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This study describes a critical discourse analysis of the officially adopted versions of the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights (LBR). This analysis was performed to examine how –if at all– the LBR has materially changed since its initial version, and what this might say about the document itself, and its relationship to librarianship.

The five official versions of the LBR from 1939-2019 were analyzed using Stuart Hall’s models of encoding/decoding and hegemony. The language of iteration was examined individually as well as relative to previous and subsequent versions of the document. A taxonomy was then developed. The data and their analysis suggest the LBR is the discursive practice through which hegemonic consent is created and rearticulated.

Headings:

Librarians -- Professional ethics

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History of library science
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF
THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

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Introduction

The normative values and metaethical principles of librarianship are the subject of continuous debate and scrutiny among information professionals. However, one concept seems to occur more frequently than most others: intellectual freedom. While a single, wholly satisfactory definition of intellectual freedom and its relationship to libraries may not exist, of the many attempts to codify these nebulous ideas, the American Library Association’s (ALA) *Library Bill of Rights (LBR)* is perhaps the best known and most influential.

First adopted in 1939, the ALA considers the articles of the *LBR* to be its most “unambiguous statements of basic principles that govern the service of all libraries” (2018b). Today, the *LBR* consists of a one-sentence preamble, and six fairly concise articles, each one dealing with one specific facet of intellectual freedom and its role in libraries and librarianship. There exists a considerable corpus of literature surrounding the *LBR*, particularly research analyzing specific articles from their respective eras; research addressing the usage and meaning of key ideas, such as “free speech,” “free expression,” and “rights;” and research using similar literature from other disciplines and contexts to suggest changes that might improve the authority, clarity, and soundness of the document. However, little scholarship exists about the historical development of this document, particularly historical analysis of the document vis-a-vis the changes to the exact language used therein. This paper, therefore, aims to fill that gap.
Using the methods of critical discourse analysis, this paper will trace the development of the LBR from its inception in 1939 through its current incarnation in order to identify what-if any- substantive changes have been made, as well as what those changes might mean about the document’s relation to the profession.

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

History and Definition

Firstly, one should note that the “critical” in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) holds multiple meanings: it refers to both the “spirit” of criticism (i.e., the practice of evaluating the merits and faults of a particular work), as well as “critical” branch of academics (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Although critical studies are often limited to those built around the work of a handful of 20th Century scholars (e.g., Horkheimer, Adorno, Foucault, etc.) Krings (as cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2001) argues that the academic understanding of “critical” should be taken to mean the “practical linking of ‘social and political engagement’ with ‘a sociologically informed construction of society’” (p. 3).

While CDA builds off of the work of numerous scholars, it is particularly indebted to Habermas’ (1978) conception of language as a fundamentally ideological
force which serves to reproduce and reinforce the power structures and modes of domination inherent to the society of its creation. Wodak and Meyer (2001) stress that what makes CDA distinct from other forms of linguistic analysis is that emphasis of discourse in its social context. Moreover, Fairclough (2013) considers CDA to be a dialectical process, meaning that, in addition to mapping discourse onto its material and social contexts, one must understand discourse as a phenomenon which emerges from the negation of contradicting ideas or forces. That is, discourse cannot exist independently of power, because power produces and is produced by discourse.

While there are multiple forms of CDA, their differences should be understood as descriptive rather than normative, because they are all predicated on the same principle: that there is nothing arbitrary about the nature or structure of discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Relatedly, CDA is often thought of as synonymous with critical linguistics (CL); however, Wodak argues that, if they are indeed synonymous, CDA should be the preferred nomenclature, since CDA’s defining “heterogeneity of methodological and theoretical approaches” (2011, p.51) is not obviously conveyed by the term CL.

While the application of critical theory to content analysis long predates CDA, CDA as a recognized and distinct means of analyzing data begins in earnest in the late 1970’s and 1980’s at the University of Amsterdam Linguistics Department. Key figures in its development include van Dijk, Fairclough, Kress, van Leeuwen, and Wodak (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Fairclough is widely considered the most central figure in the movement, and his interpretation is understood to be the central model for CDA (Widdowson, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Jones, 2004).
Three intellectual movements of the 1970’s and 80’s are typically regarded as the catalyzing events behind CDA’s development (Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Jones, 2004): First, a renewed interest in the work of Gramsci and Althusser prompted scholars studying power in contemporary society to shift their focus away from the domain of the explicitly political or economic, and towards the realm of the cultural and ideological (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Second, the rise of poststructuralism and its major figures - especially Baudrillard, Bourdieu, and Foucault- provided additional philosophical grounding to the foundation laid by Gramsci and Althusser (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Last, a movement against the dogmatism of mid-20th Century sociolinguistic theory emerged, taking aim at established descriptive models of language which tended towards a deterministic relation between discourse and the social (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p.4). Kress (1989) claims this movement was in equal measure a rejection of the naive belief that language per se could be understood divorced from social context, and a challenge to adopt and refine Halliday’s (1977) assertion that “language is as it is because of its functions in the social structure and the organization of behavioural meanings should give some insight into its social foundations,” (p. 65).

Fairclough (1992) argues there are five necessary characteristics and axioms in the theoretical framework common to all modes of CDA: First, language is ontologically social; by the nature of its existence, it cannot be parsed from its context. Second, every institution, grouping, or meaningful arrangement of elements of a social order possess meanings and values in the same way individuals do. Third, those who in some way process discourse (e.g., read, hear, watch, etc.) do not consume discourse passively. Fourth, the language of institutions reflects and reinforces the language of science and
technology, which in turn, is a reproduction of the structures of power and domination in a particular social context (Kress, 1990). Fifth, in a post-industrial society, cultural and ideological signifiers (i.e., language) are the primary means of reproducing and reinforcing power (Fairclough, 1989).

Criticisms and Defenses of CDA

A frequently observed strain of CDA criticism claims that it relies too heavily on Foucauldian “discourse idealism” to be considered a serious method of inquiry (Jones, 2004). These criticisms typically involve a variation on the refrain How can a model for investigation claim to effectively parse and analyze data if that model uses a framework which precludes the possibility of distinguishing between discourse and reality, truth and falsehood? However, these criticisms seem to overlook the incorporation of philosophical pragmatism and critical realism into some varieties of CDA throughout the 1990’s. First, Fairclough (1992) began to argue that the non-discursive elements of social structures (e.g., law, economics, etc.) have to be a part of CDA’s dialectic, because they themselves have a dialectical relationship with the natural world. Subsequently, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1996) -drawing heavily from Bhaskar’s (1986) critical realism- incorporated into CDA the distinction between epistemic relativism and judgmental relativism by granting that regardless of whether all interpretations of discourse are equally “true” or “valid” reflections of social life, one can weigh different interpretations against each other to assess which ones are most effective for relating socially, processing the material factors at play, and making sense of a given discursive dataset. In fact, some forms of CDA have turned so far from discourse idealism that Fairclough (2013) categorizes his
model—the predominant form of CDA— as a “realist approach which claims there is a real world, including the social world, which exists irrespective of whether or how well we know and understand it” (p. 4).

Widdowson (1995) argued that CDA is fundamentally flawed, because from its origins, it conflated linguistic theory with socio-political and economic agendas. Furthermore, he saw no satisfactory explanation for how CDA bridges the gap between admittedly sound linguistic analysis, and equally sound socio-political theorizing, stating that Fairclough and his peers have simply performed a bit of sleight-of-hand, and expected no one to notice the disconnect. Ultimately, he concludes by denying the very notion that CDA could be a method of analysis because it is “an exercise in interpretation” (p.156) privileging ideological commitment over substantive interrogation of fact.

