

Materials Challenge Aerobics

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Who has heard?

- This book is a little racy
- That's an R-rated video
- That guy is looking at porn!

Levels of complaints

- **Expressions of concern**
- **Oral complaints**
- **Written complaint**
- **Public attack**
- **Censorship**

**Strength
training
for our
core ...**



Our core values

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

American Library Association, 1996

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

WLA Intellectual Freedom Statement

The Washington Library Association supports the principle of **free, open, and unrestricted access to information and ideas** regardless of the medium in which they exist.

Washington Library Association

<http://www.wla.org/assets/AboutUs/ifig%20statement.pdf>

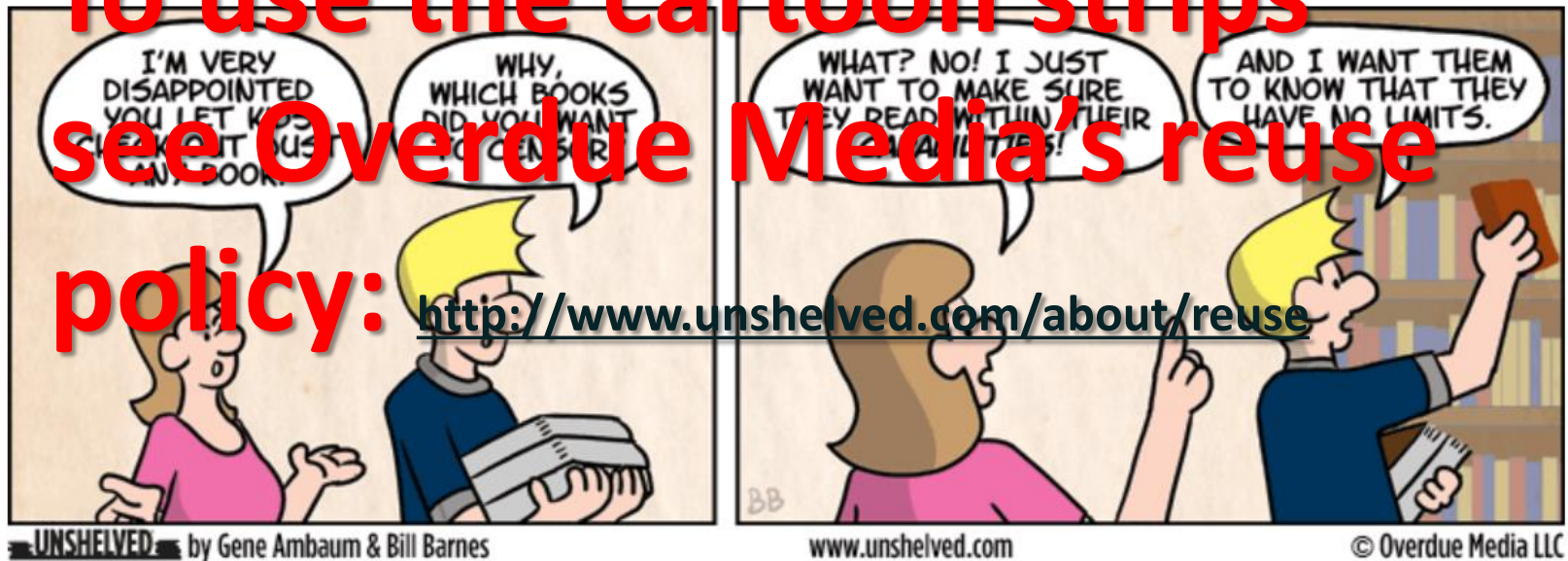
Intellectual Freedom

- “The public library is unique among institutions as an unbiased repository for the recorded expression of human thought. It must, therefore, **accept responsibility for providing free access by the public to all points of view** contained therein.”

