

11-19-2013

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Recommended Citation

Hanania, Ray, "Censorship at Orland Park library is wrong move" (2013). *Orland Park Public Library (Illinois), 2013*. Paper 216.
http://dc.uwm.edu/orland_park_library_challenge/216

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Censorship at Orland Park library is wrong move



Censorship at Orland Park Library is wrong move

A women activist from New Lenox decided to target the Orland Park library system a few months ago and she made the accusation that a man was viewing "pornography" on a computer used only by adults in an adult section; children use computers in a different area.

She went to a meeting of the Orland Park Library with a friend and they together confronted the board, not in an informational or polite way, but in a confrontational style, almost making demands. They accused the Orland Park Library staff of being rude and inconsiderate of their concerns.

Later, it was reported that police were called by "a woman" regarding a man who the woman claimed was a "pedophile" but when I spoke with Police Chief Tim McCarthy, he explained that when police arrived, the woman refused to comment and the alleged "perpetrator" -- a man who was using the computer -- was no longer there.

Instead, the woman supposedly gave info about the man and the police went to his home and discovered he had nothing to do with the library.

Over the past few weeks now, the Orland Park Library has been turned into a cesspool of filth and pornography. The woman from New Lenox who raised these issues has given Orland Park a Black eye. She has given the Orland Park Library a black eye. People are talking about the Orland Park library like it is a resource center in a prison for pedophiles, instead of being one of the best library systems in the Midwest.

The New Lenox activist has the right to express herself. That's what our Freedom allows. But I don't agree with her views and demands and I think her concerns contradict our concerns as a community.

I go to the Orland Park library with my 12 year old son all the time.

I have NEVER seen an adult sitting at an adult computer viewing "pornography."

But more importantly, when I am with my son, we don't go to the adult computers. I help him at the children's computers, where he belongs.

The woman got what she wanted, however She has turned the phenomenal and great Orland Park Library system upside down in the media, defaming not only the integrity of the employees and the library administration but also casting a shadow of filth on a system that deserves so much more.

To quiet the lady, the library board is now considering to apply "filters" to the adult library computers. Those filters sound great in principle, but they don't work very well. Not only do they prohibit access to pornography sites -- sadly in America where FREEDOM is still an important concept, the Congress and laws allow pornography to be displayed -- but filters will also prohibit access to many other sites that are not pornographic or related to pornography. In fact, many news sites that cover the pornography debate will be banned. Websites that deal with R rated issues and terms -- like politics, and the Orland Library "pornography debate" will be banned.

If the carpet bagger from New Lenox gets her way, because she wasn't too happy with the way the Library responded to her concerns, according to the news reports I can read online today, then the Orland Park Library will surrender to bullying and intimidation and limit access to adult users of the public computer system paid for by the law-abiding taxpayers.

Mayor Dan McLaughlin is a good person and I know the new Library Board President Nancy Healy very well. They are good people. They want to do what's right. But placing filters is not the way to "protect" our children.

It will simply reduce the amount of research data that adults will be able to access on the computers. And it will give adults who ask that the filters be lifted the "aura" of being pornographers, as defined by the selfishly-motivated activist from New Lenox whose video has been distributed throughout the Internet to embarrass Orland Park.

The Mayor should withdraw his proposal to place filters.

Let society take care of itself.

All the library needs to post at the computers is that these computers should not be used to view pornography because they are located in a public place. That's not an act of censorship, but a caution to keep people from viewing pornography -- if in fact that is what they are doing AND I SURELY DOUBT THE ORIGINAL CLAIMS THAT SOMEONE WAS.

If a person is viewing pornography in a public place where children are nearby -- and it can be proven, then the library should be notified and then can eject the library user.

Accusing someone of being a "pedophile" because they were allegedly viewing something that the New Lenox activists doesn't like is outrageous. I didn't elect her to manage Orland Park or the Orland Park library.

But I do live in America where freedom is more important than censorship. Falsifying claims just to enact laws should be treated harshly, as harshly as the activists are calling for censorship in our library.

If they can ban access to websites, then the next thing you know they will be able to impose bans on who can access the computers, maybe ban Arabs like me. Who cares if I served active duty fighting for my country during the Vietnam War? Maybe people don't like Arabs in New Lenox and they might come here to shut down our library to people like me. Why not confront racism

and hatred? Why not censor what people can say?

Don't censor the Orland Park Library.

Our population of Adults are Adults. We are smart and we care for our community. Let us police the computers. Let the employees apply the law, not someone else's judgment of what the laws should be.

The activist from New Lenox should instead take her battle to the U.S. Congress and get Congress to ban pornography -- but they have tried. Because trying to define what is and what isn't pornography has been a problem. Good Art sites would be injured, as would be good public debates about this and other controversies.

Don't submit to the bullies, Mayor McLaughlin.

We have a great library. Let's keep it that way.

-- **RAY HANANIA**

Posted by [Ray Hanania](#) at [5:16 AM](#)

Reactions:



10 comments:



[SafeLibraries](#) November 19, 2013 at 6:30 AM

Filters work quite well. Source for that statement? Barbara Jones of the ALA who spoke at the meeting. <http://safelibraries.blogspot.com/2012/02/ala-admits-library-filters-work-barbara.html>

[Reply](#)



2.

[Ray Hanania](#) November 19, 2013 at 8:26 AM

That's not exactly true. That is just her opinion. The ALA stated in a study that it does censor out other information that is not pornographic. So who will be filtered out along with the bad? <http://www.baselinemag.com/industries/media/Library-Filtering-Remains-Controversial/>

[Reply](#)



3.

[Anonymous](#) November 19, 2013 at 2:37 PM

There are some very expensive filters that can work, if managed on a daily basis with a staff trained to differentiate between "obscenity" -- which is the only legal concept that exists -- and "pornography", which is a concept but one that isn't legally defined. Anything other than obscenity is legally protected speech all adults have a right to access.

