



# Weeding Your Collection

Why, What & How

# What is weeding?

- Removing items from your collection

# Why do we weed?

- Damaged Materials
- Overflowing Shelves
- Items no longer circulating
- Out-of-date materials
- Moving a collection
- Accessibility
- Administrator/Supervisor Request

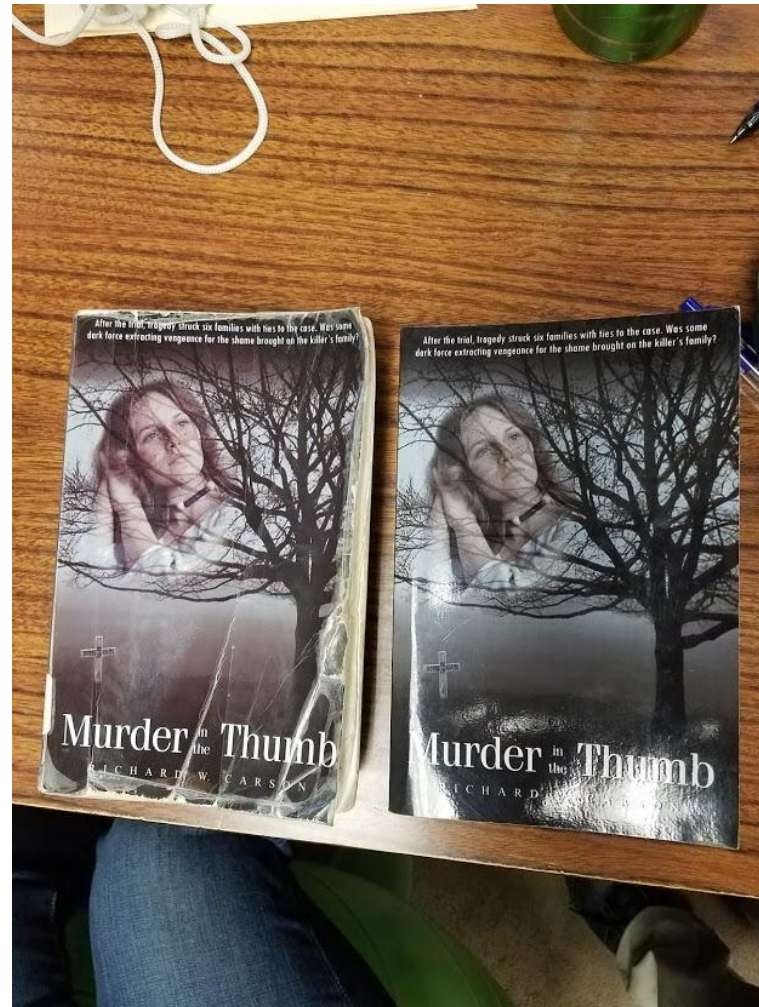
Does this look familiar to you?



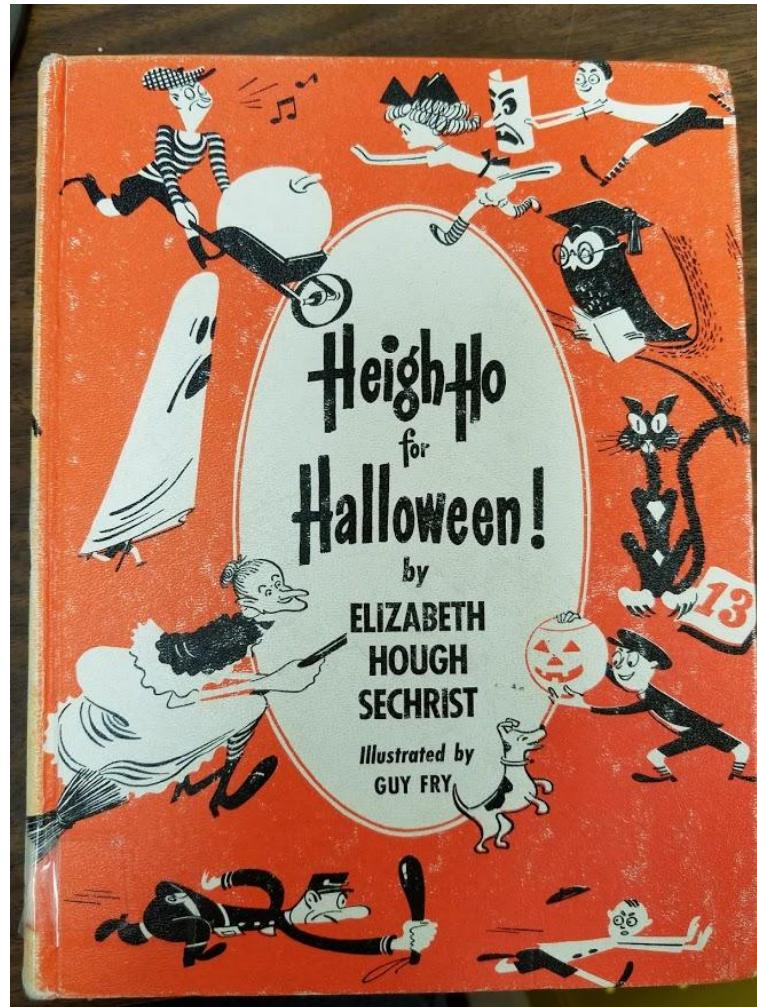
# Why might this section need weeding?



