was temporarily removed but eventually returned to the shelf without further activity. Only 2% of the material was altered to retain the resource.

Table XXI Grade Level Action Taken When an Objection Was Raised

	Elementary		Secondary		Combo	
	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%
Did not notify anyone of the objection	7	11	6	22	5	17
Reported the objection to the principal	38	61	18	67	13	43
Informally visited with the objector	28	45	14	52	17	57
Requested formal written objection from the objector	17	27	8	30	11	37
Other	11	18	10	37	8	27

Percentages were calculated on number of respondents by grade level.

As Table XXI reflects, secondary library media specialists did not notify anyone 22% of the time but they did report the objection to the principal 67% of the time. Combination centers were the most likely to request written objections

and the least likely to notify the principal.

Survey question 28 asked the respondent to indicate all action(s) taken if no one was notified of the objection. Eighteen respondents (15%) had not notified anyone.

Table XXII Action Taken When Media Specialist Did Not Notify Anyone

	Elementary	Secondary	Combination
Temporarily removed	0%	17%	20%
Removed from collection	57%	17%	60%
Restricted checkout	14%	0%	0%
Pending further action	14.5%	0%	0%
Relocated to other library	0%	17%	0%
Retained in collection	0%	33%	0%
Relocated to special collection	0%	16%	0%
Altered contents	14.5%	0%	20%

*Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

When the library media specialist did not notify anyone, secondary specialists were the only level to retain the item either by simply retaining it or relocating it to a special collection. Items were three-and-a-half times more likely to be removed at elementary and combination sites. Restricting the child's checkout was exclusive to elementary schools. No material was altered at the secondary level.

Survey question 11 asked respondents who they would seek advice from if media center resources were challenged. All appropriate responses were to be chosen.

Table XXIII Sources of Advice If an Objection Was Lodged

	Objection Sites Percent	Nonobjection Sites Percent
School principal	89	84
Teachers in the building	66	67
Media specialists in the district	60	65
Local library groups	55	34

Media specialists in other districts	40	37
Local education groups	18	25
University library professors	21	20
Community leaders	16	19
Legal representation	13	16
Local civil liberties groups	7	9
Other	21	19

*Percentages were calculated on number of respondents by objection and nonobjection sites

The school principal was an overwhelming choice for advice if a resource was challenged at both objection and nonobjection sites. Two-thirds of the time advice would be sought from teachers in the building and other media specialists in the district. Seeking advice from local library groups showed the most differentiation between objection and nonobjection sites. Nonobjection sites would seek advice from local library groups 21% more often than objection sites. The other sources of advice showed little deviation between objection and nonobjection sites.

Electronic networks was one of the choices provided in an effort to see if library media specialists were using online networking, but only 7 respondents chose this as a source of advice. "Other" categories included responses such as state department of education, family and friends, parents, positive reviews, public librarian, and publisher.

Survey question 29 asked media specialists if they sought assistance from within the school or district during the objection. Forty-six percent responded they did. When asked in survey question 30 if they sought assistance from outside the school during the objection, only 15% said they did.

In response to Question 36 which asked about the level of support provided by teachers during the objection, 41% of the respondents felt they had the complete support of teachers. Twelve percent did not have any support at all

from teachers. Question 37 asked the level of support provided by principals during the objection. Complete support was given by principals 51% of the time. No support was provided by the principal 11% of the time.

Conclusions

Figure 21 Diagram of Subsequent Action When an Objection Occurred
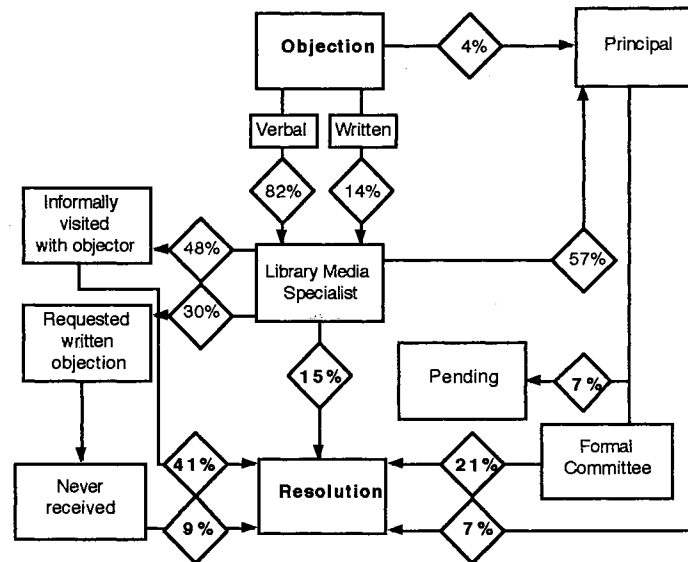
The survey showed that when an objection occurred, the most prevalent action taken by the library media specialist was to informally visit with the objector and to notify the principal. Formal written objections were requested three out of ten times. The majority of the time, if a written objection was not submitted or an informal visitation satisfied the objector, the library media specialist either abandoned the issue or reevaluated the item to see if it met curriculum objectives and/or had literary merit.

Fifteen percent of the time, the library media specialist did not notify anyone. When no one was notified, secondary specialists tended to retain the item; elementary and combination tended to remove. Retaining the material by altering its content was seldom employed at any level.

More than the other two levels, secondary media specialists both notified the principal or did not notify anyone. Combination library media specialists were

the least likely to notify the principal.

If advice was needed, the overwhelming choice for consultation was the school principal. Teachers in the school and other media specialists in the district were seen as significant sources of advice. Slightly more than half of the respondents sought advice from within the school or district during an objection. Only 15% sought outside assistance.

Principals gave complete support during an objection slightly more than half of the time. Complete teacher support was given almost half of the time. Principals and teachers gave no support at all in about one out of ten situations.

Question 10

10. Did an objection result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the library media specialist?

Survey question 8 asked respondents if they avoided purchasing material that might be considered objectionable. Three-fourths of all respondents indicated reluctance to select objectionable material whether an objection had been experienced or not.

Table XXIV Attitude toward Avoiding Objectionable Material by Sites Experiencing Objections

Grade Level	Number of Sites Responding	Number of Respondents Who Avoid Objectionable Material	Percent
Secondary	27	21	78
Elementary	63	49	78
Combination	32	26	81
Total	122	96	79

Table XXV Attitude toward Avoiding Objectionable Material by Sites NOT Experiencing Objections

Grade Level	Number of Sites Responding	Number of Respondents Who Avoid objectionable material	Percent
Secondary	70	41	59
Elementary	61	49	80
Combination	30	25	83

Total	161	115	71

As can be seen in Tables and XXIV and XXV overall, library media specialists who had experienced objections were somewhat more prone to avoid objectionable material than those not experiencing objections. The evidence indicated the attitudes of secondary respondents who had experienced objections significantly changed. Nineteen percent more of those who had experienced objections said they did avoid purchasing objectionable material. Elementary and combination sites showed a slight avoidance decrease at sites where objections occurred.

Secondary media specialists who had not experienced objections were 20% less likely to avoid selecting conceivably questionable resources than the other two grade level combinations. Combination sites demonstrated the most reluctance to avoid selecting objectionable material.

Table XXVI Reasons for Avoiding Potentially Objectionable Material

Reason	Responses	Percent
Inappropriate for community needs	128	11
Literary quality is unacceptable	109	9
Unfavorably reviewed	108	9
Does not meet selection policy objectives	100	8
Avoid community conflict	98	8
Curriculum objectives not met	78	7
Users might be offended	74	6
Lack of evidence to defend	73	6
Limited requests for material	72	6
Administration instructions	55	5
Might be subversive or indoctrinating	48	4
Resource challenged at other sites	41	4
Adding item viewed as endorsement	39	3
Avoid personal beliefs conflicts	35	3
Adverse publicity would result	30	3
Past objections	25	2
Defending would take too much time	25	2
Fear of losing job or respect	23	2
Other	19	2

Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

. The data in Table XXVI shows inappropriate for community needs was the number one reason given for avoiding objectionable material. Past objections

composed only 2% of the reasons for avoidance but 8% of the respondents indicated a reason to avoid was community conflict. "Other" reasons incorporated: not age appropriate, best served by basic needs, children would deface, less controversial material available, and lack of or waste of money.

Survey question 9 asked respondents if they had ever removed material from the collection other than for routine maintenance and weeding.

Figure 22 Respondent Removal of Material other than Routine Maintenance
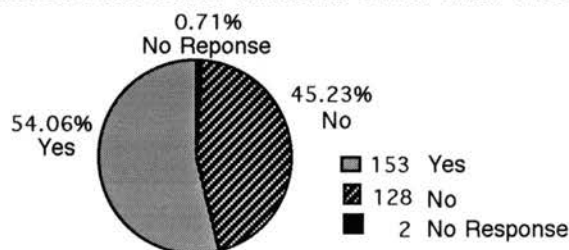
Figure 22 shows over half of the library media specialists have removed material for other reasons than routine weeding and maintenance.

