

Section 7 **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT**

INTRODUCTION

The Waterford Public Library's Collection Development Policy supports the library in its mission and values and serves as a guide for authorized personnel in the selection and withdrawal of library materials. It also serves to inform the public as to the criteria upon which library materials are selected and withdrawn. The library is a forum for all points of view on current and historical issues and adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the [First Amendment to the United States Constitution](#) (appendix A), the [Library Bill of Rights](#) (appendix B) and the [Freedom to Read Principle](#) (appendix C) adopted by the American Library Association (ALA).

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for selecting materials for purchase and withdrawal resides with the library director and, under their direction, other staff members who are qualified for this activity by reason of training and/or experience.

SOURCES FOR SELECTION

Reviews in library and publishing industry periodicals are primary sources for materials selection. Award lists, standard bibliographies, booklists, and the advice of recognized individuals and/or entities in specific subject areas also are used. Suggestions from library staff and community members are also considered.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Library materials are diverse in topic, format, and other characteristics. Each type of item must be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No single set of selection criteria can be applied to all cases.

In general, the selection of books and other library materials will use the following criteria:

1. the relevance of the item to the current and future needs and interests of library users and of the community as a whole
2. the timeliness, authoritativeness, and accuracy of the information
3. the quality and/or uniqueness of the item
4. the value of the item to the collection as a whole
5. items of local interest
6. space and budgetary considerations

It is the library's goal to build a broad collection composed of materials of current popular interest as well as materials that enhance the collection. Popular demand is a significant basis for selection. The library recognizes its responsibility to provide unrestricted access to books and other materials presenting diverse points of view on the problems and issues of our time. Textbooks will not be purchased unless such items constitute the best available source of information on a subject.

The library's decision to acquire materials does not constitute an endorsement by the library of the ideas or viewpoints expressed within those materials. Library users within the Waterford community are free to request library review of any item in the collection by completing the **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials** form (appendix D) and returning it to the library director.

PATRON REQUESTS

Requests to purchase materials are welcome. The library will consider all requests from library users and potential library users within the Waterford community using the same selection criteria that we use for the collection.

The library will make every effort to obtain via Interlibrary Loan, upon request by cardholders, items which are not represented in our collection and do not meet our selection criteria.

MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

The primary objective of the collection is to provide books and other materials for children and teens that promote a lifelong love of learning and reading. Materials are chosen in response to the needs and interests of youth in the community with a focus on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and teens rests with the parent or caregiver.

The children's collection serves children from birth through age thirteen, as well as their parents, teachers, caregivers, and other professionals working with children, by providing books and other media of the best available quality for recreational use, general information, and curriculum support for early childhood through middle school. Literary excellence, reading level, accuracy and timeliness of factual material, and high-quality art and illustrations are the standards met in materials selected for the library's collections.

The teen collection is designed to address the recreational, developmental, academic, and informational needs and interests of youth ages thirteen to eighteen. The materials chosen cover a wide range of topics, reading skills and developmental levels.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

The library keeps its collection vital, useful and current by deselecting worn, outdated, inaccurate, or no longer in demand items. This will be done on a systematic and continuing basis. Such materials may be added to the library book sale, given to another organization or discarded.

GIFTS & DONATED MATERIALS

The library accepts donations of books and other collection materials without commitment as to final disposition. It assumes unconditional ownership of all items donated and retains the right to use or dispose of them as it sees fit.

Gift items must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Items in poor physical condition will be discarded. Duplicate copies of items already in the collection will be added only if needed. Gift materials will not be accepted with restrictions and/or conditions that necessitate special and separate housing, processing, or treatment. The only form of donor or memorial identification will be a book plate.

The library cannot give a dollar valuation for gifts of materials; on request, the library will provide the donor with a statement verifying the number and type of materials donated. Arrangements for memorial gifts and monetary donations to the library may be made with the director.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Any library patron who objects to the presence of a work in the collection has a right to submit a completed *Reconsideration of Library Materials* form (Appendix D). The director will review the request and inform the patron in writing of the library's decision.

Board of Trustees – Approved September 12, 2023

CONSTITUTION ANNOTATED

Analysis and Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution

Constitution of the United States

First Amendment

First Amendment Explained

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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.

