

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

WILLIAM JEANES MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND NICHOLAS AND ATHENA KARABOTS CENTER FOR LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Directors of the William Jeanes Memorial Library has adopted this Collection Development Policy to guide its librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which library collections are developed and maintained.

The William Jeanes Memorial Library (“Library”) acquires and makes available materials that inform, educate, entertain and enrich a community comprised of individuals representing a wide range of age groups, ethnic backgrounds, religious persuasions, educational levels, and interests. Since no single library can possibly acquire all print and non-print materials, every library must employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. The Library provides, within its financial limitations, a general collection of reliable materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Included are works of enduring value and timely materials on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on several factors including community demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

Due to the size of the Library’s collection budget, other community resources and area-library resources are taken into consideration when developing collections. Through interlibrary loan (“ILL”), library staff may obtain materials from other sources. Additional information may be obtained through electronic access and the Internet. Electronic databases will be selected using the same principles that are applied to books and other formats. New formats will be considered for the collection when a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format.

Impartiality and judicious selection will be exercised in all materials acquisitions practices. Allocation of the materials budget and the number of items purchased for each area of the collection will be determined by indicators of use, the average cost per item, and objectives for development of the collection as expressed in this policy.

The Library supports the individual's right to access ideas and information representing all points of view. To this end, the Library welcomes and solicits patron suggestions, comments, and ideas about the collection and its development. The Board of Directors of the William Jeanes Memorial Library has adopted the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement (appended).

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Ultimate responsibility for material selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies adopted by the Library Board. The Director may delegate this responsibility to staff members who are qualified for this activity by reason of education, training, and experience.

Responsibility for a minor's use of library materials rests with his/her parents or legal guardians. Library materials are not labeled as to content, and materials are not sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

The Library purchases materials that support and enrich the needs and interests of students of all ages. However, the Library is unable to purchase textbooks for specific educational institutions. It is the expectation of the public library that school libraries will assume the responsibility for the needs of their

own students. The Library will provide materials to supplement the reference, research, and recreational needs of student borrowers of all ages.

(A) GENERAL POLICY OF SELECTION

GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA

Final selection of adult, young adult, and juvenile materials, in all formats, is made after careful and thoughtful study of professional and reputable review sources. An item need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable, nor will any single criterion be decisive. Neither the order of the general criteria nor the order of items in a list of specific criteria indicates relative importance.

The criteria are:

- Importance of author and/or subject matter to the collection as a whole
- Timeliness or lasting importance of the content to the community
- Current and anticipated needs and interests of the community
- Scope and/or treatment of subject matter
- Reviews in professional sources (such as but not limited to *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, etc.)
- Authority and credibility of author/artist and/or publisher
- Availability of material on the subject within and outside the district (Montgomery County, PA.)
- Affordability
- Format; suitability of physical form for library users, readability, clarity of print, illustration, and ease of use
- Inclusion of title in standard bibliographies or indexes
- Nomination for major literary awards
- Provides selection aids and/or resources for education professionals

The following general principles also will guide the selection process:

- Multiple copies will be purchased in response to popular demand limited by budgetary restrictions and the anticipated value of the material
- No attempt is made at completeness of any author/artist and/or publisher
- Materials archival in nature are acquired and maintained in appropriate formats for historical and research purposes
- Within the limits of space, budget, and availability, materials will be chosen to represent a variety of opinions on subjects that may have valid differing points of view

Materials for which there is heavy, temporary demand may be selected with less emphasis on the general criteria listed above.

To satisfy demand for highly specialized materials—materials that are of interest only to the advanced researcher—the Library will depend on interlibrary loan service. Interlibrary loan service is not intended as a substitute for collection development, but is meant to expand the range of materials available to library users without unnecessarily duplicating the resources of other libraries.

Free access to all points of view on public questions will be provided. Because the public library serves many varied groups of people, the interests of one group cannot take precedence over the interests of another.