- Whitman County Library's Intellectual Freedom Policy

Unrestricted access

To use the cartoon strips
see Overdue Media's reuse
policy: <http://www.unshelved.com/about/reuse>



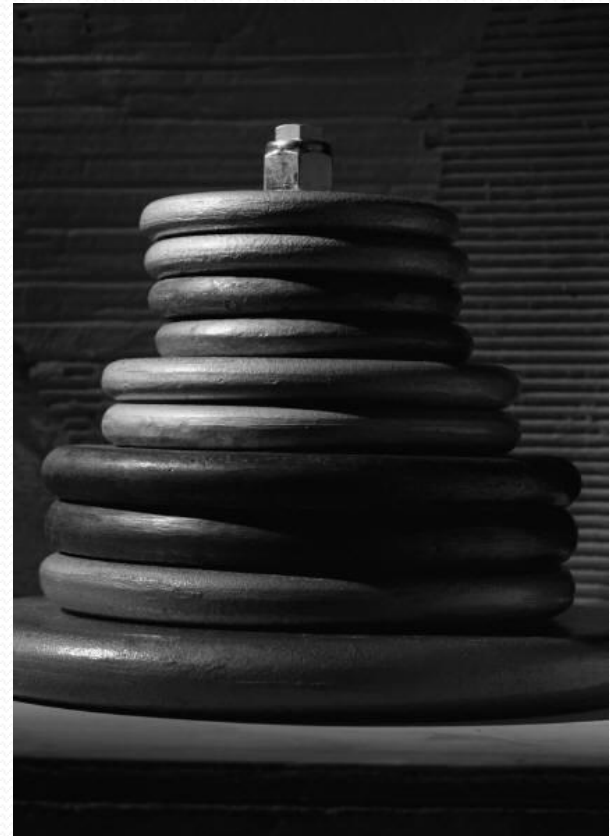
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Tools for training

- **Body Language**
- **Response Strategies**
- **Phrases**
- **Practice**



Body language matters



Basic training

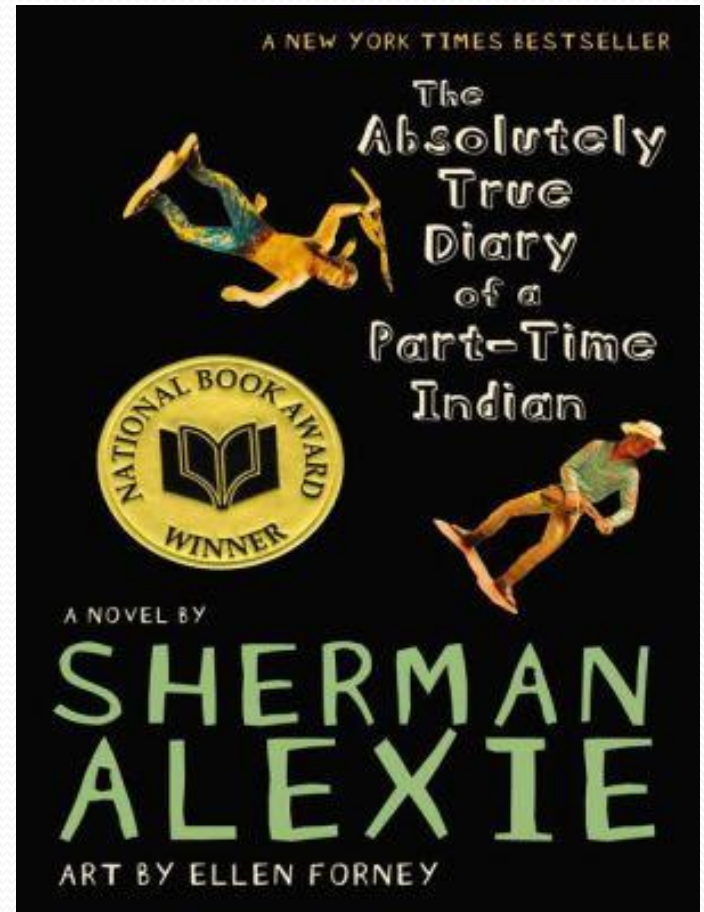
- Seek privacy
- Listen calmly
- Acknowledge

*American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association,
Oregon's Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse, and Sno-Isle Libraries*

