

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.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. 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 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read

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 These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of

politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens 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 citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

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 need the help of censors to assist them in this task. 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.

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 or unpopular with 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 with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it 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 the citizen. 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. 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.
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 channels 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 citizens 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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, by

the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association

Association of American Publishers

Subsequently Endorsed by:

American Association of University Professors

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

American Society of Journalists and Authors

The American Society of Newspaper Editors

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

Association of American University Presses

Center for Democracy & Technology

The Children's Book Council

The Electronic Frontier Foundation

Feminists for Free Expression

Freedom to Read Foundation

International Reading Association

The Media Institute

National Coalition Against Censorship

National PTA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

People for the American Way

Student Press Law Center

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

*Misinformation/Disinformation details added 1/25/2022:

- Misinformation is when false information is shared, but no harm is meant.
- Disinformation is when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm

The spread of disinformation and/or misinformation can have disastrous results. As the ALA and Institute of Museum and Library Services states, "combined, mis/disinformation can have an alarming impact on public opinion, our trust of the media, and our understanding of democracy." The D. A. Hurd Library makes every effort to ensure that the materials in its collections do not promote false or inaccurate information of any kind. *Definitions provided by [Media Literacy in the Library: A Guide for Library Practitioners](#) (ALA, 2020)"

Freedom to View

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:

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.

To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.

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.

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.

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 by the ALA Council January 10, 1990

Challenged Materials

The D. A. Hurd Library actively supports and adheres to the Library Bill of Rights and abides by the laws of the State of Maine and the U.S. Constitution concerning intellectual freedom. These laws and documents will be key factors in reconsidering materials.

Should an individual library user object to a specific item in the collection, the request should be handled in the following manner:

1. Staff will respond courteously, but make no commitment.
2. If the explanation of the selection policies does not satisfy the citizens, they shall be given the Request for Reconsideration form to complete and submit to the D. A. Hurd Library Director.
3. The D. A. Hurd Library Director and the D. A. Hurd Library Staff/Board will review the challenge and take appropriate action.
4. No citizen may reissue a complaint for the same material for three years.

Gift and Donation Policy

The D. A. Hurd Library encourages community support by accepting gifts of money, time and talent to enhance the D. A. Hurd Library programs. Donations to the D. A. Hurd Library may be tax deductible. The valuation of gifts of tangible personal property and gifts-in-kind shall be the responsibility of the donor.

Books, pamphlets, periodicals donations

The same principles of selection applied to materials purchased by the D. A. Hurd Library shall apply to donated library materials. The D. A. Hurd Library will keep materials only if they can be of active value to the collection.

The D. A. Hurd Library reserves the right to offer materials to other public libraries in the community or other publicly funded agencies, sell them at its book sale, or otherwise discard them.

Gifts and monetary donations

Donors may indicate preferences for the types of materials to be purchased. However,

the D. A. Hurd Library staff is ultimately responsible for the selection of gift materials and will base their decisions on the needs, mission and goals of the D. A. Hurd Library. Gift materials purchased in memory or in honor of an individual shall not be housed in special collections. The D. A. Hurd Library encourages potential donors to make monetary gifts. These gifts will be used to enhance the programs and resources of the D. A. Hurd Library.

Volunteers/Unpaid Interns

Volunteers are accepted at the D. A. Hurd Library on an as needed basis. We may encourage individuals to donate their time and talents to the D. A. Hurd Library.

Emergency procedures:

First Aid kit and Fire extinguisher are on the D. A. Hurd Library premises.

Some members of the D. A. Hurd Library staff may be CPR certified.

Fire

Remain calm, do not panic

Locate the fire in the D. A. Hurd Library, or proximity to the D. A. Hurd Library.

Notify all patrons in the D. A. Hurd Library.

Evacuate the area immediately.

Confine the fire or smoke by closing doors as you leave, if fire is in the D. A. Hurd Library

Call the fire department/911 once you are in a safe location

Severe Weather/Flood

The D. A. Hurd Library programs, events, and building may be canceled/closed due to inclement weather or severe weather warnings.

As with all weather related emergencies, if there are any severe weather/flash flood warnings issued, go to the nearest high ground that is safe from floodwaters, or follow issued instructions to reach safety

Hostage

During hostage situations, notify law enforcement agencies immediately and evacuate all

other staff and D. A. Hurd Library patrons from the area if possible

Shooting

Any incident related to a firearm or any other deadly weapon, D. A. Hurd Library staff and patrons must leave the area immediately. Evacuation routes should be as far away from the incident as possible.

Notify law enforcement agencies immediately

In ANY emergency -- KEEP CALM.

Your reaction will greatly affect the way the patrons behave.

This is a working document, subject to changes, edits, and updates as needed for the D. A. Hurd Library.

Information from ALA, ABOS, and MSAD #60 was used to create these guidelines

D. A. Hurd Library Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The Board of Trustees of the D. A. Hurd Library has established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the library director.

D. A. Hurd Library

41 High St.

North Berwick, ME 03906

(207) 676-2215

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Do you represent yourself? Or an organization? Name of Organization _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book (e-book) Movie Magazine Audio Recording

Digital Resource Game Newspaper Other

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

4. What concerns you about the resource?

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

6. What action are you requesting the board committee consider?