Materials are evaluated as complete works and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. A work will not be excluded from the Library's collection solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, because of frankness of expression, or because it is controversial. The selection of any material for the collection does not constitute an endorsement of its contents. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Acquisition decisions are

not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merit of the work in relation to the collection and to serving the interests of patrons.

MATERIAL FORMAT

Material is purchased in the most appropriate format for library use. Non-book materials, such as audiobooks, music CDs, videos, video games, and electronic databases are selected according to the same criteria as book materials.

New formats will be considered for purchase as demand and use dictates. Some titles may be purchased in several formats. Availability, cost per item, and the Library's ability to acquire and accommodate the items will also be factors in determining when a new format will be collected.

PLACEMENT OF MATERIAL

The placement of material within the Library is determined by several factors. The Library uses Dewey Decimal Classification ("DDC") and Library of Congress ("LOC") subject headings to organize and place materials into the proper subject area and assign them to Adult, Juvenile, Young Adult, and other sections. Reviews by professionals in the field recommending age appropriateness of material also aid librarians in choosing and locating material. These sections have been developed for the convenience of the public, however patrons of any age may use all parts of the library. The classification scheme, reviews by professionals, and the librarians' expertise contribute to the proper placement of material.

The Library's special format materials are usually shelved separately from bound materials. This segregated placement promotes ease of access. These collections may include audiobooks, DVDs, video and computer games, multimedia kits, music CDs, maps, magazines, and newspapers.

Material access will not be restricted by content, but rather to prevent theft or damage.

(B) PRIMARY COLLECTIONS SELECTION CRITERIA

ADULT FICTION

The Library provides a collection of standard and contemporary fiction titles as well as genre fiction for the intellectual enrichment, information, and entertainment needs and interests of the adult population of users. Multiple copies of frequently requested titles are provided. Large print and audiobook editions of some popular titles are also available.

ADULT NONFICTION

The Library maintains a collection of general interest nonfiction titles to provide for the information needs and browsing interests of library patrons.

PERIODICALS

The Library maintains a collection of magazines for informational and recreational reading. Most periodicals are retained for one year. Access to and availability of digital and streaming collections will be considered when selecting for or weeding from the physical collection.

NEWSPAPERS

The Library maintains a collection of newspapers that provide local, state, regional and national coverage. Issues are retained from one to six months, depending on frequency of issue.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES / NEW TECHNOLOGIES

With new technologies developing at a rapid rate, electronic formats will be considered with the following criteria in mind:

- Relevance to the existing collection
- Permanence of the format
- Compatibility with available equipment
- Replaces standard printed texts
- Enhances accessibility and currency
- Offers new sources of information in an efficient and economical manner
- Provides ease of use and access
- Demonstrates the capacity to be accessed remotely, via passwords, or patron codes
- Is supported by on-site or immediately-available technical support (including updates and training)
- Presents no licensing restrictions
- Allows for the tabulation of usage statistics if deemed necessary or optimal
- Is validated by the reputation of vendor, publisher or supplier
- Enhances the existing collection

YOUNG ADULT MATERIALS

The ultimate aim of library work with young adults is to contribute to the development of well-rounded citizens in their own community, the nation, and the world. Titles written/produced especially for young adults are naturally included in the Young Adult collection. Since users of teen-age materials vary widely in ability and background, the materials selected for them will vary widely in content and ease of assimilation. To this end, the Young Adult collection also includes adult titles that are keyed to the young person's current needs and interests, as well as materials that motivate teens to examine their own attitudes, behavior, responsibilities, rights and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make informed judgments in their daily lives. Materials may span a wide scope of reading levels and maturity levels. All titles are purchased in the hope that they will lead to a continued materials' use in adult fields on as a high a level as possible.

CHILDREN'S MATERIALS

The Library's objective in selecting titles for children is to instill in the child a desire to use materials, to guide them toward an appreciation of good works, and to cultivate an enjoyment of reading. In selecting materials for children, the Children's Librarian will attempt to anticipate the diverse aptitudes and interests of users at all ages, from the beginner to the child who is ready to use materials in the Young Adult collection. Selection also will reflect the needs of children whose interests are more mature than their reading/viewing skills.

