THE ETHICS QUIZ

You are the reference librarian on duty at a large public library. Two teenagers come in and ask for instructions on how to build a car bomb. Would you:

- Help them all you could?
- Call the police?
- Ask your supervisor for advice?
- Ask them why they want the information?

You are the director of a small academic library. An automation vendor offers to take you to dinner at a national meeting. Would you:

- Accept with thanks?
- Go ahead but pay your own way?
- Decline the invitation?
- Ask if another director friend could come too?

You are the head of a large public library system with many branches. A group of young adult librarians come to you with a request for a sex education day in the library. They want to dress up like condoms, pass out condoms, and give out information about safe sex. Would you:

- Agree and ask how you could help with the plans?
- Suggest they plan some displays but not anything as elaborate as a whole day of activity and costumes?
- Discourage them from getting involved with safe sex programs?
- Fire them?
You are the head cataloging librarian for a large school district and notice some books of lesbian fiction which have rather explicit covers waiting to be cataloged for the local high schools. Would you:

- Send the books off to be bound in plain covers?
- Put the books on the backlog shelf hoping they won't be found?
- Process the books with the explicit covers?
- Mark the books for patrons over 16?

You are the director of the public library system in a large urban setting. A member of your staff has become involved in defending the rights of the Man and Boy Club—a group of known pedophiles—to use the library's meeting facilities. Members of your board and the city government have threatened to withdraw support from the library if the staff member's activities are allowed to continue. Would you:

- Defend your staff member?
- Fire the staff member?
- Help the club find another meeting place?
- Review and revise the policy statement concerning the use of facilities.

You are in charge of circulation at the Business/Professional Library in a large urban area. You receive a call from the FBI asking you to prepare a report on all those who have used materials relating to Eastern Europe or the Middle East. Would you:

- Delete the records from the circulation system?
- Prepare a printout?
- Call ALA?
- Call the newspapers.
Patrons in your small inner city public library have complained about homeless people taking baths in the library rest room and sleeping on the furniture. Would you:

- Lock the restrooms and have people get a key from the staff so that restroom use could be monitored?
- Put signs up discouraging inappropriate use of the library?
- Have the police remove persons who are sleeping or using the library to bathe?
- Suggest that patrons start a shelter for the homeless?

A group of young people come into the library on Saturday afternoon seeking information about moonshine and drugs. They seem to be high on something but you are not sure what. Would you:

- Ask them to leave?
- Call their parents?
- Show them information about drugs and moonshine?
- Question them about their intentions to use the information?

Several members of your library staff have been threatened both at home and at work, by someone who says she plans to kill one of them. The caller seems to be very well read because she makes reference to the latest murder mysteries which the library has received. You suspect a member of the staff or one of the regular patrons. Would you:

- Set a trap using the mysteries?
- Call the police?
- Do nothing?
- Stop ordering mysteries?
A child in the third grade asks you, the school librarian, for information about using cocaine. Would you:

- Tell the teacher?
- Talk with the guidance counselor?
- Call the parents?
- Help the child find the information?

A fellow staff member has been coming to work with bruises on his arms and legs about once a week for several months. When questioned, he asks you not to interfere. His mental state, however, is declining and you are having to cover for the work he is not able to complete. Would you:

- Insist he seek help?
- Consult the head of the library?
- Invite a counselor to have lunch with you and the person?
- Do nothing?

You hear at a state library convention that anti-abortion groups are planning to ask libraries receiving federal funds to remove materials on abortion from their collections. Would you:

- Remove abortion materials before anyone ask you to do so?
- Alert your Board of Trustees to the possibility of a challenge?
- Rush out and buy all you can on abortion—pro and com?
- Write up a special policy on controversial materials?
The KKK asks if they can put up a display during the week for the Martin Luther King holiday. Your library has a policy of being open to all public groups for displays or meetings. Would you:

- Allow the KK to have a display but put it in the back of the library?
- Allow them to have a display but encourage groups supporting racial harmony to have displays also?
- Refuse the request?
- Refer the request to the Library Board?

