



BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MATERIALS AND RESOURCES SELECTION

INTRODUCTION

Euclid Public Library will provide a variety of resources to meet the lifelong learning needs of our citizens. This purpose statement was adopted January 26, 2004 by the Euclid Public Library Board of Trustees.

The Euclid Public Library Board of Trustees recognizes that the United States is a country in which the right to free expression is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. People may speak, hear, read, and view what they choose within the parameters of the First Amendment no matter how popular or unpopular it may be because democracy functions only when the full range of ideas is available to all people. The public library supports free and open access to information and ideas for all users. Therefore, the Euclid Public Library, within the limits of selection standards, budget, and space offers a collection that is varied, divergent, inclusive, and protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, and the library Board of Trustees' endorsement of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. In addition, the Board of Trustees endorses the following: Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors, Diverse Collections, Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View (see attached statements, below).

COMMUNITY SERVED

The Euclid Public Library is a school district library whose primary service area is the Euclid City School District. The library provides walk-in borrowing privileges to any Ohio resident and participates in interlibrary loan programs that make it possible for libraries to share materials.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLECTION

The library collection is selected and maintained to enable all citizens to find the library materials and information they want according to their own free choice. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, political or social view of either the author or of the material. The collection, taken as a whole, will be an unbiased and diverse source of information representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects and viewpoints will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth to meet anticipated and expressed community needs. The Board of Trustees recognizes that library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must adhere to budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries and electronic access are valid ways of meeting community needs.

Selection of materials by the library does not mean endorsement of the contents or views expressed in those materials or by the author.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES SELECTION

The Board of Trustees recognizes the pluralistic nature of the community and the varied backgrounds and needs of all citizens regardless of age, race, nationality, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or political persuasion. It declares as a matter of policy:

1. The selection of books, materials, and electronic and other resources shall be vested in the Director, and, under this direction, by designated Staff. Any book, material, and/or electronic or other resource so selected shall be held to be selected by the Board of Trustees.
2. The library Trustees and Staff recognize the changing nature of the Internet and provide access to Internet resources within this understanding. Electronic resources may change in format and content after selection, and it is possible that a resource may not conform to the library's selection criteria at any given time. Library Staff will review the content of electronic resources on a regular basis to assess their continued value in terms of meeting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community.
3. The Board of Trustees recognizes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential in order for citizens to exercise their constitutional rights. The Board of Trustees believes censorship is an individual matter and declares that while one is free to reject for oneself books, materials, and electronic resources of which one does not approve, one cannot exercise the right of censorship to restrict the intellectual freedom of others to read and inquire.
4. The library Staff does not act in loco parentis. Decisions concerning a child's use of specific library materials and/or electronic resources are the responsibility of the child's parent or guardian.

SELECTION CRITERIA

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. Not every item is subject to each criterion, nor does an item have to meet a certain number of criteria for inclusion in the collection. Rather, these are general parameters within which selection decisions are made.

- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Relation to the existing collection
- Reputation and significance of the author or publisher
- Presentation of varying viewpoints
- Cost
- Accuracy
- Reviews
- Currency
- Inclusion in standard library indexes and tools
- Physical format or condition
- Patron request

Library Staff depend upon standard library reviewing journals and also consider other sources appropriate to the material or subject.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

The library has a responsibility to provide a representative collection of materials on varied subjects of interest to the community, including controversial matters. The library makes an effort to provide information that represents balanced coverage of diverse opinions so individuals can examine all sides of an issue. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not necessarily an equality of numbers. Materials are chosen on the basis of content as a whole and are not excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

Materials in any format that contain frank treatments of certain situations, language, or illustrations which may be objectionable to some individuals are included if they meet general selection criteria. Each work must be

judged on its own merit, considering the audience for whom it is intended. The library has a responsibility to protect the rights of users by providing materials that are well balanced, authoritative, and up-to-date.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

In order to ensure a vital and relevant collection for the community, it is necessary to continually evaluate the usefulness of materials and resources previously added to the collection. Criteria considered in removing items from the collection include:

- Physical condition
- Duplication of material no longer in demand
- Currency of material
- Availability of newer and better materials in a field
- Demand or need for the title or subject
- Depth of the library's collection on a subject

Electronic resources are evaluated on a regular schedule. Any site which no longer meets the selection criteria overall will be deselected. Unnecessary duplication, lack of community demand or need, or the availability of newer and better resources may also be criteria for removing an electronic resource.