MULTIMEDIA MATERIALS

Audio: The Library primarily purchases unabridged adult and juvenile fiction and non-fiction titles for the audiobook collection. Abridged titles are purchased only when unabridged titles are unavailable. Music CDs and other audio items will be added to the collection without regard to a ratings system.

Video: The video collection is intended to serve the informational, educational, cultural, and entertainment needs of the community. In selection of DVD, Blu-ray, and digital materials, the demand for the item will be considered, as well as the quality of the item as determined by documentation, awards, and reviews.

Video games and interactive devices will be purchased based on the most common systems and reviews.

The Library purchases material regardless of any ratings system, and it is all shelved together, except when it is located somewhere to prevent theft or damage.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Library may maintain special collections of materials that focus on one topic to provide more in-depth coverage of that topic than may otherwise be found in the general public library collection. In general special collections will be limited to topics that fulfill a specific community need or library role. Priority will be given to maintaining those special collections that the Library has a contractual or special commitment to maintain.

Other material including but not limited to Adventure Packs, American Girl Dolls, board games, Launchpads, Rokus, Hot Spots, and pre-loaded devices will be added to the collection as the Library deems necessary and of interest to the community. Promotional material will indicate any special location and circulating policies.

GIFTS OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Library welcomes gifts of library materials. Gifts are accepted from the donor with the full understanding that all gifts become the property of the Library with no restrictions. Once given, no gift materials can be returned to the donor. The Library will not assign a value to donated gift materials. The Library will provide a receipt indicating the quantity and nature of donated materials.

Gift materials will be added to the collection only when they meet the same criteria and standards as purchased materials. In no case will a gift be added to the collection solely because it has been donated. The majority of material donated will be given to the Friends of the William Jeanes Library for re-sale to benefit the Library. Material in unacceptable condition will be disposed of or recycled.

Gifts of a large collection falling into subject areas not widely developed in the collection are evaluated based on the same criteria and standards as for purchased materials, with a determination as to probable use, space required, and cost of maintenance.

The Library reserves the right to sell or otherwise dispose of gifts and donated materials.

LOCAL AUTHORS POLICY (ADDED 12/18/24)

To support, encourage, and foster access to local talent, the Library will maintain a Local Author Collection. The mission of the Local Author Collection is to continually improve Library service to the public by providing free access to books by local authors, enriching the community with books created by local authors, and promoting individual achievements in authorship. This collection features donated books from local authors.

Items included in the Local Author Collection must meet the following guidelines:

- a) Authors must reside in Montgomery County, or their work must be based in the area.
- b) The Library will accept one donated copy of each title. Authors may donate up to three different titles per year.

- c) Materials must be bound and formatted in a way that enables circulation, ease of use, and durability.
- d) The Library will only accept physical formats.
- e) Items must be in new condition.
- f) Regardless of genre, all items in this collection will be labeled as “LOCAL” and include the name of the author.
- g) Donated materials become property of the library and are subject to the Library’s **Collection Development Policy**, including weeding procedures.

To donate materials for this collection, please complete the [Local Author Submission Form \(HERE\)](#) and include it with the donated item, or contact us via jeanesinfo@mclinc.org

Regarding an associated program, we are fortunate to have a great number of authors in our community. Though we would like to accommodate them all, we have limited time, space, and staff for programming. Programs for local authors are considered by the Library’s programming staff only when the book has received widespread, professional recognition (*Library Journal*, *Booklist*, etc.)

(C) COLLECTION MAINTENANCE & DESELECTION

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

In order to maintain a collection of current, relevant library materials that meets the needs of our diverse, changing constituents, the Library engages in an ongoing process of continual assessment. This process ensures that the Library is fulfilling its mission to provide materials in a timely manner to meet patrons' interests and needs.

