

4-15-2009

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Recommended Citation

Kleinman, Dan, "UW-M Library School Misleads West Bend Citizens" (2009). *West Bend Community Memorial Library (Wisconsin)*, 2009. 342.

https://dc.uwm.edu/west_bend_library_challenge/342

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Wednesday, April 15, 2009

UW-M Library School Misleads West Bend Citizens



School of Information Studies

The [School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee](#) has made a public statement to the citizens of [West Bend, WI](#). "[The School shall contribute locally ... in information-related education, ... and service,](#)" says the "SOIS Vision." However, the "contribution" in West Bend is to **mislead the community into giving up legal means to protect children from harm**. And by this means the American Library Association [ALA], which [accredited SOIS](#) and [whitewashes child rape in public libraries](#), again pressures another community to keep the ALA's "anything goes" policies.

Here is my response to "[UW-M School of Information Studies Statement of Support for the West Bend Library](#)," by **Dr. Joyce Latham**, *School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*, April 14, 2009:

Dear Dr. Joyce Latham,

"In recent weeks, two citizens of West Bend, Wisconsin have petitioned the West Bend Community Memorial Library to remove gay-themed books...." Yes, but they are no longer seeking that goal and implying they are can only be misleading. Issues should be fought on the issues, not on false implications. Besides, after refining their goals, [those two citizens have grown to hundreds](#). A fair report would have included that information.

"They further demand that the books be labeled with a warning about their content, arguing that they are obscene and pornographic." Perhaps, but that's not the real issue. And if someone does not articulate the real issue well, that does not mean the real issue should be ignored. The real issue is not pornography, rather it is material that may be legally treated differently from other material for reasons of age inappropriateness.

Or, if we don't want to recognize the differential status of the material in question, then shouldn't it be treated like all other holdings, with its subject matter properly identified? This is similar to the argument that indicating that the book is about sex or violence is considered "labeling," which carries a bad connotation. Yet if we label a book about "wood carving" as being about wood carving, that is okay. If the subject matter is neutral, then it's called "cataloging," yet if the subject matter is controversial, then it's considered "labeling."

And I love the way Dr. Latham makes it appear such a request is some out of this world idea. I suppose it would not help to further mislead people to disclose that [other communities have already been successful](#) in this regard. And look at this: "[Missouri SB 450 - Requires public libraries to adopt policies on the placement of books and other materials that are obscene or](#)

[pornographic for minors.](#)" Dr. Latham only discloses one side of the picture, and a distorted view at that.

"The books are from major publishers, sold in general bookstores, and are available in public and high school libraries throughout the state." True, but again this is misleading. For example, [possibly the most liberal city in the USA, New York City, removed one of those books from hundreds of its schools because of its inappropriateness for children.](#) Yet Dr. Latham makes no mention of that, choosing instead to mislead the public. Again. A pattern is starting to be established. Further, bookstores are private businesses, not public entities supported by taxpaying citizens.

"Throughout the history of the American public library, special interest groups have attempted to exert a disproportionate degree of influence on the development of a community wide resource." True, but the implication is citizens seeking redress under existing library policies are in the wrong, yet Dr. Latham does not address that the "special interest group ... exert[ing] a disproportionate degree of influence on the development of a community wide resource" may be the [American Library Association](#) [ALA] and its local acolytes.

"The public library was developed to be the anchor of free inquiry in our democracy." True, but tell me where "free inquiry" allows children access to inappropriate materials despite the law and common sense?

Does "free inquiry" for children include the following: "[Lara unbuttoned my pants and pulled my boxers down a little and pulled out my penis. And then she wrapped her hand around it and put it into her mouth.](#)" The ALA awarded that book the top book of the year for children 12 and up, and with no notice as to the contents other than how wonderful was the book. I personally got the author to admit [he would not even give his own award-winning book to his own 12 year old if he had one.](#) Is providing publicly funded access to such material for children despite the law and common sense an "anchor of free inquiry in our democracy"?

"Over 15,000 public library branches throughout the United States maintain access to quality materials collected and arranged according to national standards developed by thoughtful and committed information professionals." Right, but Dr. Latham fails to disclose how the US Supreme Court allows certain materials to be kept from children despite this. For example, from US v. ALA, "[The interest in protecting young library users from material inappropriate for minors is legitimate, and even compelling, as all Members of the Court appear to agree.](#)" Why does Dr. Latham exclude that? Such a stance is consistent with America's long history of age-based laws designed to protect its youth.

