Notes and Chat History, Access to Offensive Materials

Notes
Scenario:

Your library has received a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material from a patron regarding a well-known children’s book published decades ago. The book portrays a class of people in a way that most contemporary audiences, including your library’s review panel, would agree is clearly offensive.

The panel must decide what to do with the book -- keep it on the shelf, restrict access to it somehow, remove it from circulation entirely, or something else.

- What ethical questions arise in this decision-making process?
- What strategies can be employed to deal with this challenged book?

Chat History
Yvonne Ng: What ethical questions arise in this decision-making process? What strategies can be employed to deal with this challenged book?
Katharine Rapkin: open a discussion with the community about context and shifting mores, norms...
Cherry: Remove it.
Allison Young: Maybe the book can be kept somehow as a means of discussion on the issue?
Robin Grunwald: Is this an outlier or does a significant group have the same sentiment?
MonaLisa Whitaker: Although the content may be offensive, the history is important, particularly for present and future generations; we have some objects within our collection similar to this issue.
Michelle Schabowski: The ALA does say that everyone has the right to any book, even if they are personally distasteful.
Naomi Steinberger: Depends on the type of library. An academic library should keep it and make it available.
Melissa Anderson: It depends on the role of the institution in the community... is it a elementary school or a historical society?
Sachiko Iwabuchi: I personally agree with Allison.
Rhodes College: The book might be used as a point for discussion. Erasing history does not hold us accountable for our actions.
Dee Gallo: I agree with Monica. The history is important. I think I'd campaign to leave it.
Brooklyn Historical Society: Insert a disclaimer to explain why this book is in your collection, context, etc.
Rhodes College: maybe host a community forum
Ricki Moskowitz: keep for historical purposes but it should not be a circulating volume