

LEOMINSTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Collection Development and Management Policy



Approved June 5, 1995

Board of Trustees

Leominster Public Library

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STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

This policy was developed by members of the Collection Development Committee:

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The *Leominster Public Library Collection Development and Management Policy* was approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 5, 1995 meeting:

Richard A. Bergman, Chairman
Carol Millette, Vice-Chairman
Jeanne Zephir, Secretary
Robert Allen, Trustee
Nancy Hicks, Trustee
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INTRODUCTION

As part of its long-range planning process, Leominster Public Library staff completed a community profile (see appendix), determined the roles the library plays in the community, and wrote the following mission statement:

The Leominster Public Library is a service organization which provides free information in various formats to residents of Leominster and the surrounding communities. The purpose of the public library is to provide those library materials, information, programs, and services which are most wanted by the residents of the service area; to provide convenient access to needed materials and information; and to actively work to make the community members and organizations aware of the resources and services provided by the Leominster Public Library.

This mission is carried out as the library focuses on the three main roles it has chosen to develop. In its primary role as a POPULAR MATERIALS LIBRARY, the Leominster Public Library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages. In its other major roles as a FORMAL EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTER and INDEPENDENT LEARNING CENTER, the library assists students of all ages in meeting formal educational objectives, and supports individuals of all ages pursuing a sustained program of independent study.

One of the primary ways the library fulfills its mission and carries out its community roles is through the careful development of its print and non-print collections.

As the library's governing authority, the Library Board of Trustees has the ultimate legal responsibility for the library's collections. Day-to-day collection development and management activities are administered by the Library Director and implemented by staff in various library departments.

The intent of the *Collection Development and Management Policy* is to guide the library staff in collection development and maintenance activities, and to provide for public understanding of the purpose and nature of the library's collections.

In addition, this document outlines the procedures dealing with gifts to the library's collections and with the public's concerns and suggestions about the these collections.

This document will be reviewed annually, and updated at least every five years.

MATERIALS SELECTION

To carry out the library's mission and roles as defined in its long-range planning document, this materials selection policy puts particular emphasis on fulfilling Goal III: "Provide high-interest, popular materials in adequate numbers in a variety of formats for all ages."

The Leominster Public Library serves a diverse clientele. It addresses its users' many interests by building and maintaining a collection of educational, instructional, and recreational materials representing a spectrum of opinions and viewpoints and suitable for a wide range of age and ability levels. The collection is "balanced" in the diversity of its materials, not in an equality of numbers.

The Library supports the basic tenets of intellectual freedom as expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretations, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements, copies of which are appended to and have been made part of this policy (see appendices).

Since a single standard can not be applied in all cases, one or more of the following factors is considered when a work in its entirety, not isolated portions of it, is evaluated for possible acquisition.

GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA

- o Relevance to community needs
- o Contemporary significance, permanent value, and/or popular content
- o Relation to existing collection
- o Public recognition of author, editor, illustrator, performer, or source in the media or in critical reviews
- o Evaluative reviews in professional publications and other periodicals. (See appendix for list)
- o Accuracy and reliability
- o Scarcity of information in the subject area
- o Availability of similar materials through the C/W MARS network
- o Price and availability
- o Format, durability, and ease of use

o Budget and space constraints

Below, the three major divisions of the library's holdings are discussed in some detail. Remarks about the Children's, Young Adult and Adult collections deal with philosophies of service, aims, and selection methods which apply in situations unique to a special age group or type of material.

CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

AIMS: In its development of the children's collection, the library strives to acquire the best of both current and retrospective materials for children, recognizing that young people have diverse needs, interests, tastes, backgrounds, abilities, and potentials. Materials are selected with the aims of providing pleasurable reading and enrichment and of filling a wide range of informational needs.

SELECTION PLAN: While the collection contains a number of different formats, emphasis is placed on the acquisition of books, both hardcover and paperback. Duplicates are purchased if a title is considered to be of importance to the collection. The collection primarily serves infants through young adolescents, therefore the age of the intended audience is a determining selection principle. Accordingly, materials are evaluated for appropriateness of reading level, interest level, and subject treatment. The Head of Children's Services is responsible for decisions pertaining to the children's collection.

DESCRIPTION: The following areas comprise the children's collection. Additional criteria used in the selection process are noted.

BOARD BOOKS

Board books are selected for very young children and infants. Their sturdy pages, bright illustrations, and simple design provide an introduction to book format.

