Ethical Training: Censorship and Intellectual Freedom in the Public Library

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Abstract

This study sought to establish if a weakness regarding the provision of training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom identified in 1997 still existed. A questionnaire was sent to public library staff asking about their training experience in this area, and whether they felt adequately equipped to deal with issues related to intellectual freedom and censorship. 77 replies were received and four of these respondents later interviewed as well. A second questionnaire was also sent to lecturers who teach library and information ethics.

All respondents were questioned about information sources they used related to this area; the information available was found to be mainly adequate, but with significant scope for further U.K. focused literature. Regarding previous training experience only 16 of the 77 public library respondents had received any training in this area, some of which was limited or very specific. Interviewees also reported the continuing dominance of other training topics.

It is suggested that training at library schools should be strengthened and that relevant professional development courses should be created to address this weakness. The vast majority of respondents felt that intellectual freedom and censorship is an appropriate training topic, and many expressed a wish for a course which would provide a general overview of these issues. Although training content would need to vary, many respondents also agreed that training should be offered to all levels of staff.

Issues involving censorship and intellectual freedom were also considered to involve a significant element of judgement within a framework of ethical guidelines. This implies that some training regarding the interpretation of guidelines in a consistent, impartial way may be necessary. It is concluded that training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom is still weak and that if the library profession wishes to adhere to the principles of intellectual freedom it must promote them through training.   (304 words)

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

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1 - INTRODUCTION

Intellectual freedom and censorship have been concerns of the library profession for many years. Initially that concern often revolved around what material should be censored (Doyle, 2001:45-6; Krug in Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2002:5-6), whereas today there is a growing literature which advocates supporting intellectual freedom.

Intellectual freedom is a concept which many believe to be at the heart of the library profession (Byrne, 2000:61; Gorman, 2000:90; IFLA, 2007:1; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:126), and could even be considered the raison d'être for a library service in a democracy; the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) considers intellectual freedom to be both "the basis of democracy" and "the core of the library concept" (IFLA, 2007:1).

However, it is a topic which appears to have been neglected in the United Kingdom (U.K.). Curry's (1997b:149) study of censorship and intellectual freedom reported that "British… [public library] directors acknowledge that more training [on censorship and intellectual freedom] is needed at all employee levels", but that it "appears…to have a low priority because of its abstract nature and the more immediate need for training in new technical and service-delivery areas".

Ten years on, this dissertation seeks to establish if this weakness regarding the provision of training still exists by investigating public library employees training experience in this area, and whether they feel adequately equipped to deal with issues related to intellectual freedom and censorship. The research will also seek to ascertain how, if necessary, training could be improved.

1.1 Overall Aim

This research seeks to establish if the weakness concerning training for public library employees regarding intellectual freedom and censorship identified by Curry (1997b) still exists, and if so, to suggest how this problem could be resolved.

1.2 Objectives

This overall aim will be achieved by addressing the following objectives:

1. To examine sources of information that give advice regarding censorship and intellectual freedom currently available to public library staff.

2. To gather data about which sources of information public library staff are actually using (and/or not using), and to establish how they are using them to help with issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

3. To investigate if public library staff find the information currently available to them regarding the issues of intellectual freedom and censorship adequate for their needs.

4. To explore the views of professionals who are involved in training or advising public library staff about the adequacy of training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom.

5. To examine how training for public library staff regarding intellectual freedom and censorship might be improved.

1.3 Definitions of Key Terms

All of the key terms used in this study have many definitions with subtle differences. To examine them all would be a study in itself, therefore, for the purposes of this research the following definitions will be used:

1.3.1 Censorship

Censorship will be considered to be "the suppression of ideas and information that certain persons - individuals, groups or government officials - find objectionable or dangerous" (ALA, 2007b:1). This definition provided by the American Library Association (ALA) is particularly useful because it clearly defines censorship as a negative act which denies information.

It is this negative focus which is cited by those who claim a clear distinction between censorship and selection (Asheim, 1953; Malley, 1990). In contrast to censorship which seeks to deny information, it is claimed that selection seeks to include information and should be carried out with reference to organisational and professional, rather than personal, beliefs. The censorship versus selection debate is examined in greater detail in Chapter 3.2.3.

Additionally, the ALA definition broadly defines potential censors, alerting the librarian to the variety of directions from which challenges may emerge. It is also flexible enough to cover both external censorship where the pressure to censor comes from an outside source, and internal censorship where pressure may come from an individual or group within the library.

1.3.2 Intellectual Freedom

For the purposes of this study intellectual freedom is taken to mean "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction" (ALA, 2007b:1).

This definition is very similar to the IFLA definition (IFLA, 2007:1) and the appeal to the rights of an individual also indicates that intellectual freedom is a concept frequently linked to legal rights, for example the U.K. Human Rights Act 1998 (Office for Public Sector Information, 1998). Specific legislation is discussed at greater length in Chapter 3.2.2.

Both the above definition of intellectual freedom and the definition of censorship were included in the questionnaire that was used to collect data from public library staff. Respondents were invited to discuss any disagreement they may have with these definitions; however, none chose to challenge the explanations offered indicating agreement with the provided definitions.

Although censorship and intellectual freedom are issues in their own right, this author considers them to be inextricably linked because if one exists the other cannot be taking place.

1.3.3 Ethical Training

Hannabuss (1998:93) asserts that a "profession is not merely a way of making a living: it is carrying out an occupation or vocation with which standards of competence and responsibility are associated". To maintain such standards, it is necessary to train employees.

Training is fundamentally concerned with learning (Wetherly, 1994:3) and can be considered in either a broad or narrow sense; training activities may be restricted to specific courses, or they can encompass wide-ranging actions such as reading the professional literature to update ones knowledge and awareness of an issue. For the purpose of this study any activities or actions which seek to explore and promote ethical practice and the application of ethical standards can be considered ethical training.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

Unfortunately, it is far beyond the capacity of a Masters dissertation to survey every member of public library staff in the U.K. In addition, the researcher did not have access to information that would have allowed them to identify a representative sample of this population. Therefore, this study concentrates on a small sample of participants recruited through the researcher's personal contacts, the researcher's supervisor's contacts and the JISCmail Public Library discussion list.

However, it is hoped that the broad mix of job titles, and participants from many levels of the public library staff hierarchy, will help to address this problem. Additionally, the research does not seek to generalise to the population as a whole; it merely suggests that staff in similar situations may benefit from the suggestions found within this study.

It would also have been interesting to carry out a greater number of in depth interviews. However, time, geographical and financial restraints meant that this was not possible and it was, therefore, decided to limit the number of interviews to four.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

The subsequent chapter of this study, Chapter Two, outlines the methods used to conduct the research. Chapter Three then provides a literature review of relevant topics which also relates to the first research objective.

The analysis and discussion of the questionnaire results is split between five chapters. Chapter Four briefly summarises the basic information collected in the questionnaires to provide information concerning the composition of the research respondents. Chapter Five then examines what sources of information

are being used and their adequacy, addressing research objectives two and three.

Research objectives four and five are then explored in Chapter Six which investigates the training experience of public library staff and Chapter Seven which considers how training could be improved. The results of all of interviews are then discussed in the subsequent Chapter Eight and also relate to the fifth research objective.

Finally, Chapter Nine draws conclusions from the research, recommends improvements for training in this area, and makes suggestions for further research related to the issues covered in this study.

2 - METHODOLOGY

The inspiration for this research, Curry's (1997b:149) study, identified a weakness regarding training for public library staff relating to intellectual freedom and censorship. Therefore, an inductive approach was chosen to conduct this research because inductive reasoning allows an observation to be explored; it "proceeds from particular instances to general principles" (Powell and Connaway, 2004:17).

Curry's (1997b:149) observation was investigated by asking public library staff about their training experiences regarding censorship and intellectual freedom to establish whether or not the weakness identified in Curry's study continued to exist. Reasons why any weaknesses continued to be observed, and the views of lecturers, were then explored before finally suggesting what could be done to improve the situation.

2.1 Literature Review

Firstly a literature review was carried out. A literature review aims to: uncover information about what research has already been done in the area to avoid repetition; provide information about how previous research was conducted; and illuminate what the key issues are helping to provide a greater understanding of the scope of the topic (Hart, 2005:1).

The literature review also allowed the researcher to address the first objective of their research; to examine sources of information that give advice regarding censorship and intellectual freedom currently available to public library staff. This objective does not intend to produce a detailed critique of all sources, but to gain a general awareness of the content and availability of resources that

could be used for informal self-directed training. This knowledge can then be used to help develop recommendations for improvement.

The literature review focused on literature relating to censorship and intellectual freedom in libraries, and ethical training for public library staff. A consideration of codes of conduct and the role of a professional association was also included in the later category.

2.2 Data Collection

The first phase of the data collection comprised two lines of enquiry; one questionnaire for public library staff and an additional questionnaire for lecturers. These two lines of enquiry were not dependent on, or informed by, the responses of the other.

However, interview questions were designed to build on themes brought out by questionnaire responses, with a particular focus on the future of training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. For this reason the interviews were part of a second phase of data collection and took place after all questionnaires had been returned.

2.3 Public Library Staff Questionnaire

A questionnaire was chosen because Powell and Connaway report that this data collection tool "tends to encourage frank answers" and "eliminate[s] interviewer bias" (2004:125). A questionnaire can also be completed at a time convenient to the participant, and is inexpensive to produce (Powell and Connaway, 2004:125) which makes it useful for small-scale studies with a limited budget.

However, response rates for questionnaires are generally low. Therefore, a variety of avenues, including personal contacts as well as contacting a public library discussion list, were used to recruit participants to help address this problem.

It is also acknowledged that the use of a questionnaire prevents interaction between the participant and the researcher which may have led to greater insights, and does not allow participants to "qualify answers to ambiguous questions" (Powell and Connaway, 2004:125). It is hoped that this lost potential for insight is addressed by the interviews which are discussed below in Chapter 2.5.

2.3.1 Questionnaire Design

The absence of the researcher during the completion of the survey means that the questionnaire should aim to be as clear as possible. The pilot study, discussed in Chapter 2.3.3, should help in the identification of any areas of confusion. However, such mistakes can also be eliminated at the outset by good questionnaire design e.g. avoiding double questions which seek to examine more than one issue at a time (Bell, 1998:73).

Many of the questions were also open-ended to encourage the respondent to give any information they felt was relevant. Although open-ended questions can provide almost limitless responses and can be more difficult to categorise and analyse (Powell and Connaway, 2004:128) it was felt that due to the exploratory nature of this research, and the expectation that respondents would have varied experiences, that it was best not to use tightly structured questions.

Although care was taken to avoid using leading or presuming questions (Bell, 1998:80), the four structured Likert scale questions required the production of a statement for respondents to react to. Therefore, these four questions were

not neutral, but provided the opportunity for individuals completing to survey to select their opinion and explain their answer. These Likert scale questions were also placed near the end of the survey in congruence with Bell's view (1998:82) that more complex or sensitive questions should be located at the end of a questionnaire.

The use of Likert scale questions not only provided a useful way to gauge attitudes to some key issues, but also added some variation of question style which may help make the questionnaire look more appealing to potential respondents. Likert scale questions were also successfully used by Curry (1997) and Cole (1998) when conducting previous studies which addressed issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.

2.3.2 Content

The questionnaire for public library staff (see Appendix A) contained a combination of qualitative and quantitative questions. The decision to mix qualitative and quantitative questions was taken because the research question requires knowledge about, for example, *how* respondents are using sources of information, and *why* some participants feel they have not received training which requires a qualitative approach; in addition, quantitative questions regarding *what* training had been received were also necessary.

The questionnaire begins with quantitative questions asking for personal information regarding: the respondent's job title; age category; highest level of academic attainment; whether or not they hold a professional qualification; if they are a member of a professional body; and how many years they have worked in the public library sector.

The question regarding age asked respondents to select a category because, in congruence with the views of Bell (1998:81), it was felt that age is too sensitive an issue for many people to ask for an exact number. Additionally,

the question regarding how many years the respondent had worked for a public library service also offered categories to choose from because some respondents may not be entirely sure, or may not wish to give exact details.

These initial questions provided the researcher with some basic information with which to evaluate their sample e.g. if respondents seem to be mainly older or younger employees, and whether or not they are professionally qualified. It was not intended to be used extensively in the analysing process.

Participants were then asked to indicate what, if any, sources of advice regarding censorship and intellectual freedom they actually use. This question was open-ended and also included prompts to the respondent. It was felt that although this could be considered to be leading the participant, that it would not lead them to a certain opinion and would merely clarify the aim of the question.

Qualitative open-ended questions followed asking participants how they are using these sources of information, and their views on the adequacy of these information sources. These first questions begin to examine the second objective of the research; to gather data about which sources of information public library staff are actually using (and/or not using), and to establish how they are using them to help with issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Further quantitative questions were also asked about what training and advice public library staff had received, followed by more qualitative questions about their views regarding these experiences. Participants were also asked what training, if any, they would ideally like to have access to in the future relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.

These questions allowed the researcher to address the third and fifth objectives of the research: to investigate if public library staff find the advice currently available to them regarding the issues of intellectual freedom and censorship adequate for their needs; and, to examine how training for public library staff regarding intellectual freedom and censorship might be improved.

The first Likert scale question was designed to ascertain whether the respondent feels comfortable with dealing with a complaint relating to censorship and intellectual freedom. If they do not feel comfortable it may be due to a lack of knowledge and training.

The later Likert scale questions then explore the respondent's views on the appropriateness of training in this area, and whether or not this training should be provided to all levels of library staff. Finally, participants are asked to respond a question which states that 'individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to any complaints regarding intellectual freedom and censorship'. This question was included because if individual judgements are felt to be most important, then it may indicate a greater need for training than if library staff merely follow absolute guidelines which allow little scope for interpretation.

2.3.3 Pilot Study

In line with recommended research practice, the questionnaire design was piloted before it is sent out (Bell, 1998:75). After initial discussions with the researcher's supervisor, three members of the MA Librarianship course who were currently working in public libraries completed the questionnaire.

Two of the pilot study participants found no problems or ambiguities to report. The third pilot participant thought that the questionnaire was clear but that some library staff, especially Library Assistants, may be daunted by

launching straight into questions about intellectual freedom and censorship. They suggested the inclusion of definitions to address this potential problem.

As a result of this suggestion, two brief definitions of the key terms taken from the ALA website were added to the top of the survey (ALA, 2007b:1). These definitions were chosen because they were felt to be brief, yet informative, and do not seek to narrowly define who can be considered censors.

2.3.4 Contacting Potential Participants

Potential participants were contacted predominately via personal contacts of the researcher and their supervisor, and the JISCmail LIS Public Library discussion list. The participants did not form a representative sample of the population, but an accessible selection. However, given the inductive, and predominately qualitative nature of the research this was not problematic. Inductive research does not necessarily seek to be representative, but to illuminate an issue in greater depth.

The JISCmail LIS Public Library discussion list allowed the researcher to send an email (Appendix E) inviting the 900 list members to contact them if they would be willing to fill in a questionnaire. Asking potential participants to make contact with the researcher rather than attaching the questionnaire (Appendix A) and Information Sheet (Appendix C) to the email was not ideal; however, discussion list etiquette dictates that it is best to avoid sending large attachments that may fill up the recipient's email inbox.

At this stage it should be acknowledged that not all list members are suitable participants. The list members comprise, not only of public library staff, but also Library and Information Studies (LIS) students and lecturers, retired staff, and others with an interest in developments within the public library sector. There was no way for the researcher to identify exactly how many recipients of the email are practising public library employees.

In total, 86 questionnaires were sent out, and 77 were returned, giving a response rate of 89.5%. Although, a very good response rate was achieved, it is acknowledged that 77 people is still a very small, unrepresentative selection of the U.K. public library staff population. However, the inductive, predominately qualitative nature of the research should help to overcome this limitation.

2.4 Additional Questionnaire

A separate, simultaneous questionnaire (Appendix B) and Information Sheet (see Appendix D (lecturers) or Appendix F (advisors)) was sent to professionals involved in training and advising public library staff, but are not library employees themselves. For example, library and information studies lecturers, and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) advice staff.

This line of enquiry addressed the fourth objective of the research; to investigate the views of professionals, who are involved in training or advising public library staff, about the adequacy of training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom.

The inclusion of this additional perspective added depth to the investigation enabling the researcher to gain a greater understanding of views on the research topic outside of the public library, and to examine whether or not there is any marked difference between the attitudes of those advising on this subject and the public library staff.

It was particularly useful to gain another perspective from people with some experience of these issues, and who, by the nature of their jobs, are likely to be aware of the current state of training. It was possible that public library staff might be unaware of information sources available to them, therefore to

survey people involved in recommending resources provided additional information to help inform the researcher's analysis and recommendations.

