

ITEM NUMBER: 4.08  
CHAPTER 4: Library  
Statements  
CODE: Policy  
COMPUTER ID: LS-8

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Title:	Expurgation of Library Materials, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.
Effective Date:	9-22-86
Authorized By:	Library Board of Trustees
Date of Last Review:	7-2013

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## **Expurgation of Library Materials**

### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Expurgating library materials is a violation of the [Library Bill of Rights](#). Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other library resources by the library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles I, II, and III of the [Library Bill of Rights](#), which state that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval," and that "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all library users, by limiting access to ideas and information. (See also other [Interpretations to the Library Bill of Rights](#), including [Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks](#) and [Free Access to Libraries for Minors](#).)

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

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Adopted February 2, 1973, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; January 10, 1990.

[ISBN 8389-5419-7]