In response, Fairclough (1996) argued that Widdowson confuses the simple “interpretation” (“interpretation-1”) we all perform (i.e., mapping a sign onto a meaning) with the academic form of “interpretation” (“interpretation-2”), which could be better conceived of as “explanation.” He goes on to define “explanation” as the “matter of analysts seeking to show connections between both properties of texts and practices of interpretation-1 in a particular social space, and wider social and cultural properties of that particular social space” (p.49-50). Fairclough goes so far as to claim that Widdowson’s criticism may be entirely disingenuous, since it disregards a crucial piece of his model’s framework, namely “the tension manifest in texts and discursive events between the way in which social subjects are discursively determined and constructed on the one hand, and the creative discursive activity of social subjects as agents of their own-
discourse on the other” (p. 50). Furthermore, Poole (2010) provides a counterexample to Widdowson’s claim. Poole assumes the perspective of a right libertarian, and applies Fairclough’s model of CDA to a text from the far-left publication Socialist Worker. Using only the text and a mapping of it onto its social context, Poole is able to “interpret” (read: “interpret-2”) the article as a denunciation of one of the few social power structures of the political left, trade unionism.

This debate factors significantly into one of the more comprehensive critiques of CDA, the provocatively titled What is Critical Discourse Analysis and Why are People Saying Such Terrible Things About it? (Toolan, 1997). Toolan is a proponent of CDA, and identifies areas of potential weakness in order to prompt further refinement of the various models of CDA in order to strengthen its position as a research method. Particularly, he worries that, as part of the “familiar habit of new approaches jostling for attention” (p.86), Van Dijk dismissed the “fashions of postmodernism and other ‘post-’movements” (1993, p. 132, as cited in Toolan, 1997) as cynical and vapid, yet the work of Baudrillard, Foucault, Habermas, and countless others typically regarded as “postmodernists” is indispensable to CDA’s theoretical foundations. Moreover, he cautions that while critical linguistics may conclude that language’s meaning is contextually bound, CDA’s practitioners and theoreticians need to be precise with their language, and points to the disagreement between Widdowson (1995) and Fairclough (1996) over the meaning of “interpretation” to illustrate this point. Toolan also suggests that CDA’s users and advocates need to further refine what exactly it is that makes critical discourse analysis critical, especially vis-a-vis traditional discourse analysis, which Toolan claims has not been proven to be wholly uncritical (p. 88).
Finally, Toolan considers a set of propositions he considers to be fundamental to CDA: 1) That the forces of hegemony and inequity shape our world, and the critical discourse analyst seeks to identify and redress these inequities (hence, the double meaning of “critical”); 2) All of these power structures and inequities are maintained through the deployment of capital, both literally and figuratively; 3) Discourses are expressions of symbolic capital; and 4) CDA can reveal how proposition three works through its systematic process of interrogation. Toolan then posits that this series implies a fifth proposition: that CDA will identify ways in which a discursive element could be changed so as to minimize or avoid reproducing and reinforcing existing power inequities. However, based on his research, Toolan states that this is yet to be explicitly addressed in the CDA literature. Furthermore, Toolan says that other forms of discourse analysis -including literary analysis and stylistics- have incorporated that final principle into their aims and practices. He challenges CDA researchers to work towards this prescriptive component for models of CDA.

Lastly, one of the major challenges to CDA came from Stubbs’ (1997) criticism of what he saw as CDA’s circular psycholinguistic assumptions. Stubbs sees CDA as part of the Whorfian tradition of linguistics, in which “languages or uses of language implicitly classify experience, and that these categories influence a person's view of reality” (p. 6) (i.e., the psychological effects of linguistics are deterministic). He therefore sees an unresolved problem for CDA: how can CDA make claims about the psychological effects of linguistic signs without psychological data?

Surprisingly, a potential solution to this problem comes from another prominent CDA critic, Widdowson (1996) who suggests that comparing the results obtained from a
text to those from a systematically altered version of that text might help control against this problem.

Hall’s Textual Analysis: Encoding/Decoding, Ideology & Hegemony

One of cultural studies’ leading figures, Stuart Hall is perhaps best known for the encoding/decoding model of communication and textual analysis (1980). Critically, Hall developed this model at a moment when the influence and acceptance of the positivist and pluralist models of communication theory was beginning to wane (Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran, & Woollacott, 2005, p.2). Hall’s model of communication was heavily influenced by the structuralists -particularly Barthes and his work on myth- whose approach showed him

“that things and events in the real world do not contain or propose their own, integral, single and intrinsic meaning, which is then merely transferred through language. Meaning is a social production, a practice. The world has to be made to mean. Language and symbolization is the means by which meaning is produced. This approach dethroned the referential notion of language, which had sustained previous content analysis, where the meaning of a particular term or sentence could be validated simply by looking at what, in the real world, it referenced. Instead, language had to be seen as the medium in which specific meanings are produced,” (Hall in Gurevitch et al, 2005, p. 63).

Two sets of critical concerns arose from this understanding: The first is exactly this. There is no singular meaning for any text, and the meanings of a given text are not inherent to the text itself, but rather a complex set of interconnected references and contextual elements that the text expects its analyst to possess. The second issue,
however, represented the most radical break between Hall’s model and then-prominent theories of communication; that is, that the receiver of a message is never a passive recipient of that discourse (Hall, 1993). As Morley (1992) explains, Hall’s model was the first to truly grasp that the inherent polysemy of all discursive objects could not be accounted for by earlier models like the hypodermic needle theory; if the creator of a text “injected” the meaning into the audience, how does one account for the countless interpretations of every text from, say, emails from one’s supervisor to literary classics like *Hamlet*? This left one of three possibilities: that all authors of texts are fundamentally unskilled as creators; that all audiences are fundamentally unskilled as receivers; or that audiences are active participants in the communication process, and the meanings they create depend on the contexts of their participation.

Hall decided to focus on the lattermost explanation, and began developing the encoding/decoding model of communication. He delivered the first articulation of this model in 1973. Hall states that meaning is created as communication flows between media and audiences; it is “produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments - production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction,” (1993, p. 91). To begin, a media-creating entity uses the “institutional structures and networks of production and broadcasting” (1973, p.2-3) to create a discursive object. Critically, it is this process -the production of discourse- where what Hall called “Meaning I” (p.3) or the “preferred meaning” (p.9) is created; the text of the object itself is not -or at least not primarily- where meaning is created or resides. Obviously, some of the preferred meaning must be established in and transmitted through the text using decipherable signs and signifiers, but the preferred meaning is primarily transmitted by
the technical knowledge of the production itself (e.g., the medium and the metawareness of that medium) and the professional values of that media entity with which the audience is familiar, and to which they will refer -consciously or otherwise- as they consume and decode that text. In other words, the text yields a *message*, but the decoding of that message yields a *meaning*.

Hall provides the example of news media communications to illustrate this point. The exact wording and ordering of, say, a newspaper article will doubtlessly establish some of its creator outlet’s preferred meaning; however, the crucial content of that preferred meaning is a result of the professional values of journalism with which the audience reads news texts. Since the most essential normative value of news media is “journalistic objectivity,” the audience will hopefully read their texts as a wholly objective account of events, not a single interpretation in the set of all possible recountings.

That preferred meaning, however, is not guaranteed to be the meaning the audience decodes. As Hall puts it, the products of encoding and decoding “do not constitute an immediate identity,” (1973, p.4). Different audiences will navigate these texts and discourses differently depending on their particular relations to the “means of meaning production” (p.4) (i.e., their context and position relative to the factors influencing encoding). Thus Hall identifies three possible decoded positions: the dominant, oppositional, and negotiated codes (1980, p. 137-138). The dominant code -later renamed the dominant-hegemonic position- is the decoded equivalent of the preferred meaning in which the audience has “institutional/political/ideological order imprinted” (1980, p.134) upon them; that is, the audience decodes the encoded preferred meaning. The
oppositional code is one in which the audience decodes the encoded meaning in a “globally contrary way” (p.138). Finally, the negotiated position is one in which the audience partially decodes the encoded meaning. In part, this explains why discourse is so often iterative; as contexts and relations change, the preferred meaning must be re-encoded for audiences to be able to decode the dominant-hegemonic code, as well as to ensure that the terms of the negotiated code remain acceptable.