It is also interesting to be able to compare the thoughts of outside observers with those currently working in the public libraries regarding questions such as: the appropriateness of training; who should receive training; and whether individual judgements or absolute guidelines are central to dealing with issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, adding greater depth to the investigation.

2.4.1 Content

The questionnaire focused on the same broad themes as the public library staff questionnaire. It asked about sources of information that the respondent would recommend, and whether they found the available sources of information adequate. Additionally, the survey asks what improvements they believe could be made in this area.

Finally, it repeats three of the Likert scale questions included in the public library staff questionnaire; the statements relate to whether training about censorship and intellectual freedom is appropriate in principle, whether training should be given to all levels of staff, and finally whether individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.

2.4.2 Potential Participants

Potential respondents were identified one of three ways: through module information regarding information studies courses; by contacting departmental secretaries at universities that run Library and Information Studies (LIS)/Information Management courses; or by their role within CILIP.

The researcher contacted the sixteen universities with LIS courses accredited by CILIP. Twelve of these universities replied, although four replied to say that they had forwarded the email to the appropriate lecturer and a further university explained that they had very little course content relating to the subject. Seven lecturers from different institutions returned the questionnaire giving a response rate of 44%.

An email was also sent to the CILIP Advice Team. However, a prompt reply explained that due to current restructuring the Advice Team no longer existed in its previous form, and that in future the Information Team would deal with general enquiries while more detailed enquiries would be forward to a new Policy and Advocacy section. It was suggested that I try to contact the committee members of the Public Libraries Group instead.

However, during the research period CILIP also launched the Information Ethics website. The content of this website indicated that guidance on ethical issues was provided to CILIP members by the Ethics Panel (CILIP, 2007d:1; CILIP *et al,* 2007:1). Therefore, the questionnaire was emailed to the Ethics Panel instead of the Public Libraries Group committee. Unfortunately, no response was received.

2.5 Interviews

Given that questionnaire-based methods of gathering data can often produce limited replies face to face interviews also took place with four public library questionnaire respondents, of the 24 who indicated a willingness to become more involved. Interviewees were chosen by geographical distance, due to time and money constraints, and represent 5% of the total respondents to the survey.

It was decided to use the interview questions to examine in greater depth issues brought up in the interviewee's questionnaire, and to explore areas which would provide the researcher with information about what could be done in the future.

Although respondents were previously asked to suggest changes that could be made to, or issues that could be included in, future training in the questionnaire the interviews do not repeat the same questions. The questionnaire mainly asked about what training had already been received, and the resources that are used to deal with queries relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, and presented statements designed to gauge views on training in this area. The interview provided greater scope to explore any conflicting answers given in the questionnaire, and to consider ways to improve training put forward by other questionnaire respondents.

Moreover, although interviews are time consuming and introduce the problem of interviewer bias, they are also much more adaptable than questionnaires; interviews allow the researcher to "follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings" (Bell, 1998:91). This is particularly useful when trying to gauge the views of participants regarding how training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom could be improved.

In congruence with the recommendations of King (in Millar and Gallagher, 2004:80) all interviews were recorded. Taping equipment was also checked carefully to ensure that the participant's responses were recorded. In addition, brief notes were taken during all interviews so as not to disrupt the natural flow of the interview (Millar and Gallagher, 2004:80), and more detailed notes were made immediately after the interview in case any technical failure had occurred. Interviews were not fully transcribed due to the limited amount of time available to complete the research; instead the recordings were used to check direct quotes where possible.

2.5.1 Content

The interview questions were semi-structured to allow a degree of flexibility while retaining a clear focus on the research topic (see Appendix H). Participants were initially asked five questions relating to: training providers; training methods; the role of ethics in the Chartership process; further details regarding the recipients of training, and finally, what areas of training had been prioritised in their library authority. These questions were designed to inform the researcher about ways that training in this area can move forward.

The first five questions, which were the same for all participants, were followed by two or three personalised open-ended questions designed to gather more detailed information about their previous responses. All interviewees were given an Information Sheet, asked to sign a consent form, and assured that their answers would be anonymised (see Appendix G).

2.6 Analysis

Analysis of the questionnaire results initially involved copying all the survey responses on to a spreadsheet, and anonymising the data by assigning each response a number or letter and removing any contact details that were given for interview purposes. In addition, any quantitative data to be analysed using the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was coded to prepare for later analysis e.g. 0=No Answer, 1=Yes, 2=No.

After the data was collected together the researcher started to analyse the data with reference to the specific objective of the research, for example collating information regarding the variety of sources of information that respondents are using to gain advice.

The analysis then progressed to the categorisation of the qualitative responses looking for common themes. This process helped to provide information about participant's current views and experiences, and enabled the researcher to gain an indication of what training public library staff would like to receive regarding intellectual freedom and censorship. Frequencies were recorded, and graphs and charts were also created where appropriate using SPSS and Microsoft Excel.

Interview data was analysed by identifying common themes and areas of difference between the responses of the four interviewees. Data collected from the questionnaires and interviews was then triangulated to allow the researcher to draw overall conclusions and make recommendations.

2.7 Ethical Concerns

Censorship and intellectual freedom are obviously delicate issues which were approached with an appropriate degree of sensitivity. However, given that the focus of the study was on participant's views regarding the training and information available to support dealing with these issues, rather than the issues themselves, any potential for offence was reduced.

It was also clearly stated in bold text that a participant has given their consent for the information they provided to be used by returning the questionnaire to the researcher, and all interviewees were asked to sign a consent form. Additionally, all participants were given an information sheet (see Appendix C, D, F and G) to explain what the research intended to do.

Additionally, it was made clear that no names would be used in the final report, that all responses would be anonymised, and that data would stored appropriately. All original replies, plus a copy made in case of technical failure, will be destroyed a year after the completion of the research.

3 - LITERATURE REVIEW

The debate surrounding censorship and intellectual freedom is not confined to the library profession; both are established topics in the field of political philosophy. Philosophical examinations of these concepts reveal a variety of opposing views and possible perspectives, though they often focus on consequentialist and/or deontological defences of both intellectual freedom (Ward, 1990; Woodward, 1990; Doyle, 2001) and censorship (Ingram, 2000).

However, for the purposes of this study it is most relevant to examine the concepts as understood by the library profession, and the practical impact of ideas relating to censorship and intellectual freedom in the library workplace.

The literature review also examines literature relating to ethical behaviour and training, which includes a brief examination the role of professional associations and codes of conduct. In addition, the literature review addresses the first objective of this research: to examine sources of information that give advice regarding censorship and intellectual freedom currently available to public library staff.

3.1 Censorship and Libraries

Debates about censorship and intellectual freedom mainly feature in the professional literature of librarianship in relation to practical issues such as stock selection, and studies of the attitudes and actions of librarians. There is also an increasing interest in electronic censorship due to the ongoing debate surrounding Internet filters.

However, Cole observed that:

"*the subject of 'intellectual freedom, censorship and the public library' is not discussed extensively in British library literature…*" (1998:16-17)

This claim is supported by Curry's (1997a:230) finding that censorship was "rarely a major concern" in Library Association Record between 1975 and 1994. Instead, much of the literature on the subject is of United States (U.S.) origin.

One reason for the apparent lack of U.K. literature on the subject is that Britain does not have a history of threats to intellectual freedom comparable to the U.S. (Oppenheim and Pollecutt, 2000:190-193) and, perhaps as a result, tends not to challenge censorship in the courts unlike the U.S. litigation detailed by Jones (1983:77-87). Additionally, the U.K. often seems to lack the kind of sense of entitlement that comes with having a Bill of Rights which protects freedom of speech, even if very similar rights can be found in pieces of U.K. legislation such as the Human Rights Act 1998 (Office for Public Sector Information, 1998:1).

However, although much of the literature is of U.S. origin, many of the professional values of American and British librians are similar (Dole *et al*, 2000), and, therefore, much of the sentiment of U.S. literature is relevant to U.K. library staff even if any legal or political advice would obviously need to differ between the two countries.

3.1.1 Censorship and Intellectual Freedom in Libraries

There is widespread condemnation of censorship as a restrictive, undesirable practice in the professional literature (Oboler, 1980; Jones, 1983; Malley, 1990; Byrne, 2000; Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2002; IFLA, 2004; CILIP, 2005; ALA, 2007b; Long, 2006; ALA, 2007d). It is criticised as an action which aims to

"suppress…ideas and information…to impose [the censors] view of what is truthful and appropriate" (ALA, 2007b:1).

Equally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, there is widespread support for the principle of intellectual freedom. Malley (1990:3) characterises intellectual freedom as "the essence of the profession of librarianship" a view which is supported by research done by Dole *et al* (2000:196) who identified intellectual freedom as a key value for librarians.

The centrality of intellectual freedom to the library profession is also echoed by both Byrne (2000:61) who states that "the free flow of information is the business of libraries", and McMenemy *et al* (2007:16-17) who claim that "free and equal access to information for all…is quite simply the fundamental reason for the existence of the profession". Gorman (2000:90) even declares that "librarians believe in intellectual freedom because it is as natural to us, and as necessary to us as the air we breathe?'

It is also frequently claimed that intellectual freedom is vital to the functioning of a democracy (Byrne, 2000:61; Doyle, 2001:49; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:19). Therefore, censorship, which would disrupt the free flow of information, is clearly an undesirable practice and one which conflicts with statutory duty of the library to "provide a comprehensive and efficient library service" (Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2000:4).

3.1.2 Legally Guaranteed Rights

Regarding more general ethical considerations, a respondent to Oppenheim and Pollecutt's study noted that "librarians in the [United States of America] have a written constitution to rely on that those in the U.K. do not" (2000:195). The key feature of the U.S. constitution relating to intellectual freedom is the First Amendment found in the Bill of Rights which states that: "Congress shall make no law…abridging the freedom of speech" (McKeever et al, 1999:523).

While this is true, it is necessary to stress that while the U.K. does not have an equivalent of the U.S. constitution, the U.K.'s uncodified constitution lies in its legislation. Although laws can be changed, while they remain unchanged they provide a degree of protection. In the U.K. similar rights to those covered by the First Amendment can be found in Article 10 of the Human Rights Act 1998 which states that:

"*Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference…*" (Office for Public Sector Information, 1998:1).

This Act supports the U.K.'s commitment to the freedoms found in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UN, 2007:1).

However, an absolute commitment to intellectual freedom in libraries may not be as straightforward as we may wish to believe. Questions have recently been raised over whether Hauptman's 1975 study would gain the same response if repeated 20 years later (McMenemy, 2007:179; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:xiii) illustrating concerns relating to intellectual freedom.

In 1975 all thirteen reference librarians supplied information on how to make a bomb (McMenemy *et al*, 2007:xiii). However, in the current social and political climate with memories of recent failed bomb attacks still fresh in many people's minds it is unlikely that many librarians would feel comfortable providing information on how to make a successful bomb no matter how fervently they believe in the principles of intellectual freedom.

It is possible that 22 years later instead of advocating an outright commitment to the philosophy of intellectual freedom that many librarians support a version of J.S. Mill's Harm Principle which allows restrictions to one person's freedom, if allowing them that freedom threatens harm to another

citizen (Wolff, 1996:117). Proving a threat of harm is obviously difficult, but given that the consequences of providing bomb making instructions is likely not be a minor harm, but death, it is probable that many librarians would prefer to be cautious and impose a restriction.

However, Hannabuss and Allard (2001:83) point out that we have already laws to restrict certain actions, and protect citizens from harm. If something is considered to be sufficiently damaging there is likely to be a law condemning it already, therefore, it can be argued that any legally available information should be provided.

Furthermore, Hannabuss and Allard (2001:81) also caution that while "too much control can be tyranny" equally "too much tolerance can dwindle into passive relativism". It can be inferred that concerns about sliding into 'passive relativism' may require some form of selection process and the use of professional judgement.

3.1.3 Censorship versus Selection

A significant amount of library related literature claims a clear difference between the process of selection which is deemed to be inclusive, and a policy of censorship which seeks to exclude material (Asheim, 1953; Jones, 1983; Malley, 1990; Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2002; Johnson, 2004; ALA, 2007b; Cain, 2006; ALA, 2007d).

Asheim eloquently claims that:

 "*Selection…begins with a presumption in favor of liberty of thought; censorship, with a presumption in favor of thought control. Selection's approach to the book is positive… Censorship's approach is negative, seeking for vulnerable characteristics*" (1953:1).

He also states that "selection is democratic while censorship is authoritarian" (Asheim, 1953:1) supporting arguments made above that censorship is an undemocratic practice.

The ALA is clearly influenced by Asheim's interpretation of the difference between selection and censorship, stating in their online 'Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q&A' that:

"*Selection is an inclusive process, where the library affirmatively seeks out materials which will serve its mission…By contrast, censorship is an exclusive process [which seeks] to deny access to or otherwise suppress ideas and information...*" (ALA, 2007b:1)

Similar sentiments are also found in Cain's (2006:8) article which presents an argument against censorship and exclaims that "the bedrock of all library work is selection" and that libraries should "select in a positive way" to maintain credibility.

However, it can be argued that selection can become tantamount to censorship if one is concerned with ends and not means (Ingram, 2000:125); fundamentally the end result of both selection and censorship is the library user cannot access certain items in that library. Hannabuss and Allard (2001:86) raise the argument that selection may be considered "a more socially acceptable word for censorship", a position clearly supported by Spiller (1991:16) who dismisses positive selection policies as a "euphemism…devised to soften censorship's image". This is a statement which many librarians may find objectionable, but perhaps does not lack an element of truth.

3.1.4 Censoring Actions

Despite the professional literature displaying a clear condemnation of censorship and a commitment to unhindered access, even research which documents the support of librarians for the principles intellectual freedom (Fiske, 1959; Busha, 1972; Curry, 1997b; Sutton, 2001; McNicol, 2005a) also exposed a tension between what is believed, said and actually practiced.

A number of studies have revealed that censoring practices are taking place, despite many librarians support for intellectual freedom; Fiske (1959), Busha (1972), Curry (1997b), Cole (1998; 2000), Sutton (2001), and McNicol (2005a; 2005b) all report the existence of varying degrees of censorship whether it takes the form of removal, moving or labelling of stock.

Fiske (1959:64) reported that nearly half of the librarians they interviewed "expressed unequivocal freedom-to-read convictions" but that:

"*when it comes to actual practice, nearly two-thirds of all librarians who have a say in book selection reported instances where the controversiality of a book or an author resulted in a decision not to buy*" (Fiske, 1959:64).

Similarly, over forty years later McNicol's study of school and children's librarians found that:

"*freedom of choice for young people was widely supported in principle, but when it came to issues such as control of dangerous or controversial ideas; labelling of resources; and restricting access to websites and books, many respondents failed to put these principles into practice*" (2005a:24).

In addition, Cole and Sutton's studies also revealed a preference for a "pragmatic" (Cole, 2000:44, Sutton, 2001:2) application of intellectual freedom which often involved acts of censorship, rather than a commitment to intellectual

freedom. Such pragmatism is also reflected in Curry's study which reported the view of one Canadian Library Director who explained that:

 "*the concept of in loco parentis is hard in a small community because you know the child and the parents…It's very hard to face the displeasure of your whole community, your close friends, when intellectual freedom is such an abstract concept to most of them*" (1997b:138).

Illustrating Hannabuss and Allard's (2001:83) assertion that "often issues are not black and white, but grey" the reality seems to be that librarians have to negotiate a number of competing concerns with intellectual freedom being just one of the many things to consider.

One action that falls short of refusing to buy or removing stock is labelling. Although not specifically condemned by CILIP, the ALA (2007c:1) dismisses labelling as a "censor's tool" clearly stating that "labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment…render[ing the item]… inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users".

In contrast, one U.K. library director interviewed by Curry (1997b:63) suggested that "labelling the nasty stuff helps the Christians avoid it and helps the sex-starved find it". However, the majority of the library directors that Curry (1997b:59) interviewed expressed reservations about it indicating concerns that labelling is a "slippery slope" (1997b:60) which could lead to demands for more and more labels.

Cole (2000:45) also reports that other studies have revealed "attempts to deny access have been made by elected members". This presents a very difficult situation for librarians because while they have their own professional ethics which support intellectual freedom, they are also employed by the local authority. Problems balancing the political and the professional were also

documented by Curry (1997b:186) concerning support from the local authority in the event of a complaint. One U.K. library service director reported that:

 "*if problems arose with the library service in a ward that they [the ruling party] regarded as marginal, they wouldn't hesitate to ditch the library service.* (Curry, 1997b:186)"

In such a climate, it is unsurprising that many librarians may seek to censor to avoid complaints arising, or to take precautions such as labelling to try and protect their position.

3.1.5 Internet

There is a growing body of literature which examines issues relating to intellectual freedom, censorship and the Internet. In similarity to a lot of literature relating to this research, there appears to be a strong U.S. focus. This may in part be due to a wider engagement with the topics of censorship and intellectual freedom in the U.S. but also relates to a recent piece of legislation; many American librarians are concerned about the impact of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) passed in 2000.