Figure 23   Respondent Removal of Material other than Routine Maintenance at Objection and Nonobjection Sites
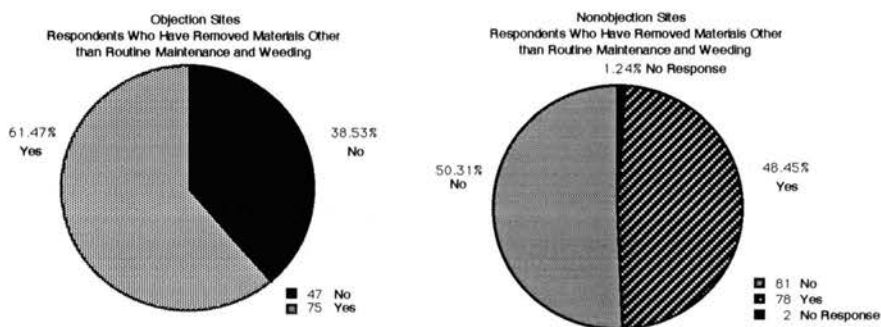
A significant change was observed in attitude toward removing material after an objection occurred. Figure 23 indicates respondents who had removed materials at sites experiencing objections rose by 13%. The data indicated occurrences of removing material for other than routine maintenance and weeding significantly increased after objections occurred.

Table XXVII Reasons for Removing Material other than for Routine Maintenance

Reason	Objection Sites Percent	Nonobjection Sites Percent
Inappropriate for curriculum needs	30	29

Avoid potential controversy	23	18
Community beliefs not reinforced	22	13
Resource has history of controversy	5	4
Principal directive	5	4
Inappropriate for the grade level	2	6
Professional journals altered	5	1
Parents objected	3	1
Committee decision	3	1
Relocated to older age library	2	1
Affected behavior of students	1	1
Sexually explicit/Nude pictures	1	1
Board decision	2	0
Community beliefs not reinforced	2	0
Lack of literary or other value	1	1
Superintendent directive	2	0
Profanity	1	1
Teacher objected	1	0
Parent alerted	1	0
Couldn't keep on shelves	0	1
Can't defend	0	1
Defacing of material	0	1
Personal beliefs	0	1
Librarians collectively agreed	0	1
Misleading review	0	1
Resource came from unknown source	0	1

*Percentages were calculated on raw number responses by objection and nonobjection sites

As can be seen in Table XXVII the main differences for removing materials other than routine maintenance at sites that experienced objections and those that had not were to avoid potential controversy, community beliefs were not reinforced, and professional journals alerted the library media specialist to potential controversy. The main reason at both objection and nonobjection sites for removing material was its inappropriateness to curriculum needs.

Survey question 10 asked respondents if an objection occurred, would it affect their materials selection process in the future. Forty-one percent of all respondents said it would affect their future selection process.

Table XXVIII Effect on Future Selection by Sites NOT Experiencing Objections

Grade Level	Sites Responding	Would Effect in the Future	Percent
Elementary	61	25	41
Secondary	70	20	29
Combination	30	15	50
Total	161	60	37

Table XXIX Effect on Future Selection by Sites Experiencing Objections

Grade Level	Sites Responding	Avoid objectionable material	Percent
Elementary	63	27	43
Secondary	27	11	41
Combination	32	17	53
Total	122	55	45

The data in Table XXIX implies library media specialists that had experienced objections would be slightly more sensitive to future selection. Secondary sites that had experienced objections indicated significantly more (12%) sensitivity to future selections. Only a 2% increased sensitivity at the elementary level and a 3% at the combination sites was noted.

Respondents were asked to indicate how objections would alter future materials selection.

Table XXX How Objections Would Affect Future Selection Process

Change	Responses	Percent
Preview before purchasing	63	28
Request suggestions	60	27
Purchase only from outstanding book lists	49	22
Reviews indicate no questionable topics	40	18
Rely on vendor	6	2
Be more alert to controversial material	5	2
Spend money on curriculum	3	1

*Percentages calculated on raw number responses from all responding sites.

Survey results in Table XXX suggest media specialists would take a more cautionary approach to future selections by previewing prior to purchase, purchasing only from outstanding booklists, selecting only reviews which had no questionable topics, and requesting suggestions from parents, teachers, and students.

Conclusions

Seventy-five percent of all respondents replied they did avoid purchasing potentially objectionable material. Results indicated library media specialists would become slightly more sensitive to future selection processes if they encountered an objection.

Not meeting community needs was the number one reason given for

avoiding objectionable material. Past objections was an insignificant reason. If objections did occur, the specialists said precautions would be taken by previewing material prior to purchase, buying only from recommended reading lists, avoiding items which reviews indicated might contain questionable content, and soliciting suggestions from others.

Occurrences of library media specialists removing material for other than routine maintenance and weeding significantly increased at sites which had experienced objections. Avoiding potential controversy, community beliefs were not reinforced, and professional journals alerted the specialist to potential controversy were the significantly different reasons for centers which had experienced objections to remove materials. Inappropriateness to curriculum needs was the overall reason for removing materials other than routine maintenance at all sites.

Though secondary library media specialists were overall less receptive to avoiding questionable material, secondary sites showed the greatest avoidance increase after an objection had occurred. Media specialists at elementary and combination centers showed a slight decrease in avoidance after an objection had been raised.

Chapter V

Study Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

This study surveyed a random sampling of all public school library media centers in Oklahoma during the spring of 1995. The sample was asked to respond to a questionnaire designed to evaluate ten factors affecting frequency and outcomes of objections raised against the appropriateness and presence of resources in the school library media center during the past three school years. The study focused on community demographics, student enrollment, size of media center collections, frequency of occurrences, objector characteristics, final resolutions to objections, effect of board-approved selection and reconsideration policies on retention of materials, actions of the media specialist when an objection occurred, and the effect of objections on pre- and self- censorship selection procedures of library media specialists.

The results of this study were to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis that objections to the presence or appropriateness of library media center resources have occurred during the past three years and there is a relationship between these occurrences and final resolution outcomes and the selection procedures of library media specialists in Oklahoma public school library media centers.

The data from this study constructed a comparative, supportive framework to be used by educators and practitioners to assess their personal and professional values and beliefs against national and international trends. An understanding of the dispositional hierarchy of outcome decisions can be used to maximize damage control for both the defender and the objector. Higher

education curriculum can incorporate the findings to better prepare and educate future school library media specialists, teachers, and administrators.

This study had three major assumptions. First, Oklahoma public school library media centers had experienced objections and the rate of occurrences had increased. A second assumption was that administrative personnel granted school library media specialists professional autonomy. Decisions reached by the library media specialist were based on professional education and knowledge, not external or political factors was the third assumption.

Results of the Study

Community Demographics

1. Was there a relationship between community demographics and objections to media center materials?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that metropolitan secondary library media centers experienced the least number of objections, urban elementary sites the most. Overall, rural sites were the most susceptible to objections.

Though objections were dispersed throughout the state, the southwestern and northeastern quadrants had the largest concentration. Populations of counties that experienced the most objections were older, had more residents under the age of 18 and were predominantly white.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Jenkinson (1986) and Reichman (1993) reported objections were widespread in all demographic areas. Woods (1979) reached the same conclusion but added pockets existed where objections were above the average and added rural areas may be more prone to objections. Jenkinson

(1994) found in his Canadian study that while objections had increased in all areas, rural objections had almost doubled in the last nine years. Burress (1989) argued rural areas experienced less objections because collections were smaller and the communities were more homogenous. Fiske (1959) and Busha (1972) countered that larger populated areas were less tolerant of censorship. Hopkins (1991) found the type of community made no significant differences.

The findings of this study supported previous studies except those of Burress (1989) and Hopkins (1991). There were differences in the number of objections and the type of community.

Implications of the Results

Burress introduced a supposition which may be applicable to data detected in this study. He theorized that in the past, middle- and upper- class homogeneous groups have dominated. Consolidation of school districts disrupted this homogeneity.

The counties in this study that had experienced the greatest number of objections were predominantly white, indicating more homogeneity and less cultural diversity. Perhaps the recent consolidation of several Oklahoma school districts created an aggregate population, making these areas more prone to objections. Diverse student bodies may be one of the contributing factors to the large number of objections in urban elementary library media centers.

Student Enrollment Size

2. Was there a relationship between the size of the student enrollment and the number of objections made to media center materials?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that a relationship between the number of objections

and student enrollment size did exist but had distinct characteristics at different grade levels. Overall, schools with mid-size enrollments of 501-800 experienced the greatest number of objections. However, they were a predominant size of Oklahoma schools so this generalization may be skewed.