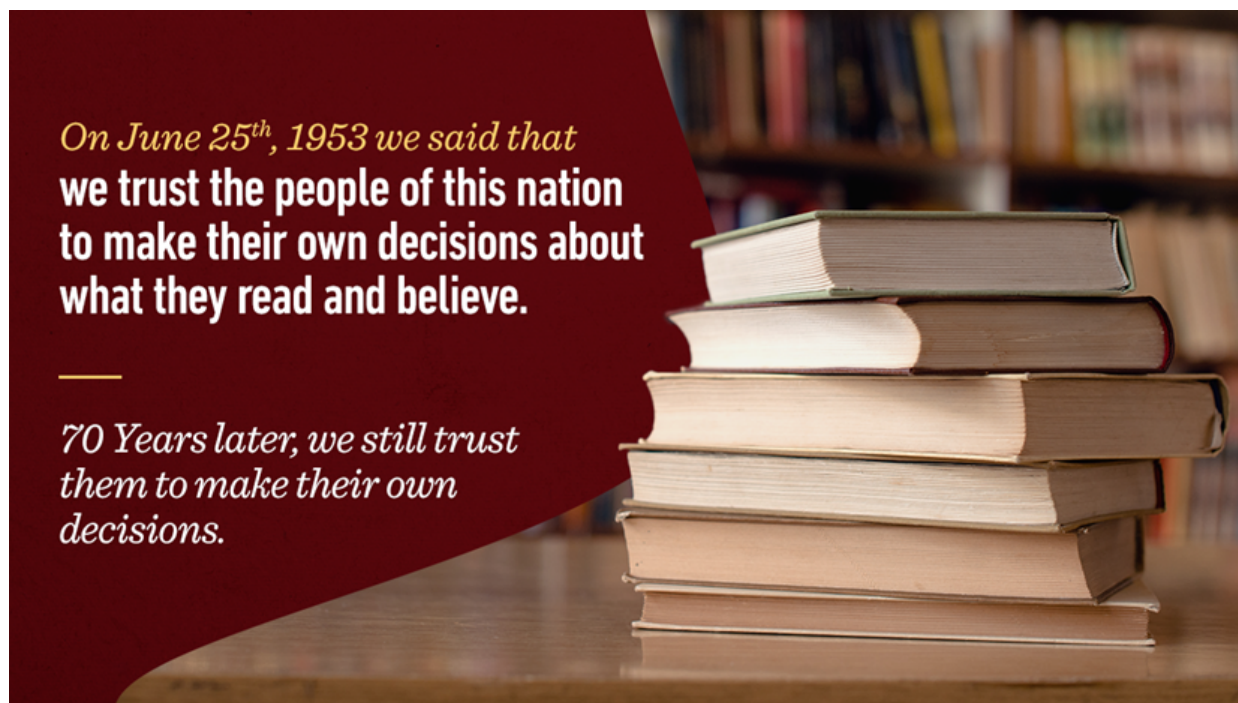
- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide 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.

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 (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>).

The Freedom to Read Statement



On the 70th anniversary of the Freedom to Read Statement, we are asking for individuals, authors, organizations, and associations to sign on to support the freedom to read.

TAKE ACTION: SIGN YOUR NAME! (<https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/freedomtoread/>)

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 (<http://www.publishers.org/>)

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers for Free Expression (<http://www.bookweb.org/abfe>)

The Association of American University Presses (<http://www.aaupnet.org/>)

The Children's Book Council (<http://www.cbcbooks.org/>)

Freedom to Read Foundation (<http://www.ft rf.org>)

National Association of College Stores (<http://www.nacs.org/>)

National Coalition Against Censorship (<http://www.ncac.org/>)

National Council of Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org/>)

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Waterford Public Library Board has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library materials and resources to the library director and staff. Library users within the Waterford community may request library review of any item in the library's collection by completing this form and returning it to: Library Director, Waterford Public Library, 49 Rope Ferry Rd, Waterford, CT 06385

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you have a Waterford Public Library card? ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you represent an organization? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the organization: _____

Author: _____

Title: _____

Item Format (book, video, etc.): _____ Year of Publication: _____

Did you read/view the entire work? ☐ Yes ☐ No If not, which page(s), section(s)? _____

What brought this item to your attention? _____

Please explain your concerns about the material; please be as specific as possible.

(Use reverse side if needed)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Library Use:

Date received: _____ Staff initials: _____

Reviewed by: _____
(Name) (Title) (Date)

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