

Ledyard Public Library Collection Management Policy

Ledyard Public Library's aim is to provide a robust collection of materials representing different points of view for the information, education, enrichment, and entertainment of its patrons.

The primary objective of the Library is to provide accessible materials for people of all ages, making available carefully selected quality materials that meet the needs and interests of the community. Consideration of all interests, needs, and wide-ranging viewpoints are characteristics of a valuable and successful collection. The selection of a given item is not an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines by which the Library develops and manages its collections.

Objectives

- To provide resources and materials that inform, educate, entertain, and enrich our community
- To include materials of enduring value as well as current topics
- To select materials based on community needs and interests
- To improve a wide range of literacies
- To supplement resources through the use of electronic access and interlibrary loan
- To increase social awareness and community involvement
- To advance equity, diversity, and inclusion through our resources
- To preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ledyard Public Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We recognize and embrace the strengths of our differences and celebrate the varied experiences and viewpoints that make up our global and local community. To ensure a collection that is reflective of these ideals, we are flexible and conscientious in our selection and evaluation of materials. We affirm this work is a continuous process and a crucial part of our overall mission.

Collection Philosophy

Decisions about the Ledyard Public Library collection are made in conjunction with the Library's mission, vision, and strategic plan. The Library acquires materials and services that reflect the diverse information, educational, and recreational needs of its patrons. In doing so, the Library provides access to content through print, multimedia, and digital resources while also recognizing different learning styles and preferences for receiving information. Collection materials are not included or excluded based solely on subject matter or on political, religious, or ideological grounds.

Standards of Selection

It is the goal of the Library to build a balanced collection characterized by materials of current interest and a broad range of opinions as well as materials of permanent worth.

All or some of the following criteria are considered when adding new items to the collection:

- Accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, durability, and ease of use
- Cultural significance and critical acclaim
- Contemporary or historical significance of author or subject
- Diversity of viewpoints and experiences
- Literary merit
- Price, format, and availability
- Public demand, appeal, and local interest
- Relevance to the present and potential needs of the community

Suggestions from patrons are always welcome and given consideration using the same criteria used for the collection.

Gifts of physical library materials, including those from local authors, shall meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials and will have no condition imposed on their use, location, or disposal. Monetary gifts for the collection are discussed in the Gifts and Donations Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The selection of library materials shall be the responsibility of the Library Director, operating within the framework of policies determined by the Library Commission. Selection may be delegated to other qualified staff members by reason of training or experience.

Collection Maintenance

To keep the collection fresh and relevant, the library performs an ongoing evaluation.

Withdrawal from the collection is based on the following criteria:

- Items are worn, stained, or damaged beyond repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate data, or are not historically significant
- Newly updated or more comprehensive resources are available
- A more desirable format is available
- Duplication
- Low circulation

Items removed from the collection will be donated or disposed of properly at the discretion of the Library Director. Items withdrawn for reasons of condition, loss, or damage will be considered for replacement. Materials withdrawn from the collection may be given to the Friends of the

Ledyard Library book sale or disposed of by other means. Individual items that are being withdrawn will not be saved for specific individuals.

Janice W. Bell Historical Research Room

This policy applies to the materials in the Library's collection. While considered available for use in the Bell Library, the historical materials housed in the Bell Room, do not fall under the provisions of this policy but to the policies and procedures of the Ledyard Historical Society.

Concerns about Library Materials

Ledyard Public Library supports an individual's right to have access to ideas and information representing all points of view. The Library subscribes to the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement included at the end of this policy.

A patron's choice of library materials for personal use shall be an individual matter. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Materials are selected solely on the principles stated in this policy and not on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval.

Responsibility for the use of materials by children and adolescents shall rest with parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that items may come into the possession of children. While a patron may personally reject materials, they shall not exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

Any Ledyard resident who objects to the presence (or absence) of a work may do so by speaking with the Library Director and requesting the *Request for Reconsideration* form. The Director will review the request, make the decision to retain or remove the material in question, and notify the resident in writing. If the resident is not satisfied with the Director's decision, the Library Commission shall review the request. While an item is under review, it shall remain in the collection. The resident shall be informed of the Commission's decision regarding the challenge in writing.

All requests for reconsideration will be reported to the Connecticut Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee and the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

Items previously reconsidered that remain in the collection will not be reconsidered for 5 years from the date of the last reconsideration process.

Approved by the Library Commission 09/18/2023

Request for Reconsideration Form
Ledyard Public Library

The Ledyard Library Commission has established a collection management policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, speak to the Library Director and complete this form. The completed form can be returned to the Library Director via mail or by dropping it off at either Library building. Refer to the policy for how the final decision will be determined.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Representing yourself

Representing an organization

Name of organization (if applicable) _____

Material for which you are commenting:

Book

Audio Book

DVD

CD

Magazine

Newspaper

Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

What brought this material to your attention? _____

Have you examined the entire material? If not, what sections did you review? _____

What concerns you about the material? _____

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

What action are you requesting the Library consider? _____

Requestor Signature

Date

Director Signature

Date

Director Comments:



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](#).



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