At the elementary level, as enrollment increased so did the number of objections. At the combination level, as enrollment increased the number of objections decreased. Objections at the secondary level increased when enrollments were between 501-800 and greater than 1400.

If analyzed from a ratio of numbers of objections per site, the largest and smallest sites at all grade levels had the least ratio of objections. School library media centers at all grade levels with student enrollments of 501-800 had the largest ratio with 2.41 objections per site.

Comparison to Previous Studies

According to Gottlieb (1990), more challenges occurred in schools where more students were enrolled because more people were exposed to the resources. This study did not confirm Gottlieb's hypothesis.

Implications of the Results

No common pattern could be established between student enrollment and the number of objections.

Collection Size

3. Was there a relationship between the size of the media center collections and the number of objections to media center materials?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that objections occurred more frequently in medium sized collections. Regardless of how the data was analyzed, mid-size collections with 4000 to 8000 items experienced more occurrences of

objections than smaller or larger collections.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Burress (1989) concluded the size of the library collection had more impact on the number of objections than the size of the student body. In his opinion, more books led to more censorship pressure. The data from this study did not support his conclusion.

Implications of the Results

The possibility existed that medium sized collections were more often the targets of objectors because most Oklahoma library media center collections were in this range. However, the average collection size of 8,387 for all library media centers in this study, is larger than the collections most vulnerable to attacks. This conjecture was unfounded.

Frequency

4. How frequently were objections occurring?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that the number of objections to library media center resources during the past three school years had increased by a mere 1%. Objections had increased by 26% during the 1993-94 school year. This study provided no explanation for the significant rise during that year.

Objections at elementary library media centers increased by 17%. Secondary objections decreased by 24%. There was no change in frequency of objections at combination centers.

Fifty-seven percent of all respondents had not experienced any objections. Of those sites which had experienced objections, almost half occurred at elementary library media centers. Secondary centers experienced the least number of objections.

Comparison to Previous Studies

The findings of Abbot (1987), Burress (1989), People for the American Way (1994), Troy (1994), and Woods (1979) indicated the frequency of complaints had significantly increased. Burress reported objections had increased by 151% between 1950 and 1980. Woods said protests had doubled between 1966 and 1976. People for the American Way found a 23% increase between 1991 and 1994.

Jenkinson (1986) and Jenkinson (1994) both found evidence of steady but insignificant growth. Reichman (1993) and Williams & Dillon (1993) discovered the rate of growth remained relatively unchanged during the past five years. The 1992 comprehensive survey conducted by AIME revealed objections had decreased in Indiana by 20%.

The findings of this study supported those of Reichman (1993) and Williams & Dillon (1993). While objections increased slightly, the pattern of occurrences remained relatively unchanged.

Comments from some of the respondents further supported that frequency of objections remained relatively constant. "There have only been two objections to material in my 18 year tenure here." "...for 17 years I have had no problems with censorship." "In the approximate 14 years I've been librarian, I can recall only 1 objection..." "In 20 years, I've had 2 books challenged..." "Only two books have been questioned in the last 10 years." "The last objection I had was about 5 years ago..." "I have been here for 24 years and have had two complaints on materials." "I have been at this school for 10 years and have never had a complaint lodged." "In twenty-one years in the library only one book was questioned..." "Our school system experienced a censorship case in the 1985-86 school year..." "I have had one instance this year..." "Only once in my 20+ years at this site has there been a formal complaint."

Implications of the Results

The data from this study indicated objections did occur but their frequency was not significantly increasing as the library literature indicated. One of the purposes of conducting this research was the lack of Oklahoma references in the professional literature that reports censorship incidents. A false impression was implied that Oklahoma did not experience any disputes. A hidden assumption could be reached that those who experienced objections did not report them to the national monitoring agencies or the professional literature. Administrative dictates and autonomous decisions by the library media specialists offered possible explanations.

Topics

5. What were the topics of objections?

Results of the Study

This study revealed the most frequent topics of complaints were profanity, inappropriateness to the age or grade, explicit sex, nudity, occult, supernatural, and witchcraft. Profanity and inappropriateness to the age or grade received the largest number of complaints at secondary and elementary library media centers. Supernatural was the third leading subject at the elementary level. Combination library media center targets focused on explicit sex and the occult.

Holidays and scary contents were reported only by elementary sites. Literary merit and inaccuracy of content accounted for only 2% of the objections.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Previous studies of AIME (1992), Burress(1989), Chernick (1992), Fiske (1959) Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), Williams & Dillon (1993), and Woods (1979) found profanity and explicit sex composed the plurality of controversial concerns. Low response rates to the subjects of abortion, AIDS, drugs,

multiculturalism, politics, racism, and suicide indicated a shifting trend in the locus of objectionable topics. DelFatore (1992), People for the American Way (1994), and Reichman (1993) reinforced this shift by validating that New Ageism, Satanism, secular humanism, self-esteem, and witchcraft had become the most hotly contested issues.

The results of this survey confirmed the findings of other studies. Although profanity and explicit sex were still major topics of objections, it appeared provocations had shifted away from abortion, AIDS, anti-government, homosexuality, global education, and racism to Satanism, supernatural, and witchcraft, especially at elementary and combination library media centers.

Implications of the Results

One of the most surprising aspects of this survey's findings was that Oklahoma topics of objections duplicated international trends. Incentives for challenges in Oklahoma were nearly identical to those Williams & Dillon found in their 1993 Australian study. Morality topped the Australian list with 14.75% but nudity, obscenity, occult, and profanity accounted for 36% of the challenges. These same topics accounted for 34% of the objections in Oklahoma. Similarly, abortion, anti-Australian [government], drugs, and racism were not cited as grounds for challenges. Jenkinson's 1994 Canadian survey disclosed witchcraft and supernatural have replaced former objectionable topics. The objections made to elementary and combination library media centers in Oklahoma mirror Jenkinson's results.

This discovery offered several theories of possibility. The misinterpretation that objectionable topics were localized needs to be dispelled. Library and information science educators need to expand the rationale that collections must meet local community needs to collections must meet global needs. Two explanations might explain this phenomena. First, global networking is

intensive and expanding. Secondly, the speculations of those in the field that objections have hidden agendas and are really class struggles may be universal. Both of these speculations are worthy of further investigation.

<center>Objectors</center>

6. Who were the objectors and what were the common characteristics?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that the typical objector was a female parent between the ages of 36 and 40 whose highest level of education was high school. School personnel were the second largest group of objectors. A large majority of the situations were single item, one-time incidents. Affiliation with national or local groups was quite insignificant.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Results of Burress (1989), Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), Jenkinson (1986), and Williams & Dillon (1993) all verified parents were the largest source of objections and the second largest group were people from within the school. Fiske (1959) was the only researcher which showed more objections came from within the school than from parents.

In contrast to what AIME (1992) and Woods (1979) discovered, Abbott (1987), People for the American Way (1994), Burress (1989), DelFatore (1992), Reichman (1993), and Troy (1994) all found that over the past decade more and more challenges were initiated by people who identified themselves with an affiliated or specialized group. No former studies were found which dealt with age or educational level of the objector.

While results of this study fundamentally supported many of the previous studies, the percentage of parental objectors was about 30% less than what Burress (1989), Hopkins (1991), and Jenkinson (1994) found. The number of

parents objecting was closest to the findings of Williams & Dillon (1993) who attributed complaints to parents 49.5% of the time. The data from this study showed significantly more complaints came from within the school than the studies conducted by Burress and Hopkins, and Woods (1979). This data was closest to the findings of Williams & Dillon.

This study's results did not confirm the findings of Abbott (1987), People for the American Way (1994), Burress (1989), DelFatore (1992), Reichman (1993), and Troy (1994). Group affiliation was negligible.

Implications of the Results

Although group affiliation was rarely admitted, evidence existed that groups impacted library media center complaints. The changing complaint topics echoed the literature of the "Religious Right" and other activist groups.

Outcomes

7. What was the final outcome to the objection?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that retention rate was high. Outcomes in 52.17% of the challenges resulted in items being retained on open, unrestricted shelves. Resources were removed 21.74% of the time, restricted 15.22% of the time, and relocated to an older age library 3.62% of the time. Challenges remained unresolved in 7.25% of the cases.

The majority of the outcomes were determined by the library media specialist. When an administrator was the objector, no item was retained.

Erratic data did not establish a clear pattern between collection size and outcomes. Larger collections appeared to have more retentions and smaller collections more removals. Slightly more items were retained at secondary, grades 7-12 library media centers than at other combinations. Grades K-8 had

the most number of removals.