Your library has an extensive software collection for children. Would you:

- Allow staff members to copy freely?
- Enforce copyright agreements?
- Informally allow some copying of software if it could be done quietly?
- Ignore copying and leave it to the discretion of the staff members?

A very mature ten year old has been reading books on genetics and reproduction in the adult section. He has been very quiet, but some of the adults have complained and the staff members are wondering about the motives behind his reading. Would you:

- Have his parents sign a permission form to allow him to read and check out adult materials?
- Ask the child to do his reading in the children's department?
- Do nothing?
- Ask the boy not to use the adult section?
You are in charge of library personnel for a large city system. A branch manager asks you what you think of her running for the school board so that she could do more to support school and library cooperation. Would you:

- Suggest she resign before she declares her intention?
- Encourage her and offer to help her win?
- Suggest she take a leave from her job?
- Urge her not to get involved in politics?

You are in charge of collection development for a small town in a rural area. The director of your library has urged you to select more romance novels and action fiction to please the members of the Friends group. You, however, feel an obligation to the students in the area to balance the collection. In a time of very limited funds, would you:

- Order what you think best and risk your job?
- Encourage students and parents to fill up the suggestion box?
- Ask for help from teachers in the community?
- Order what the director wants?

You are the reference librarian in a research library. You have been asked by one of your scientist to get large quantities of material on interlibrary loan for a daughter who is in college but living at home. He has asked you to charge the photocopying his research account. Would you:

- Do as instructed?
- Refuse to do as asked?
- Tell your immediate supervisor?
- Tell the scientist's supervisor?
You are in charge of a building project for a small public library. Your Board wants a large Victorian parlor for receptions, teas and other meetings. You want the floor space for public services. Would you:

• Seek to replace the board members?
• Lobby for a small Victorian parlor?
• Ask staff members to write letters to board members?
• Comply with the board request and look for another job?

You are a new staff member in a large university library. After a few weeks on the job, you begin receiving invitations to lunch from a senior staff member. You politely decline, but the invitations continue. Alone in the staff elevator on day, this staff member tells you that he was responsible for you getting the job and if you will not go out with him he will have you fired. Would you:

• Scream rape or fire in the elevator?
• Go out with him and try to reason with him?
• Threaten to charge him with sexual harassment?
• Refuse to go out with him?

You are the director of a corporate library and you find out that your company is being sold and that the library will be closed. You have been asked not to reveal your information. Do you:

• Tell your staff and help them look for other jobs?
• Tell your professional staff?
• Start making job contacts yourself?
• Find another job and quit?
You badly need to upgrade your library's online system but have no budgeted money for the project. Recently, with the settlement of an estate, the library has received $250,000 as a gift designated for books. Since the will was written in 1963, you might be able to justify using the money for a system upgrade. Would you:

- Call the heirs and see if they would support you?
- Move the money from the book budget to the system budget to disguise the use of the gift funds?
- Forget using the gift money for the upgrade?
- Let the library board decide?

You developed a software program on the job in your spare time to keep track of archival material. You are under no contractual agreement at work to surrender rights to your software. Would you:

- Try market your program and give the proceeds to our employer?
- Split the profits 50%-50%?
- Get a lawyer and try to keep the profits for yourself?
- Wait to market the product until you leave that job?

You find out while searching a database for a client that a company is likely to have a huge increase in the value of its stock. Would you:

- Forgot the information?
- Buy the stock before it goes up?
- Tell all your friends about the good deal?
- Warn the database providers about potential abuse of the information?
You are a stamp collector and work in the acquisitions department of a large library. You often see envelopes with stamps which you would like to have. Would you:

- Take the stamps out of the trash?
- Ask if anyone else wants the stamps and share?
- Ask your supervisor?
- Ignore the stamps?

You are in charge of interlibrary loan in a large library. The demand for copies of journal articles has far exceeded fair use under the copyright laws. Your supervisor has told you to ignore the law. Do you:

- Do what you are told?
- Call the ALA for help?
- Report the situation to the proper government officials?
- Find another job?

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