If Orland Park should decide to use filters on adult computers, they would be vulnerable to a First Amendment challenge in the courts, which would be time consuming and expensive. Given that the adult space is separate from the children's space, it would be hard for Orland Park to justify the need for any filters on their network. The library board may want to appoint an ad hoc community advisory group to investigate the issues and come back to them with an analysis; I'd suggest including library staff on such a committee, since they are familiar with all the resources that would be needed. Hopefully the Mayor would be comfortable with such a community conscious approach. I wouldn't include anyone exterior to the community of Orland Park, since they literally have no standing vis a vis the Orland Park question.

Joyce M. Latham
UWM/SOIS

[Reply](#)

[Replies](#)



1.

[SafeLibrariesNovember 20, 2013 at 6:53 PM](#)

Joyce, thank you for commenting here. Respectfully speaking, you make filters sound really expensive and really hard to use. Barbara Jones of the ALA says filters work well and no longer block health-related information and that they simply need to be used correctly.

Then you go on to say things that are just 100% the opposite of what's in *US v. ALA*, 539 US 194 (2003). For example, you say pornography is not the issue, yet it is the issue throughout *US v. ALA*. You say if the library uses filters to block porn it would be open to a First Amendment lawsuit, but *US v. ALA* shows it would not, and indeed there has never yet been a case for blocking porn in a public library.

Hard for OPPL to justify filters? You overlook the porn viewing, the unreported sex crimes, the people who said they would no longer attend the library until it is filtered to block porn, and the sexually harassed librarians like Linda Zec. Watch Deborah Caldwell-Stone speak at the meeting. What she says about sexually harassed librarians really put them down. I was shocked. This is the American Library Association, after all, not the American Porn Association. I would have expected a porn executive to similarly downplay sexual harassment cases, which, by the way, only came up for discussion because of what I've been disclosing about how ALA misleads communities.

"I wouldn't include anyone exterior to the community of Orland Park, since they literally have no standing vis a vis the Orland Park question." This is most

remarkable. Here you are, a supposed free speech advocate, a major player in a library school, supporting continued porn viewing in OPPL, yet you are telling others to shut their ears to anyone outside of Orland Park. It's a remarkable double standard. You get to tell the community false information that goes against US v. ALA perpetuates the harm while at the same time you tell them not to listen to people like me who point out the law says there's no First Amendment right to porn in public libraries per US v. ALA. It's remarkable. Given your position at a library school, it's disgraceful. Given your obeisance to ALA, it's understandable.



2.

[SafeLibrariesNovember 20, 2013 at 7:10 PM](#)

"Anything other than obscenity is legally protected speech all adults have a right to access." But not in public libraries, per US v. ALA. I forget to include this in my previous comment. Thanks, Ray, for approving these comments.

[Reply](#)



4.

[AnonymousNovember 20, 2013 at 7:12 AM](#)

Children aren't meant to be in the area, so parents keep your kids out of the area.

The simplest solution the library can implement immediately is to purchase screens filters that prevent others from seeing from the side, you can only view if you are sitting right in front of it.

To those individuals who spend time patrolling what others are viewing, they are the voyers and should mind their own business.

Keep your children supervised and out of adult areas. And it is the responsibility of the parents to respond to children when confronted with information or images that may be confusing. There are worse images and information of crime in the news that children are inundated with daily on basis on television. Sex images are not the worst thing to be viewed online.

I understand the concern but implementing filters to websites is futile. Anyone who works in technology can tell you "where there is a will there is a way". If you want to get at the information, there are ways you can get around filters.

[Reply](#)



5.

[Ray Hanania](#)November 20, 2013 at 7:15 PM

"Safe libraries" you come across as if you are bullying someone. You should focus on the argument not attack the person. I think it is also appropriate if you identify yourself rather than hide behind anonymity. Everyone has a right to express their views. Bullying is an instrument of censorship. You can make your points on this very important community issue by focussing on the issue. Just my opinion.

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[Replies](#)



1.

[SafeLibraries](#)November 20, 2013 at 7:27 PM

Ray, I did no such thing. I pointed out what she did and who she is and commented it's a disgrace for someone in her position to mislead people and to cut off free speech. And it is. That's not a personal attack. And I have focused on the issue saying again and again that Barbara Jones of the ALA says filters work and work well, and linked to where you can hear her say that. You made light of that, but she is the top leader at the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom. If she says filters work well, I'm inclined to believe filters work well.

If I "come across as if you are bullying someone," that's most likely due to the shock that anyone is standing up to the false information at all. Who would believe librarians would mislead anyone? Yet a limited set of them are. My response is based on facts and the law. You didn't like the obeisance comment? Did you hear what ALA said at Monday night's OPPL meeting about shutting your ears to comments on Facebook? Is it not substantially similar to what Joyce Latham wrote here about shutting your ears to outside voices? Have you ever heard librarians ever say don't listen to other people?



2.

[SafeLibrariesNovember 20, 2013 at 7:29 PM](#)

Oh yes, I'm not hiding behind "SafeLibraries." Everyone doing the simplest Google search or look at my site will see Dan Kleinman.

[Reply](#)



6.

[Ray Hanania November 21, 2013 at 3:04 AM](#)

Well Safe Libraries, then SIGN YOUR NAME if you want to be taken seriously because not everyone is going to waste their time looking you up. You have a right to express your opinion and I agree with some of it, but your tone comes across in a bullying manner. Address the issues and not the people. Anyone reading your comments can see you are beating up on someone rather than discussing the issues. Don't demean your argument. Personally, I am against censorship and I should be able to express that opinion without someone accusing me of anything. Thanks Dan. Transparency is important.