<u>Comparison to Previous Studies</u>

AIME's 1994 retention rate of 58.12% was the highest found by any of the studies. Hopkins (1991) discovered the second highest rate of 52.3%. The results of Jenkinson (1994) and Williams & Dillon (1993) both showed about one-third of the items were retained on open shelves. Hopkins, Jenkinson, and Williams & Dillon all found items were usually restricted about one fourth of the time.

Removal rates in past studies had considerable variance. Burress (1989) concluded material was removed in 53.8% of the cases. Reichman (1993) and Woods followed with 50%. Jenkinson (1994) found a 45% removal rate. People for the American Way's 1993 survey paralleled the 41% removal found by Williams & Dillon in 1993. AIME (1994) and Hopkins (1991) reported materials were removed about a fourth of the time. Busha (1972) concluded larger collections had less tolerance for removal.

Douma (1973), Fiske (1959), Hopkins (1991) and McDonald (1993) discovered that when the initiator was from within the school, particularly a district administrator or principal, materials were more likely to be removed or restricted. Hopkins and Williams & Dillon (1993) established a direct link between the principal's influence and actions on the final resolution to the complaint.

The data from this research was comparable to the rate of retention found by Hopkins (1991). Challenges resulting in retention were significantly higher than what Jenkinson (1994) and Williams & Dillon (1994) found in their studies. Removal rates were significantly lower than what Burress (1989), Jenkinson (1994), People for the American Way (1993), Reichman (1993), Williams & Dillon (1993), and Woods (1979) found. The results did confirm the removal

rates established by AIME (1994) and Hopkins.

The hypothesis that materials were likely to be removed when the initiator was an administrator established by Douma (1973), Fiske (1959), Hopkins (1991), McDonald (1993), and Williams & Dillon (1993) was confirmed by both the data and respondent comments. "...[principal] refused to take the objection before the review committee." "...since the principal was the party raising the objection no formal action was taken." "All of this mainly depends on the backing you get from your principal, superintendent, and school board!!" "...an administrator..is where I receive the least support."

No distinguishing pattern could be established regarding collection size and removals to support Busha's 1979 finding.

Implications of the Results

An unexpected result of this survey was the frequency with which the library media specialist determined the outcome of the questionable item. Fifty-one percent of the time, the library media specialist either informally or independently determined the fate of the item. The library media specialist was more likely to remove or restrict an item than retain it. Some of the respondents' remarks offered explanations for their actions. "I have removed a few books because of inappropriate grade level." "In two cases of challenged material, I agreed with the objectors. The books in questions were just not appropriate..." "I would not have acquired this book had I known of the particular section to which objection was made." "I agreed with her [the objector] and removed the series." One librarian's explanation described why library media specialists have autonomy, "This objection was not in the form of a request to remove from shelves so I personally reviewed the material and made a decision to retain it based on the belief that the material had merit and the comments would not be taken further."

Presence of a Board-Approved Reconsideration Policy

8. Did a board-approved reconsideration policy result in greater retention of materials?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that a definite correlation between complete use of a reconsideration policy and retention existed. When policies were completely used, 66% of the items were retained. When policies were not followed at all, retentions dropped to 43% and removals rose from 10% to 33%.

In the opinions of the library media specialists, policies affected the outcome only 33% of the time and resulted in retention 38% of the time. However, policies were completely used only 32% of the time. A fourth of the time, policies were not used at all. In more than half of the cases, the library media specialist made the decision without activating the formal committee procedure.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents indicated the school did have a board-approved reconsideration policy. Seventy-nine percent of the challenges were initiated as verbal, informal objections.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Burress (1989), Douma (1973), Fiske, (1959), Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), People for the American Way (1993) and Reichman (1993) established that having and adhering to a written, board-approved reconsideration policy resulted in greater retention of materials. Hopkins determined 72.1% of the schools had board-approved reconsideration policies. According to Williams & Dillon (1993), only 40% had approved policies.

People for the American Way (1993) stated material was almost twice as likely to be removed when policies were ignored. According to Reichman

(1993) when policies were followed, materials were retained 75% of the time. Hopkins (1991) found that policies were more likely to be followed if objections were in writing but only 27.1% of the objections were written and most complaints from within the school were oral. AIME's 1994 survey found objections resulted in written complaints only 16% of the time. Reichman found that in at least half of the incidents, the material was never subjected to formal review and objections were resolved in ad hoc ways. Hopkins said formal reviews occurred only 37% of the time. In Williams & Dillon's 1993 study, policies were only used 26.8% of the time.

This study affirmed findings of previous studies. The rate of retention was not as great as that found by Reichman in 1993. Removals from policy non-adherence were greater than what People for the American Way surmised in 1993.

Non-use of policy closely matched that found by Williams & Dillon (1993) but was less than what Hopkins (1991) and Reichman (1993) indicated. The number of schools which had board-approved reconsideration policies exceeded findings of Williams & Dillon by 52% and Hopkins by 20%. Written objections were submitted less often than what Hopkins and AIME (1994) discovered.

Implications of the Results

An unanticipated discovery in this research was how seldomly board approved reconsideration policies were completely followed. One realistic explanation for this discovery was that most objections were merely verbal and informal. If the challenges could be resolved internally by the library media specialist, there was no need to activate a formal procedure. Others indicated the parent wasn't asking for removal, just personalized service for their child.

Many comments from respondents indicated a strong belief in the

importance of having reconsideration policies. "It is essential to have a plan of action in place..." "Having a board approved reconsideration policy makes all the difference. It's a must." "...found that having my selection policy and policy for removal of materials and a committee in place and in our school board policy handbook stood me in a good position." "Because of our well thought out & board approved policy & committee, we have had very few objections." "A thoughtful complete selection policy prevents most problems..." "It is imperative to have a selection policy approved by the school administration and Board of Education..." "Our school has a very good selection policy...when books are challenged the review is done in a very professional manner." "At the elementary level, a selection policy is vital!" "The presence of a selection policy...supports the philosophy that a parent or group may only restrict access to materials for their child and no other." "We have a selection policy to which we adhere." "Our policy is explicit." "As a new media specialist, the first things I made sure were in force were a board-approved selection policy and a board approved reconsideration policy."

That the majority of the outcomes were pre-determined by the media specialist, mandated by administrative directives, and/or informally resolved without committee consultation, offered suggestions why two-thirds of the respondents felt policies were ineffectual. Policies were not given a chance to work. It is the researcher's opinion that media specialists perceived importance of a reconsideration policy was sometimes undervalued. Reconsideration policies might have been activated more often if their effectual value was fully realized.

In a few instances, the questionnaires were completed by library aides who denoted no policy existed. However, personnel from the same district indicated a policy did exist. The assumption could be made that the aides were simply not

aware of the policy. A recommendation from this research is that all staff be made fully aware of existing policy and procedure.

Media Specialist Action

9. What action did the media specialist take when an objection occurred?

Results of the Study

This study revealed that when an objection occurred, 48% of the time the library media specialist informally visited with the objector. The principal was notified 57% of the time. No one was notified 15% of the time. Formal written objections were requested 30% of the time. When a written objection was not received, or the objector was satisfied after an informal visit, the library media specialist reevaluated the item for literary and/or curriculum merit to determine the final outcome of the objection. Alteration of the material occurred in only 2% of the situations.

Secondary library media specialists exhibited the most deviation in their actions. They were the most likely to inform the principal but they were also the most likely to not notify anyone else. Secondary specialists tended to retain the item whereas elementary and combination specialists tended to remove the item.

If the media specialist needed advice, the overwhelming choice for consultation was the school principal. Slightly more than half of the respondents sought advice from within the school or district during an objection. Only 15% sought outside assistance.

Principals gave complete support during an objection slightly over half of the time. Complete teacher support was given almost half of the time. Principals and teachers gave no support at all in about one out of ten situations.

Comparison to Previous Studies

Fiske (1954) and Hopkins (1991) found library media specialists often sought assistance from someone else, particularly a principal, when a complaint was received. Both Jenkinson (1994) and Williams & Dillon (1993) indicated 3% of the material was altered. Burress (1989) and Chernick (1992) implied librarians, out of fear, were often unwilling to defend challenges.

This research supported what Fiske (1954), Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), and Williams & Dillon (1993) discovered in previous studies. The hypotheses of Burress (1989) and Chernick (1992) that librarians did not report objections out of fear was not substantiated by the data from this study. Library media specialists notified the principal almost four times more often than they did not notify anyone. When the decision was the specialist's discretion, materials were often retained. Specialists did not appear to be reluctant to informally resolve issues by visiting with objectors.