CIPA insists that libraries covered by the act install Internet filters on their computers "to retain federal funding and discounts for computers and computer access" (ALA, 2007a). This requirement is considered by many to have damaging implications for the achievement of intellectual freedom (Cooke, 2006; Gottschalk, 2006; Holt, 2006), and the ALA has clearly expressed its opposition to CIPA and any other form of blocking or filtering Internet content (ALA, 2007e).

Aside from concerns relating to the infringement of the principle of intellect freedom, practical problems are also reported. The filtering software used in many libraries is inadequate. Many problems are reported with so called "overblocking" where information that should be available is blocked, and

"underblocking" where illegal material or material which infringes a library's Internet use policy is available (Willson and Oulton, 2000:198; Gottschalk, 2006:1, Holt, 2006:1).

The problem of complacency regarding filters is also discussed in the literature. The knowledge that filtering is taking place, coupled with a lack of knowledge about the inadequacies of such software may lead some individuals to misguidedly believe that they, or their children, are unable to be exposed to material that is illegal. This was a problem acknowledged by the Library Association (LA), now known as CILIP, in a statement in 2000 (LA in Willson and Oulton, 2000:199), but little progress has been made in the last seven years. To address concerns and misunderstandings about the accuracy of filtering Cooke (2006:1) advocates user education and a greater emphasis on parental responsibility.

Other strategies for coping with the complexity of filtering, and demands for filtering by local authorities or national governments are also provided by the literature. Holt (2006:1) stresses that is it is necessary to test the limits of any filtering software to "vigorously investigate the product's setting" and examine what is being blocked. The librarian can then attempt to ensure that sites that have been blocked mistakenly are made accessible. If necessary it may also be possible to create user profiles which have changed versions of the computer's settings blocking far more content for child rather than adult users to comply with legal requirements such as CIPA (Holt, 2006:1).

More generally, instead of filtering, the ALA encourage:

 "*all libraries…to develop Web sites, including links, to Internet resources to meet the information needs of their users…within the existing mission, collection development policy, and selection criteria*" (Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2002:91).

This way the library can continue to encourage the use of quality resources, but all other information is still available if required.

However, there is an argument that views Internet filtering as merely a modern extension of library selection policy. Pors (2001:311) states that "acquisitions policies of public libraries…have always been a filtering mechanism" indicating that filters allow libraries to select websites in the same way that they did with physical materials.

This argument firstly ignores the failures of filtering software mentioned above, and secondly, additional opposing views can also be found within the arguments put forward in the wider selection versus censorship debate. It is possible to claim that the difference lies in the aim of the action. Selection policies for library materials aim to include items within a limited budget; in contrast, filtering prevents access to information that costs the library nothing and in fact creates a cost itself (Cooke, 2006:1)

Cooke (2006:1) also points out that selection by librarians is "usually [carried out] with reference to clearly defined and transparent acquisitions or collection development policies" which are not used by filtering companies. Therefore, traditional defences of selection do not apply and filtering is still regarded as censorship.

3.1.6 Age Restrictions

There is also a further philosophical and political debate of relevance to censorship and intellectual freedom regarding whether rights and restrictions should apply differently to adults and children.

J.S. Mill, in his essay 'On Liberty', expressed the view that the freedoms he advocated were "meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties" (Mill, 1985:69) acknowledging a duty to protect younger citizens, and implying a need for censorship. Similarly, Ingram states that "the bringing up of children is an area of social life where both extensive restrictions and directed guidance play an unquestioned part" (2000:53).

However, unlike the philosophical arguments put forward by Mill (1985) and expressed by Ingram (2000), the ALA (2007d) and IFLA (2004) specifically stress that intellectual freedom should not be restricted due to age. This view is also implicit in advice and guidelines on the CILIP website (2005; 2007a; 2007c); the CILIP statement on Intellectual Freedom, Access to Information and Censorship (CILIP, 2005:1) specifically states that "access should not be restricted on any grounds except that of law". In addition, the CILIP Code of Professional Practice states that librarians have a duty to "promote equitable access for *all* members of society to public domain information of all kinds and in all formats" [emphasis added] (CILIP, 2007a:1).

Although it should be acknowledged that libraries and their professional bodies do not necessarily advocate an absence of restriction for children. The ability to censor information can be considered to lie with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) (Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2002:153); it is not the role of librarian to take paternalistic actions which would involve the "exercise of power or authority over another person to prevent self-inflicted harm, or to promote that person's welfare" (Reeve, 1996:365).

3.2 Ethical Behaviour and Training

The availability of detailed literature on ethical decision making and training for librarians is limited (Winston, 2005), especially relating to intellectual freedom and censorship. However, there are a number of additional considerations also relevant to this area including the ethical considerations in general, the role of professional associations and codes of conduct.

3.2.1 Ethical Behaviour, Professional Associations and Codes of Conduct

Hannabuss (1996) asserts that ethical behaviour is closely linked to professional behaviour; a view clearly supported by CILIP (2007a; 2007c; 2007e), and Broady-Preston who states that "a key tenet of professional status is the existence and enforcement of ethical standards" (2006:55). Being a professional is about following agreed ethical standards and doing what is right.

However, "defining the 'right thing' is not always easy" (McMenemy *et al*, 2007:14), and training people to do the 'right thing' is even more complicated. Therefore, some form of guidance is often sought from the professional association because, among other roles, professional associations frequently produce codes of ethics to express and/or promote their professional values (Froehlich, 2000:268).

McMenemy *et al* (2007:28) claim that "ethical codes are useful documents for two specific reasons…[as] as model of behaviour [and to] communicate a set of values". Oppenheim and Pollecutt (2000:188) add more specifically that they also provide "standards of service to the client".

Although, CILIP (then the Library Association) is often questioned or even criticised (Usherwood, 1981: 233; Sturges, 2003) for failing to develop a code of professional practice until 1983 when the ALA adopted their code in 1938 this needs to be viewed in a wider context of U.K. business and society.

Schlegelmilch and Houston (quoted in Farrell *et al*, 2002:156) identified a "dearth of U.K. literature on business ethics in general and corporate codes of ethics in particular" in 1989. Additionally, a growth period for ethical codes was identified in the mid to late 1980s (Farrell *et al*, 2002:156) which coincides with adoption of CILIP's code.

Therefore, although it would have been advisable for the U.K.'s professional association to have taken a more proactive role, it appears that their adoption of a code was in keeping with the growth in ethical codes in the U.K. business sector, and so any intense criticism of the almost 50 year gap between the U.S. and U.K. may be a little harsh.

The importance and relevance of ethical codes relating to training is that training should be designed to help support professionals maintain the standards expected of them by their profession as detailed in such codes.

3.2.2 Decision Making

Hannabuss (1996:24) asserts that ethical training is about assisting people to make ethical decisions rather than indoctrination. However, over ten years after his observations there seems little evidence of established training courses which aim to help individuals to come to their own judgments while acting in a professional manner.

This is troubling given that Winston (2005:236) reports that "individuals overestimate their ability to make ethical decisions and underestimate the impact of their biases on their decision-making". Furthermore, Winston quotes an article from Harvard Business Review which stated that "more than two decades of research confirms that…most of us fall woefully short of our inflated self-perception" and are "deluded by…the illusion of objectivity" (Banaji et al, in Winston, 2005:239).

3.2.3 Training on Censorship and Intellectual Freedom

A concern for raising employee's awareness of "the illusion of objectivity" (Banaji et al, in Winston, 2005:239), is of relevance to Hannabuss's (1998:97) claim that "ethical professional conduct starts with effective and honest ethical self-examination".

It is possible that current courses such as CILIP's Reflective Practice for Library and Information Staff (CILIP, 2007f:1) may help to promote this type of approach, but it is also probable that many library employees may need further guidance on how to go about such an examination of personal values and beliefs relating to ethical issues. Oppenheim and Pollecutt identify that having a code is unlikely to be sufficient on its own; therefore, professional associations "can also offer education and training for members in relation to ethical matters" (2000:190).

However, McMenemy *et al* (2007:xiii) admit that "teaching ethical issues is notoriously difficult, given that…individuals…possess unique values and beliefs". This is further complicated by the problem that "for many ethical dilemmas there is no right or wrong answer" just options with a variety of potential outcomes (McMenemy *et al* 2007:125), and that "the necessarily broad terms used in [codes] means that they can be difficult to apply to specific situations (Oppenheim and Pollecutt, 2000:190). This is a challenge acknowledged by CILIP (2007e:1) who state that:

"*there are rarely 'right' or 'wrong' answers to ethical dilemmas but more often balances that have to be found between conflicting principles*".

Conversely, despite acknowledgments that ethical issues are complicated, implying that it is an area in which individuals might need extra guidance Cole's (1998) thesis identified a specific weakness in the profession's engagement with training relating to intellectual freedom. She suggested that

the issue would need to be examined in greater depth both at library school, and through continuing professional development courses to address this problem. This was a view echoed by McNicol (2005b:5) who also called for "more training, guidance and support in dealing with censorship issues, both as part of…initial training and on an ongoing basis".

3.2.3.1 University Training

However, despite such recognition of the importance of training and calls for greater engagement with the issues at library school, it appears issues of censorship and intellectual freedom are only briefly covered in many current university-based library and information courses (for examples see University of Sheffield, 2006; 2007; University College London (UCL), 2007; University of Wales: Aberystwyth, 2007). Additionally, there are appears to be only one module with a specific emphasis on professional ethics, and/or censorship and intellectual freedom; the Philosophy and Practice of Librarianship module at the University of Strathclyde (2007:1).

Despite Callahan's (in Winston, 2005:240) assertion that "a greater focus on ethics" is needed to "prepare future graduates for…ethical challenges" it is therefore unlikely that the issue is covered in any depth unless library school students choose to extend their learning through their own reading. This is regrettable because library school provides a particularly suitable place to learn about ethical issues because it provides a "'safe' environment for students to learn, test their ideas and perceptions, expose their biases, and develop their skill sets" (Winston, 2005:241) before being confronted with an ethical dilemma in the workplace.

Cole's (1998) thesis also gave rise to the concern that some graduates may not have covered issues such as intellectual freedom during their library school courses. Only three of the sixteen librarians Cole interviewed recalled receiving any training in this area at library school (1998:108). This reinforces,

calls for further engagement with ethical issues as part of continuing professional development (Winston, 2005:240; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:108).

3.2.3.2 Additional Training Providers

Additionally, there is little evidence of the existence of any ethical awareness training courses outside of university courses. Two bodies which offer training to LIS professionals, TFPL and Aslib, confirm that no course currently covers the areas of intellectual freedom and censorship and that they have no knowledge of a previous course covering these areas.

Furthermore, despite Broady-Preston's (2006:52) assertion that "CILIP views its role vis-à-vis education and training as one of fundamental importance", the last publication on censorship and intellectual freedom produced by then Library Association's publishing arm was in 1990 (Malley, 1990) and desperately needs updating; the sections on Section 28 are now only of historical interest because Section 28 has since been repealed. Equally, no training courses currently offered by CILIP are comparable to the Museums Association's continuing professional development course 'Ethical Problem Solving' (Museums Association, 2007a).

3.2.3.3 Information Ethics Website

However, although no specific courses have been organised and the last specific publication was 17 years ago, CILIP recently commissioned InfoResponse Associates and Oxford Business Associates to develop an ethics website designed to be both a source of information for LIS professionals, and a way to encourage discussion (CILIP, 2007e:1).

The website may help to fulfill CILIP's "duty to provide for professional development" (Oppenheim and Pollecutt, 2000:198), while also contributing to Oppenheim and Pollecutt's (2000:197) recommendation that the U.K. professional association "does more to educate members of ethical issues".

However, at the moment the website would be of limited use to many public library staff facing problems relating to censorship and intellectual freedom. None of the case studies explicitly deal with these issues; only four of the 32 case studies relate to the public library at all, and there are no case studies which engage with complex issues relating to children's information provision.

The only case of potential relevance relates to a customer viewing pornographic websites who a librarian later refuses to serve and is suspended as a result. However, the angle this case study takes focuses on the refusal to serve the customer, not the nature of information they wished to access, or whether or not this conflicted with any kind of so-called 'acceptable use policy'. It seems like an opportunity to discuss intellectual freedom has been sadly missed.

There is also currently no advice on the website which examines what to do when professional values of access to information conflict with local authority policies which may be useful to many public librarians; for example, regarding filtering requirements.

Although the Information Ethics website provides a valuable bibliography and is a useful start, is not currently particularly helpful for public library staff concerned with censorship and intellectual freedom. This appears to be an oversight given the assertion of the centrality of intellectual freedom to the library profession (Malley, 1990:3; Byrne, 2000:61; Gorman, 2000:90; IFLA, 2007:1; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:16-17,126).

4 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The overall aim of this study is to establish if the weakness concerning training for public library employees regarding intellectual freedom and censorship identified by Curry (1997b:149) still exists, and if so, to suggest how this problem could be resolved.

To achieve this aim the following five chapters analyse and discuss the data collected with reference to the second, third, fourth and fifth individual research objectives outlined in Chapter One. All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

After a brief summary of the basic information collected about respondents in Chapter Four, the analysis of the both questionnaires and the interviews are divided into four main sections reflecting the key themes of this investigation:

1)   Sources of information and their adequacy;
2)   Training experiences of library staff; and
3)   Improvements to training – Phase One; and finally
4)   Improvements to training – Phase Two.

Interesting remarks made by respondents in the 'Additional Comments' sections of the questionnaires are integrated into the discussion where appropriate.

Respondents to the public library questionnaire have been assigned numbers e.g. Respondent 4, while Interviewees have been assigned letters e.g. Interviewee A. Respondents to the lecturer questionnaire have also been assigned letters e.g. Respondent B.

4.1 Basic Information

The researcher collected the following basic, background information during the public library questionnaire to gain an indication of the composition of the sample and assist with recommendations. For example, if only a minority of respondents were a member of the professional body, it would not be helpful to suggest that the professional body co-ordinated training in this area. Equally, if very few respondents held a professional qualification then increasing teaching in library schools would have a limited impact.

This basic information was not designed to be used extensively during the analysis of the data collected. Therefore, only a summary of the information collected is included below; more detailed information about the exact composition of the public library sample can be found in Appendix I.

The questionnaire for lecturers asked only for their job title and institution to identify any key areas of responsibility. Problems contacting people who advise public library staff but are not lecturers are discussed in Chapter 2.4.2 of the methodology section.

4.1.1 Public Library Staff Summary

Overall, the public library sample was quite mixed with a wide range of working-ages, job titles and length of public library experience. The majority of respondents were also educated to degree level or above (86%), held a professional qualification (83%), and were members of CILIP (73%).

4.1.2 Lecturer Basic Information

Respondents comprised three Lecturers, two Senior Lecturers, one Subject Leader, and a Professor of Library Studies. Additionally, all respondents work at different universities.

5 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: Sources of Information and their Adequacy

Research Objective 2

To gather data about which sources of information public library staff are actually using (and/or not using), and to establish how they are using them to help with issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Research Objective 3

To investigate if public library staff find the information currently available to them regarding the issues of intellectual freedom and censorship adequate for their needs.

Research Objective 4

To investigate the views of professionals, who are involved in training or advising public library staff, about the adequacy of training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom.

5.1 Public Library Staff

Consulting information sources can provide library staff with knowledge of a particular subject without having to attend specific training courses. Therefore, respondents were asked to specify what, if any, sources of information they have consulted to answer queries relating to issues of censorship and intellectual freedom.

5.1.1 Sources of Information

31 respondents (40%) had consulted sources of information that relate to censorship and intellectual freedom. The frequency with which these sources were mentioned is indicated in brackets after each source of information.

The most popular sources related to CILIP; respondents referred to resources such as the CILIP website (13), the CILIP statement on intellectual freedom (3), CILIP publications (3), and a CILIP branch members' day workshop (1). Additionally, one respondent who had not consulted any sources of information indicated that if they had a problem they would use CILIP resources.

Web-based resources provided by other organisations such as the ALA (3) and IFLA (1) were also cited, as were professional journals/trade press in general (3). Additional popular sources of information were library school course notes (8) indicating the value of this professional training, and informal advice from colleagues (3) or mailing list participants (2).

Other more varied sources of information related to specific library authority or county council policy statements and briefings (8), internal training on selection (2) or gay and lesbian awareness (1), legal documents such as the Human Rights Act (1) and Obscene Publications Act (1), and general publications on censorship and intellectual freedom (2). Forty-Six respondents (60%) reported not having consulted sources of information relating to these topics.

5.1.2 Use of Information

Respondents who had consulted sources of information were also asked to specify how they used these sources. Twenty-Seven responses were received which can be divided into two main themes; problem specific, and background knowledge.

