Too Taboo? Sex in LIS Education Texts

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Methodology
1. Identify relevant literature
2. Identify and locate absence or presence of thematic elements
3. Analyze absence, presence and use of thematic elements

Findings
Analysis of more than 40 items, categorized by:
• Reference materials
• Collection development text books*
• Intellectual freedom and policy texts* (*subset analyzed)

1. Representation in LIS literature?
   • Reference material is predominately pejorative
   • Legal definition of obscenity not followed
   • Direct relationship between obscenity and pornography
2. Balanced coverage?
   • Reference materials not given balanced coverage
   • Balanced and fair in intellectual freedom and policy texts
3. Change over time?
   • Coverage in reference materials becomes more unbalanced over time – not covered or becomes more pejorative

Theoretical framework
Education “follows the well-trodden battle lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse.”
(Foucault, Discourse on Language, 1972, p. 227)

Research Questions
1. How are items of a sexual nature represented in LIS educational materials?
2. Are sexual materials given balanced coverage in collection development LIS texts?
3. Has the representation of sexual materials in LIS texts changed over time?

Search Western Libraries catalogue
• Identify materials used for collection development education.
• Note: Western has long-standing ALA-accredited LIS program with an extensive collection of LIS resources.

Subjects:
• collection development (libraries)
• collection management (libraries)
• libraries (censorship)

Keywords:
• collection development

Definitions
Erotica
As per Miller v. State of California (413 U.S.15[1973]): Must meet all criteria: (a) whether “the average person, applying contemporary community standards” would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest, (b) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law, and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

Obscenity
Some redeeming qualities Based on Kent, 1968, and legal definitions

Pornography
An umbrella term for material with sexual themes. (Krug, 2006)

EROTICA
pornography
CENSORSHIP
sex
obscenity
facetiae
CURIOSA

References

*It is not the librarians duty to warn readers against such things as obscene language, descriptions of explicit sexual acts or unorthodox political, religious, moral or economic theories.*
(Krug, 2006)