

ROXBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS POLICY

PURPOSE

The Roxbury Public Library seeks to serve the public efficiently, pleasantly, and without discrimination. The purpose of this policy is to outline the parameters the library uses to develop and maintain a well-balanced collection that meets community needs within the limits imposed by funds and space. The core collection of materials should include items that are timely and those that have withstood the test of time. In addition, patrons should find the Library's collection easy to use and should not be reluctant or embarrassed to ask for materials. For these reasons, the bulk of the Library's collection will be on open shelves for maximum self-service.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The Library Board has reviewed and endorses the Library Bill of Rights as it applies to this policy, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements adopted by the Council of the American Library Association (see attached copies). Although this endorsement may provide for appropriate legal action it does not require the library to pursue such action. In the event of any conflict or discrepancy with any other library policy the other policy will take precedence.

MATERIALS SELECTION

Selection and purchase of library materials for the collection rest with the Library Director who may delegate responsibilities to other staff members. Staff will adhere to this policy.

First, the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community will be considered in selecting materials. Then, positive reviews in professional journals, general lists, special bibliographies, and other appropriate aids will be considered in selection. The specific criteria used for selecting materials include the following in alphabetical order.

- Content, accuracy, and relationship to the total collection
- Literary/artistic merit
- Maintenance of representative literary classics
- Potential or known demand
- Relation and importance to existing collection
- Reputation/significance of author

The Library recognizes its obligation to provide materials that reflect current interest, although they may not have enduring value. Within the guidelines of this policy, suggestions from the community for items to be purchased are strongly encouraged. The Library cannot purchase all materials requested, but will attempt to extend its resources through cooperation with other libraries, information resources and interlibrary loan.

SELECTION OF AND ACCESS TO MATERIALS IN THE CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

The children's collection is intended to serve children from birth through adolescence as well as interested adults. The criteria used to select children's material are the same as for adults. Materials are kept on open shelves where they are available to all minors and adults. Minors may also borrow materials from the adult collection. All materials are accessible to the community except as restricted in other Library policies. Responsibility for a minor's choice of material rests with parents or guardians.

The Library supports the school curriculums by providing supplementary resources to students and teachers. This may include materials for frequently repeated school projects and for summer reading lists. It is the responsibility of the public school systems to supply required textbooks.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and may offend some patrons. Selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval as per this policy.

All materials will be accessible on open shelves, except to protect an item from damage or theft. Parents or guardians are responsible for the material their minor reads, listens to, or views. Material selection will not be determined by its accessibility to minors. Library materials will not be marked in such a way to show approval or disapproval.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERTION OF MATERIALS

A person wishing to register a complaint about any library material must do so in writing using the attached Reconsideration of Material Request Form. The Board of Directors and the Library Director will review the communication and the Board of Directors will respond to the person when the review is completed. No challenged material that has been selected under the guidelines of this policy shall be removed from the collection except by formal action of the Board of Directors.

DE-SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The American Library Association recommends that annual withdrawals should average 5% of a library's collection. A comprehensive weeding and inventory of the collection should be completed every five years. An on-going weeding program benefits the Library in many ways:

- It allows the Library to acquire new materials without requiring additional space;
- It makes the collection current
- It helps to alert the Library Director of gaps in the collection and materials in need of replacement or repair.

The main criteria for weeding are lack of circulation, obsolete information, and poor condition of the materials. Books targeted for weeding will be checked against works of standard titles such as the Public Library Catalog, Fiction Catalog and Children's Catalog. Decisions will be based on accepted professional practice such as those described in the CREW Method and the professional judgement of the Library Director or designated staff. Items which are withdrawn from the Library will be disposed of in accordance with local law or transferred to the Friends of the Roxbury Library, Inc. for sale.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The library provides materials such as Large Print books, sound recordings, a low vision viewer and ADA compliant work stations. As budget and space permit, the library's goal is to provide other equipment/material that will enable individuals with disabilities to further utilize its resources.

Revised, Approved and Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees

Cynthia Newby, Chair

10/19/2015
Dated

ROXBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Roxbury, Connecticut

RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIAL REQUEST FORM

Please express your concerns by answering the following questions addressed to the Library Director and the Board of Directors. Your response will help in better understanding your concerns. You may use this form as presented here or as the basis for a letter.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

1. Material on which you are commenting

Title _____

Type of Material _____

Author/Producer _____

Publisher/ Date _____

2. How was this material brought to your attention?

3. Did you read (listen to/view) the entire work? If not, what parts did you read (listen to/view)?

4. To what part of the work did you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes, etc.

5. What do you think might be the results of reading/listening to/viewing this work?

6. Have you read or listened to reviews of this work?

7. What action do you suggest the Library take concerning this work?

8. Can you recommend any resources which provide additional information on this topic?

Signature _____

Date _____

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.

A Joint Statement by:

[American Library Association](#)
[Association of American Publishers](#)

Subsequently endorsed by:

[American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression](#)
[The Association of American University Presses, Inc.](#)
[The Children's Book Council](#)
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)
[National Association of College Stores](#)
[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)
[National Council of Teachers of English](#)
[The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression](#)

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 guarantee 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

-

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.

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

A history of the Library Bill of Rights is found in the latest edition of the [Intellectual Freedom Manual](#).

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).