Finally, Hall’s model must be considered in its context in order to grasp all of its implications, as well as the fullness of its purpose and the questions it seeks to answer. As the “means of meaning production” language implies, Hall is a theorist in the Marxist tradition. The “moments” (1980, p.130) (i.e., the stages) in his model of the production of discourse are cribbed directly from *Capital*. Hall writes that continuing in the mold of *Capital*, the encoding/decoding model is “the ‘labour process’ in the discursive mode,” (1980, p.130). Unlike much of the Marxist tradition, however, Hall sought to de-emphasize the economic determinism of orthodox Marxism, and supplant the base-superstructure model with a new understanding of culture (i.e., discourse) as the battleground of the political (1990).

In particular, the encoding/decoding model aimed to answer a problem plaguing Marxism since its foundation: the problem of ideology. Engels’ (1893) answer to the problem was false consciousness. This is the notion that ideology was reproduced in the superstructure resulting from the economic base as dictated by the dominant class; ideology was then willfully embodied in the subordinate by superstructural entities forcing the subordinate class to conceive of itself only as a class-of-itself, and attempting
to preclude the possibility of conceiving of itself as a class-for-itself. This explanation, however, was found by many to be lacking.

Roughly contemporaneously to Hall, Althusser brought about the Structuralist understanding of ideology. Althusser proposed a framework for ideology that was both idealist and materialist - a major break with orthodox Marxism. Althusser’s (1970) theory of ideology and ideological reproduction was threefold: First, ideology is a product of lacunar discourse. Drawing heavily on Freud and Lacan, this first premise means that ideology is created and reproduced in discourse that uses a number of propositions which 1) are never untrue, 2) imply further propositions, and 3) are disclosed by the initial propositions. Second, ideological discourse is created and reproduced by Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) such as the church, schools, professional organizations, and the news media. Moreover, these institutions show that ideological discourse has no meaning -or as Althusser says, no history- and they are made to mean by participating in that discourse. For example, Althusser points to the church and liturgy; the child need not understand what the liturgy mean when she takes communion for the first time, because the belief in the liturgy is created by the very act of participation in the liturgy. If and when ISAs fail to effectively reproduce ideology, there are Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) -such as the police- that can be deployed to reinforce relations to power. Last, Althusser says that the reason some can develop an awareness of ideology and then create counter-beliefs is through the application of critical thinking -which he calls “science.”

Hall was deeply dissatisfied with that final point. He found this explanation wholly inadequate, writing that Althusser does not “enable us to understand why there are internal struggles within all the major political formations over the appropriate “ideas”
through which the interests of the dominant class are to be secured. Nor does it enable us to understand why, to a significant degree, in many different historical social formations the dominated classes have used ‘ruling ideas’ to interpret and define their interests,” (2016, p.128). This brings us to the need to develop the encoding/decoding model as part of the answer to this problem.

Hall turned to Gramsci and his idea of cultural hegemony, and wedded it to Althusser’s theory of ideology, creating his own conception of hegemony. Hall’s understanding of hegemony is essentially the control of power by manufacturing consent through discourse (2003). By creating discourse, an institution creates hegemony not through what Gramsci’s “consensus” (Hall, 2017), but through consent. By creating discourse and getting participation in that discourse, an entity creates consent, and that process plus the maintenance of consent through continued discourse is hegemony. Discursive construction then becomes the site of the articulation of the “common sense” of a population, and “common sense” is then the rearticulation of the consent of that population to its hegemon (Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 1978).

Finally, one should consider Hall’s work relative to its parent discipline, cultural studies. As Johnson (1996) notes, the essential goal of the field is to escape the dogma of traditional sociopolitical inquiry by moving beyond the classical models (i.e., base-superstructural interpretation) which ignore or dismiss the role of culture in politics and vice versa. Culture, Johnson says, is a Parmenidean whole; if we accept that it is, it is necessarily everything, but in order to be intelligible to us, we have to interrogate each component part and then reassemble the whole. In other words, Hall’s theory is intended to be applicable to any necessarily cultural institution or apparatus.
Historical Development of and Perspectives on the LBR

History, 1938-1996

Remarkably, as of this writing, only one comprehensive history of the LBR exists (Magi & Garner, 2015), and this section summarizes their account of its history.

The LBR began as a modified version of a document created by Forrest Spaulding of the Des Moines Public Library in 1938. Spaulding’s text read:

“No when indications in many parts of the world point to growing intolerance, suppression of free speech, and censorship, affecting the rights of minorities and individuals, the Board of Trustees of the Des Moines Public Library reaffirms these basic policies governing a free public library to serve the best interests of Des Moines and its citizens.
I. Books and other reading matter selected for purchase from public funds shall be chosen from the standpoint of value and interest to the people of Des Moines, and in no case shall selection be based on the race or nationality, political, or religious views of the writers.
II. As far as available material permits, all sides of controversial questions shall be represented equally in the selection of books on subjects about which differences of opinion exist.
III. Official publications and/or propaganda of organized religious, political, fraternal, class, or regional sects, societies, or similar groups, and of institutions controlled by such, are solicited as gifts and will be made available to library users without discrimination. This policy is made necessary because of the meager funds available for the purchase of books and reading matter. It is obviously impossible to purchase the publications of all such groups and it would be unjust discrimination to purchase those of some and not of others.
IV. Library meeting rooms shall be available on equal terms to all organized nonprofit groups for open meetings to which no admission fee is charged and from which no one is excluded.”

The ALA drafted and adopted the original LBR in 1939. Several modifications to Spalding’s original document were made, including removing the words “equally” from
Article II; deletion of Article III; and substantial revision of Article IV, which was ultimately rolled into Article II. The first official version of the LBR was as follows:

“Today indications in many parts of the world point to growing intolerance, suppression of free speech, and censorship affecting the rights of minorities and individuals. Mindful of this, the Council of the American Library Association publicly affirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of free public libraries.

I. Books and other reading matter selected for purchase from the public funds should be chosen because of value and interest to people of the community, and in no case should the selection be influenced by the race or nationality or the political or religious views of the writers.
II. As far as available material permits, all sides of questions on which differences of opinion exist should be represented fairly and adequately in the books and other reading matter purchased for public use.
III. The library as an institution to educate for democratic living should especially welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and the discussion of current public questions. Library meeting rooms should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs or affiliations.”

The first alteration of the LBR came in 1944 when the chair of ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) recommended the inclusion of the phrase “factually correct” in Article I. In October of that year, the ALA Council approved the change. Although it was a minor formal change, this edit will prove to be the source of tremendous tension over the next two decades. The first extensive revision to the content of the LBR, however, would come four years later when a near-total overhaul of the document was undertaken. The 1944 version of the LBR read:

“Today indications in many parts of the world point to growing intolerance, suppression of free speech, and censorship affecting the rights of minorities and individuals. Mindful of this, the Council of the American Library Association publicly affirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the
services of free public libraries.

I. Books and other reading matter selected for purchase from the public funds should be chosen because of value and interest to people of the community, and in no case should the selection be influenced by the race or nationality or the political or religious views of the writers. Further, books believed to be factually correct should not be banned or removed from the library simply because they are disapproved of by some persons.

II. As far as available material permits, all sides of questions on which differences of opinion exist should be represented fairly and adequately in the books and other reading matter purchased for public use.

III. The library as an institution to educate for democratic living should especially welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and the discussion of current public questions. Library meeting rooms should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs or affiliations.”