FICTION

Fiction is selected for a wide range of ages and reading abilities. Abridged works are not purchased. In choosing picture-story books for preschoolers, aesthetics (illustration, format) and developmental significance (language, vocabulary, theme) are evaluated. "Beginner" or "easy reader" books are provided for those who are just learning to read. Additional selection considerations for these books are: use of vocabulary, clarity and appeal of text, and aesthetics. For transitional readers, those reading at grade levels three and four, motivational and appealing material is selected. For older readers, emphasis is placed on acquiring materials that are voluntarily read for enjoyment and personal fulfillment.

NON-FICTION

Non-fiction is also selected for a wide range of ages and reading abilities (preschool through young adolescent). Timeliness is an additional criterion. While textbooks are not purchased, the collection does supplement the school

media centers' collections. At least four areas of the non-fiction collection are updated annually in response to changing curricula requirements. Adult materials are acquired where an expressed need exists that cannot be filled with a juvenile title.

REFERENCE

The reference collection area is developed for in-house use by both patrons and staff. Materials are selected with the intent of providing a broad spectrum of easily-accessed information for children as well as adults. Adult materials are purchased where a need exists that cannot be filled with a juvenile title. In such instances, every effort is made to acquire titles that do not duplicate what is in the adult collection. Materials that contain information subject to change are regularly updated.

PAMPHLETS

The collection includes a pamphlet file containing ephemeral information for children on hard-to-locate subjects and frequently asked-for topics.

PARENT RESOURCE COLLECTION

Materials for adults who are concerned with children (parents, teachers, caregivers, etc.) are located in the Parent Resource Collection. These include magazines and books that are written on an adult level and that provide a wide range of information on the education and upbringing of children. There is, in addition, a pamphlet file that contains ephemeral parenting/education information and a collection of children's books that address various life issues which young children may have difficulty coping with or understanding.

MAGAZINES

Magazines for children are selected for their recreational and informational content. They circulate, and no attempt is made to retain back issues past the current year.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Children's books in Spanish and Spanish-English are selected. The collection contains both fiction (picture-story books, easy readers, and older fiction) and non-fiction materials that are read for pleasure.

CASSETTES/BOOKS & CASSETTES

Cassettes and book/cassette sets are selected for children. These are primarily for recreational listening.

YOUNG ADULT CENTER COLLECTION

AIMS: Young adults are persons who no longer see themselves as children but whom society does not see as adults. They are undergoing rapid social, physical and emotional changes; many are "at risk". In these critical years, teens are formulating their personal and sexual identity, searching for roots and continuity, questioning lifestyles, developing political preferences, expanding their appreciation and understanding of other cultures, and adding dimensions to their religious or spiritual beliefs.

Young adults often look for library materials and resources to meet academic demands, and the library's general reference, non-fiction, audio-visual and periodicals collections all contain materials appropriate for young adults. Though the resources of the entire library are available to users in this age group, the Leominster Public Library is also committed to developing and maintaining a separate collection for young adults in the Young Adult Center.

The Center's collection focuses on the recreational and emotional needs of this age group, as well as informational needs in certain subject areas. Resources selected for teenagers contribute to intellectual and emotional growth, give pleasure, stimulate curiosity, and expand understanding of others, the world, and one's place in it. These resources expose young adults to the widest spectrum of beliefs and attitudes with the broadest possible range of materials, thereby providing young people opportunities to make intelligent and considered choices.

SELECTION PLAN: Young adult service is generally geared to the secondary school age, defined as grades seven through twelve and corresponding approximately to ages 12 through 18. The majority of the collection consists of material written specifically for young adults. However, in order to provide for a wide range of abilities and maturity levels, some titles written specifically for children's collections as well as adult titles are included.

The collection is comprised of fiction and non-fiction in both hardcover and paperback formats, limited reference resources, magazines, pamphlets and audiocassettes.

The Young Adult Services Coordinator has been delegated the day-to-day responsibility for selection decisions for the Young Adult Center collection. Selections are guided by but not limited to the General Selection Criteria outlined at the beginning of this document. The following format descriptions contain additional information and criteria used in the selection process.

DESCRIPTION: The following areas comprise the young adult collection. Additional criteria used in the selection process are noted.

FICTION

The Young Adult Center fiction collection consists of material written for and/or appealing to this particular age group regardless of genre. Every effort is made to provide teens with fiction that deals with their concerns in open, honest ways and which meets their recreational and/or academic needs. Primarily, titles of distinction and literary merit, favorably reviewed in standard selection sources, are added to the collection. Recommendations by young adult patrons, parents and educators are also considered.