Added respondent explanations substantiated their lack of fear to report or deal with an objectionable occurrence. "I feel comfortable addressing censorship problems." "Most complaints or concerns have been handled informally." "I have always had support from the principals." "...when principals give the parents the form to fill out and inform them of the process, very few carry it through." "I do not mind playing public relations. I represent myself as someone who works with parents." "...when I gave them [the objectors] the objections form to fill out, I never heard from them again." "Usually these objections can be defused if they are taken seriously, immediately." "...after being told the procedure for reconsideration, he [the objector] asked that his child not be allowed to read the book or listen to it being read aloud." "The challenged book was checked out and then given to the Superintendent, who in turn gave it back to me." "When given Xerox copies of reviews and a form for them to fill out, nothing more was said." "...was offensive in parts to the objector

and myself, but I do not believe it was our place to remove it..."

Library media specialist actions indicated some individuality. "I provided references...and the material was put back on the shelf." "...moved to the back room for the remainder of the year and reshelved the following year..." "..temporarily removed it until the student graduated." "When I came, we had a 'reserve shelf', books of questionable material that students had to be 10th grade or older with parent's permission to check out. I phased that out, and as of yet have experienced no problems." "...had one patron who objected to my choice of news magazines...he has since subscribed for the school to receive [a title with an opposing viewpoint]...Problem solved!" "I put it back on the shelf, told her [a teacher] we did not believe in censorship here, and did not offer to discuss the matter further." "It is my experience that objectors mainly wish to be heard and sympathized with. Perhaps I am deceptive in my dealings with objectors but I usually respond by saying, 'I understand your concern, let me look this over.' Then return the item if it is appropriate."

Implications of the Results

It appeared many objections were informal and the library media specialist took appropriate action to defuse the objection in a logical, simple manner. Apparently, simply asking the objector to complete a reconsideration form sometimes obviated formal procedures. Specific data to document this observation was not within the scope of this study but future studies need to address this.

Further research needs to be conducted as to why library media specialists occasionally acted independently and did not inform anyone of the objection. Possible reasons for this action might be the informality of the objection; as some said, "it was no big deal"; or the specialist anticipates and fears the reaction of the principal if alerted. Some data indicated, theoretically media

specialists believed principals were a great source of advice, yet their assistance was sought only about half of the time.

<div align="center">Pre- and Self-Censorship</div>

10. Did an objection result in increased pre- and self-censorship by the library media specialist?

Results of the Study

This study found strong evidence that library media specialists did engage in pre- and self-censorship. Seventy-five percent of all the respondents said they avoided purchasing potentially questionable material. Forty percent indicated they would become more cautionary if objections should occur.

Occurrences of specialists removing material for other than routine maintenance and weeding significantly increased at sites which had experienced objections, giving further support to the hypothesis. Secondary sites showed the greatest avoidance increase after an objection had occurred. Elementary and combination centers showed a slight decrease.

The number one reason given for avoiding material was that it did not meet community needs. Past objections was an insignificant reason. Inappropriateness to curriculum needs was the overall reason for removing materials other than routine maintenance at all sites. Precautions to be taken if an objection should occur would be previewing material prior to purchase, buying only from recommended reading lists, avoiding materials which reviews indicated contained questionable content, and soliciting suggestions from others.

Respondent comments indicated practices of pre- and self-censorship were not uncommon. "Yes, I occasionally avoid buying books for fear of controversy. Because the way the board is and the administration would have me remove it

no matter what the committee decided." "We all need to object to graphic pictures and/or articles depicting sex activities...We will not buy this type of magazine or book if <u>anyone</u> objects!" "No facility can afford everything". "Since my funds are fairly limited, I seldom encounter controversial materials..." "...I don't have much money to spend and I use my money for more positive things." "Frankly, our library budget is so restricted that I don't have an opportunity to purchase much but very basic...Anything risky just doesn't get purchased." "Materials that I feel are 'sensational' or are printed 'to make a buck' do not have a place on my shelves." "Our society is subjected to so much violence, obscenity, and cruelty through media that common sense should be used in selection of reading material in schools." "...I try not to purchase materials that do not fit the mores of our community as a whole." "I try to select books and materials appropriate for our curriculum and student levels." "We try to be very careful to keep inappropriate materials off our shelves..."

Other comments show a different attitude. "I have questionable materials on my shelves. They remain because I feel they are 'valid' and merit their space." "I would not take materials off my shelves without a very valid reason." "...want students and teachers to have access to materials needed for that education." "I have some books on my shelves that other libraries have had to remove."

<u>Comparison to Previous Studies</u>

Chernick (1992), Cox (1979), Gottlieb (1990), Hopkins (1991), Jenkinson (1994), McDonald (1993), Reichman (1993), Troy (1994), and Woods & Salvatore (1981), all found evidence of self-censorship. Some methods presented by Jenkinson were placing items in special sections, altering material, and not buying questionable resources. Fiske (1954) found librarians often removed a book temporarily after a complaint. McDonald asserted librarians showed restrictive attitudes. Bump (1980) found librarians were not

influenced by incidents elsewhere when the book was already in the collection.

AIME's 1994 results showed 26% of the library media specialists treated challenged materials in the collection differently in regard to shelving or circulation. Fiske (1954) found 29% of the school librarians avoided buying controversial materials. McDonald's 1993 research found slightly more than one-third of the library media specialists agreed with restricting access and one-fourth felt books should reinforce family values.

Abbott (1987) argued it was easier to assess the affect of challenges on librarians who had experienced objections. Hopkins (1991) said feelings of pressure almost doubled in 20.7% of the media specialists who had experienced an objection.

The results from this study supported the findings of all previous studies. The number of respondents who would become more susceptible after an objection was greater than what AIME (1994) and McDonald (1993) found. The number of library media specialists who avoided buying controversial materials almost tripled what Fiske (1954) had concluded. Data further strengthened findings of Abbott (1987) and Hopkins (1991).

Implications of the Results

An interesting observation from this study was the decrease in avoidance of objectionable materials at the elementary and combination sites after objections occurred. It was suggestive that media specialists who experienced an objection overcame an initial fear of challenges; thus, becoming more receptive to adding or defending potentially questionable resources. Secondary sites created a diametrical contrast as they became significantly more cautious to future selection when a challenge transpired.

Not meeting community needs was the main reason to avoid purchasing while not meeting curriculum needs was the main reason to remove after

purchasing. It appears to this researcher that the reasons should be reversed. It is possible that library media specialists use these reasons to mask true reasons for removal because these reasons are considered acceptable and do not acknowledge pre- and self-censorship.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis that objections to the presence or appropriateness of library media center resources have occurred during the past three years and there is a relationship between these occurrences and final resolution outcomes and the selection procedures of library media specialists in Oklahoma public school library media centers was partially supported by the findings of this study. Resolution outcomes appeared to have no relationship to frequency of objections. Evidence was found that objections at library media center sites caused library media specialists to take a more cautious and apprehensive approach when adding potentially objectionable material to the library's collection.

Most Significant Results of this Study

1. The number of objections at all library media centers has only increased by 1% during the past three school years. Combination library media centers saw no gain at all. Secondary objections have significantly decreased.

2. Fifty-seven percent of all respondents had not experienced any objections.

3. Elementary library media centers were the most susceptible to objectionable occurrences. They were the only grade level which had more objections than nonobjections and the only level where objections

had increased. Urban elementary library media centers experienced the most number of objections. Forty-nine percent of all objections occurred at elementary sites.

4. Collections with 4000 to 8000 volumes had the most occurrences of objections.

5   Complainant affiliation with national or local groups was minimal.

6. Retention rates were high. Resources were retained 52.17% of the time.

7. The majority of the final outcomes were determined solely by the library media specialist.

8. There was a correlation between complete use of a reconsideration policy and retention of materials. When a board-approved reconsideration policy was completely following, two-thirds of the items were retained.

9. Reconsideration policies were only used 32% of the time.

10. The most significant finding was the parallelism in the results of this study and those done by Williams & Dillon (1993) in Australia and Jenkinson (1994) in Canada. In several instances the percentages found by Williams & Dillon could almost have been inserted into the results of this Oklahoma study. This implied censorship concerns addressed in this study were not limited to Oklahoma but international in scope.

Other Observations

A strong suspicion developed while analyzing the data, that the wider the grade span served by the school library media center, the more susceptible the center was to objections and the more difficult it was for library media specialists to select materials. Although the data from this study did not address nor support this supposition, it bears further investigation. Several respondent comments heightened this suspicion. "It is difficult to select appropriate

materials which fit this wide age range." "Since our school plant serves Grades K-12, it is not always possible to avoid having 7th graders check out material intended for 12th grade mature readers. Most of our complaints have been from parents of our younger readers who have brought home a book intended for an older reader." "Providing age-appropriate material for these three grades has been challenging." "It is difficult to purchase suitable books for ages 12-18..."