Sixteen respondents noted that they used these sources of information in a specific way to solve problems as they arose; Respondent 66 explained that they helped them to "ensure that I am making a well thought out decision".

A further seven respondents reported using these sources in a much more general way to gain a basic awareness of the issues. A typical comment from this group was that the resources were used to "get an overview of the general principles" (Respondent 12).

Three respondents also indicated that they had previously consulted sources but that they had not yet encountered a reason to use the information, or that their research had related to an essay at library school.

5.1.3 Adequacy

Overall, of the 31 respondents who had consulted sources of information the majority appear to believe that the sources of information available to them are adequate; 22 respondents (71%) indicated that they found the sources of information met their needs.

However, three of these respondents specifically reported that they hadn't actually had any reason to use the sources of information and so it had they been tested. Moreover, another respondent stated that while they currently found the sources of information adequate that "until something better comes along, it is hard to criticise what there is!" (Respondent 11).

Specific problems were also reported by seven respondents, three of which had also claimed that they found the resources to be adequate. Respondents recounted that it is "not always easy to understand if the information applies or not" (Respondent 41), that "it always take some hunting to fund what I want" (Respondent 14), and that the resources "seem to expect some background knowledge" (Respondent 10). Additionally, Respondent 44

declared that "if there is any up to date, accessible info available to non-expert library staff I have never found it!" It is probable that some basic training would help library employees to understand when information applies, direct them to useful information and provide some background knowledge that may be required to make best use of the information available to them.

5.2 Lecturers

5.2.1 Sources of Information

A wide variety of potential information sources relating to censorship and intellectual freedom were reported: IFLA FAIFE resources; CILIP statements and other web resources which had also proved popular with public library staff; ALA statements, web resources and publications; Canadian Internet Policy and Public Information Clinic website; a number of individual publications; and a blog relating to Freedom of Information also received one recommendation each. Only CILIP and ALA resources were mentioned by more than one respondent.

5.2.2 Adequacy

Similarly to the public library staff, all respondents seemed to find the selection of resources available to them adequate. However, Respondent C suggested that "there is still tremendous scope for good new material on these issues".

Four respondents also took the opportunity to express frustration at the difference between the U.K. and U.S. sources of information. Respondent F states that:

"*easily accessible material examining the debates around censorship philosophically and practically and on filtering specific to the U.K. context tend to be a bit harder to obtain*".

Respondent E took this sentiment further exclaiming that "the amount of material authored by British writers is very poor".

Furthermore, Respondent B reported that they found "the U.S. work e.g. ALA online resources far more useful than the CILIP resources". However, they went on to qualify their criticism stating that they "recognise[d] that U.S. advancements have been made out of necessity and that not all situations/policies are comparable".

5.3 Summary

Public library staff are using a wide variety of sources of information relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, with many looking to CILIP for resources and relying on library school course notes or the advice of colleagues. Lecturers are also keen to recommend a number of specific publications, but individual texts were not singled out by any public library staff.

All of these sources have potential to aid informal learning and gain a general awareness, but over twice as many public library staff are using them to respond to challenges as they arise. This supports criticisms revealed in the next chapter about the ad hoc nature of dealing with these issues in the U.K.

The majority (71%) of the 40% of public library staff surveyed who had looked at sources of information find them adequate although some comments have revealed that they are not always easy to use and that they may require background knowledge. It may also be difficult to evaluate resources without knowledge of what information sources could ideally provide. Lecturers point to a weakness in the U.K. literature compared to the U.S. and would welcome further sources of information that address this area. This weakness regarding U.K. literature was also identified in this study's literature review.

6 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: Training Experience of Public Library Staff

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Research Objective 5

To examine how training for public library staff regarding intellectual freedom and censorship might be improved.

To guide and support the formulation of suggestions for how training may be improved respondents were asked to explain and comment on training they had previously received. Alternatively, if they had not received training, respondents were asked to suggest why they had not received training in this area.

6.1 Respondents That Had Received Training

Given that the majority of the sample held a professional qualification, the researcher had hoped that many respondents would have received some training on censorship and intellectual freedom. However, only 16 of the 77 respondents (21%) could recall having received any training relating to censorship and/or intellectual freedom.

To ascertain how training may be improved these 16 respondents were asked to explain what training they had already received, three main things that they learnt from it, and what further training, if any, they would like to receive.

6.1.1 Types of Training

Respondents noted down a wide variety of training experiences including a specific course on stock selection, briefings on Freedom of Information and Data Protection, and a workshop at a regional CILIP members' day.

Library school lectures were mentioned with the highest frequency with nine respondents recalling such training. However, as mentioned above, given the high percentage of professionally qualified respondents (83%) it seems worrying that 61 respondents could not remember having received training.

Although Cole's (1998) study revealed that some respondents had not covered intellectual freedom at library school, it may also be likely that some respondents failed to remember this lecture, or equate training only with courses they are sent on by their employers rather than their professional qualification. For example, Interviewee B reported receiving no training in their questionnaire but later referred to lectures they had been to at library school during the interview indicating that in fact they had received some training in this area.

6.1.2 Training Content

To attempt to ascertain if the message of the training had made much of an impact, respondents were also asked to write down three main things they learnt from the training they had received.

Overall, the training appears to have had a positive impact on respondent's awareness of the complexities of issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship. Responses included: an awareness of the potential for personal bias; the need to be conscious of unintentional censorship; an understanding of the sensitivity of the issues; valuing the freedom of the individual; the legal position of libraries; and who to consult in the event of a problem.

6.2 Respondents That Had Not Received Training

The remaining 61 respondents (79%) could not recall having received any training in this area.

6.2.1 Reasons for Absence of Training

The two most frequently cited reasons for why respondents believed that they had not received any training on issues relating to intellectual freedom or censorship were because it is: "not necessarily an 'everyday' issue" and so is regarded as a "low priority" (Respondent 22); or that it has "no immediate relevance to [my] job" (Respondent 60). Both themes represented in these quotes received 12 mentions.

Similarly, Interviewee B also expressed the view that they thought they has not received any training because it was an issue not deemed to be relevant to their post. However, during the course of their interview they remembered that before they had taken their Masters that they had "had [a Mills and Boon book] thrown at [them]" by a disgusted reader, and was once "asked to bring porn" by a home library user. They reflected that had they had training that they "might possibly have dealt with it better, as it was I ran" (Interviewee B).

Recollections such as this indicate that the failure to immediately recognise incidents relating to censorship and intellectual may be related to a lack of awareness of the issues at the time and that perhaps the issue may arise more commonly than respondents first remembered. Interviewee B's reflection that they may have handled this better if they had received training, also seems to indicate that many library staff would benefit from further guidance.

Budget pressures and a lack of staff time were mentioned by six respondents while two respondents also indicated that it is "not considered a priority training need by library managers" (Respondent 68). More worryingly Respondent 66 also viewed it as being related to a "move away from

professional Librarianship" within their authority, while three respondents made reference to training being unnecessary because they felt that the values of intellectual freedom were upheld in their area; Respondent 49 reported that "the council would never operate a censorship policy". Such comments perhaps suggest a lack of awareness regarding unintentional censorship.

A further three respondents took a broader approach citing the U.K. position as a whole and the way that such complaints tend to be dealt with. Respondent 24 explained that they felt that "public librarianship in the U.K. seems somewhat reticent about these issues…issues are not addressed directly but answered on an ad hoc basis".

Such a response echoes additional comments made in the lecturer's questionnaire by Respondent C who claimed that the issues of censorship and intellectual freedom have "been neglected, even ignored, and that librarianship has been a poorer profession because of this". Additionally, in an additional comment public library questionnaire Respondent 32 commented that they believe the topic to be a "much neglected one".

6.3 Dealing with a Complaint

To try to ascertain how confident public library staff questionnaire respondents already felt with issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, and therefore what type of training they may require, respondents were asked to respond to the statement 'I feel able to confidently deal with a complaint relating to censorship and intellectual freedom by a member of the public.'

Figure 1: Confidence in Dealing with a Complaint

I feel able to confidently deal with a complaint relating to censorship and intellectual freedom by a member of the public.
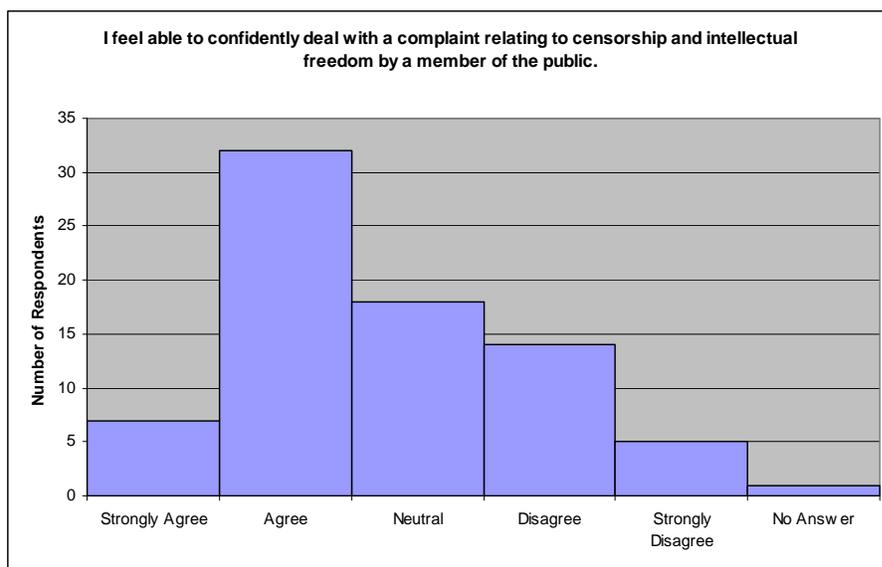
Over half of the respondents (51%) chose to strongly agree (9%) or agree (42%) with the statement. Just over a quarter (26%) of these respondents also made reference to some form of training, or knowledge of local authority policy.

Similarly, Interviewee A also referred to local authority policy and relevant parts of the staff manual that could help them when dealing with a complaint relating to electronic resources, as well as the course they had undertaken in book selection. However, not one public library questionnaire respondent or interviewee made reference to the CILIP guidelines on this issue.

Knowledge of who to refer people to, or the ability to find out information if required, was cited by a further three respondents. Previous experience, although not necessarily related to censorship and intellectual freedom issues, was also referred to by seven respondents. Similarly confidence in one's own ability to make decisions was mentioned frequently by eleven respondents.

It is interesting to compare this data to the answers given regarding whether or not training had been received. Not all those respondents who reported having had training earlier in the questionnaire indicated that they were confident; 3 (19%) strongly agreed, 8 (50%) agreed, 2 (13%) were neutral, and 3 (19%) disagreed.

However, despite this, a greater percentage (69%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement compared to the sample as a whole (51%). Additionally, over half of those who had received training but selected neutral or disagree had received limited or highly specific training.

The 18 respondents (23%) who selected a 'neutral' response predominately made reference to being unable to decide because it would "depend on the detail of the complaint" (Respondent 39), or that they were unsure because the issue "rarely comes up" (Respondent 19). Three of these respondents also indicated that they would refer anything difficult to a more senior member of staff.

The explanation of 9 of the 14 respondents (18%) who disagreed with the statement, and all of the 5 respondents (7%) who strongly disagreed, can be typified by Respondent 53's comment that they did not feel confident due to a "lack of training/awareness".

6.4 Summary

The vast majority of public library questionnaire respondents had not received any training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom. This is worrying given that the majority of the respondents have a professional qualification, but perhaps not unexpected; Cole (1998:108) previously identified that a number of participants in her study could not recall receiving any training in this area at library school.

Of those that had received training, library school lectures were most frequently mentioned emphasising the value of this professional training. The content of such training introduced respondents to a wide range of complex issues involved with censorship and intellectual freedom. Additionally, a greater proportion of those who had received training felt confident in dealing with a complaint compared with the sample as a whole.

However, the overall amount of people who indicated that they felt confident was also quite high given the absence of relevant training. It is interesting to consider the level of confidence identified with reference to a comment made by Respondent 67 who said that:

 "*I feel it's a topic we probably all feel we know about and don't need training in; but I suspect that in the face of actual situation, we might be less confident than we expect.*"

Such suspicions are also supported by Winston (2005:236) who reported that "individuals overestimate their ability to make ethical decisions and underestimate the impact of their biases on their decision-making". Therefore, it is possible that in practice respondents may not be as confident as they feel they would be, and therefore training may be advisable; re-asserting key values to the profession would not be harmful.

However, the level of confidence displayed may also be partly due to the existence of knowledge regarding who to refer such queries to, or because the respondents have experience in dealing with other kinds of complaints.

Additionally, respondents who had not received training indicated that censorship and intellectual freedom were not seen as relevant to their jobs, and that training was constrained by time and budget pressures. It was also suggested that perhaps the issues are not widely examined in U.K. Librarianship outside of context specific, ad hoc decisions leading to a lack of training.

These findings suggest that the weakness identified by Curry (1997b) seems to continue to exist. Most respondents have not received training, and many do not perceive it as relevant to their posts despite the depth of feeling in the professional literature that intellectual freedom is at the heart of the library service (Malley, 1990:3; Byrne, 2000:61; Gorman, 2000:90; IFLA, 2007:1; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:126). To address this contradiction, ways in which training can be improved and extended need to be examined.

7 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: Improving Training - Phase One

> **Research Objective 4**
>
> To investigate the views of professionals, who are involved in training or advising public library staff, about the adequacy of training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom.
>
> **Research Objective 5**
>
> To examine how training for public library staff regarding intellectual freedom and censorship might be improved.

7.1 Ideas for Improving Training from Public Library Staff

7.1.1 Training Improvements

Respondents who had received training were asked how, if at all, this training could have been improved. Three respondents specifically called for a longer examination of the issues echoing the sentiment of Respondent 9 who described their previous training in this area as "very brief".

Similarly, Interviewee D stressed that they would have liked a longer session because they felt the issues were only "touched on very briefly" and would have benefited from greater exploration. Interviewee D also felt that dividing the sessions into print materials and electronic resources may be a good idea because they feel that there is a "tension" in the way the profession approaches the two types of resources. In an earlier interview question they had expressed the view that while the focus for print resources was on access and availability, in their experience the approach to electronic resources was often far more "wary" and focused on restriction.

Respondent 30 also suggested that "follow up training" would be useful because these issues are "ongoing and changing areas," while Respondent 12 recommended that "some training with adult stock" may prove useful. In support of this suggestion it is worth noting that Respondent 11 cited the "group discussion of real life examples" as a particular strength of their training experience, and the use of stock was also described as a "brilliant way of stimulating debate" (Interviewee C). Given the practical needs of library staff such training activities would seem to be highly appropriate.

7.1.2 Further Training

Suggestions for further training from other respondents included: a course on copyright; a course on specifically on censorship; information about filtering software; follow-up training for already trained staff; the introduction of training for library assistants; a practical incorporation of the issues into customer care training; and a debate about "what happens in the 'real world' as opposed to the academic arena" (Respondent 69). The later suggestion highlights the tension revealed in the literature review in Chapter Three regarding the prevalence of actions of censorship despite being a profession which advocates intellectual freedom

In congruence with two respondents who had not received training, four respondents also specifically suggested that they would like to receive training which provides an update of the current legal situation and how this impacts on libraries.

7.1.3 Training Ideas

Respondents who had not received any training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom were asked what sort of training they would like to receive in this area. Fifteen respondents mentioned the words general, basic, overview or introduction in their answer, while a further four respondents made reference to some sort of briefing, frequently asked questions or guidelines. There was no

desire for in-depth training, but plenty of support for an introductory overview of the topic.

Eight respondents also suggested that they would be grateful for any training that would help them understand the area and its implications for their daily work. In addition, Respondent 4 suggested a "combination of ethical and practical considerations", while Respondent 66 called for "very focused, scenario based" training suggesting that "in the current political religious climate it is something we be more aware of".

This concern regarding the current political and religious climate is important because in the lecturer questionnaire Respondent F insightfully commented that "censorship arises out of fear/sense of threat to individual's values, and we need to show how we understand this and defuse it."

Interestingly, during their interview Interviewee A also stated that currently "a lot of extremist books aren't being bought for obvious reasons", presumably referring to the current socio-political climate, and indicating that a form of censorship is taking place at the moment. This cautious, perhaps reactionary, response would seem to be expected given Cole's (2000:44) finding that many librarians favoured "pragmatic day to day decisions" above a commitment to intellectual freedom.

The use of online training resources was also suggested (Respondent 41) and Respondent 24 indicated that they would appreciate some guidance in this area regarding the "complexities of operating within the structure of local authority government". Additionally, two respondents also specifically mentioned CILIP as a potential provider of the training they would like to receive.