DUPLICATION

Titles are duplicated in areas where user demand is heavy and sustained. The library does not maintain sufficient copies of individual titles to meet classroom demand.

BINDING/REPLACEMENT

Books basic to the collection and physically suitable for binding are rebound if they cannot be replaced. Books that can only be purchased in a nondurable format are bound before circulating.

Materials withdrawn because of loss, damage, or other factors are considered for replacement. The same criteria apply to replacements as to original selection. In addition, the following factors are considered:

- Availability of newer and better materials in the field
- Scope of the library's collection on the subject
- User demand for the title or subject

GIFTS

Euclid Public Library accepts gifts of books and other library materials with the understanding that they will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria applied to materials selected for the collection. The library reserves the right to dispose of any material that cannot be used in the collection in any way it deems appropriate.

Money may be donated for the purchase of a specific item as a memorial gift. The item must meet all criteria of the regular selection process.

REQUESTS TO RECONSIDER LIBRARY RESOURCES OR MATERIALS

The library is committed to free and open access to information and ideas for all users. The library will reconsider a library resource upon the submission of a properly completed form requesting reconsideration, which will be available at the library. A form must be completed *in its entirety* by an adult cardholder who has read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety. (This includes viewing a display in its entirety or attending a program in its entirety.) The form must include the date, cardholder's name, address, phone number, library card number, signature, and reason for requesting reconsideration and the requested action.

The appropriate Manager, in consultation with the Director or Director's designee, will make the initial decision on the request. The cardholder may appeal the decision to the Director, who will make a decision on the appeal. The cardholder may appeal the Director's decision to the Library Board of Trustees, whose decision is final and binding. Material will remain in the collection and in circulation during this process. Future requests on the same item will be addressed only if the reason for reevaluation is substantially different from previous requests.

This procedure includes the following steps:

1. The adult cardholder should complete the request form in its entirety and deliver it to the Director or Director's designee.
2. Within three weeks (if feasible), the designated Manager, in consultation with the Director or Director's designee, will make an initial assessment of the request and provide a written response to the cardholder.
3. The cardholder may appeal the Manager's decision in writing to the Director within one week of the meeting on the decision.
4. Within thirty days (if feasible), the Director, after consultation with a committee of librarians if the Director so chooses, will make a decision on the request. The Director will inform the cardholder in writing of the decision.
5. The cardholder may appeal the Director's decision in writing to the Board of Trustees within one week of the written decision.
6. By the date of the second regularly scheduled meeting following its receipt of the appeal (if feasible), the Board of Trustees will make a decision on the request and inform the cardholder in writing of its decision, which will be final and binding.
7. In considering properly completed cardholder requests, the decision-maker will, as applicable:
 - Read, watch, or listen to the item in its entirety (to the extent accessible, e.g., in the context of a display or program);
 - Read reviews from authoritative sources;
 - Consider other relevant information;
 - Consider the rationale used by other decision-makers (e.g., the Manager or the Director); and
 - Judge the item under the Library's selection criteria, based on its entirety rather than individual parts, passages, or excerpts. Items that meet the criteria for selection and inclusion within the collection should not be removed.

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

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.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages. Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users is in violation of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V. This includes minors who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign a library card application. Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness should be able to obtain a library card regardless of library policies related to chronological age.

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and information needs of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library services and should be determined on an individual basis. Equitable access to all library resources and services should not be abridged based on chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, legal status, or through restrictive scheduling and use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them. Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

Article VII of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use." This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries do not authorize librarians or their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As “Libraries: An American Value” states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services.” Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities, should so advise their own children. Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor’s access to materials.

Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972 by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 under previous name “Free Access to Libraries for Minors”; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.

Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights*: “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library services. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.” A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stores, and experiences.

Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meet—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, abilities of all the people the library serves. This means acquiring materials to address popular demand and direct community input, as well as addressing collection gaps and unexpressed information needs. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered.

A well-balanced collection does not require a one-to-one equivalence for each viewpoint but should strive for equity in content and ideas that takes both structural inequalities and the availability of timely, accurate materials into account. A diverse collection should contain a variety of works chosen pursuant to the library’s selection policy and subject to periodic review.

Collection development, as well as cataloging and classification, should be done according to professional standards and established procedures. Developing a diverse collection requires:

- selecting content in multiple formats;
- considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers;
- seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups;
- evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed;
- including content in all of the languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible; and
- providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.

Best practices in collection development assert that materials should not be excluded from a collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial. Refusing to select resources due to potential controversy is considered censorship, as is withdrawing resources for that reason. Libraries have a responsibility to defend against challenges that limit a collection's diversity of content. Challenges commonly cite content viewed as inappropriate, offensive, or controversial, which may include but is not limited to prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, scientific research, sexual content, and representation of diverse sexual orientations, expressions, and gender identities.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to varying expressions of ideas through which a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be fair and just in defending the library user's right to read, view, or listen to content protected by the First Amendment, regardless of the creator's viewpoint or personal history. Library workers must not permit their personal biases, opinions, or preferences to unduly influence collection development decisions.

Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 24, 2019.

Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for accessing information, education, and recreation. Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves." Library displays increase awareness of programs, resources, and services.

Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts, participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs.

Library-initiated programs and displays utilize library worker expertise for community interests, collections, services, facilities, and providing access to information and information resources. They introduce users and potential users to library resources and the library's role as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Libraries should not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure they have equitable access to library resources. Library-initiated programs and displays should comply with all applicable laws, including the standards and requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local disability accessibility guidelines. If a program is held in a location not controlled by the library, the library should assure that the space is accessible to all users. If users overflow designated event areas during library events, libraries should secure accessible public spaces (e.g., ramps, pathways, and emergency exit routes) to ensure access and safety for everyone. Reasonable accommodations should also be made to have interpretation or real-time captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing at library-initiated programs when needed or requested by library users.

“Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.” Libraries should actively seek to include a variety of programming options representing diversity of genres, formats, ideas, and expressions with a multitude of viewpoints and cultural perspectives that reflect the diversity in our communities. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce community members to the library’s resources and provide access to information. Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those who speak and read languages other than English, including advertising for such events.

Concerns, questions, or complaints about library-initiated programs and displays are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources. These policies should apply equally to all people, including, but not limited to, library users, staff, and members of the governing body. The policies should set forth the library’s commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Programs should not be canceled because of the ideas or topics of the program or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, nor should library workers censor or remove displays because someone may disagree with the content. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by the participants or speakers, any more than the purchase of resources for the library collection or curation of a display constitutes an endorsement of the resources content or its creator’s views. Libraries should vigorously defend the First Amendment right of speakers and participants to express themselves.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, “A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.” The right to use a library encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries create programs for an intended age group or audience based on educational suitability and audience interest; however, restrictions on participation based solely on the gender, chronological age, or educational level of users violate this right and should be enforced only when not doing so would adversely impact the safety of the participants or interfere with the intended purpose of the program. Parents and guardians may restrict their own children’s access to library programs, but no person or organization can interfere in others’ access and participation. A parent or guardian may discuss their child’s access to and participation in library programs with their child, but may not impose those decisions on others, including other people’s children.

Libraries should not deny access to library-initiated programs if patrons owe the library for overdue fines or other fees. If libraries charge program participants for supplies used, they should make every effort to reduce economic barriers to participation.

Any collection and retention of program participants’ personal information should be on an opt-in basis only. While attendees may need to demonstrate their eligibility to attend the program by showing a library card or student ID, they should not be required to share their personal information in order to attend a library program.

Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000; June 26, 2018 *under previous name* "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource"; and June 24, 2019.

THE FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public

authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose

widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group

has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or

filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees 12-20-04; Revised 01-18-22.