HB1017 put into law that schools must have board-approved selection and reconsideration policies. Effective June 30, 1995, all secondary schools were required to have full-time, certified library media specialists. Secondary objections significantly decreased during the 94-95 school year. Future research needs to monitor HB1017 and its effect on library media center objections.

It occurred to the researcher that during the 1993-94 school year when objections rose significantly, the general Oklahoma populace was in the thrust of a major upheaval over Outcome Based Education. It was possible that anger at this shift spilled over into anger at school library media center resources. A retrospective study is needed to substantiate this observation.

A finding from this study which needs to be addressed is the infrequency and inconsistency of using board-approved selection policies. Reichman (1993) pointed out that when policy is not followed, it creates a legal jeopardy for administrators and challengers may quietly succeed. Future resolution outcomes may have to be decided by following board-approved policy or legal entanglements could ensue.

Williams & Dillon (1993) proposed a new concept which has yet to be investigated. They offered that censorship could be viewed as educational malpractice. The implications from this theory need to be carefully considered by school library media specialists. It adds further support to the importance of

having and adhering to sound board-approved selection and reconsideration policies.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further research needs which spring from this study include:

•Do consolidated Oklahoma school districts with culturally diverse student bodies have greater frequencies of objections?

•Does the presence of a full-time, certified library media specialist reduce the number of objections or result in different resolution outcomes?

•Do education paradigm shifts and implementation of new educational strategies such as Outcome Based Education develop into displaced anger resulting in increased library media center objections?

•Why do library media specialists frequently determine a resource's fate without activating board-approved reconsideration policies?

•Can activist group impact on challenges be assessed by matching trends and topics with subjects of interest to group coalitions?

•Why are objectionable incidents rarely reported to outside monitoring and tracking agencies?

Final Thoughts

In the words of LaRue (1994) pro-choice and anti-activist groups agree on three areas:

1. Censorship is a conspiracy. In fact, it's a war.

2. The other side is devious, dishonest, and will stop at nothing.

3. The other side is winning.

This study did not set out to nor did it definitively settle the black and white

issues of censorship. Its intent was to expand old and introduce new findings which will offer school library media specialists a track on which to run. As Reichman (1993) said, library media specialists need to know who has influence, be prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue, and develop a reputation of openness and fairness to enhance the school's image. Teachers, librarians, parents, and citizens should be free to defend material while providing avenues for review. It is hoped that the findings from this study can provide some of those avenues.

References

Abbot, R. L. (1987). <u>A critical analysis of the library-related literature concerning censorship in public libraries and public school libraries in the United States during the 1980's.</u> Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, School of Library and Information Science. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 308 864).

AIME Intellectual Freedom Committee. (1994). Association for Indiana media educators 1992 intellectual freedom survey results. <u>Indiana Media Journal 16</u>(3), 73-80.

American Library Association . (1992). <u>Intellectual freedom manual</u> (4th ed.). Chicago: Author.

Apple, M.W. & Christian-Smith, L.K. (Eds.) (1991). <u>The politics of the textbook.</u> New York: Routledge.

Attacks on the freedom to learn. (1994). <u>Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, XLIII,</u> 179, 207-208.

Berge, R.C. (1970). <u>Libraries and cultural change</u>. Hamden, CT: Shoestring.

Black, H. (1967). <u>The American schoolbook</u>. New York: William and Morrow.

Broderick, D. & Curley, A. (1985). Censorship and selection. In D. Broderick & A. Curley, <u>Building library collections</u> (6th ed., pp. 154-160). Meutchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

Buehrer, E. & K. (1994). <u>Helping you create a positive public school experience</u> [Brochure]. (Available from Gateways to Better Education, P.O. Box 514, Lake Forest, CA 92630).

Bump, M.M. (1980). Censorship practiced by high school librarians prior to

(Actual) book selection. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kansas State University, Manhattan.

Burress, L. (1989). Battle of the books: Literary censorship in the public schools, 1950-1985. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

Busha, C.H. (1972). Freedom versus suppression and censorship: With a study of the attitudes of midwestern public libraries and a bibliography of censorship. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Casteel, C. (1995, August 31). More books challenged in schools. The Daily Oklahoman, p. 10.

Carlson, J. (1991). What are your kids reading? The alarming trend in today's teen literature. Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt.

Chernick, B.E. (1992). Introduction to library services. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Childs, H.L. (1952). Freedoms of communication. In E.M. Daniels (Ed.), (1954). The censorship of books. (pp. 32-36). New York: H.W. Wilson.

Commission on freedom and equality of access to information. Dan M. Lacy, Chair. (1986). Freedom and equality of access to information: A report to the American Library Association. Chicago: American Library Association.

Cox, C.B. (1979). The varieties of censorial experience: Toward a definition of censorship. High School Journal, 62, 311-319.

Daddy's roommate year's "most challenged" book. (1995). American Libraries, 26, 368.

Daniels, W.M. (Ed.). (1954). The censorship of books. New York: H.W. Wilson.

DelFatore, J. (1992). What Johnny shouldn't read: Textbook censorship in America. New Haven, CT: Yale University.

Demac, D.A. (1988). Liberty denied: The current rise of censorship in

America. New York; PEN American Center.

Dillon, K. & Williams, C.L. (1994). Censorship , children & school libraries in Australia: Issues of concern. Emergency Librarian, 22(2), 8-14.

Donelson, K. (1985). Almost 13 years of book protests...now what? School Library Journal, 35(3), 93-98.

Donelson, K. (1993). Ten steps toward the freedom to read: Step-by-step procedures for dealing with censorship. The Alan Review, 20(2), 15-19.

Douma. R.G. (1973). Book selection policies, book complaint policies and censorship in selected Michigan public high schools. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 078 448).

Eagle Forum. (n.d.). [Brochure]. (Available from Eagle Forum, P.O. Box 618, Alton, IL 62002).

Fiske, M. (1959). Book selection and censorship. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

Experienced fighters tell how to fend off censors. (1994). American Libraries, 25, 680.

Fiske, M. (1959). Book selection and censorship. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

Gabler, N. & M. (1978, Winter). A parent's guide to textbook review and reform. (Available from The Heritage Foundation, 513 C. Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 2002).

Gottlieb, S.S. (1990). The right to read: Censorship in the school library. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills Digest. Bloomington, IN: Smith Research Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 319 067).

Haight, A.L. (1970). Banned books: Informal notes on some books banned for various reasons at various times and in various places. New York: R.R.

Bowker.

Haney, R.W. (1960). Comstockery in America: Patterns of censorship and control. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Helsberg, A. (1994). Self-censorship starts early. American Libraries, 25, 768-770.

Hendrickson, L. (1985). Library Censorship. (1990). ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education. Boulder, CO: National Institute of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 264 165).

Hirschy, D.E. (1992). Mobilizing our community against 'blackmail'. School administrtor, 49(4). 16-18.

Hopkins, D.M. (1993). A conceptual model of factors influencing the outcome of challenges to library materials in secondary school settings. Library Quarterly, 63(1), 40-72.

Hopkins, D.M. (1991). Factors influencing the outcome of challenges to materials in secondary school libraries: Report of a national study. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, School of Library and Information Studies.

Jansen, S.C. (1991). Censorship: The knot that binds the power and knowledge. New York: Oxford.

Jenkinson, D. (1994). The changing faces of censorship in Manitoba's public school libraries. Emergency Librarian, 22(2), 15-21.

Jenkinson, E.B. (1986). The schoolbook protest movement: 40 questions & answers. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Johnson, C. (1994). Stifled laughter: One woman's story about fighting censorship. Golden, CO: Fulcrum.

King, N. (1989, January). Position on censorship in education (Rev. 1994) [Position Paper]. (Available from Parents' Alliance to Protect Our Children, 44 East Tacoma Avenue, Latrobe, PA 16560-1141).

King, N. (1985, October). Position: Ratings/labels on recordings and videos (Rev. 1994) [Position Paper]. (Available from Parents' Alliance to Protect Our Children, 44 East Tacoma Avenue, Latrobe, PA 16560-1141).

LaRue, J. (1994). Reading with the enemy. Wilson Library Bulletin, 68(1), 43-45.

Manley, W. (1994). Does intellectual freedom give libraries the right to lie? American Libraries, 25, 880.

Manley, W. (1986). Facing the public. Wilson Library Bulletin, 60(5), 40-41.

Marek, K. (1987). Schoolbook censorship USA. Viewpoints (120 - Reports -Descriptive 9141). ERIC Clearinghouse. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 300 018).

McClellan, G.S. (Ed.) (1967). Censorship in the United States. New York: H.W. Wilson.

Massie, D.C. (1984). Censorship and the question of balance. Social Education, 48(2), 145-147.