7.2 Ideas for Improving Training from Lecturers

Respondent G called for greater engagement with the topics stating that censorship and intellectual freedom are "not addressed specifically enough for all levels of staff" indicating a continuing weakness in the professions' engagement with the issues. In addition, Respondent C was concerned that training would need to "aler[t]…[library staff] to their own potential role as 'censors' through their selection of materials and response to enquiries."

Furthermore, Respondent E unequivocally stated that such training "should form an essential part of every training or induction session for public library staff be they professional or paraprofessional" citing current concerns over Internet filtering. This view is also supported in the additional comments made by two public library staff who mentioned that in their experience issues relating to censorship currently only tend to arise in relation to Internet access. The increasing importance of this area is also reflected in the growing amount of literature on Internet filtering in libraries.

Respondent B also promoted the idea of CILIP and MLA taking a greater role in providing training and advice in this area suggesting that CILIP provide "more tailored guidance" and that "more provision should be made to respond to individual requests for advice", while MLA could provide regional advice and "funding towards training in this area." A greater role for CILIP was also envisaged by interviewees and is discussed in Chapter Eight.

Additionally, Respondent F called for action to "ensure that CILIP offers the same level of [Frequently Asked Questions] and case example support on its website as the ALA does" and suggested that these issues should be "buil[t] into the [Framework of Qualifications] and NVQs as well as in degree programmes." These comments reflect both the U.S. bias of information sources, and the need previously identified by both Cole (1998) and McNicol (2005a) for greater engagement with such issues as part of initial and ongoing training.

7.3 Appropriateness of Training

Respondents to both questionnaires were asked to respond to the statement 'In principle, I believe it is appropriate for public library staff to receive training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.'

7.3.1 Public Library Staff

Public library staff overwhelmingly supported the statement; 77% chose to either strongly agree (14 respondents) or agree (45 respondents), and no respondent selected the response 'strongly disagree'.

Figure 2: Appropriateness of Training
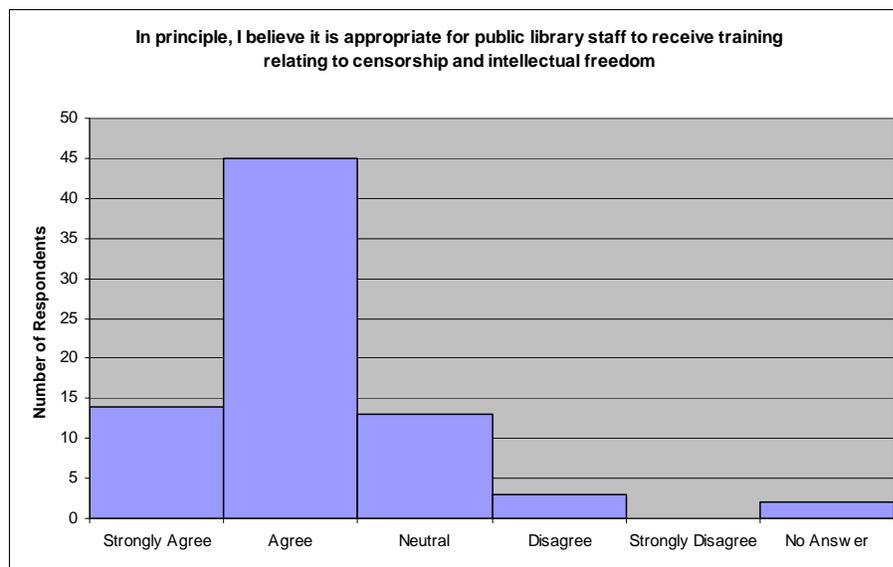
Reasons for agreement varied widely although contained certain thematic similarities, therefore, the main themes of the responses are represented below with illustrative examples taken from specific respondents.

The need for understanding and awareness of issues related to censorship and intellectual freedom was cited by over 20 respondents; Respondent 6 asserted that it is an "important area for current awareness" and it was suggested that "it is becoming more of an issue with electronic resources"

(Respondent 10). The increasing importance of electronic resources and the complexities they can create was also acknowledged by lecturers and other public library staff above.

Concern for informed decision making was also revealed in many responses; the importance of knowing what is legally required was mentioned by four respondents, while Respondent 19 asserted that training would "enable staff to deal with any issues effectively with knowledge rather than assumptions". The promotion of effective, ethical practice is particularly important given that Respondent 30 indicated that "it is my experience that certain staff still hold views that are against the freedom of others". This comment appears to substantiate Winston's (2005:236) claim that "individuals… underestimate the impact of their biases on their decision-making".

Additionally, Respondent 59 asserted that such training should be supported because "intellectual freedom is at the heart of the library and information profession ethical code". This view is clearly supported by both the professional literature (Malley, 1990:3; Byrne, 2000:61; Gorman, 2000:90; IFLA, 2007:1; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:16-17,126) and Respondent 23 who stated that intellectual freedom and censorship are "matter[s] that should concern every information professional".

Respondents who selected a neutral response tended to cite reasons which made reference to such training being "more interesting than useful" (Respondent 72), or that "in an ideal world" (Respondent 20) it would be offered but that there is "no immediate use for this training" (Respondent 60). It should be noted however, that neutral respondents displayed no outright opposition to the principle of offering such training, just doubts about its necessity.

Only three respondents disagreed; one chose not to explain why and another explained that it is "not an issue that comes up regularly" (Respondent 48). The final respondent who disagreed stated that training is "not essential as long as know main principles of censorship/intellectual freedom" (Respondent 54). However, they make no mention of where this knowledge may be gained if no training is available.

7.3.2 Lecturers

Three lecturers chose to strongly agree with the statement, while a further three agreed with it. The explanatory comment of the seventh respondent which states that training would "enable [public library staff] to give appropriate advice" (Respondent G) indicates that they support this statement as well, although they had not picked a response.

Figure 3: Appropriateness of Training

In principle, I believe it is appropriate for public library staff to receive training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom
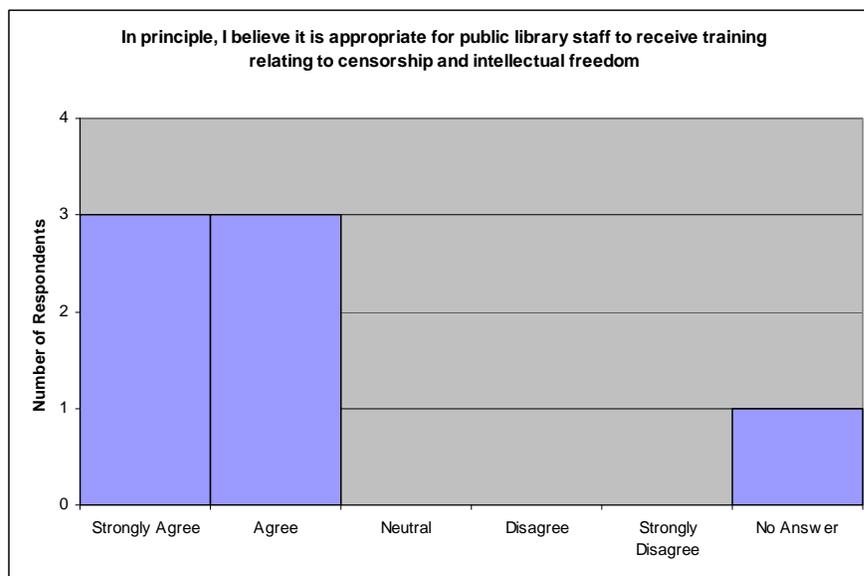
Therefore, perhaps unsurprisingly given their training role, there is unanimous support for training from the lecturers; Respondent E explains that such training it is important because "these values underpin why public libraries exist".

7.4 Recipients of Training

Both questionnaires also asked participants to respond to the statement 'Training on intellectual freedom and censorship should be provided to all levels of public library staff.'

7.4.1 Public Library Staff

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) indicated agreement with the statement that training on intellectual freedom and censorship should be provided to all levels of public library staff; one respondent described the content of such training as "essential information in this sector" (Respondent 76).

Figure 4: Recipients of Training
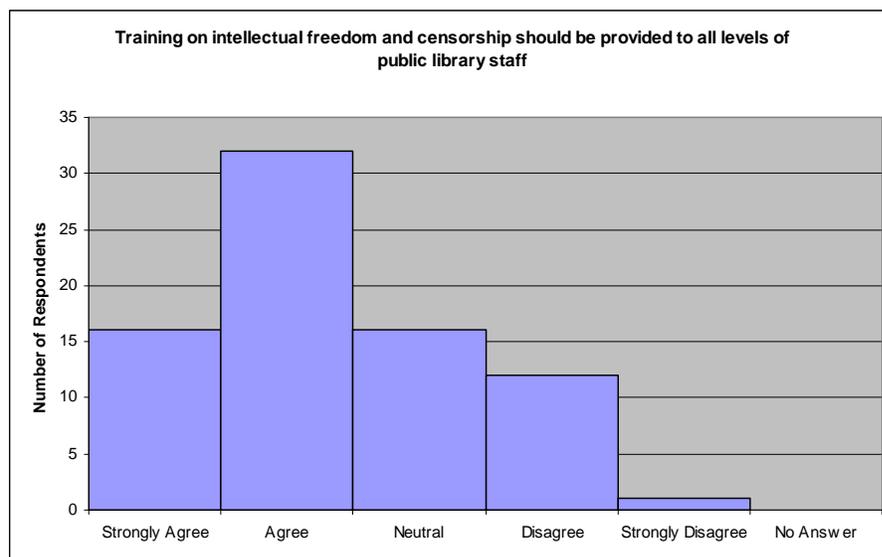
Sixteen respondents (21%) strongly agreed, while a further 32 people (42%) agreed with the statement. Comments regarding their agreement tend to stress that training regarding such issues was necessary because "library staff at all levels need to be aware of the responsibility to provide free access to information, but also of the legal and ethical constraints" (Respondent 5) even if the depth of knowledge varies depending on that staff member's particular job.

Additionally, a few respondents added comments indicating that training for all staff is appropriate because some library employees they have met do not act in accordance with the principles of intellectual freedom. This is not unexpected given the many studies which have reported the existence of various forms of censorship (Fiske, 1959; Busha, 1972; Curry, 1997b; Cole, 1998; 2000; Sutton, 2001; and McNicol, 2005a; 2005b).

The crucial initial role of frontline staff was also highlighted as reason to provide training to all levels of staff. Respondent 67 explained that they are often "first in the line of fire when people object", and they tend to "get the brunt of complaints" (Respondent 15).

Sixteen participants (21%) selected a 'neutral' response. Of these sixteen, six respondents indicted doubts about the necessity and relevance of such training, especially given tight budgets. Although three respondents also suggested that a basic vague awareness may be necessary, and Respondents 52 and 73 also suggested that some form of cascaded training may be useful.

Twelve people (16%) disagreed predominately citing a lack of necessity, costs or that training should be concentrated on more senior staff so that frontline staff can forward issues to them. Only one person strongly disagreed stating that library staff are "being trained within an inch of their lives already" and would "resent…unnecessary training" (Respondent 20).

7.4.2 Lecturers

Training for all levels of library staff was clearly supported in congruence with the results from the public library staff questionnaire; five respondents strongly agreed, while the final two respondents agreed with the statement.

Figure 5: Recipients of Training
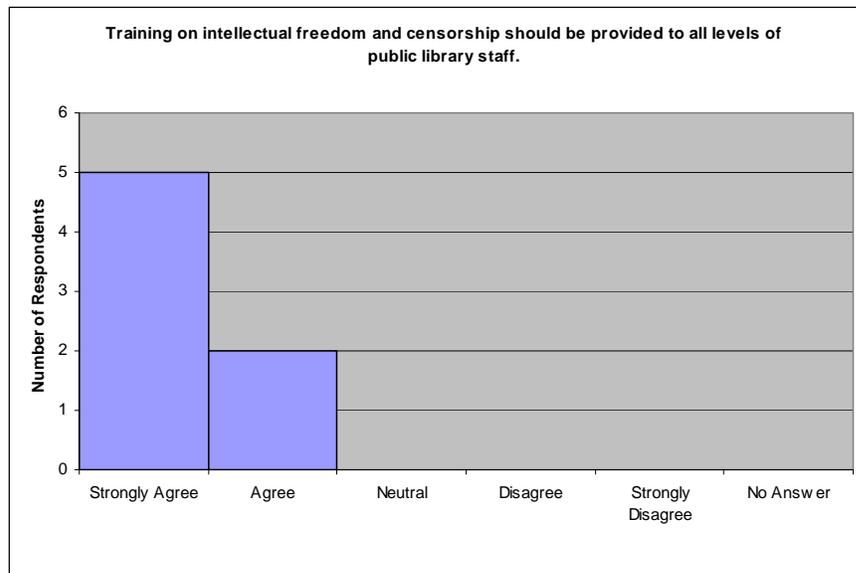
Respondent E stated that "if public library staff do not know why public libraries exist in the first place any service they may offer is weakened". Such a statement clearly echoes the view found in the literature that intellectual freedom is at the heart of the library profession (Byrne, 2000:61; Gorman, 2000:90; IFLA, 2007:1; McMenemy *et al*, 2007:126) and supports Respondent 24's additional comment that "these issues lie at the core of librarianship".

In addition, Respondent B stressed that training should be "focused in different ways" to achieve an appropriate level of detail for different staff members. This would also help to address some concerns raised in the public library questionnaire regarding costs, and help ensure that training is relevant.

Interviewee D also expressed the view that training should be varied for different levels of staff. They suggested that training for frontline staff should focus on: "dealing with complaints face to face"; providing an "awareness of library policy"; information about who to refer issues to; and promoting awareness about problems regarding censorship and intellectual freedom that frontline staff may encounter.

In contrast to this specific focus for frontline staff, Interviewee D then suggested that training for managers could examine the "wider picture" focusing on broader issues such as "address[ing] public concerns", the position of the professional association and the local authority, and balancing professional and political concerns given that the public library is part of local government.

7.5 Judgements and Guidelines

Finally, both questionnaires asked respondents to consider the statement 'Individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to any complaints that refer to issues to do with censorship and intellectual freedom.'

7.5.1 Public Library Staff

In contrast to the clear response of the previous two issues, respondents had very mixed feelings.

Figure 6: Judgements and Guidelines
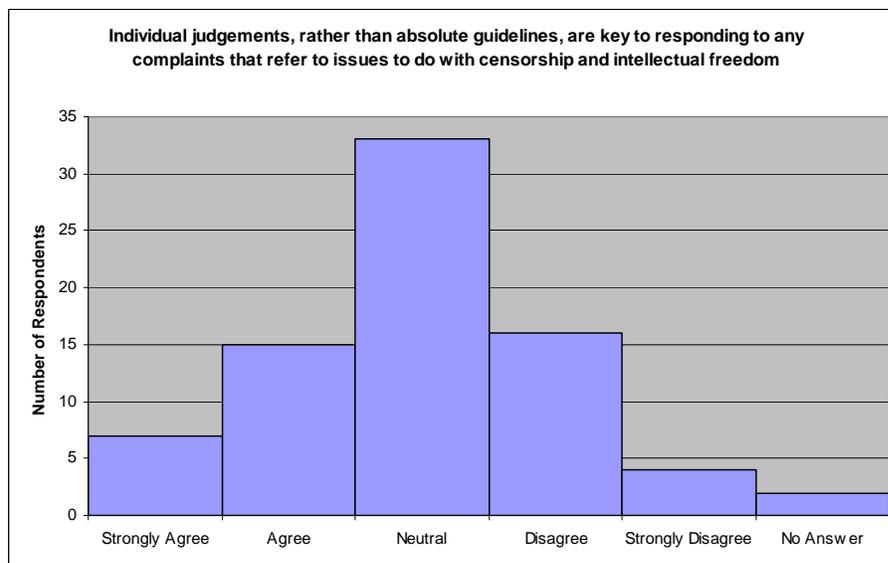
Thirty-three respondents (43%) selected 'neutral' and used the opportunity to explain their answer to clarify why they had chosen this response. Fourteen of these respondents indicated that they felt a mixture of judgement and guidelines were appropriate for dealing with such issues, and a further four respondents stated that many issues would be "context dependent" (Respondent 1).

The concept of discretion was mentioned by Respondent 56, and supported by Respondent 5 who suggested that there are "occasions when some element of judgement may be required…for example in relation to safeguarding children using the internet." However, it is likely that some librarians may disagree and assert that 'safeguarding' is merely another word for censorship; the ALA guidelines clearly state that access should not be restricted on the ground of age (ALA, 2007d).

Perhaps supporting such concerns about censorship taking place Respondent 11 worryingly wrote that "I would like to answer 'agree' to this, but feel that - having experienced certain people's response to issues of intellectual freedom - disaster may ensue".