In 1948, the IFC suggested the following changes to the LBR: First, the preamble was shortened considerably, because “by 1948, there was no longer the pre-World War II need to point out ‘the growing intolerance and censorship affecting the rights of minorities and individuals,” (Magi & Garner, 2015, p. 46). Second, the clause “as a responsibility of library service” was added to Article I to foreground the idea that upholding intellectual freedom was a professional responsibility; furthermore, the reference to “public funds” was removed, and “books” was expanded to all materials. Next, the scope of Article II was expanded, and the word “banned” was replaced with “proscribed.”

Perhaps the most notable change of 1948 was the creation of two new Articles. The new Article III was intended to address “the need of libraries to challenge the ‘censorship of books, urged or practiced by volunteer arbiters of morals or political opinion or by organizations that would establish a coercive concept of Americanism,’” (Magi & Garner, 2015, p. 46), while the new Article IV “recognized libraries’ responsibility” (p.46) to collaborate with other “educational” institutions. Last, what was
once Article III was made Article V without any changes in its content. This radically altered version of the *LBR* was adopted in June, 1948. It read:

“The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

I. As a responsibility of library service, books and other reading matter selected should be chosen for values of interest, information, and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should any material be excluded because of race or nationality, or the political or religious views of the writer.

II. There should be the fullest practicable provision of material presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times, international, national, and local; and books or other reading matter of sound factual authority should not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Censorship of books, urged or practiced by volunteer arbiters of morals or political opinion or by organizations that would establish a coercive concept of Americanism, must be challenged by libraries in maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment through the printed word.

IV. Libraries should enlist the cooperation of allied groups in the fields of science, of education, and of book publishing in resisting all abridgment of the free access to ideas and full freedom of expression that are the tradition and heritage of Americans.

V. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal term to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members.”

At the suggestion of the Special Committee on Civil Liberties, the ALA council voted on February 2, 1961 to add a new Article V to the *LBR* to address the issue of segregation in libraries. The old Article V would now be Article VI, and no other changes to the language of the *LBR* were made at this time. The new Article V read “The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his race, religion, national origins or political views.”
As the 1960’s progressed, 20 years of controversy surrounding the 1944 inclusion of the phrase “sound factual authority” in Article I came to a head, and the need for revision became increasingly apparent. The catalyzing event for those badly needed changes occurred when a Catholic librarian in Illinois justified excluding Protestant books from the local library collection by citing this clause (p. 50). This prompted the IFC to convene in 1965, and it concluded that many of the most popular and influential items found in a library fail to meet this criterion; therefore, “sound factual authority” needed to be removed.

The committee took the opportunity presented by the 1965 convention to suggest a number of further alterations. First, they recommended including the word “social” in Articles I and V “because of the far-reaching results of the civil rights movement” (p. 50). Next, the list enumerating the educational groups with which libraries should collaborate was removed from Article IV and replaced with a simpler statement intended to imply a greater number of partner organizations. Article VI was changed to specify that library space use was guaranteed only to groups open to the public (i.e., no private memberships). Finally, the IFC “recommended eliminating the phrase ‘that are the tradition and heritage of Americans’ because it was both redundant and nationalistic” (p. 50).

It would take two years before a finalized version of these amendments could be presented to the ALA council, who, in turn, proposed including the word “age” alongside “social” in Articles I and V. Finally, on June 27, 1967, the second most comprehensive overhaul of the LBR was approved. This iteration read:
“The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

I. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information, and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

II. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public 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. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.

VI. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.”

Over the next decade, much debate was had over the exclusion of “sex-linked” protections in the LBR. There were also concerns over the lingering presence of the language of “the public,” which librarians in academic and research settings took as the implication that they did not face the same challenges to free expression as their public counterparts. The push for the next set of revisions began in earnest in 1977 when the Special Committee on Women in Librarianship formally requested that the IFC revisit the language of the LBR.

The initial edits were proposed in 1978, and focused on several areas of concern: The first order of modification was the removal of “sex-linked pronouns” (p. 53). In Article I, the IFC removed language it considered “distracting,” and decided to specify that “community” meant “community the library serves.” Additionally, they changed “author” to “those contributing to their creation.” Article II was amended to specify that
its obligations extended to historical (i.e., potentially dated or inaccurate) information in addition to current information. The word “public” was eliminated from Article III, in addition to other “stylistic changes” (p. 53).

The most substantial changes came in Article VI, where the phrase “an institution of education for democratic living” was deleted because:

“[It] could imply support for the idea that libraries should censor all materials that they deem antidemocratic. ‘Democracy,’ strictly speaking, means ‘rule by the majority.’ From the standpoint of intellectual freedom, the library’s role in our society is not based on the principle of majority rule but on the principle embodied in the First Amendment that minority points of view have a right to be heard, no matter how unpopular with, or even detested by, the majority” (p.53).

Next, libraries were reclassified as “forums for information and ideas,” with the use of the word “forum” intended to convey that the library is a space that must “be open to any opinion or view” (p.53) Finally, its language was modified to more explicitly refer to all types of libraries, not just public ones.

A draft edition was approved for general membership review in 1979, and comments were heard throughout year. At the Midwinter Meeting in 1980, the IFC proposed the new edition to the ALA Council. On January 23, 1980, the new edition was adopted. As of this writing, it is the current version of the LBR, and is now the longest-lasting edition. It reads as follows:

“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 which 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.”

Magi and Garner state that since this last reconsideration, “requests were made to amend the Library Bill of Rights to include the concepts of freedom of access to information and libraries without limitation by language or economic status, as well as equity of service and access and representation in the collection for gays, bisexuals, and lesbians” (p. 55). Moreover, they claim that this period saw requests for amendments to the LBR to address “growing concerns about the erosion of personal privacy in light of advancing technology,” (p. 56). However, the ALA has intensified a trend that began in the 1970’s by addressing concerns about political and socio-cultural issues through official interpretations of -rather than amendments to- the LBR. The closest the ALA came to diverging from this pattern came at the 1996 Midwinter Meeting when -in response to challenges potentially resulting in age-restricted access to certain library materials- the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association voted to reaffirm the use of “age” in the LBR.
Research Question

Several critical concerns should now be evident: first, it is troubling that so few research projects have dealt specifically with the *LBR* as a living document with an established historical record and the potential for change over time. Second, the only literature to do so was sponsored by the same body responsible for the *LBR*. Third, while there exists considerable research examining the *LBR*’s explicit meaning, and even prescribing potential ways to clarify, improve, or expand that meaning, there exists very little research which considers the possibility that the *LBR* is a rhetorical object conveying latent meaning, some or all of which might be revealed through a comprehensive picture of its historical construction.

Therefore, this paper intends to explore how -if at all- the American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights* changed materially from its inception in 1939 to its most current incarnation, as well as what those changes might indicate about the American Library Association, its document, and the relationship of both to libraries and librarianship.
Methods

Discourse Analysis: Methodologies, Applications, and Criticisms

Discourse Analytic Research Methods

In this paper, the data to be examined are discursive texts; therefore, we will consider methods of linguistic content analysis. First, a distinction is generally drawn (Hammersley, 2003; Budd, 2006) between two broad categories of linguistic content analysis: to use Hammersley’s terminology, there is conversation analysis, which usually focuses on discursive exchange between people, and there is discourse analysis, which typically examines discursive materials created by institutions rather than people. The latter mode is more appropriate in this case, but further refinement is necessary.