McDonald, F.B. (1993). Censorship and intellectual freedom: A survey of school librarians' attitudes and moral reasoning. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow.

National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association. (n.d.) Common ground: Speak with one voice on intellectual freedom and the defense of it [Brochure]. (Available from National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096).

National Coalition Against Censorship (1995). Homophobia: Instrument of Choice. Censorship News, 2(58), 2.

Nilsen, A.P. & Donnelson, K.L. (1993). Censorship. in A.P. Nielsen & K.L. Donelson, Literature for today's young adults, (4th ed., pp. 493-544). New York: Harper Collins.

Oklahoma State Department of Education. (1994). Oklahoma educational

directory: School year 1994-95. Oklahoma City, OK: Author.

Oklahoma State Department of Education. (1991). Library media programs in Oklahoma: Guidelines for excellence. Oklahoma City, OK: Library Media Section, Author.

O'Reilly, R.C. (1982). Censorship--or curriculum modification?. Omaha, NE: Nebraska State Boards Association Convention. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 226 432).

People for the American Way. (1993). Attacks on the freedom to learn: 1992-1993 report. Washington, DC: Author.

People for the American Way. (1994). Attacks on the freedom to learn: 1993-94 report. Washington, DC: Author.

Peterson, M. & Poppen, W. (1992). The right to challenge/the right to respond. Eric Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services, Ann Arbor, MI: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 347 479).

Reichman, H. (1993). Censorship and selection: Issues and answers for schools. Chicago & Arlington, VA: American Library Association & American Association of School Administrators.

Sendor, B. (1988). Good cases make bad law, and this curriculum ruling suggests the opposite also can be true. American School Board Journal, 75(9), 3, 7.

Smith, J.B. & Coleman, J.G. (Eds.) (1992). School library media annual. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Stover, M. (1994). Libraries, censorship, and social protest. American Libraries, 25, 914-916.

Troy, F. (1994, March 10). Thought police at work: A plague of censors. The Observer, pp. 1, 10, 19.

Wildmon, T. (1995). On the front lines of the culture war. American Family Association Journal, 19(3), 2,31.

Williams, C.L. & Dillon, K. (1993). Brought to book: Censorship and school libraries in Australia. Port Melbourne, Australia: ALIA Thorpe.

Wirtz, P.C. (1986). Censorship: Evidence of bias in our children's textbooks. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant.

Wolf, E. (1988). The book culture of a colonial American city: Philadelphia books, bookmen, and booksellers. Oxford: Clarendon.

Woods, L.B. (1979). A decade of censorship in America: The threat to classrooms and libraries, 1966-1975. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

Woods, L.B. & Salvatore, L. (1981). Self-censorship in collection development by high school library media specialists. School Media Quarterly, 9,(4), 102-108.

United Sates Department of Commerce. (1992). 1990 Census of population: General population characteristics of Oklahoma. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Appendix A

Survey of Objections Raised to the Presence or Appropriateness of Library Media Center Resources
in
Oklahoma Public Schools

You are being requested to participate in a survey to assess the current status of objections raised to the presence or appropriateness of school library media center resources. Your answers are totally <u>CONFIDENTIAL</u>! Your responses will be anonymously tabulated with other respondents to develop cumulative descriptive information.

> *This questionnaire has been approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board and thus ensures that your rights and welfare are protected.*

This survey is being completed by:

☐ Library media specialist   ☐ Principal
☐ Part-time media specialist/teacher ☐ Library media aide/assistant
☐ Teacher   ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

1. What grade levels are served by this school?

    ☐ K-5   ☐ 9-10
    ☐ K-6   ☐ 11-12
    ☐ 6-8   ☐ 9-12
    ☐ 7-9   ☐ K-12
             ☐ Other_____

2. How many students are enrolled in this school?

    ☐ 0-300   ☐ 801-1100
    ☐ 300-500   ☐ 1101-1400
    ☐ 501-800   ☐ 1401+

3. Is there a library media center in this school? _____Yes_____No

4. How many standard certified full-time and part-time library media specialists work at this school? If none, enter "0"
    _____full time_____part time

5. Does this school have a board approved materials selection policy?
    _____Yes_____No

6. Does this school have a board approved procedure to handle questionable material?
    _____Yes_____No

7. To the nearest thousand, how many volumes are in your collection?
    A volume is defined as a fiction or nonfiction book, an annual accumulation for a periodical, entire text of a microform, text material on CD-ROM, or online full-text database subscriptions.

    ☐ Less than 1000   ☐ 8001-9000   ☐ 15,001-16,000
    ☐ 1001-2000   ☐ 9001-10,000   ☐ 16,001-17,000
    ☐ 2001-3000   ☐ 10,001-11,000 ☐ 17,001-18,000
    ☐ 3001-4000   ☐ 11,001-12,000 ☐ 18,001-19,000
    ☐ 4001-5000   ☐ 12,001-13,000 ☐ 19,001-20,000
    ☐ 6001-7000   ☐ 13,001-14,000 ☐ 20,000+
    ☐ 7001-8000   ☐ 14,001-15,000 ☐ Other (Please Specify)_____

> For the purposes of this survey, an "objection" is an oral or written challenge questioning the presence or appropriateness of library media center material. It may be initiated by any member of the school staff as well as persons outside the school.

8. Do you avoid purchasing media center material which might be considered objectionable?
   _____Yes_____No
   If you answered **YES**, check **ALL** the reasons why you avoid purchasing potentially objectionable material?
   ☐ Adding the item might be viewed as a personal endorsement of the subject matter
   ☐ Administration instructions/restrictions
   ☐ Adverse publicity would result if the material was questioned
   ☐ Curriculum objectives would not be met
   ☐ Lack of supporting evidence to adequately defend the material if questioned
   ☐ Defending resource(s) would require too much of your time
   ☐ Fear of losing job or respect
   ☐ Inappropriate for needs of the community
   ☐ Knowledge that the material has been challenged in other library media centers
   ☐ Limited requests for the material
   ☐ Literary quality is unacceptable
   ☐ Materials might have a subversive or indoctrinating influence on the readers/viewers
   ☐ Materials do not meet the stated objectives in your selection policy
   ☐ Past objections have caused you to be skeptical
   ☐ To avoid community conflict/controversy
   ☐ To avoid conflicts with your personal beliefs
   ☐ Unfavorably reviewed in a professional selection tool
   ☐ Users might be offended by the material
   ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

9. Other than routine maintenance and weeding, have you ever removed material from the media center collection?   _____Yes_____No
   If you answered **YES**, check **ALL** the reason(s) why you removed the material.
   ☐ Avoid potential controversy
   ☐ Community beliefs and standards were not being reinforced
   ☐ Inappropriate for curriculum needs
   ☐ Professional journals alerted you to a possible controversy
   ☐ Resource has a history of being controversial in other media centers
   ☐ Other (please specify)_____
   ☐ Other (please specify)_____

10. If you should experience an objection to this school's library media center materials, would it affect your materials selection process in the future?   _____Yes _____No
    If you answered **YES**, how would it alter your selection process? Please check **ALL** which would apply.
    ☐ Preview all resources before adding to the collection
    ☐ Purchase only materials whose reviews in professional selection tools indicated no questionable topics
    ☐ Purchase only resources which appear on professionally recommended outstanding book lists
    ☐ Rely on a vendor to provide selections
    ☐ Request suggestions from parents, teachers, and students
    ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

11. If media center resources were challenged, from whom would you seek advice? Check **ALL** which apply.

☐ Community leaders   ☐ Media specialists in the district
☐ Electronic networks/bulletin boards   ☐ Media specialists in other districts
☐ Legal representation   ☐ School principal/administrator
☐ Local, state, and/or national library groups   ☐ Teachers in your building
☐ Local, state, and/or national education groups   ☐ University library professors
☐ Local, state, and/or national civil liberties groups ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

12. Counting this year, in the last three years has anyone objected to a book or other resource in this school's library media center collection? _____Yes_____No

13. Counting this year, in the last three years has anyone asked you to remove a book or other resource from this school's library media center? _____Yes _____No

If you answered NO to questions 12 and 13 proceed to question 38.