Determine the issue

*I was shocked.
Why is this book
in the library?*

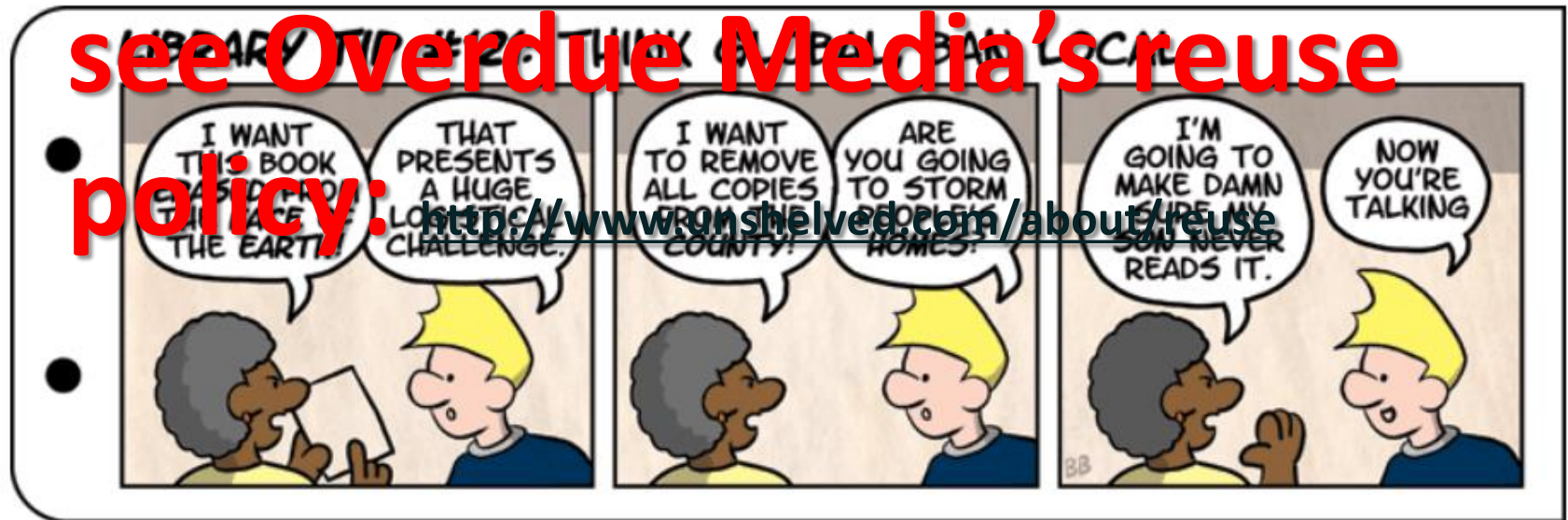
**What does this
patron really mean?**



What you say matters To use the cartoon strips

see Overdue Media's reuse

policy: <http://www.unshelved.com/about/reuse>



UNSHELVED by Gene Ambaum & Bill Barnes

www.unshelved.com

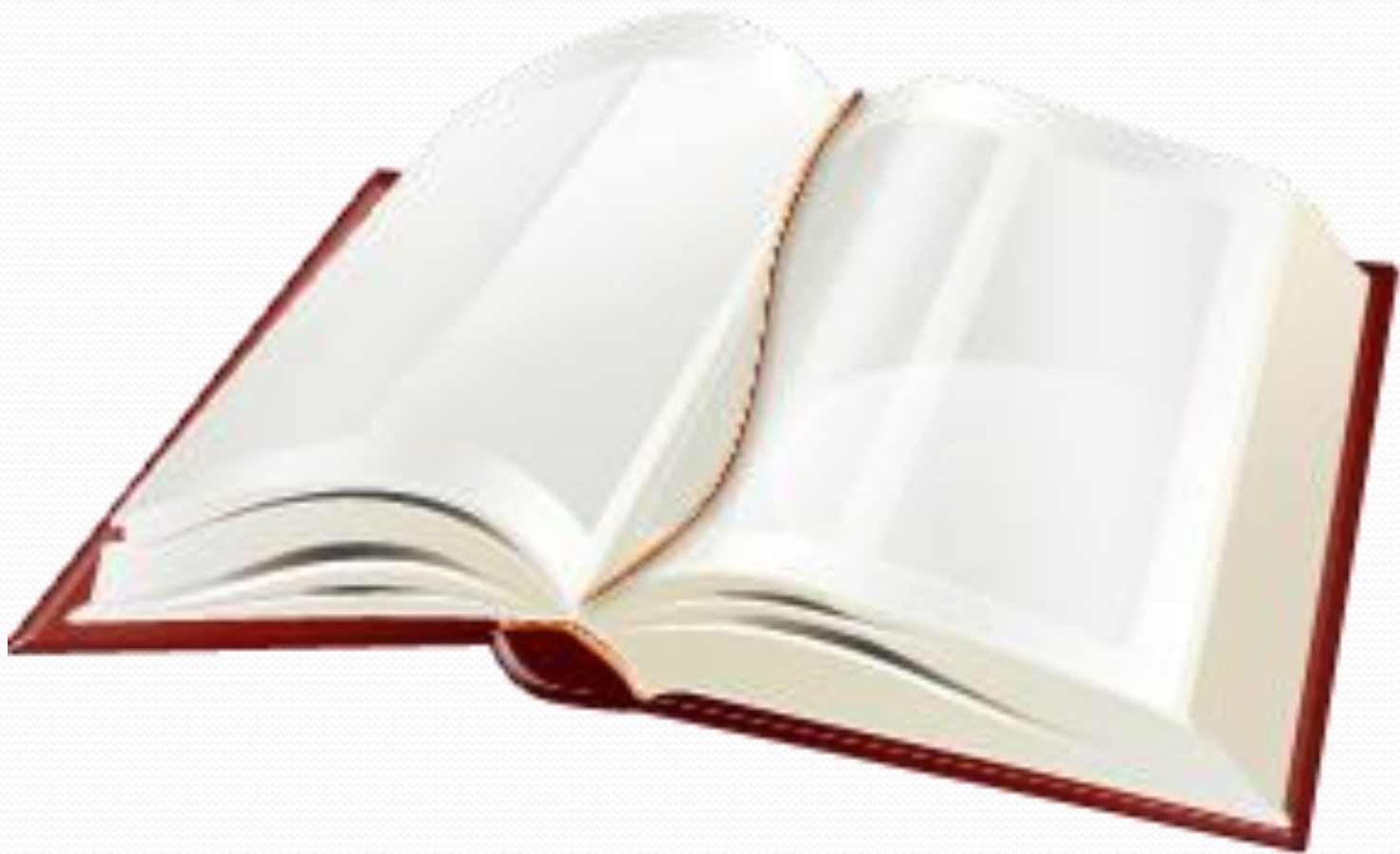
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Response strategies

- Many patrons just want express their concerns
- Respond only to the questions asked
- Start with what you can do, rather than what you cannot
- Don't speculate or debate

Phrases to try



Acknowledgement

- I really appreciate that you shared your concerns with me today ...
- I'm sorry that you are upset. Thank you for telling me. Could you tell me a little more so I can better understand...?
- **Suggestions?**

Explain: I can

- Help you find an item that you'll enjoy.
- Pass on what you've told me to the librarians who classify these items.
- Share your concerns ...
- **Suggestions?**

A Conversation About Intellectual Freedom, Sno-Isle Libraries (2010)

Come up for air

- Regroup
- Relax
- Tell a supervisor
- Share, if appropriate



Let's dive in



Group workout

- Divided into groups of 3 or 4
- Take turns acting as:
 - Patron
 - Staff member
 - Observer
- Debrief and note what works best
- Switch roles

Time to focus

- Body language
- Seek privacy
- Active listening
- Strategic responses
- Regroup



Regroup



The final stretch



**Now we're
in shape for
anything**



Special thanks

To Sno-Isle Libraries, King County Library System, WLA's Intellectual Freedom Interest Group, Oregon's Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse, *Overdue Media LLC*, Jill Wubbenhorst, Nancy Messenger, Jim McCluskey, Valerie Stephens, Eric Spencer, Amanda Jackson, and our Intellectual Freedom Interest Group colleagues Cher Ravagni, Lynne King, and Jennifer Fleck.

Citations

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