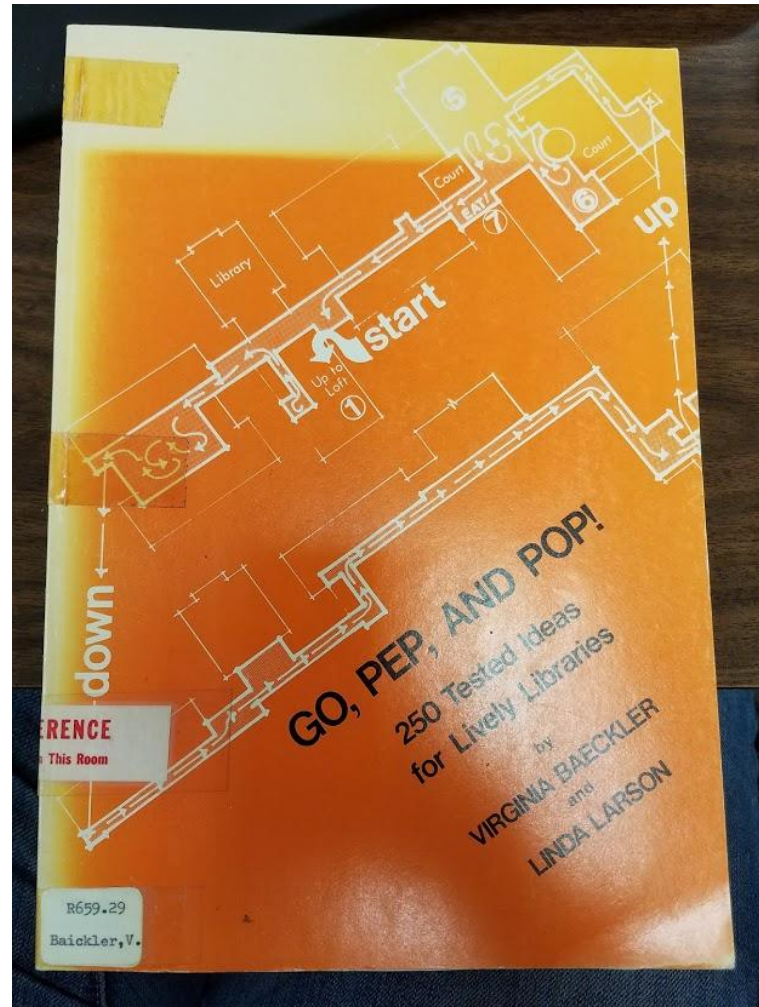
# Replace or weed?



# Appearance or circulation?



# Out-of-date





# How do we weed?

Don't start pulling random books off shelves!

First: investigate your collection

Second: come up with a plan of action

Third: follow through with the POA

Fourth: get rid of the weeded books

# How often: collection development

- Every year – never stop.
- Rotating basis



# Investigating Your Collection

What are we looking for?

- Condition
- Circulation
- Appropriate location

# Condition

- Is it an older copy?
- Are there pages missing?
- Is the spine/binding still intact?
- Is it water stained (or otherwise damaged)?
- Has a patron written in it?

# Condition: Older books

- Things to look for in an older book:
  - Is it a classic?
  - Is the cover old and out of date?
  - Has it been rebound?
  - Will it circulate if you replace it?
  - Medal winner

# Circulation

- Run a report on each separate section if possible
- Include the following:
  - Title
  - Date Added
  - Date Published
  - Date of last circulation
  - Number of circulations

# Circulation: After Running Reports

- Highlight/mark everything that doesn't conform to the following:
  - No Circulations within a certain period
    - 3-10 years
  - Age of the book (older than a certain date)
  - Total circulations = under 5
  - Subject type
    - Medical/Legal

# Report in-Hand

- Go to the shelves (with a cart!)
- Pull every book off the shelf and inspect it
- Put books you might be weeding onto the cart

# In the stacks: what you're looking for

- Damages
- Writing
- Binding
- Pages missing
- Hidden things (money!)
- Out-of-date materials
- Materials in the wrong location

# Before deleting

- Verifying the weed
- Circulation (yes, again!)
- Condition (yes again)
- Checking if you need to replace it

# Special sections

- Children's
- Nonfiction
- Reference
- Medical/Legal
- True Crime
- Biographies
- Special collections: toys, cake pans etc
- Local History
- Reference

# Useful resources

- CREW
- American Library Journal
- ALA
- MeLCat
- [Awfullibrarybooks.net](http://Awfullibrarybooks.net)

## After weeding: handling weeded materials

- Book sales
- Recycle
- Local artists or schools (for art projects)
- Better World Books
- Other libraries (local history etc)
- Amazon
- ABEbooks

# Patrons and weeding

- Be honest
- Educate them
- Hide the bodies if you recycle or dumpster them

# Useful trivia

- Roughly 1 handspace at the end of every shelf
- Weed duplicates when they stop being in demand
- Be ruthless
- Weeding ups circulation
- Make some money
- Be honest (with your patrons, board and staff)

# Quick Quiz

- What about this book that's pristine – but we got it five years ago, and it's gone out once – when we first got it?
- What about this book that's book 2 of a trilogy? Book 1 circulated two years ago, but book 2 and 3 haven't circulated in five years?
- What about this 1941 copy of Alice in Wonderland that has a replaced cover from 1980?
- What about this book of local history that has had three checkouts in twenty years?
- What about this math book that someone wrote all the answers in?