Broadly speaking, discourse analysis is the systematic examination of discursive data (Budd, 2006). One fundamental assumption of this method is that discourse cannot be reduced to pure linguistics, thus these data must be considered in context. This can take multiple forms, including the consideration of not just what is said, but also how it is said (Budd, 2006, p.69); analysis of what is said alongside what could be said (p.67); or the application of particular theoretical lenses to discursive data in order to analyze the latent meaning of those data, or critical discourse analysis (CDA). The lattermost method of discourse analysis will be employed in this paper.
Discourse Analytic Research in LIS

The case for discourse analysis - particularly CDA - in LIS research has been articulated by multiple researchers (Frohmann, 1992, 1994; Budd, 2006; Haider & Bawden, 2007; Oliphant, 2015). One of the earliest advocates for CDA in LIS research was Frohman (1992), who believed that the LIS field is uniquely well-suited for CDA research. First, he argued that the emergence of the “user-centered approach” to library service and the professional discourse surrounding the concept reproduced and reinforced the quintessential power structure of contemporary society, market capitalism, by commodifying the notions of “information” and information access, then by signifying “consumer” through the signifier “user” (1992, p. 18-21). Building from this foundation, he argued that few academic disciplines are more obviously products of the dialectic between history, culture, and material conditions (1994, p.120-121), and that the reproduction of social structures was manifestly true in LIS literature, since LIS research is uniquely tied to human practices and changing technological conditions. Moreover, using Dreyfus’ and Rainbow’s work on speech acts (as cited in Frohmann, 1994), Frohman argues that LIS is categorized by serious speech acts - like its idiosyncratic technical jargon and slew of initialisms - which are a preferred data type of CDA.

Budd (2006), drawing heavily on Frohman, provides the seminal articulation of the applicability of CDA to LIS research (Tajia & McKenzie, 2007). He begins by noting that the library, like Foucault’s prison, is not a spontaneously generated or wholly unique entity (p. 74); rather, it’s the product of a specific socio-historical understanding of abstract constructions like information and public education. Budd goes on to claim that, while the Foucauldian, near-deterministic understanding of identity may be too strong in
its prescriptions, the influence of social context on identity and behavior are undeniable, and that effect is only more evident in cases of great power imbalance (p.79-80). From this premise, his syllogism continues, stating that the relational practices of the librarian are heavily dependent on context (e.g., in the library vs. out, with colleagues vs. with patrons, etc.), and those profession-defining relations often have evident power imbalances (e.g., the reference interview); therefore, library science needs research critical of the reproduction of power imbalances through discourse. As a final consideration, the discourse of imbalanced relationships like the reference interview effectively illustrate the way in which discourse reproduces social relations, while simultaneously adding to their construction.

Criticism of Discourse Analysis in LIS Research

Hammersley (2003) argues that all forms of discourse analysis are so methodologically unsound, they can, at best, be a part of or complement to another research method, but they cannot stand on their own. He begins with the objection that they too strongly deny the Husserlian phenomenological paradigm in which speech objects map to some external reality (p. 756). He argues that this is a superior analytic framework to the purely constructivist interpretation of discourse (p.756-757).

One of Hammersley’s central objections to all forms of DA is what Woolgar and Pawluch refer to as “ontological gerrymandering” (as cited in Hammersley, 2003, p.764). Hammersley says DA “sometimes implies that those [discursive] phenomena are constituted by, rather than independent of, the accounting practices we use to talk about them; but it exempts some phenomena from such treatment, such as racism and sexism,
as well as the accounting practices that are its focus” (p.771). However, DA still makes claims “about social phenomena as they are, rather than as social constructions” (p.764). He sees several problems resulting from this: firstly, he says that all forms of DA seek to document the actions of different agents, which he deems permissible, but they also aim to ascribe those actions to the material interests of specific social classes or relations; this, Hammersley strenuously objects to, because any agent will belong to multiple categories, so to say one is the causal factor is to disclose countless potential alternatives.

Secondly, Hammersley questions “why it can be concluded that the availability of this discursive practice to one or a few members of a category means that it is available to, or used by, most or all of them” (p.764). He sees this as mistaking a sample with an entire population, and points to Potter’s and Wetherell’s example (as cited in Hammersley, 2003) of the discourse between New Zealand’s white settlers and the native Maori population. Rather than just examine the data from this particular sample of white settler discourse, Potter and Wetherell make claims about the categorical meaning of this discursive strategy, and its relationship to New Zealand’s entire white settler population.

Thirdly, Hammersley claims, “the central message of DA is that phenomena could always be constructed differently; and that how they are constructed has consequences, or fulfils certain social function…[so] why is their analysis itself not to be treated simply as a series of rhetorical moves designed to have particular effects on readers?” (p. 765). This question is perhaps the most frequently leveled objection to using forms of DA as research methods.

Finally, Hammersley dissects Wetherell’s 1998 DA study (as cited in Hammersley, 2003) of a group of adolescent males’ discursive approach to relations with
the opposite sex in order to reinforce his claim that DA is less a research method than a rhetorical technique, and to raise one final objection. Hammersley claims that Wetherell’s work lacks primary data to support her claims about the discursive data’s social context; he sees this as a deliberate omission, which is indicative of DA’s “insistence that only certain kinds of [psychological and social] attributes be applied” (p.769) to discursive data. In other words, DA is a tautological operation, allowing those who employ it to avoid having to substantiate claims, and guaranteeing that what data she does analyze always results in one of a predetermined list of outcomes.

Underlying Hammersley’s critique is the concern that the discourse analyst and her work are the very model of *Homo rhetoricus*, which may impart a certain tautological quality to that work. The discourse analyst takes discursive data that -regardless of what sort of object it refers to- is fundamentally rhetorical; then she analyzes it as rhetoric, as opposed to pure linguistic object; and finally, she communicates that analysis through rhetoric. If not exactly a methodological failing, there seems to be something disquieting about the entire process, and there is an implication that the emphasis and reliance on rhetoric results in a product wanting for substance.

These arguments, however, require further inspection, and several are predicated on assumptions which warrant further interrogation. His first set of objections are common charges, essentially paralleling the objections raised by Jones (2004); these criticisms were addressed by Fairclough (1992) and Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) and a summary of those responses can be seen in the literature review.

Hammersley’s next three criticisms, while sharing a common point of origin, should be considered separately. His first criticism -that, despite the possibility that a
discursive agent has membership in many societies and social classes, CDA claims to be able to map that agent’s actions to a causal condition- appears to come from the assumption that the findings of a CDA research project are intended to be categorically and definitively true, a demonstrably false idea. CDA, like most qualitative research, does not seek to prove causation; rather, it seeks to provide meaningful interpretation derived from data. It does not preclude the possibility of other meaningful interpretation. Moreover, if CDA was attempting to prescribe an explanation and proscribe alternatives that would seemingly contradict Hammersley’s charge of discourse idealism, because one interpretation would have to be considered the true interpretation.

Two objections arise in response to his next claim, which seems to be that one cannot go beyond the specific population one studies (i.e., generalize), but all research tries to find themes that reach beyond the specific. The first objection would be that, by his own example, one can see that CDA does just that. Wetherell and Potter do not extrapolate meaning from data about New Zealand’s white settlers beyond other white settlers in New Zealand. They move beyond pure description, and make a clear attempt to find meaning in their data. It is certainly true that they make no judgements about, for example, South Africa’s white settlers, but that expresses a limit of qualitative research, not discourse analysis. The second objection is that, assuming Hammersley is correct, there is an implicit qualitative judgment to his claim for which he provides no substantive defense. Assuming that one could not extrapolate meaning beyond a specific object or context, are there not objects of enough significance that they still warrant interrogation? The *LBR* is arguably the single-most important document about intellectual freedom in the entire library profession; even if any meaning revealed through discourse analysis
could not be applied to other cases, the *LBR* is worth analyzing because of its centrality in one of the most critical debates in the entire field.

The final claim of these three -that DA is itself a form of discourse, and is therefore subject to the same pitfalls and scrutiny as its data sets- is another iteration of an oft-repeated criticism of DA methods. However, Budd (2006) sees this not as a bug of the method, but rather a deliberate feature. Discourse is a dialectical process, and is therefore constructed by and constructive of language and meaning (p. 75); this is only a problem if a researcher denies or forgets this facet of her project. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that it would be a problem to scrutinize the methods or findings of a research paper; in fact, this is a crucial piece of the research cycle.