The majority of respondents indicated the need for balance. Respondent 37 stated that "it is important to have clear guidelines but I also think that judgement and experience come into the equation". Such sentiments were also pervasive in the explanations of those who had chosen to agree and disagree with the statement as well. Respondent 43 who agreed with the statement declared that "guidelines there should be, but we should be able to exercise our professional judgement in individual cases".

Many respondents who agreed with the statement also indicated that it was the complexity of the area which required the need for individual judgements; Respondent 70 noted that "it would be very difficult to cover all possible situations in any guidelines". Similarly, Respondent 4 asserted that "guidelines are useful, indeed important, but not infallible, as this is an area with great shadings of interpretation". Other colour references to a "grey area" (Respondent 22) and the belief that a "black and white approach will not always be appropriate" (Respondent 53) were included in the responses of those who agreed.

Respondents who disagreed seem to be most concerned with consistency and ensuring that the relevant laws and organisational policies are followed. Respondent 37 also insightfully commented that "some staff will not feel confident to use their own judgement and might fear repercussions from employers".

Respondent 16 also provided a more cautious version of comments made by many of those who had agreed with the statement stating that:

"with any policy there will inevitably be grey areas and there should be some leeway for staff to exercise discretion. However, if this is exercised too freely, then there is a danger that the discretion will be applied according to individual prejudices and could then end up being discriminatory".

The closeness of the justifications and comments made across those who agreed, were neutral and disagreed indicates the complexity of this area.

Few respondents chose answers at the extremes of the scale. Only 7 respondents (9%) selected 'strongly agree', while only 4 chose 'strongly disagree' (5%). Respondent 59 strongly agreed that individual judgements have a key role because "this is not an area where blanket response, or one size fits all applies"; this sentiment was also echoed by other respondents in this category. Respondent 57 also stressed the importance of the role of the professional asserting that "we are professionals this is what we are paid for".

Respondents who strongly disagreed were mostly concerned with either the potential for bias and/or the need for consistency. Respondent 45 clearly states that "important decisions…should be based on objective and consistent policy, not on the whims and prejudices of individuals", a view supported by Respondent 33 who asserted that "religious, cultural and individual values vary immensely but libraries are for everyone".

The confusion, uncertainty and crossovers in reasoning revealed in many of these responses appear to support the view that these are complex issues that require a sensitive approach. There is support for some sort of guidelines, but these guidelines will necessarily need to be interpreted and, therefore, an element of individual judgement will be required.

However, for library staff to be able to make these judgements with reference to professional rather than personal beliefs it is likely that they will require some form of guidance and/or training. It would be unreasonable to expect staff to make complex judgements without guidance about how to approach such issues.

7.5.2 Lecturers

Respondents to the lecture's questionnaire showed a similar level of uncertainty to the respondents of the public library staff questionnaire.

<u>Figure 7: Judgements and Guidelines</u>

Individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to any complaints that refer to issues to do with censorship and intellectual freedom
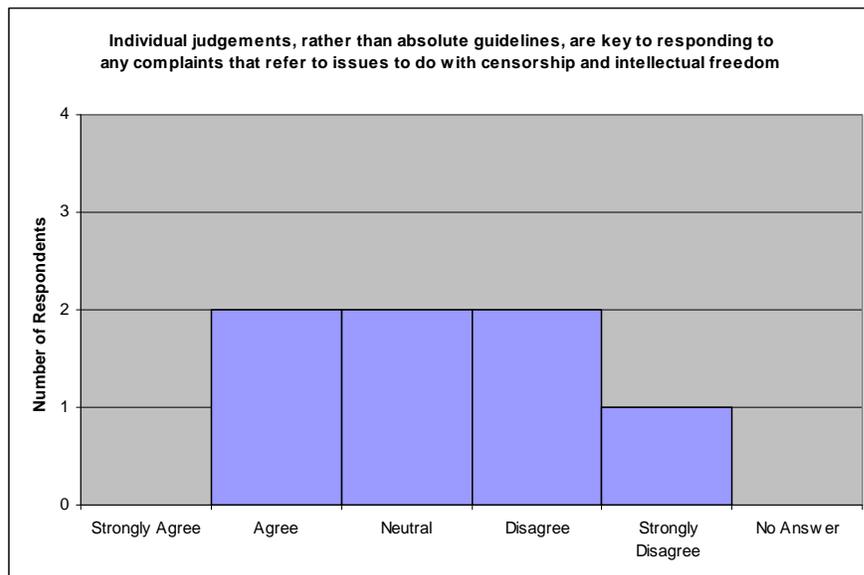
The two respondents who agreed with the statement stressed that judgements would need to be made within a "framework" (Respondent F) because there is a need for judgements to be taken "within certain parameters" and they can be used as a "support mechanism" (Respondent B) to try and ensure that decisions are made without bias. Respondent F viewed guidelines as necessary "to guide and protect staff and to ensure consistency and fairness for users, but we also need common sense" because "if we are absolute, we create as many problems as having no framework". Therefore, judgement is a crucial part of this complex issue.

One of the respondents who selected 'neutral' made very similar comments saying that individual judgement was necessary to interpret "broad (not absolute) guidelines" (Respondent C). Again the issue is presented as a question of balance between an agreed procedure and judgement.

The other respondent who selected a 'neutral' response indicated a degree of concern and unease about the role of judgement saying that "this is difficult" because "often [personal judgement] can be the problem but no-one ever admits to their own subjective and personal biases being flawed or prejudiced". This echoes the concerns of Winston (2005:236) that "individuals overestimate their ability to make ethical decisions".

Similarly, both respondents who disagreed with the statement indicated concerns about individual prejudice. Respondent A stressed that "it is important personal prejudices so not get in the way of good practice" while Respondent G stated that "individual judgements are too subjective". Respondent G also went on to echo some of the concerns of the respondents who agreed with the statement saying that:

"*guidelines and good interpretation of legal responsibility linked with a sound knowledge of cultural and moral requirements of the social structure/connect are needed to enable sound decisions and responses to be made*".

Yet again, a need for guidelines is indicated, but a degree of interpretation also seems to be inevitable.

However, Respondent E, who strongly disagreed with the statement, cites the 'slippery slope' argument regarding giving in to complaints and making individual judgements clearly stating that "individual judgements could also include religious or moral prejudice in stock selection." They believe that "libraries need to defend intellectual freedom and battle censorship based on core shared values" and that "it cannot be left to individuals to decide."

7.6 Summary

In general, there is widespread agreement from both those who teach potential public library staff about ethical issues, and from public library staff themselves, that training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom is appropriate. The content of this training would need to cover relevant issues such as the current legal situation, information about filtering software and a discussion on stock censorship.

Ideally, training courses should include a discussion of real life situations using items of stock for discussion as recommended by Respondent 12 and Interviewee C. The inclusion of such practical tasks helps to increase the relevance of the training to the workplace and prevents it from being a confusing abstract concept. Stock based training may also help to address the concern of Respondent C that library staff should be "altered to their own potential role as 'censors' ".

There is no immediate need for in-depth training; the majority of respondent indicated that they would support receiving a general overview of censorship and intellectual freedom. However, in-depth philosophical discussion is still valid and would perhaps be more suited to journal articles which could be read to extend one's knowledge, or included in training for those at the top of the decision making structure, rather than in basic training courses.

Respondents who have previously received training also suggested that training sessions should be longer than the brief lectures and workshops they had attended before. The role of CILIP was specifically mentioned by respondents to both questionnaires, and will be explored further in the following chapter, while the additional involvement of MLA given increasing regionalisation was also suggested by Respondent B, in similarity to two interviewees.

Additionally, there is strong support for providing training to all levels of staff; while often it may be professionally qualified librarians who respond to any complaints frontline staff need to be able to recognise issues and forward them to the appropriate person. Equally, a large number of professionally qualified staff in this research previously reported having received no training on censorship and intellectual freedom and so may benefit from gaining knowledge in this area. To make an impact it is an issue that needs to be addressed across the profession.

Finally, dealing with issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom are predominately seen to involve a difficult balancing act between judgement and guidelines. Therefore, those higher up in the decision making structure may benefit from training which examines the complexity of dealing with competing demands and how to interpret guidelines in consistent ways.

8 - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: Improving Training - Phase Two

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Research Objective 5

To examine how training for public library staff regarding intellectual freedom and censorship might be improved.

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Interviews were carried out after the first phase of analysis. They discussed issues raised in the questionnaires, and gained further opinions on training for public library staff based on suggestions made in the questionnaires. Some interview data has also been integrated into the previous two chapters of analysis where appropriate.

Unfortunately, recording quality of all interviews was not very clear and therefore, very few long direct quotes have been included. To avoid the possibility of misquoting interviewees the analysis relies instead on comments that can be heard clearly on the recording and the researcher's notes made both at the time and immediately after the interviews.

8.1 Training Providers

All interviewees indicated that they thought that CILIP should take a central role. Interviewee A stressed that as the professional body CILIP should provide "official training" and guidance on "national guidelines", and on further related issues such as the Code of Professional Practice, while the local authority may focus more on the application of local authority policies that relate to this area.

Similarly, Interviewee D saw CILIP taking a broader role concentrating on issues such as "intellectual property [and] intellectual freedom" and how these issues "impact on the profession, on the conduct of librarianship", while the local

authority may offer more "concrete", practical training of relevance to that particular service.

Two other interviewees also agreed that the local authority was an important training provider because it could emphasise practical points of relevance to that particular authority.

In contrast, Interviewee B was more sceptical about the involvement of the local authority in providing training stating that fragmenting training in such a way gives "no parity" which they saw as a particular problem with library services in general. Instead, they viewed CILIP as having the major role in providing consistent advice, perhaps with some involvement from regional branches of national organisations such as the MLA. Two other interviewees also indicated that there may be an increasing role for regional groups, for example MLA South East etc, in the current cost-saving climate.

Additionally, Interviewee D indicated that courses from other training providers such as Aslib would be "useful, and would be nice", but not necessarily a priority given that CILIP and the local authority should be the "main ones" delivering training. Furthermore, Interviewee C suggested that the existence of a couple of competing training courses may in fact lead to better value and quality!

8.2 Methods of Training

All interviewees affirmed that there is no substitute for face to face training; however, other methods could have a supporting role. Interviewee A expressed a wish for "in house training" stating that it would be "more efficient and more relevant" and that "people find it a lot easier to learn when they are being told or shown how to do stuff".

However, Interviewees A and C both mentioned previous training experiences such as the European Computer Driving License (ECDL) (Interviewee C) and New Opportunities Fund (NOF) (Interviewee A) which used web-based resources to "back up" other training. Interviewee D also added that previous training courses they had been on often used a short film as a "way in" to the topic.

In addition, interviewee C mentioned that their own Open University experience means that they are familiar with learning through recorded lectures, and that they saw no reason why similar methods of learning could not be used "in conjunction" with face to face training.

Interviewee B was more sceptical about how some library staff may react to training resources in the form of a Podcast saying that "I don't think [it] would be the best bet" or even CD Rom. However, they later stated that "if you had a young staff service section then yeah…use the multimedia", but that older members of staff might not respond as well to such training resources. Nevertheless, Interviewee B also conceded that DVDs were now sufficiently widespread that they were not likely to be off putting to more technologically cautious staff members.

8.3 Role of Ethics in Chartership Process

No interviewee was entirely sure about whether or not CILIP specifically requires ethical considerations to be examined in the Chartership process, but then none of the interviewees have undergone the process themselves.

Only Interviewee D mentioned the recent Information Ethics website and the existence of the Ethics Committee, and suggested that these were a step in the right direction. However, they still felt that CILIP's advice remained "vague" on ethical considerations, feeling that the advice currently available was "lacking" and that there was "no real guidance" about how to act.

Nevertheless, all interviewees supported the concept of incorporating this requirement. Interviewee B stated that as an important element of professional practice it should be clearly included. A view supported by Interviewee D who also made similar comments that censorship and intellectual freedom "ought to be addressed" both in Chartership and Revalidation.

However, Interviewee A was also concerned that they would not wish for someone to 'fail' if their personal beliefs were not consistent with the professional position because it was "a bit of a grey area", but thought that a "knowledge of the area" and the "professional line" was crucial.

8.4 Recipients of Training

In congruence with their questionnaire responses all interviewees expressed support for training all members of library staff. However, it was stressed that they would not all need to go on an external course.

Similarly to the questionnaire responses, "frontline staff" were specifically emphasised by all interviewees because they interact with the public on a "day to day basis" (Interviewee C). Interviewee A also specially mentioned "library assistants" saying that they "expected librarians and library managers" to already be familiar with the issues. In contrast Interviewee D suggested that "Library Managers" would be a priority group for training given their position of responsibility.

In addition to the suggested involvement of the local authority in Chapter 8.1, the cascading of training by other members of library staff was mentioned by three of the interviewees; Interviewee B suggested that "at least one member of each team" could be trained and pass on their knowledge to the rest of the team. Interviewee D also mentioned the possibility of managers "disseminating" training to those lower down if necessary.

Furthermore, Interviewee D raised the question of whether it "might be a good idea to introduce basic training for elected members" who would be ultimately responsible for conflicts relating to intellectual freedom and censorship if a complaint escalated beyond the library itself, but may lack an understanding of librarians' professional values.

This suggestion makes an interesting comparison to Questionnaire Respondent 37 who stated in the 'Additional Comments' section that any "guidelines will need to tackle issues of potential conflict between government/local government and library services".

8.5 Training Priorities

All interviewees reported similar areas of training that had been prioritised in their library authorities perhaps above intellectual freedom and censorship. All interviewees mentioned I.T. training such as a "European Computer Driving License" (ECDL), as well as "Cultural Awareness" and "Customer Care" training.

Other priorities included standard council training courses such as "first aid", "sign language", "Health and Safety", and "Disability Discrimination Act training". On further questioning, two interviewees had knowledge of conflict management training beyond that which may be offered in a customer care course, though one interviewee stressed that it was designed for management level staff.

The continuing domination of practical courses relating to areas such as I.T., customer care, cultural awareness, Health and Safety and Disability Discrimination Act training is understandable given current service priorities and legal requirements. However, it also indicates that training relating to intellectual freedom and censorship is still a "low priority" and continues to be overwhelmed by "the more immediate need for training in new technical and service-delivery areas" (Curry, 1997:149).

8.6 Potential Impact of Training

In answer to a question regarding an incident that had occurred at Interviewee C's library where a 'Queer Choice' promotion was abandoned due to staff complaints, Interviewee C admitted that training would "probably not" have changed any of those staff members' views, but that if they had received training then other members of staff would have been able to remind those who objected that it is "not your place" not to make such judgements.

In addition, Interviewee C also pondered whether recent frontline staff training regarding making recommendations to library users, and how different types of readers have different reading preferences and needs, may start to change some members of staff's views in this area. A more reader centred approach may help to restrict censoring actions.

8.7 Summary

Following on from suggestions made in phase one, interviewees were asked about training providers, methods of training, the role of ethics in the Chartership process, and asked in greater detail about who should receive training.

Interviewees supported CILIP as the main training providers, with the local authority providing local additional information. It was also suggested that regional organisations such as MLA may have an increasing role to play.

Regarding methods of training interviewees considered there to be no substitute for face to face training, but conceded that DVDs or web-based training may have a supporting role. Additionally, although it was agreed that training should be provided to all staff, particularly those on the frontline, the possibility of cascading training from one member of a team who had been on a course was acknowledged. There was also general agreement that it would be appropriate to include a greater emphasis on ethics in the Chartership process.

Interviewees were also asked what training had been prioritised in their library authority, perhaps above intellectual freedom and censorship, to examine if training in "technical and service-delivery areas" (Curry, 1997:149) continues to overshadow ethical training. Interviewee's answers continue to support Curry's finding predominately citing I.T., cultural awareness, customer care, Health and Safety and Disability Discrimination Act training.

9 - CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 General Conclusions

9.1.1 Training Weaknesses

The weakness identified by Curry's (1997:149) research continues to exist. The majority of the public library questionnaire respondents had not received training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, and even some of the 16 respondents who had received some training only received guidance in certain areas of concern and did not address the topics as a whole. Additionally, interviewees revealed that their library authorities continue to prioritise training which address "technical and service-delivery areas" (Curry, 1997b:149).

Current sources of information available on censorship and intellectual freedom have been deemed adequate by the 40% of public library respondents who had consulted them. A number of respondents mentioned resources produced by CILIP, although no-one specifically cited the new Information Ethics website. However, there is always room for improvement with lecturers pointing to a lack of detailed U.K. specific information. These sources of information are also predominately used on an ad hoc basis to respond to challenges as they arise.

This context specific, ad hoc approach in U.K. librarianship was also suggested as a reason why training on censorship and intellectual freedom had not been received. Other reasons for a lack of training included that censorship and intellectual freedom were not seen as relevant to respondents' jobs, and that training was constrained by time and budget limitations.