14. Counting this year, in your opinion, have objections to this school's library media center resources increased in the past three years? _____Yes _____No
    If you answered **YES**, to what degree do you think objections have increased?
    ☐   ☐   ☐
    Unchanged   Somewhat   Significantly

15. How many objections to library media center materials have there been in:
    _____1992-93 _____1993-94 _____1994-95

16. Who initiated the most recent objection to the material? Check **ONE**.
    ☐ Community resident   ☐ School media specialist
    ☐ Conservative organization/group   ☐ Student
    ☐ Grandparent(s) of student(s)   ☐ Substitute teacher
    ☐ Liberal organization/group   ☐ Superintendent/district administrator
    ☐ Minister(s)/church representative   ☐ Teacher in the school
    ☐ Parent(s)/guardian(s) of student(s)   ☐ Teacher from a different school
    ☐ Principal   ☐ Other (Please specify)_____
    ☐ School board member(s)   ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

17. Is this the first time this person has raised an objection to library media center resources?
    _____Yes _____No
    If you answered **NO**, how many other objections have been raised by this person?_____

18. The objector represented:
    ☐ Himself/herself   ☐ A local group   ☐ A national group

19. The objector's gender was _____male_____female.

20. Please check the approximate age of the objector:
    ☐ 5-10 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 56-60 ☐ Unknown
    ☐ 11-15 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 60+

21. The objector's educational background is:
    ☐ Non-high school graduate   ☐ College graduate
    ☐ High school graduate   ☐ Post-graduate work
    ☐ GED   ☐ Unknown

22. How was the objection initiated?
    ☐ Informal verbal request ☐ Formal written request ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

23. What action did the objectors request? Check **ALL** which apply.
- ☐ Reevaluate the value of the material
- ☐ Remove the item from the collection
- ☐ Remove the item from this media center and relocate it in a center serving an older age or grade level
- ☐ Remove the questionable portion by altering the content i.e. blackout the word, remove the page
- ☐ Require parental permission to use or checkout the item
- ☐ Retain the item but limit its access by relocating it in closed shelving
- ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

24. What type(s) of material did the objector question? Please check **ALL** which apply.
- ☐ Fiction book(s)
- ☐ Electronic network i.e. Internet or Online
- ☐ Nonfiction book(s)
- ☐ Magazine(s)
- ☐ Newspaper(s)
- ☐ Video(s)/Film(s)
- ☐ Other (Specify)_____
- ☐ Other (Specify)_____

25. What were the subjects focused on in the objection? Check **ALL** which apply.
- ☐ Abortion
- ☐ AIDS
- ☐ Anti-American
- ☐ Anti-Family
- ☐ Anti-Government
- ☐ Anti-War
- ☐ Conflicting Values
- ☐ Death Education
- ☐ Depressing thoughts
- ☐ Distorted view of life
- ☐ Drugs
- ☐ Ecology
- ☐ Evolution
- ☐ Explicit Sex
- ☐ Family Values
- ☐ Global Education
- ☐ Homosexuality
- ☐ Human Reproduction
- ☐ Immoral
- ☐ Inaccurate Content
- ☐ Inappropriate grade or age
- ☐ Literary Merit
- ☐ Magic
- ☐ Morality
- ☐ Multiculturalism
- ☐ Mythology/Folklore
- ☐ New Age
- ☐ Nudity
- ☐ Obscenity
- ☐ Occult
- ☐ Parental Disrespect
- ☐ Political Views
- ☐ Pornography
- ☐ Profanity
- ☐ Promotes Bad Behavior
- ☐ Racism
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Satanism
- ☐ Secular Humanism
- ☐ Self-esteem
- ☐ Sex Education
- ☐ Sexism
- ☐ Social Values
- ☐ Suicide
- ☐ Supernatural
- ☐ Values Clarification
- ☐ Violence
- ☐ Vulgarity
- ☐ Witchcraft
- ☐ Other_____
- ☐ Other_____
- ☐ Other_____
- ☐ Other_____
- ☐ Other_____

26. To your knowledge, what part of the objectionable item had the objector read or viewed?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%   Unknown

27. When the objection was raised, what action did you take? Check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ Did not notify anyone of the objection
- ☐ Formally reported the objection to the principal
- ☐ Informally notified the principal
- ☐ Informally visited with the objector
- ☐ Requested the objector formally submit the objection in writing
- ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

28. If you did **NOT** report the objection, which actions did you take? Check **ALL** which apply.
- ☐ Removed the item from the collection
- ☐ Removed the item and forwarded to a media center serving an older age or grade level
- ☐ Removed the item for a short period of time then returned it to the collection
- ☐ Removed the questionable portion by altering content i.e. blacked out the word, removed the page
- ☐ Retained the item but relocated it to a different area or a special collection
- ☐ Retained the item on open shelves but restricted its use to the media center
- ☐ Retained the item but required parental permission to check out the book
- ☐ Other (Please specify)_____

29. Did you seek assistance from within the school or district during this objection?
    _____Yes _____No

30. Did you seek assistance from outside the school or district during this objection?
    _____Yes _____No

31. Was the questionable item reviewed and evaluated by a formally appointed reconsideration committee?
    _____Yes _____No
    If you answered **YES**, what recommendation did the review committee make? Check **ONE**.
    ☐ The questionable material was retained on open shelves
    ☐ The questionable material was restricted
    ☐ The questionable material was removed from the collection
    ☐ The issue is still pending and remains unresolved
    ☐ Other(Please specify_____
    If you answered **YES**, was the recommendation of the review committee accepted as the final outcome?
    _____Yes _____No

32. What was the final outcome to the objection? Check **ONE**.
    ☐ The questionable material was retained on open shelves
    ☐ The questionable material was restricted
    ☐ The questionable material was removed from the collection
    ☐ The issue is still pending and remains unresolved
    ☐ Other(Please specify_____

33. In your opinion, to what extent was the materials reconsideration policy following during this objection?

    [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
    Not at all   Partially   Completely

34. In your opinion, to what degree did the presence of a board approved reconsideration policy affect the outcome of the objection?

    [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
    Not at all   Partially   Completely

35. In your opinion, did the presence of a board approved reconsideration policy result in retention of the questionable material?
    _____Yes _____No

36. What best describes the level of support provided to you by teachers in the school during this objection?

    [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
    Not at all   Partial   Complete

37. What best describes the level of support provided to you by the school principal during this objection?

    [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
    Not at all   Partial   Complete

38. Please add any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make:

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

Appendix B

University of Central Oklahoma

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Ext. 5721
Bilingual Education
Early Childhood Education
Elementary Education

Ext. 5682
Library Media Education

Ext. 5711
Reading

Ext. 5714
Special Education

Ext. 5705
Speech-Language Pathology

Library Media Education Department
Box 192
(405) 341-2980 X 5888

April 28, 1995

Dear Library Media Specialist:

The professional library literature indicates objections to the appropriateness or presence of school library media center resources are steadily rising.

I know you are extremely busy at the end of the year. I, along with your regular users, **need your help.** I am asking for your assistance in determining the characteristics of people who question the suitability or presence of resources and the impact these objections have on collection contents in Oklahoma public school library media centers. Only your knowledge and experience can help answer these questions. Your response is extremely important! The results of this study can provide a descriptive, predictive blueprint for public schools in developing sound policy which reflects all viewpoints.

I am asking for about twenty (20) minutes of your time in assisting me with a survey questionnaire as part of my doctoral dissertation. Your school has been randomly selected to assist with this research study. In no instance will individuals, schools, districts, or communities be identified or discernible in any resulting reports or summaries. The number on the survey is to let me know you have returned your questionnaire so that no follow-up mailing will be necessary. Your responses will be totally CONFIDENTIAL!

If there is more than one library media specialist in this school, the library media director/head is asked to complete the questionnaire. If there is no certified library media specialist in this school, the principal or other knowledgeable representative is asked to complete the survey.

Please return the questionnaire to me in the postage paid envelope by May 16, 1995.

If you would like for me to share the results of this study with you, please enclose your name and address with a simple note indicating you would like the cumulative results.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Pat Walts
Instructor

2

VITA

Patsy M. Waits

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS IN OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

     Personal Data: Born in Lawton, Oklahoma, on September 16, 1943, the daughter of James E. and Merrell F. Patterson.

     Education: Graduated from Anadarko High School, Anadarko, Oklahoma, in May, 1961. Received Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford, Oklahoma, in May, 1966. Completed the requirements for the Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, in May 1984. Completing requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in December, 1995.

     Experience: Teacher, Animas Elementary School, Farmington, New Mexico, 1966-1968. Teacher, Mustang Middle School, Mustang, Oklahoma, 1970-1983. Media Director, Mustang High School, Mustang, Oklahoma, 1983-1992. Instructor, Curriculum and Instruction/Library Media Education, University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma, 1992-present.

     Professional Memberships: American Library Association. American Association of School Library Media Specialists.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 04-26-95   IRB#: ED-95-078

Proposal Title: CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS IN OKLAHOMA

Principal Investigator(s): Bruce Petty, Patsy M. Waits

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

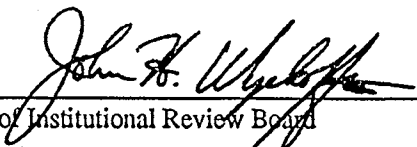ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: _____   Date: May 2, 1995

Chair of Institutional Review Board