Lastly, it is worth briefly considering Hammersley’s apprehensions about the role of rhetoric throughout the discourse analysis process. Again, this is not exactly a direct object to the methodology, but rather a set of concerns about rhetoric fulfilling a role in the research process it may not typically occupy. The discourse analyst -and especially the critical discourse analyst- might respond in two ways: first, one might caution that the *process* of DA is distinct from the *product* of DA, and second, that no reason has been given as to why rhetoric qua rhetoric is an unacceptable object for scholarly inquiry.

The second response is slightly more robust, and should be expanded some. First, one should consider that Hammersley’s concerns appear to be epistemological; it seems he sees a methodological hierarchy in which some form of the modern scientific method occupies the top most position, and methods failing to meet all of its criteria -including the avoidance of rhetoric as a means of substantiating claims- fall below it. The response, therefore, would be to note that as McCloskey (1983) argues, no research method -
particularly those deployed in the social sciences- can completely eschew rhetoric. It is as an integral part of the scientific method, and it is necessary for successfully communicating ideas; moreover, folly lies not in the use of rhetoric, but in the denial of its centrality to all modes of research and the attempt to exorcise it from these processes. Using Feyerabend's (as cited in McCloskey, 1983, p.488) Galileo example, she demonstrates that were the epistemological prohibitions on rhetoric truly upheld, Galileo’s contemporaries would have rejected his “proof” for heliocentrism as insufficient, since it was fundamentally an argument from analogy. Continuing with this reasoning, one can see that vital portions of research processes, such as the literature review, are definitionally rhetorical; what is a literature review if not arguments from authority and analogy?

Coase (1992, p.15-18) goes further still, arguing that if all studies -quantitative or qualitative- intend to show that a given data set points to a specific meaning, they require a pre-established belief system upon which they can build; in other words, data cannot exist in a vacuum of prior belief and still possess the potential for meaning. If, therefore, Hammersley’s unease is really the result of a misunderstanding of the meaning, usefulness, and inextricability of rhetoric in all research methods, then McCloskey provides perhaps the most succinct response, writing, “The invitation to rhetoric, however, is not an invitation to irrationality in argument. Quite the contrary. It is an invitation to leave the irrationality of an artificially narrowed range of arguments and to move to the rationality of arguing like human beings,” (p.509).
Knowledge Gap and Importance of this Research

The ALA refers to the Articles of the *LBR* as the organization’s “unambiguous statements of basic principles that govern the service of all libraries” (American Library Association, 2018b). Moreover, the ALA is “the oldest and largest library association in the world” (American Library Association, 2018a). However, after extensive searching in research databases including Library and Information Science Source, Library and Information Science Abstracts, Academic Search Premier, and JSTOR, as well as University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s (UNC) library catalog and Articles+ index, only one comprehensive history and analysis of the *LBR* was found. The relative dearth of literature on one of the foundational texts from librarianship’s chief professional body is the first issue this research seeks to address.

Furthermore, that one document was produced by authors employed by the American Library Association as part of a book marketed towards its membership. This presents a clear conflict of interest that could result in biased work, since the ALA has a vested interest in representing its document and its history in the best light possible. Therefore, this paper intends to present a third-party analysis to corroborate or criticize the evaluation found in Magi and Garner (2015).

Biases

Certain aspects of my identity may affect how I interpret these data. In particular, I am afforded a great deal of privilege due to my placement on multiple social spectra (e.g., socioeconomic status, race, gender, etc.), and this privilege may disclose certain interpretations, or it may inflate the presence or value of others.
My relative historical context should also be considered here. The creation of- and majority of revision to the LBR occurred before I was born, and the last formal consideration of the language of the LBR was in 1996, when I was a young child without a critical awareness of social context. Therefore, while I can acquaint myself with historical documentation of that particular moment, it is possible that there exists some qualia of having a meaningful experience of that moment in time. Moreover, my understanding and experience of history subsequent to its most recent revision may affect my analysis of this document.

Finally, one should consider my status as a student in a library science program, and an employee of a library. While there are key distinctions between the American Library Association and myself, there also exist potentially important similarities between us. My “insider’s perspective” on libraries, librarianship, and library discourse may affect my analysis of the LBR, potentially pushing me to similar conclusions as those found by Magi and Garner (2015).

Research Process

Data Sampling

For this research, the necessary data are mostly apparent and specific. This paper requires the text of the different versions of the LBR throughout its 80-year history. Data will be selected, then, on a purposive basis, and the researcher will be the instrument for data collection. Critically, the ALA does not index the text of previous versions the LBR alongside the current iteration on its website. Therefore, these data will be taken primarily from JSTOR-archived issues of ALA Library Bulletin, later renamed American
Libraries. Moreover, extracting these data from those sources may provide some of the contextual information needed for CDA. Additional data may be taken from other ALA publications such as Magi and Garner’s 2015 work and work pertaining to the LBR published on ALA.org.

These data will be coded using the “cycle” paradigm described by Saldaña (2016). Each cycle will consist of multiple readings of the data; cycles are demarcated not by an arbitrary number of data processings, but rather by a change in the exact purpose and methodology of those processings. Through the first cycle of processing, data will be coded using his eclectic method. Specific coding schema likely to be employed at this stage include grammatical methods, such as magnitude or attribute coding; affective methods, especially versus coding; and procedural methods, particularly causal coding. After light coding through the first cycle, the second processing cycle will introduce a heavier volume of annotation through a possible mix of longitudinal, pattern, and theoretical coding. Using these schema will enable the introduction of the necessary theoretical lens, and allow for the investigation of any material changes over time. After the second coding cycle, a synthesizing process will begin, and the various schema employed will be woven together in order to theorize about possible patterns and meaning in these data.

Additionally, as a means of managing and documenting the effect of the researcher’s biases on the coding cycles, Saldaña (2016) recommends tracking one’s attitudes and impressions of the data throughout this process. Possible questions to consider while coding the data include: “What do I find surprising in these data, and why did those items surprise me?,” “Were any items particularly intriguing or disturbing to
me, and why was that so?,” and “If my understanding of a specific datum changes significantly after repeated processing, what might have affected that change, and what might that change reveal about my relationship to these data?”

Data will be collected and stored using F1000’s citation management workspace. There, primary data will be tagged with appropriate metadata, and then sorted into subdirectories based on the instance of the LBR they represent, while secondary information (e.g., theoretical literature) will be stored in discrete subfolders in the same F1000 directory. Beyond providing a systematic and documentable organizational process, this may serve as a means of minimizing improper or redundant processing.

First, the analysis of these data will first track changes to the text itself across each of the accepted versions of the LBR. This will, in part, verify Magi and Garner’s reporting, as well as provide a critical appraisal of the changes of the texts themselves. Next, the texts will be considered in context and their linguistic and contextual meanings will be compared and synthesized using the theoretical framework provided by Althusser, Gramsci, and Hall.

Evaluation Criteria

This paper and its findings will largely be evaluated vis-a-vis Magi and Garner (2015). As of this writing, it is the only comprehensive account of the development of the LBR, charting its course from its successor document to its present incarnation. Therefore, this paper will be successful if its findings stem from rigorous application of appropriate research methods, and those findings can provide meaningful comparison to Magi’s and Garner’s, regardless of whether they corroborate or contradict each other.
Additionally, a second researcher, Dr. Casey Rawson, will review the coding data and procedures, themes, and interpretations for trustworthiness. She will be an involved participant in all stages of the process, and will conduct multiple distinct, focused reviews of the paper, procedures, and findings.

The last major criterion for evaluating the success of this paper is whether its findings create the opportunity for more exploration of this topic. As one of the essential documents of the library profession, the field might benefit from a more critical and thorough investigation of the LBR, and hopefully this paper can point to more areas worthy of investigation.

Data Analysis

Comparison of Each Iteration

For a complete, side-by-side comparison of all iterations of the LBR, refer to the supplemental tables.