"The education of these professionals is rigorous and expansive, demanding sophisticated skills in assessment, development and leadership; it ensures their preparedness to take the lead in developing and delivering information resources to their communities." So she says, apparently to explain why common sense, community values, and US Supreme Court decisions do not compare to "sophisticated" professionals. The **Annoyed Librarian** would disagree with Dr. Latham: "[A library school by any other name would still be irrelevant to the concerns of actual librarians.](#)" And again, Dr. Latham fails to disclose that [all such education must be ALA](#)

[approved](#) and thereby based on ALA policy.

"We, the faculty and teaching academic staff at the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, along with the SOIS Graduate Student Organization, commend the West Bend Community Memorial Library Board of Trustees, administration, and staff for their support of the principle of intellectual freedom in the face of pressure to abandon their professional and communal commitments." Excuse me? A legitimate filing of a request to reconsider material under an existing library policy is "pressure to abandon their professional and communal commitments"? The [ALA said despite US v. ALA, its policies will remain unchanged](#) and children will still have access to inappropriate materials. Are those the "professional commitments" the library is being "pressured to abandon"?

Furthermore, why would the library even have a policy of "material reconsideration" if the very act of "material reconsideration" is perceived as a threat or inconsistent with their philosophy. Many libraries maintain such policies, but often [when someone wants to exercise the policy, it becomes a threat and the person is labeled a "censor."](#) Maybe they just need to nix this policy, so no one bothers to ask in the future.

In summary, the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has totally misled the community. Then it recommended support for a policy made up by an out-of-state organization that continues to act despite a ruling against it in the US Supreme Court and that whitewashes library crimes. As a result, the West Bend community is being misled into voluntarily giving up legally available means for protecting children from harm in public venues.

I certainly hope the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is not receiving taxpayer funding to mislead those same taxpayers into allowing their children to become sexualized or otherwise endangered by "special interest groups" like the ALA despite the law and common sense.

Why do I have to make this statement? Large organizations array themselves against local communities, but they usually can't force the locals to act. Instead, they mislead the local communities to think like they think so the people will act like they would act. It's a [propaganda technique called conversion](#). Voices like mine are few and far between, and our resources do not measure up to those of, say, the ALA's, which partly come with [backing from George Soros](#) and Playboy Enterprises:

Playboy's own sex and violence agenda long funded The American Library Association and its Freedom to Read campaign. Such a conflict of interest becomes significant when the ALA seeks to bring into our libraries previously prohibited "harmful matter" produced by one of its legal patrons.

Source: "[The Toxic American Public Library: Violating Children with 'Harmful Matter'; 'A Clear & Present Danger,'](#)" by **Dr. Judith Reisman**, *The Institute for Media Education*, 4 April 2000, footnote omitted.

Along comes the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Information Studies. It basically tells West Bend residents to oppose "pressure to abandon their professional and communal commitments." It does so by flat out misleading the public. Based on that false information, the community is suppose to act the way the library school and the ALA would want it to act, namely, ignore the law and common sense and leave the children exposed to harm.

Just look at the false and misleading "information" the "School of Information" provided. Certainly the great and powerful "School of Information" could not be wrong. Certainly we must oppose the "pressure to abandon professional and communal commitments." Small voices like mine, like **Ginny Maziarka's**, we are little bugs to be squashed by the great and powerful ALA-accredited "School of Information" and the Playboy-funded ALA. They know better. The library board knows better. We little people are too unsophisticated (I was actually told this by a library board). After all, that's why there's a library board in the first place, right?

Nothing happened here in West Bend. Move along. Children remain exposed to harm, so what, at least the citizens fought off the pressure to abandon professional commitments to ensure children have access to anything and everything despite the law and common sense. Who cares anyway, it's happening everywhere, there's bigger fish to fry. As **Judith Krug**, the [40 year de facto](#) leader of the ALA and former ACLU-IL Board member said, "Parents who would tell their children not to read Playboy 'don't really care about their kids growing up and learning to think and explore.'" She's right; Ginny's wrong. Move along, nothing to see here. As Krug would say, "[What we're dealing with is a minority of people who are very vocal.... These people are small in number but they start screeching, and people start getting concerned.](#)"

So that's why I had to make this statement. Someone has to stand up and support the children against the powerful interests. I'm doing it, Ginny's doing it in West Bend, and a few others nationwide are doing it, but we just don't have the machine the powerful interests have. So if you are reading this, this may be your only chance to hear another side of the story. Try to put the ALA propaganda out of your heads, think for yourselves, and protect your children as you are legally allowed to do.

If I were the UW-M School of Information Studies, I'd be embarrassed by Dr. Latham's one-sided, misleading attempt to influence West Bend citizens. The "SOIS Vision" is a distant vision right now.