Materials which are found to be outdated, excessively worn, or no longer of interest to the general public are removed from the collection on a regular basis. Weeding—the systematic removal of materials from the collection—is an important component of total collection development. Weeding improves the accessibility of the remaining materials, enhances the appearance of the collection, and helps improve the overall circulation and turnover rates of materials.

The assessment process takes into account the same criteria used when the item was first selected for inclusion in the collection. In addition, criteria such as obsolete information, insufficient use, excessive wear and tear, patron demand, availability at other local libraries, space availability and changing user interests are considered. Duplicate copies and items superseded by newer editions are reviewed for possible deselection. Replacement of worn or older editions of materials is not automatic.

To assist in the assessment process, the Library consults the Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding (CREW) method, as established by the American Library Association. CREW focuses on weeding as one step in the selection, cataloging and processing, and usage cycle of materials, and offers specific guidelines for evaluating each subject area of the collection. The CREW method is not the sole determining factor. Standard lists and bibliographies are consulted to ensure that items of lasting value are retained, and to help rebuild areas which have been weeded.

RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS, SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND DISPLAYS

(revised 8/31/22)

The William Jeanes Memorial Library (“Library”) does not promulgate particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item or presentation of a program express or imply an endorsement of the author’s viewpoint.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft. Library program attendance may be restricted to a specific age group in an effort to provide concepts and skills relevant to that age group. Unaccompanied adults are not permitted in Children’s or Teen programs, as per the Library Use Policy.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expression of opinion by customers, but will be governed by the Collection Development Policy in making additions to or deleting items from the collection.

Patrons who request the reconsideration of library materials, a program, or display will be asked to put their request in writing by completing and signing the form entitled “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials/Services/Programs/Displays.” (attached)

Upon receipt of a formal, written request, the Director will appoint an ad hoc committee from the professional staff including, but not limited to, the selector for the subject area of the item in question, the program manager, the display creator, and/or the appropriate Department Manager. The committee will make a written recommendation to the Director, who will then make a decision regarding the disposition of the display, material, or program. The Director will communicate this decision and the reasons for it, in writing, to the person who initiated the request for reconsideration at the earliest possible date. The Director will inform the Board of Directors of all requests for reconsideration.

In the event that the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision of the Director, she/he may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Directors by making a written request to the President of the Board. The Board of Directors reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at a hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the William Jeanes Memorial Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director.

(Reconsideration of Library Materials—Approved 6/24/15; revision approved 8/31/22)

APPENDICES

The Library Bill of Rights: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

The Freedom to Read Statement: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

The Freedom to View Statement:

<http://www.ala.org/rt/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>

William Jeanes Memorial Reconsideration of Materials, Services, Programs, and Displays Form

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS, SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND DISPLAYS FORM

Request initiated by (your name): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ (home/work/cell)

Email: _____

Do you represent:

Yourself _____

An organization (name): _____

Another group (name): _____

Title of material/service/program/display:

Author (if applicable):

1. To what in the work do you object? Please be specific; cite page number, timestamp, or other detail if applicable.

2. Did you read/view/listen to the entire work, if applicable? ___ Yes ___ No*

If not, what parts have you read/viewed/listened to/participated in?

*Note that as per our Collection Development Policy: “An integral part of the Library’s Materials Selection/ Collection Development Policy is that materials are evaluated as complete works and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. Therefore, only those requests in which the initiator has read/listened/viewed the ENTIRE work will be considered.”

3. What do you feel might be the result of someone reading/viewing/listening to/participating in this work/service/program/display?

4. In your opinion, is there anything good about this work/service/program/display?

5. Are you aware of judgments of this work/ service/ program/ display by critics, reviewers, experts in their field, etc.?

Yes ____ No ____

6. What would you like the Library to do about this material/service/program/display?

7. In its place, what would you recommend that would convey the same perspective of the subject?

Signature and Date

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.

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

ALA 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 for Free Expression](#)
[The Association of American University Presses](#)
[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](#)

ALA 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