A Taxonomy of Changes

In order to sufficiently capture and classify all of the changes made to the LBR, a four-part coding taxonomy was developed. The first category is “Authority Expanding Changes.” These are changes which add to the powers, duties, and responsibilities of libraries and librarians enumerated in the LBR. These include changes such as the following representative data:
• The expansion of Article I in the 1944 revision (“Further, books believed to be factually correct should not be banned or removed from the library simply because they are disapproved of by some persons”) (“Library’s Bill,” 1944)
• The addition of Article III in the 1948 revision (“Censorship of books, urged or practiced by volunteer arbiters of morals or political opinion or by organizations that would establish a coercive concept of Americanism, must be challenged by libraries in maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment through the printed word.”) (“Bill of Rights,” 1948)
• The addition of Article IV in the 1948 revision (“Libraries should enlist the cooperation of allied groups in the fields of science, of education, and of book publishing in resisting all abridgment of the free access to ideas and full freedom of expression that are the tradition and heritage of Americans.”) (“Bill of Rights,” 1948)

The second category is “Changes of Scope.” These are changes that broaden or clarify the “jurisdiction” of the LBR and its dictates, or broaden the scope. Moreover, these changes can refer to both people and items affected by the LBR. This category can best be understood by examining changes such as the following representative data:

• The 1948 change to the preamble expanding the domain of the LBR from public to all libraries (“Bill of Rights,” 1948).
• The 1967 addition of Article V specifying which groups are subject to and protected by the articles of the LBR (“The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.”) (“San Francisco,” 1967).
• The nearly complete revision made to Article VI in 1980, which generalized the language about whose right to use library meeting space is guaranteed (“New Draft,” 1979, p.663).

The third category is “Changes of Identity.” These are changes affecting the nature or purpose of libraries and librarians. Consider the following representative data:

• The 1948 changes to Article V to specify that the library is “an institution of education for democratic living…” (“Bill of Rights,” 1948)
• The definition of libraries as a member of the set of “groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas” added to Article IV in the 1967 LBR iteration (“Proposed Revision,” 1967).
• The insertion of the phrase “libraries are public forums for information and ideas” into the preamble as part of the 1980 revisions (“New Draft,” 1979).
The final category is “Contractive Changes.” These are changes made to focus the applicability or degree of emphasis of a protection or obligation, or changes made to resolve a tension resulting from ambiguous wording. These changes can best be understood through the following representative data:

- The changes made to Article II in 1948 clarifies the extent of the library’s responsibility to represent the various sides of an issue, as well as to which issues this pertains ("There should be the fullest practicable provision of material presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times…") ("Bill of Rights," 1948).
- The 1967 changes to the language of Article III made the censorship clause a strong recommendation rather than an absolute requirement ("...libraries must…" was replaced with "...libraries should…") ("Proposed Revisions," 1967).
- The 1967 removal of the entire 1944 revision to Article II ("Further, books believed to be factually correct…") changed language that, as previously noted, formed the basis for a legal challenge to an Illinois library.

Lastly, it must be noted that these categories are not strictly discrete. Consider one of the changes made to Article I in the 1980 version: the sentence “In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors” was changed to “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.” This is both a Change of Scope and a Contractive Change, and as we will see in the subsequent section, a change can occupy a position and its opposite without creating a contradiction or changing the meaning of the LBR.
Reexamining Changes with Hall’s Model of Hegemony

Several clear patterns and issues emerge as one traces the historical development of the *LBR*. Firstly, nearly all Authority Expanding Changes occur in the first two revisions to the *LBR*. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of libraries and librarians are largely defined by the 1948 version. The changes made post-1948 are nearly all changes which then clarify who and what are subject to those powers, as well as which groups should be identified as needing specific protections and how those groups should best be identified, and what these duties and client-bases say about the identity of libraries and librarians.

Secondly, each version of the *LBR* is essentially discrete. The changes made at any given revision point do not reflect the reasoning or contextual considerations that necessitated or inspired earlier changes, and frequently undo what could be considered the central-most revision from the previous iteration. For example—as Magi & Garner claim and was corroborated in contemporary reporting (“New Statement,” 1962; “San Francisco,” 1967)—the 1967 revisions were in large part a response to segregation in libraries and the growing civil rights movement. The 1980 revision was in part a response to the push for the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution and the influence of the budding third-wave feminist movement on the membership of the ALA (“New Draft,” 1979; “ERA,” 1980). Considered together, however, it is striking that the causes and effects of the former changes in no way presaged the causes and effects of the latter. As Keetley & Pettigrew (2005) note, the ERA was first proposed in 1921; it was publicly considered and endorsed by the Democratic Party as early as 1964; and it was endorsed by prominent mainstream figures in the civil rights movement, including Coretta Scott
King and Shirley Chisholm. Clearly the two were strongly linked, and the consideration of race in the *LBR* would seemingly indicate the (at least eventual) need to consider the relationship between gender and the *LBR*, yet the versions of the *LBR* gives no such indications. The iterations of the *LBR* occupy many presents without ties to any histories.

Lastly, changes made and the justifications given for them often result in new internal contradictions for the *LBR*. Consider the tension created by the insertion and then deletion of the phrase “social” in Articles I and V. Magi & Garner state that it was added as part of the 1967 revisions “because of the far-reaching results of the civil rights movement” (p. 50). This justification -however odd it may be to describe a necessarily political movement as a “social” one- seems plausible; however, the word was deleted in the very next revision, seemingly implying that those “far-reaching results” were either done away-with as well, or no longer far-reaching or worth protecting.

Furthermore, the incongruities and disconnects created by the changes themselves pale in comparison to the underlying dissonance created by the placement of necessarily incompatible ideas in the same place. Consider first the emphasis placed on the obligation to uphold and protect all perspectives on a given issue, one of the few tenets clearly preserved across all versions of the *LBR*. There is an abundance of research and literature about the harmful fiction that is “library neutrality” (Bosseau & Martin, 1995; Rosenzweig, 2004; Jimerson, 2007; Shockey, 2016; Farkas, 2017; Kiciman, Rose, Sermeño, & Tranfield, 2017). The case has been made numerous times: libraries exist in a fundamentally imbalanced world, therefore, their default state is one which inherited those imbalances; to present “all perspectives in all cases to the same extent” is to work in service of those power imbalances; therefore, to be “neutral” is to be partisan in
support of the subordination of marginalized groups. Moreover, this technocratic vision of libraries and especially librarians is in-and-of-itself a non-neutral perspective; it is in fact a deeply conservative worldview. Yet the LBR makes no acknowledgement this reality, let alone attempt to address this issue. This is only one of several long-lasting tensions; much could be said about, say, the inevitable cannibalization of “intellectual freedom/free speech” rights by property rights when a document attempts to preserve both (Durone & Smith, 1995), as the LBR attempts to do.

All of these issues, however, are resolved when analyzed with Hall’s correlated theories of hegemony and communication. First, consider the changes themselves and their progression over time. Initially, the LBR needs to establish and be established by a professional code; thus, we see this process play out across the first two versions. By the 1967 iteration, that set of values (“neutral” perspective, anti-censorship, institution for education and “access”) can begin to articulate the profession itself (i.e., define the scope of libraries and librarianship), as well as be rearticulated by the profession - a process observed in contemporaneous ALA Bulletin articles (“Editorial,” 1962; “Proposed Revision,” 1967; “ERA,” 1980). With the discursive construction (i.e., interpolation) of the librarian subject begun, the LBR becomes a project of hegemonic maintenance. By the 1980 revisions, we see a nearly exclusive emphasis on refining the language of the LBR rather than the meaning, because there is no more meaning to create, only a message to rewrite in pursuit of a renewed consensus.

