

PHOEBE APPERSON HEARST LIBRARY
LEAD, SOUTH DAKOTA



BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CHALLENGED MATERIALS POLICY

PURPOSE

To guide staff in the event that an item in the Library's collection is challenged. Phoebe Apperson Hearst Library materials are selected through the process described in the Library's "Collection Development Policy." This policy states that since the collection reflects cultural and recreational values, it may include material which is controversial or offensive to some. The Library acknowledges that occasionally patrons may have complaints or concerns about individual materials or categories of materials in the Library's collection. The Library staff will handle complaints, ensuring that the complainant is respectfully heard and that the fundamental principles of intellectual freedom, as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights and ALA Freedom to Read Statement, are upheld.

Policy

This policy defends the freedom to read, view, and hear. For a challenge to be considered, (1) the complainant must be properly identified on the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form (attached to this policy), (2) the complainant must hold a valid Hearst Library card, and (3) the form must be completed in full.

SOURCE

Hearst Library Board of Trustees and Hearst Library Director

Procedure

Complaints shall be handled in the following manner:

1. Informal Complaints:

- a. Individuals may initiate complaints about specific titles or types of material in the collection by talking to or writing to a member of the Library Staff or the Director.
- b. Staff or the Director should then offer a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form, and explain the formal complaint procedure.
- c. No further action is taken by the Library at this point.

2. Acknowledgement of Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form:

- a. Once a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials is received by the Director, it shall be acknowledged by letter. This letter will contain copies of this policy and the Collection Development Policy.
- b. If the complainant has checked out the item, no further action will be taken until said item is returned to the Library.

3. Evaluation of Library Materials:

- a. The Director and/or a designated staff member will read, listen to, or view the material in its entirety.
- b. The Director and/or designated staff member review the material in relationship to the Library's Collection Development Policy and determine one of several actions:
 - i. Retain the challenged material in the collection
 - ii. Retain the challenged material, but move it to another location
 - iii. Withdraw the challenged material.

4. Notification of Complainant:

- a. The Director shall write a letter to the complainant stating the decision of the Library, as well as the reasoning behind the decision.
- b. The letter will include the steps complainant may take if unsatisfied with the decision.

5. Notification of the Board of Trustees:

- a. The Library Board shall be notified by the Director of any formal complaints, usually through the bimonthly Board Meeting.

6. Reconsideration by the Library Board of Trustees:

- a. If the complainant is not satisfied with the written decision of the Director, he or she may bring the matter to the Board of Trustees.
- b. To initiate consideration by the Board of Trustees, the complainant must write to the Library Director or President of the Board of Trustees and request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting. The letter must be received at least ten (10) days prior to the next regular meeting of the Board. If received after that time, the matter may be deferred until the succeeding regular meeting.
- c. The Director or Board President shall acknowledge receipt of the complainant's letter in writing, and shall include the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the matter will be considered.
- d. Once the Request for Reconsideration is on the agenda, the Board shall decide by a majority vote of the members present whether it wishes to keep the item in question, move it to another location within the library or withdraw it from the collection.
- f. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

Approved by:

Mary Levin 6-27-22 Susan Sheep 6/27/22
Library Board of Trustees President Date Hearst Library Director Date

Revision Date: June 27, 2022

HEARST LIBRARY REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FORM

(This form must be entirely completed for consideration)

Material Information:

Author: _____ **Title of Book:** _____

Publisher: _____ **Call #** _____

Type of Material:

_____ **Book** _____ **DVD** _____ **Audiobook** _____ **Other:** _____

Request initiated by:

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

This complaint represents:

_____ **Individual** _____ **Organization (Name _____)**

Please answer the following questions about the material:

Did you read/view/listen to the entirety of this item? If not, what parts?

What do you believe is the theme or intent of this item?

To what in this item do you object? (Please be specific –cite pages, scenes, etc.)

What harmful effect do you feel might be/was the result of reading/viewing/listening to this item?

Do you believe this item serves any of the following purposes? (circle)

A. Promotes understanding of other cultures or lifestyles? Yes No

B. Promotes discussion of societal issues? Yes No

In its place, what other source would you recommend that would convey valuable information or perspective on this subject?

Signature of Complainant: _____ Date: _____