9.1.2 Training Improvements

To help address such weakness, ideas for improvement were investigated. Guidelines on censorship and intellectual freedom were considered necessary by respondents to this study, however, these guidelines are likely to require a degree of interpretation because these are complex issues that do not lend themselves to absolute rules. Therefore, a degree of training is essential.

Such training is deemed to be appropriate, and of relevance to all library staff, although the content would need to be targeted at different groups for the most effective results. Generally, only a basic introduction to the concepts and their impact together with any relevant legal information is required by the majority of staff. There are also many possibilities for cascading training to staff lower down, and for developing supporting resources on the Internet or DVD.

A discrepancy previously identified in other research has also been reaffirmed by this study; much of the library literature claims the centrality of intellectual freedom to the library profession yet, in congruence with a number of other research studies that identified censoring actions taking place (Fiske, 1959; Busha, 1972; Curry, 1997; Cole, 1998; 2000; McNicol 2005a), two of this study's interviewees reported incidents of censorship in their libraries. Many participants in this study also do not consider intellectual freedom or censorship day to day issues or relevant to their work.

Therefore, to promote the importance of these issues, intellectual freedom and censorship should be examined in greater depth in formal training such as specific courses and library school courses, as well as by more informal training methods such as conferences and in journal articles. There is also scope to require a greater engagement with ethical issues such as intellectual freedom in the Chartership/Revalidation process. It may be that censorship is taking place because people have not been trained to deal with the complexity of issues that may arise, not because they disagree with intellectual freedom.

9.2 Recommendations for the Improvement of Training

A fundamental objective of this research was to suggest ways in which the training for public library staff relating to censorship and intellectual freedom might be improved. Below are the main suggestions which have emerged from this research:

- **Greater engagement with ethical issues in library schools**
  If the library profession wishes to support intellectual freedom then it must promote it during professional training. This suggestion was also made by Cole (1998) and although progress has been made since then it is still not enough. Assuming that libraries and librarians support intellectual freedom and oppose censorship can lead to complacency; we must promote what we believe in and our reasons for doing so.

- **Specific training to be introduced by CILIP**
  Running a course on this area would bring CILIP to the forefront of educating library staff on issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom, cementing its commitment to ethical considerations.

  Many of the public library questionnaire respondents expressed a wish for a basic general awareness course, and a number of respondents are already turning to CILIP for sources of information regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. It would, therefore, make sense to join these two findings, especially given that all interviewees also envisaged CILIP taking a main role in the education of library staff.

  Although some staff may have already covered the issue at library school, many other employees will not have received any training, especially given the increasing use of paraprofessionals. Additionally, even if the issues were covered at library school, some questionnaire respondents indicated that they would welcome an update on the topics. It is probable

that a quick overview or re-fresher session could be provided in a half day, with a day long course providing more comprehensive training.

- **Further development of the Information Ethics website.**

In addition to specific training, CILIP also needs to expand the Information Ethics website to address this issue, and other ethical issues, in more depth. The current case studies are not particularly useful for public library staff interested in intellectual freedom and censorship because they do not examine issues related to these topics. It also lacks any examples which, for example, relate to the complexity of meeting children's information needs with reference to intellectual freedom.

- **Greater emphasis on ethical issues in the Chartership and Revalidation process.**

To make sure that candidates for Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA) have an understanding of ethical issues, the Museums Association holds a training course called Ethical Problem Solving (Museums Association, 2007a).

It appears from this evidence that the library profession is lagging behind the museum profession in their formal engagement with ethical issues. If CILIP introduced specific training, as recommended above, then it would not be unreasonable to suggest that they incorporate a greater ethical dimension into the Chartership/Revalidation process to ensure that Chartered librarians and information professionals have knowledge of the relevant issues.

- **Training to be offered in local authority library services.**

  At the very least, it would be advisable to include a page in any staff manual acknowledging the complex and sensitive nature of issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom. It could also provide quick tips on dealing with any complaints of this nature that may arise, together with contact details of members of staff with expertise in responding to such issues.

  Additionally, with the increase in Internet filtering in public libraries, often clarification is needed at the local level, and therefore library authority specific advice is necessary.

- **Greater engagement with issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom by other organisations**

  To help emphasise the centrality of intellectual freedom to the profession, it would be helpful if other organisations promoted ethical considerations of relevance to their particular interests. For example, organisations such as Opening the Book who promote reader development issues, including stock, could run awareness courses on challenging censorship in public libraries. Censoring stock is after all not a "reader-centred" (Opening the Book, 2007: 1) action, but a suppression of information that may be of interest to some readers.

9.3 Suggestions for Further Research

A number of areas of interest have been raised by this study which may warrant further investigation. Additional detailed research on censorship and intellectual freedom within the library profession is needed in general to help inform the debate. It would be interesting to explore the impact of the current socio-political climate on the practice of censorship, and research on how to promote the importance of intellectual freedom within the profession would also be useful.

Additionally, it was difficult to locate library related literature which examines censorship and intellectual freedom philosophically in the way that Ward (1990), Woodward (1990) and Doyle (2001) have done. Therefore, further philosophical examination of defences of both censorship and intellectual freedom in libraries would be an interesting addition to the literature.

Given the limited availability of U.K. literature looking specifically at the impact of Internet filtering it may be useful for future research to examine the current extent of filtering in U.K. public libraries. It would also be helpful to examine ways in which libraries are responding to, and overcoming problems, related to filtering.

9.4 Final Comment

Intellectual freedom should not be taken for granted; we cannot assume that everyone understands what it is, its implications, the threats to its existence and how to defend intellectual freedom if we have not told them!

Word Count: 19,941

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Appendices

Appendix A - Public Library Questionnaire

By answering this questionnaire and returning it to the researcher you have given your consent for your answers to be used in this research. (If you would prefer to receive this questionnaire as a standard word document, or on paper please contact lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk to arrange this.)

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and all data that you provide will be anonymised before analysis. If you would rather not answer any question please indicate this by ticking the appropriate box, or selecting 'No Answer' from the drop-down menu.

For the purposes of this questionnaire the following definitions of the key terms are suggested:

Intellectual Freedom: "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction."

Censorship: "the suppression of ideas and information that certain persons— individuals, groups or government officials—find objectionable or dangerous."

Both of these definitions are provided by the American Library Association. If you disagree with these definitions you are welcome to discuss this in Question 20.

Please click on the grey areas to enter your answers, or to tick the box. The grey text boxes will expand to fit your answer.

Section One – Basics

1. Job Title

2. Age Category Please Select

3. Highest Level of Academic Attainment Please Select

   (If AVCE/NQV etc please state level of qualification taken   )
4. Do you hold a professional qualification in Librarianship/Information Management?

5. Are you a member of a professional body (e.g. CILIP)? If so, please state.

6. Number of years worked in the public library sector Please Select

Section Two - Censorship and Intellectual Freedom

7. Please specify what sources of information you have consulted to answer any queries relating to issues of censorship and intellectual freedom? (e.g. CILIP website, information from library school course, a particular training course etc)

I have not consulted any sources of information regarding this issue ☐
I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

8. How do you use these sources?

I have not consulted any sources of information regarding this issue ☐
I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

9. Do you find the available sources of information adequate for your needs? Please explain your answer.

I have not consulted any sources of information regarding this issue ☐
I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

If you HAVE received training on censorship and/or intellectual freedom please answer questions 10, 11, 12 and 13 before moving on to Section Three.

If you HAVE NOT had any training in this area, please go to questions 14 and 15, before moving on to Section Three.

For participants who HAVE received training
10. What training have you received on intellectual freedom and/or censorship?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

11. Please write down three main things you learnt from this training.

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

12. How, if at all, could this training have been improved?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

13. Is there any further training relating to intellectual freedom and censorship that you would like to receive? If so what?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

For participants who HAVE NOT received training

14. Why do you think you have not received any training on issues relating to intellectual freedom or censorship?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

15. What sort of training would you like to receive in this area?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

Section Three – Censorship and Intellectual Freedom Continued

The following four questions ask you to read a statement, to select a response from a scale, and to explain why this decision has been made. 1 is strongly agree, 2 is agree, 3 is neutral, 4 is disagree and 5 is strongly disagree.

16 a). I feel able to confidently deal with a complaint relating to censorship and intellectual freedom by a member of the public.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

   b). Please indicate why you have given this answer:

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

17 a). In principle, I believe receiving training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom to be appropriate.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

   b). Please indicate why you have given this answer

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

18 a). Training on intellectual freedom and censorship should be provided to all levels of public library staff.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

   b). Please indicate why you have given this answer:

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

19 a). Individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to any complaints that refer to issues to do with censorship and intellectual freedom.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	Neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

b). Please indicate why you have given this answer

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

Section Four – Final Questions

20. Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding the issues raised in this questionnaire?

21. If you would be willing to answer some more in depth questions in a brief interview please give your name and contact details below.

Please save this document and email it to lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk with 'Censorship Questionnaire 1' in the subject line

Thank you for participating in this research.

<u>Appendix B - Lecturer Questionnaire</u>

<u>An investigation into the training needs of public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom.</u>

By answering this questionnaire and returning it to the researcher you have given your consent for your answers to be used in this research.

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and all data that you provide will be anonymised before analysis. If you would rather not answer any of the questions please indicate this by ticking the appropriate box.

If you would prefer to receive this questionnaire as a standard word document, or on paper please contact lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk to arrange this.

Please click on the grey areas to enter your answers, or to tick the box. The grey text boxes will expand to fit your answer.

<u>Section One – Basics</u>

1. Job Title

2. Organisation/Institution

<u>Section Two - Censorship and Intellectual Freedom</u>

3. Please specify what sources of information you have consulted, or that you would recommend to a member of public library staff, to answer any queries relating to issues of censorship and intellectual freedom?

I have not consulted any sources of information regarding this issue ☐
I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

4. Do you find the available sources of information adequate? Please explain your answer.

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

5. How, if at all, do you think training and advice for public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom could be improved?

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

Section Three – Censorship and Intellectual Freedom Continued
The following three questions ask the respondent to read a statement, to select a response from a scale, and to explain why they have made this decision. 1 is strongly agree, 2 is agree, 3 is neutral, 4 is disagree and 5 is strongly disagree.

6 a). In principle, I believe it is appropriate for public library staff to receive training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

   b). Please indicate why you have given this answer

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

7 a). Training on intellectual freedom and censorship should be provided to all levels of public library staff.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

b). Please indicate why you have given this answer:

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

8 a). Individual judgements, rather than absolute guidelines, are key to responding to any complaints that refer to issues to do with censorship and intellectual freedom.

1	2	3	4	5
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

   b). Please indicate why you have given this answer

I would prefer not to answer this question ☐

Section Four – Final Question

9. Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding the issues raised in this questionnaire?

**Please save this document and email it to lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk writing 'Censorship Questionnaire 2' in the subject line.
Thank you for participating in this research.**

Appendix C - Public Library Information Sheet

Information Sheet

You are being invited by Alexandra Pooley to take part in a research project which seeks to investigate the training needs of public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. The research will culminate in the production of a dissertation which will be submitted as part of the course requirements for the MA Librarianship at the University of Sheffield.

Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Both Alexandra and her supervisor are happy to answer any queries you may have; their contact details are at the end of this document.

The Research Project
This project is a requirement of the MA Librarianship programme at the University of Sheffield for which the researcher has received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It has been approved by the Information Studies department's ethics review procedure, which adheres to University-wide ethics policies

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part because you work in a public library, and therefore, are someone whose training needs the researcher wishes to examine.

Taking Part
Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire which should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

You will be able to specify if you would rather receive the questionnaire in electronic form or on paper. If a paper copy is requested, an SAE will be provided to return the questionnaire. If an electronic version is preferred then it can be emailed directly back to the researcher.

The questions start by asking for some basic information such as job title and how long you have worked in the public library services before moving on to examine issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Although by returning your questionnaire to the researcher you have agreed to take part in the research, you can still withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason, and will incur no penalties. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part, and there will be no penalty or loss of any benefits if you choose not to take part.

<u>Benefits and possible disadvantages of taking part</u>
Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will highlight areas for improvement in the ethical training of public library staff to help them deal with any issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom quickly and efficiently.

It is anticipated that the only disadvantage participants are likely to suffer is the loss of up to 15 minutes of their time. If any unexpected discomforts, disadvantages or risks emerge, the researcher will inform the participants. Equally, if any participant experiences any problems they should notify the researcher and the researcher's supervisor Briony Train as quickly as possible.

<u>Confidentiality</u>
All the information collected from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and you will not be identifiable in the final dissertation, any reports, or publications.

<u>Complaints</u>
If you have a complaint about the research project please contact the researcher's supervisor Briony Train (contact details are below). If, following this step, you feel your complaint has not been handled effectively you can then contact University of Sheffield's Registrar and Secretary.

<u>Contact Information</u>
If you require further information you are welcome to contact the researcher directly by email at the following address: lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk

Alternatively, they can be contacted via their supervisor, or you can contact their supervisor directly, using the following details:

Ms Briony Train

Department of Information Studies
University of Sheffield
Regent Court
211 Portobello Street

Sheffield

S1 4DP

Tel. 0114 222 2653
Fax. 0114 278 0300

Email: b.train@sheffield.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for reading this information sheet.
Alexandra Pooley (lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk)

Appendix D - Lecturer Information Sheet

Information Sheet

You are being invited by Alexandra Pooley to take part in a research project which seeks to investigate the training needs of public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. The research will culminate in the production of a dissertation which will be submitted as part of the course requirements for the MA Librarianship at the University of Sheffield.

Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Both Alexandra and her supervisor are happy to answer any queries you may have; their contact details are at the end of this document.

The Research Project
This project is a requirement of the MA Librarianship programme at the University of Sheffield for which the researcher has received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It has been approved by the Information Studies department's ethics review procedure, which adheres to University-wide ethics policies

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part because you are involved in teaching students who may go on to work in public libraries about ethical issues.

Taking Part
Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire which should take no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete.

You will be able to specify if you would rather receive the questionnaire in electronic form or on paper. If a paper copy is requested, an SAE will be provided to return the questionnaire. If an electronic version is preferred then it can be emailed directly back to the researcher.

The questions start by asking for some basic information such as job title, before moving on to examine issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Although by returning your questionnaire to the researcher you have agreed to take part in the research, you can still withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason, and will incur no penalties. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part, and there will be no penalty or loss of any benefits if you choose not to take part.

Benefits and possible disadvantages of taking part
Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will highlight areas for improvement in the ethical training of public library staff to help them deal with any issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom quickly and efficiently.

It is anticipated that the only disadvantage participants are likely to suffer is the loss of up to 20 minutes of their time. If any unexpected discomforts, disadvantages or risks emerge, the researcher will inform the participants. Equally, if any participant experiences any problems they should notify the researcher and the researcher's supervisor Briony Train as quickly as possible.

Confidentiality
All the information collected from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and you will not be identifiable in the final dissertation, any reports, or publications.

Complaints
If you have a complaint about the research project please contact the researcher's supervisor Briony Train (contact details are below). If, following this step, you feel your complaint has not been handled effectively you can then contact University of Sheffield's Registrar and Secretary.

Contact Information
If you require further information you are welcome to contact the researcher directly by email at the following address: lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk

Alternatively, they can be contacted via their supervisor, or you can contact their supervisor directly, using the following details:

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Tel. 0114 222 2653
Fax. 0114 278 0300

Email: b.train@sheffield.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for reading this information sheet.
Alexandra Pooley (lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk)

Appendix E - Discussion List Emails

Emails to JISCmail Public Libraries Discussion List

Email One

Subject: 'Interested in censorship and intellectual freedom? Your help is needed!

Dear List Members,

I am currently a MA Librarianship student at the University of Sheffield investigating the training needs of public library staff relating to censorship and intellectual freedom for my dissertation. However, to be able to complete this research I need your help!

If you work for a U.K. public library service, whether as the Head of Service or a Library Assistant, I would be very grateful if you would help me with my research by answering a quick questionnaire. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete as I appreciate you are all very busy.

Please email me at lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk (rather than this email address) if you are willing to fill in a questionnaire, and I will email it to you as an attachment together with an Information Sheet which contains further details about the research. (Alternatively, I can post you both the questionnaire and the Information Sheet if you would prefer a paper copy.)

If you would like any further information please feel free to contact me at lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk though I am at a conference 18th - 21st June and so a reply may be slightly delayed.

Best Wishes,
Alex Pooley

<u>Email Two</u>

Subject: 'Spare 10 minutes to help me?'

Dear List Members.

Many thanks to those of you that have already helped me with my research, I am very grateful. However, to improve the quality of my research I still need more replies!

I don't mind if you have absolutely no interest in my topic, or if you're not even quite sure what the title means (in fact if you're not really sure what I'm asking about then I'd really like to know that). Please take pity on a Masters student who is desperately trying to get U.K. public library staff to complete her survey!