Read using Hall’s encoding/decoding model and theory of hegemony, the ahistoricism of the LBR is rendered clear. As Althusser notes, ideology has no history (1970); every time ideology is articulated, it is sui generis. That is, today’s news is not
produced by yesterday’s events, but by its very construction. Each iteration of the LBR is
a new text with no connection to the previous, because it is necessarily tied to its new
context. There is no point in attempting to project forward, because there is no “forward”
to be anticipated. Moreover, attempting to preempt further discourse would undermine
the LBR’s own authority. It is through these revisions that consent is manufactured and
hegemony maintained. Why attempt to stop the rearticulation of the profession by
relinquishing future control of the “means of meaning production?”

Furthermore, each version of the LBR is necessarily discrete, because each one
must be encoded to realign the preferred meaning to the new context of construction. It is
more important to render a text “historical” vis-a-vis the crises of its moment of
production than it is to render it “historical” vis-a-vis its parent documents, because its
meaning is not produced by the latter form of history.

Similarly, the paradoxes and contradictions arising from the LBR’s imprecise
vision and seeming inability or unwillingness to commit to a particular perspective are all
rendered clear by Hall’s theories. The LBR is only self-contradictory if the meaning of its
text is “libraries and librarians must protect free speech/intellectual freedom and uphold
property rights;” however, this is just the message of its text. The meaning of the LBR is
and always has been to produce discourse that articulates librarianship, and is in turn
rearticulated by librarians, thus manufacturing hegemony through consent.
Further Discussion

One lingering question raised by the above analysis is if this is the form of hegemony in librarianship, what effects does this have on the practice and services of librarians and libraries? While these data and their analysis alone cannot provide a definitive answer, they provide some basis for speculation. If we accept that this discourse manufactures and maintains hegemony, then it follows that the stated priorities of the hegemonic body become the priorities of its subjects. In this case, then, “intellectual freedom” -however ill-defined that term may be here- would be a likely candidate for the field’s primary concern. Considering the popularity and prevalence of library programming such as “Banned Books Week,” there is at least some possible evidence to support this hypothesis; however, more research is needed to state this conclusively.

Moreover, the premise above has an axiomatically true corollary one should consider: choosing a priority necessarily means not choosing every other possible priority. This then begs two questions: first, even if the stated values of the LBR are the text’s message alone and not its meaning, why choose -and perhaps more significantly, continue to choose- “intellectual freedom” in particular? Second, what might the selection of an alternate set of normative values mean for the practices and services of libraries and librarians? Once again, the best one can do at this stage is speculate, and further research is needed to support any conclusions; however, there are some possible indicators in these data and their analysis to consider.

A common criticism of the LBR is that neither “intellectual freedom” specifically, nor “rights” broadly are adequately defined or clearly related to any established legal
understanding of the two (Baldwin, 1996; Wiegand, 1996; Himma, 2004; Hitchcock, 2005). Despite that ambiguity, what “intellectual freedom” means for the practices of librarianship are fairly unequivocal: the *LBR* places a categorical ban on all forms of censorship. This makes considering changes to the *LBR* -including its very inception- were often the product of a legal challenge to a library or library materials on censorship grounds (Magi & Garner, 2015). It is understood that legal challenges can be resource intensive, costing their participants money and time. Furthermore, when the ALA adopted the *LBR* in 1939, its total membership was 15,568 (“Membership,” 2019); with the exception of the changes made during World War II, ALA membership was higher at each subsequent revision, peaking with 56,688 members in 1996. Since each member pays dues; both membership numbers and dues have risen across the history of the *LBR*; the *LBR* prohibits any abridgment of speech or expression; and the ALA and libraries have been involved in litigation surrounding censorship, it follows from these premises that one possible explanation for the prioritization of “intellectual freedom” is to guard the ALA’s increased asset pool from the threat posed by litigation. Again, this syllogism is not enough evidence to conclusively state this, and more research is needed.

There are a number of potential factors that need to be considered alongside this analysis. Firstly, Hall’s models of communication and hegemony are not without criticism. While he is ultimately a proponent of Hall’s theories, Morley (2006) raises a number of concerns about the encoding/decoding model and its relationship to hegemony. Firstly, he notes that an audience arriving at any of the three positions Hall stakes out is dependent upon their capacities to actually “read” the text; it’s entirely possible that someone misreads the message, precluding the possibility of her
understanding its meaning. Secondly, Morley believes that Hall’s three positions are an inadequate picture, and believes that there are at least six more possible decodings at which one could arrive. Lastly, and most substantially, Morley notes that a certain ambiguity could arise where the receiver of a text could reject the dominant-hegemonic message of the text, but not arrive at an oppositional position. Ross (2011) raised similar concerns, and offered the example of ObamaCare to clarify. Ross asks what if an oppositional news channel ran a story about a flaw in ObamaCare? According to Hall’s model, a reader can fully share that text’s code and embrace its meaning, or reject it and find an alternate frame for it. In the former case, however, if a reader wholly agrees with the text, she would be in opposition to the dominant ideology -assuming we understand dominant ideology here as the promotion of a government program- while in the latter case, by disagreeing with the story, a reader would actually be in support of the dominant ideology.

That leads to one final problem Ross identifies in the original model: the assumption that all media encode texts within the dominant ideology and thus suggesting that media has a totally singular nature. Ross says that one must be prepared to defend the position that, say, FOXNews and Al Jazeera share the same ideological vision.

Both Morely and Ross offer modified versions of Hall’s model, and while they both share a considerable amount of structure and theoretical grounding with Hall’s version, using their frameworks could produce different results, particularly given the wider range of possible interpretations they each afford.
More significantly, perhaps, is the lack of consensus around a singular model of hegemony and ideology. While Hall’s theory has substantial support, it is one of many visions of a problem that has gone unanswered for nearly two centuries.

Some relevant theories of ideology include Debord’s (2012) vision of ideology as the self-image of the commodity society, and a reading of the *LBR* as the product of the colonization of life by the simulacrum could produce interesting and potential contradictory results. Additionally, Manheim’s (1991) definition of ideology as the product resulting from a social group’s relations to its social constructions could be potentially applicable here. Moreover, as Kumar (2006) notes, because Manheim’s reading of ideology is more favorable to the dominant liberal order of the 20th and 21st centuries, it is arguably the most widely influential and applied model of ideology apart from Marx’s own reading; therefore, it could have conceivably influenced the writing or writers of the *LBR*, and further research should be done in this regard. than Hall’s theory of hegemonic consent.

Since Hall draws so heavily from Althusser, control studies using other theories of ideology which blend Marx’s original conception with the psychoanalytic tradition should be done. These include the model of ideology developed by Žižek (1989) which argues that ideology is entirely unconscious and functions as a series of justifications and spontaneous (i.e., spontaneous ordered) representative rituals which support virtual authorities, and Badiou & Balmès’ (1976) model of ideology as the structures which distance truth from knowledge, render truth indiscernible, and ultimately replace truths with pure language. These studies could provide a comparison to this one in order to see if similar-but-distinct models yielded similar-if-distinct results.
Finally, during the production of this paper, the ALA voted to approve a new seventh article for the *LBR* (“New Bill,” 2019). This seventh article and any changes approved in addition to it could alter the results of this paper. Further analysis should be conducted when those final changes are approved.
References


doi:10.1177/09579265030146004


“Today indications in many parts of the world point to growing intolerance, suppression of free speech, and censorship affecting the rights of minorities and individuals. Mindful of this, the Council of the American Library Association publicly affirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of free public libraries.

I. Books and other reading matter selected for purchase from the public funds should be chosen because of value and interest to people of the community, and in no case should the selection be influenced by the race or nationality or the political or religious views of the writers.

II. As far as available material permits, all sides of questions on which differences of opinion exist should be represented fairly and adequately in the books and other reading matter purchased for public use.

III. The library as an institution to educate for democratic living should especially welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and the discussion of current public questions. Library meeting rooms should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs or affiliations.”

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### Changes of Scope: Authority Expanding Change; Changes of Identity: Contractive Change

Table 3

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