It should take no longer than 10minutes to complete and asks about the training needs of U.K. public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. If you would be willing to fill in a questionnaire please email lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk and I will send you a questionnaire and an Information Sheet.

Best Wishes,
Alex Pooley

Appendix F - Ethics Panel Information Sheet

Information Sheet

You are being invited by Alexandra Pooley to take part in a research project which seeks to investigate the training needs of public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. The research will culminate in the production of a dissertation which will be submitted as part of the course requirements for the MA Librarianship at the University of Sheffield.

Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Both Alexandra and her supervisor are happy to answer any queries you may have; their contact details are at the end of this document.

The Research Project
This project is a requirement of the MA Librarianship programme at the University of Sheffield for which the researcher has received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It has been approved by the Information Studies department's ethics review procedure, which adheres to University-wide ethics policies

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part because you have potential to be involved in advising public library staff about ethical issues.

Taking Part
Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire which should take no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete.

You will be able to specify if you would rather receive the questionnaire in electronic form or on paper. If a paper copy is requested, an SAE will be provided to return the questionnaire. If an electronic version is preferred then it can be emailed directly back to the researcher.

The questions start by asking for some basic information such as job title, before moving on to examine issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Although by returning your questionnaire to the researcher you have agreed to take part in the research, you can still withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason, and will incur no penalties. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part, and there will be no penalty or loss of any benefits if you choose not to take part.

Benefits and possible disadvantages of taking part
Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will highlight areas for improvement in the ethical training of public library staff to help them deal with any issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom quickly and efficiently.

It is anticipated that the only disadvantage participants are likely to suffer is the loss of up to 20 minutes of their time. If any unexpected discomforts, disadvantages or risks emerge, the researcher will inform the participants. Equally, if any participant experiences any problems they should notify the researcher and the researcher's supervisor Briony Train as quickly as possible.

Confidentiality
All the information collected from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and you will not be identifiable in the final dissertation, any reports, or publications.

Complaints
If you have a complaint about the research project please contact the researcher's supervisor Briony Train (contact details are below). If, following this step, you feel your complaint has not been handled effectively you can then contact University of Sheffield's Registrar and Secretary.

Contact Information
If you require further information you are welcome to contact the researcher directly by email at the following address: lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk

Alternatively, they can be contacted via their supervisor, or you can contact their supervisor directly, using the following details:

Ms Briony Train

Department of Information Studies
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Fax. 0114 278 0300
Email: b.train@sheffield.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for reading this information sheet.
Alexandra Pooley (lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk)

Appendix G - Interview Information Sheet and Consent Form

Information Sheet

You are being invited by Alexandra Pooley to take part in a research project which seeks to investigate the training needs of public library staff regarding censorship and intellectual freedom. The research will culminate in the production of a dissertation which will be submitted as part of the course requirements for the MA Librarianship at the University of Sheffield.

Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Both Alexandra and her supervisor are happy to answer any queries you may have; their contact details are at the end of this document.

The Research Project
This project is a requirement of the MA Librarianship programme at the University of Sheffield for which the researcher has received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It has been approved by the Information Studies department's ethics review procedure, which adheres to University-wide ethics policies

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part because you work in a public library, and therefore, are someone whose training needs the researcher wishes to examine.

Taking Part
Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked a series of questions which should last no longer than 20 minutes.

Although by allowing the researcher to talk to you and by singing the attached consent form you have agreed to take part in the research, you can still withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason, and will incur no penalties. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part, and there will be no penalty or loss of any benefits if you choose not to take part.

Benefits and possible disadvantages of taking part
Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will highlight areas for improvement in the ethical training of public library staff to help them deal with any issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom quickly and efficiently.

It is anticipated that the only disadvantage participants are likely to suffer is the loss of up to 30 minutes of their time. If any unexpected discomforts, disadvantages or risks emerge, the researcher will inform the participants. Equally, if any participant experiences any problems they should notify the researcher and the researcher's supervisor Briony Train as quickly as possible.

Confidentiality
All the information collected from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and you will not be identifiable in the final dissertation, any reports, or publications.

Complaints
If you have a complaint about the research project please contact the researcher's supervisor Briony Train (contact details are below). If, following this step, you feel your complaint has not been handled effectively you can then contact University of Sheffield's Registrar and Secretary.

Contact Information
If you require further information you are welcome to contact the researcher directly by email at the following address: lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk

Alternatively, they can be contacted via their supervisor, or you can contact their supervisor directly, using the following details:

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Fax. 0114 278 0300

Email: b.train@sheffield.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for reading this information sheet.

Alexandra Pooley (lip06akp@sheffield.ac.uk)

Censorship and Intellectual Freedom Interview Consent Form

I give permission for the researcher, Alexandra Pooley, to use my answers as part of her research. I understand that my answers will be anonymised before analysis to guarantee that I will not be personally identified in the research.

I agree that the interview **can / cannot** be recorded (please delete as appropriate).

I agree that the researcher **can / cannot** take notes during the interview
(please delete as appropriate).

Signed   Date

………………………………………………   ……………………

Appendix H - Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. If training regarding censorship and intellectual freedom was to be offered, who do you think should offer that training?

   - CILIP
   - Local Authority
   - Regional groups or organisations (eg MLA South East)
   - Other training provider (eg Aslib), please state……………………………
   - Other, please state…………………………………………………...……….

2. Given that training can be costly both in terms of staffing and the cost of the course itself, please give your opinion on whether the following methods would be useful to train staff about issues relating to censorship and intellectual freedom.

   - CD ROM
   - DVD
   - Podcast
   - Web-based
   - Other, please state…………………………………………….……………..

3. The Museums Association hold a Professional Review meeting before awarding Associateship status. It is a 45 minute formal discussion between the candidate and two museum professionals. Among other topics, individuals must also demonstrate an understanding of the Code of Ethics and topical issues in the sector.

   a) To what extent do you believe that CILIP requires a similar level of awareness in its chartership process?

   b) Do you believe that proving an awareness of issues relating to censorship and IF should be a specific element of the Chartership process for library and information professionals?

4. Who do you believe should receive training regarding intellectual freedom and censorship in libraries?

5. To your knowledge, what types of training have been prioritised in your authority, perhaps above issues such as intellectual freedom and censorship?

For Interviewee A

- Your questionnaire responses indicate that you feel confidently able to deal with a complaint relating to intellectual freedom and censorship, yet the training you have received seems to be solely on book selection.

  Do you feel equally able to answer a complaint regarding censorship and intellectual freedom relating to the filtering of websites?

- You express the view that training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom is appropriate and should be given to all members of staff, although your own training focuses on book selection which is a specific area of librarianship. What, if any, additional issues so you think should be covered in training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom?

- The training you have noted down is also related specifically to children. Do you have any additional comments to make regarding training for those serving adult users?

For Interviewee B

- Your questionnaire responses indicate that you have had no training in this area, but you have completed a Masters course. Was the issue not covered during your Masters?

- You explain that you believe you have not received training because it is not relevant to your post. What types of library jobs do you think that it is of particular relevance to?

For Interviewee C

- Your response to Question 12 stated that the use of real life examples of contentious material in your previous training was useful for discussion. To what extent do you believe that similar practical examples should feature in future training?

- Your response to Question 17 indicates that you believe availability of information the Internet is creating new challenges for librarians, including the ability to access information that would be illegal in the U.K. Do you think that specific training relating to these relatively new concerns is necessary?

- In Question 19 you cite a few examples of situations relating to censorship and intellectual freedom that you have encountered. Regarding the Queer Choice example do you believe that training would have changed the views of the staff members who objected to the promotion?

For Interviewee D

- You said in Question 10 that you would have liked your training relating to censorship and intellectual freedom to be increased to two sessions. Do you have any ideas about how you would like to see these sessions divided?

  Prompts - divide sessions into physical and electronic resources, or between the theoretical and the practical, or in some other way?

- Your questionnaire responses also expressed support for training all members of library staff. Do you think there should be any differences in the nature of training received by, for example, frontline staff and senior managers?

Appendix I - In-depth Basic Information Responses

### **Public Library Staff Basic Information**

- **Job Title**

Job titles ranged widely. Naming all specific job titles has potential to reveal the identify of some respondents due to the very specific nature of their role, and would also be very lengthy. Therefore, a summary of some of the main job titles has been compiled instead to give an indication of the variety of the sample:

- Library Assistant

- Library Supervisor

- Assistant Librarian

- Librarian

- Team Librarian

- Branch Librarian

- County Librarian

- Deputy Manager

- Resources Manager

- e-Service Manager

- Development Office

- **Age Category**

The sample contained a wide variety of adult working-age age groups. 53% of the sample were 40 or below. The remaining respondents (46%), apart from one who chose not to answer this question, were between 41 and 65.

Figure A: Age Category
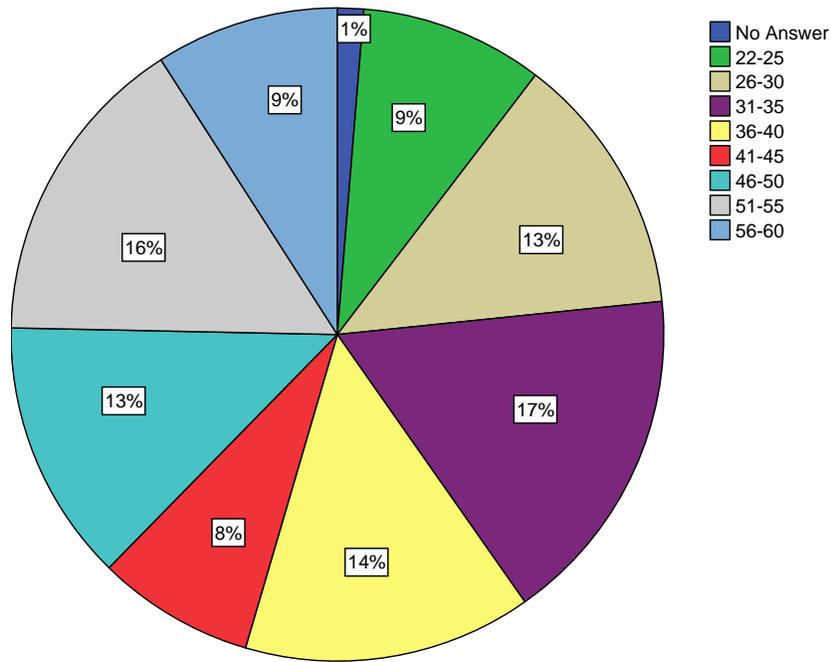
- **Highest Level of Academic Attainment**

The vast majority of respondents held either a Bachelors (42%) or Masters (44%) degree. A further 4 respondents (5%) had GCSEs, another 4 respondents (5%) had A Levels, and one respondent (1%) had a GNVQ Level 3 qualification. One respondent (1%) chose not to answer this question.

Unfortunately, during the questionnaire creation process, the researcher accidentally omitted Postgraduate Diploma from the list of levels of education. Therefore, it is possible that many respondents who reported having a Bachelors degree and a professional qualification in Librarianship hold a Diploma. However, only one respondent (1%) specified their diploma on their questionnaire and so this is included on the chart.

Figure B: Highest Level of Academic Attainment
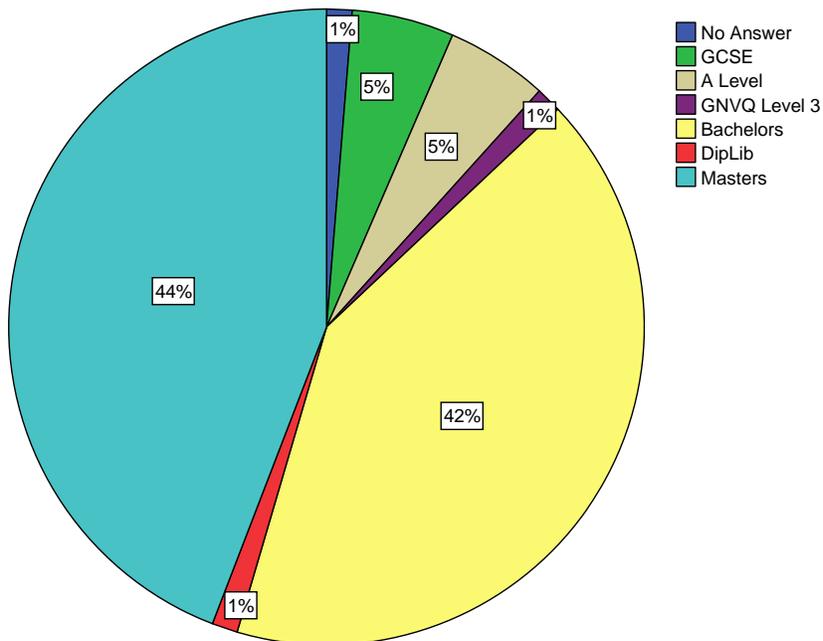
- **Professional Qualification**

The majority of respondents (83%) held a professional qualification in Librarianship. The remaining 17% did not hold a professional qualification, although one respondent who did not hold a professional qualification indicated that they held an ACILIP which is designed for paraprofessionals.
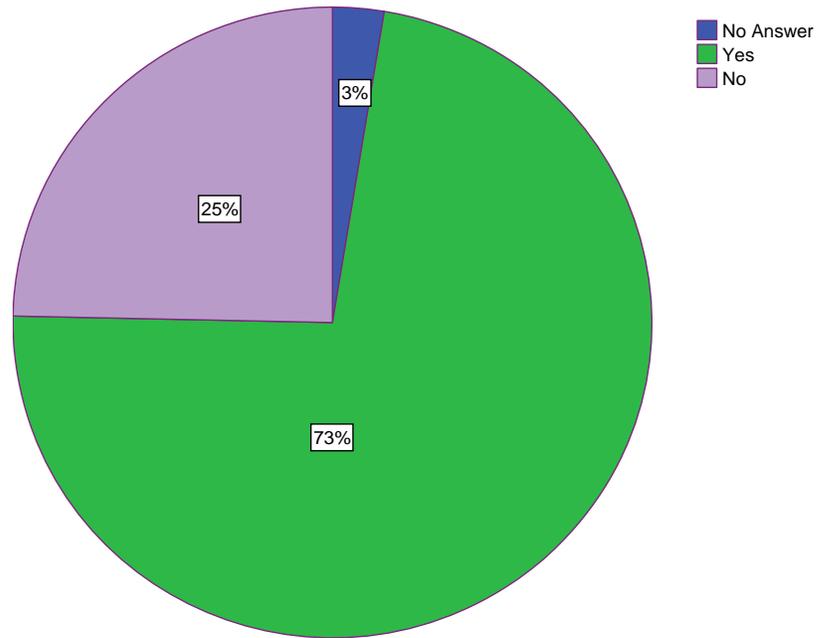
Figure C: Professional Qualification
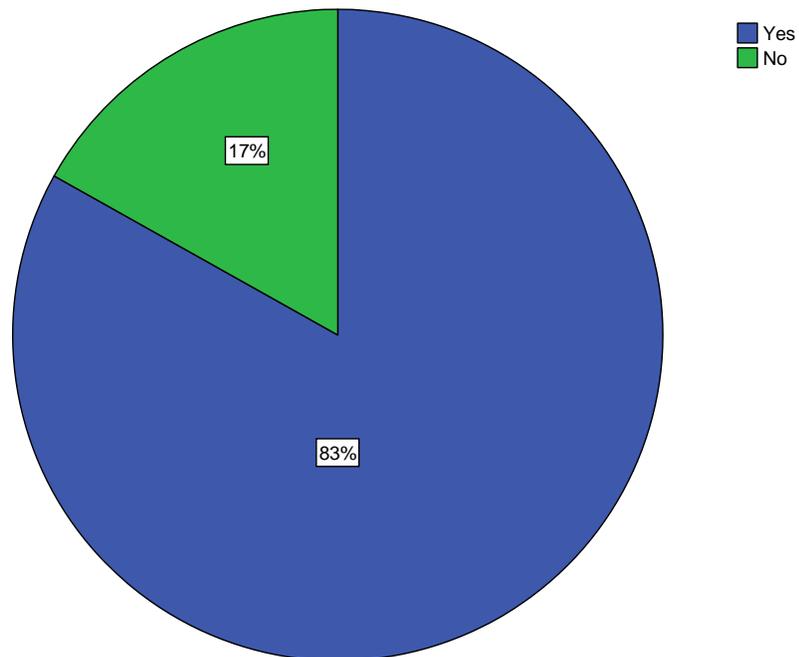
- **Membership of Professional Bodies**

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents were members of the LIS professional body CILIP. The remaining 19 people (25%) were not members of CILIP or any other professional body. Two people (3%) chose not to answer this question.

Figure D: Membership of a Professional Body

- **Years Worked in Public Library Sector**

Respondent's had varied background relating to the amount of years worked in the public library sector.

Figure E: Years Worked in Public Library Sector

Legend:
- less than 1 year
- 1-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-39
- 40+