The fiction collection encompasses contemporary novels, science fiction, fantasy, short stories, historical fiction, and mystery/horror/suspense. Cataloged fiction is purchased primarily in hardcover format; reprints are added to the paperback collection based on appropriateness and availability. Hardcover duplicates are not generally purchased due to cost and space concerns.

NON-FICTION

Titles are chosen for their relevance, timeliness and appeal. Every effort is made to purchase factual books which are clearly written and attractive in format; duplicate copies are purchased if demand exists, for a single title or for a particular subject area. The Young Adult Center collection contains hardcover and paperback non-fiction in the following specific subject areas:

- o psychic/unexplained phenomena
- o role-playing handbooks and manuals
- o health and personal appearance
- o sex education, including AIDS
- o youth problems and issues
- o substance abuse
- o fads and hobbies
- o music
- o humor
- o crisis and coping information
- o college application process/freshman college experience
- o poetry
- o biography
- o sports
- o limited reference resources

Resources on sex education are on the shelves in the Young Adult Center. Emphasis is placed on acquiring materials

appropriate for teens, but some resources useful to parents and educators are also purchased. In the age of AIDS, and with the open references to sex in today's society, it is imperative that teens have access to sound and authoritative sources which bury the myths of sex, promote a healthy and balanced attitude, and provide the informational framework for responsible sexual behavior.

PAMPHLETS

Pamphlet materials are obtained at little to no cost primarily to supplement books for homework-related assignments and personal informational needs. The pamphlet collection includes topical material on youth problems, health issues and substance abuse.

PAPERBACKS

Paperbacks are the format of choice among many young adults, and the Young Adult Center maintains a large paperback browsing collection. Fiction is purchased, with a focus on popular series, genre and formula books in the areas of romance, mystery/horror/suspense, humor, science fiction and fantasy. Contemporary fiction, non-fiction, and media tie-ins are also selected to a lesser degree. Duplicate copies of popular titles are purchased to meet current demand. Paperback selection reflects requests and suggestions from young adult users.

MAGAZINES

Current magazines are an increasingly popular format among young adults and are chosen primarily for their recreational content. The collection reflects popular teen culture and is heavily oriented toward entertainment and fads. Selection is based primarily on suggestions from young adult users. Current issues are kept in a browsing area in the Center and cannot be checked out; back issues circulate. No attempt is made to retain back issues beyond the current year.

AUDIOCASSETTES

The use of materials other than books which promote the goals of library service to youth are an integral part of the library's service to young adults. Popular music is an expression of our times and is of consuming interest and importance to most teens. In order to maintain its credibility with the young adults it serves, the Leominster Public Library feels it is appropriate to provide their favorite music. Therefore, audiocassettes which reflect the current output are purchased, though no attempt is made to fully cover this ever-expanding field.

Though some professional and vendor publications are

consulted, selection is based almost exclusively on requests and suggestions made by young adult library users.

Some audiocassettes selected for the Young Adult Center collection may carry "Parental Advisory/Explicit Lyrics" warnings. The advisory label is a voluntary statement used by some, but not all, members of the recording industry. It offers parents an opinion, not an absolute standard for judgment. Since neither the recording industry nor the library can relieve parents of their basic responsibility, the library stands behind the American Library Association in its position on labeling. (See "Statement on Labeling: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights").

ADULT COLLECTION

AIMS: The library aims to select and acquire materials that meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of adults, recognizing their diverse backgrounds, interests, tastes, abilities, and potentials.

SELECTION PLAN: Materials are selected with the primary intention of serving adults of all ages. In some areas of the adult collection, materials are selected that also serve young adults and children.

Although emphasis is placed on acquiring books and other print materials, non-print materials are acquired in some areas. The decision to add a new type of non-print material or to eliminate an existing one is made after considering the following factors: appropriateness for a public library lending collection, storage requirements, circulation procedures, significant public demand, costs to establish and maintain the collection, and continued availability.

Ultimate responsibility for the Adult Collection rests with the Head of Adult Services.

DESCRIPTION: The following areas comprise the adult collection. Additional criteria used in the selection process are noted.

FICTION

The fiction collection focuses on twentieth century literature including classic titles, best-sellers, diverse genres, and special interests. Because of the enormous volume of fiction published, it is possible to purchase only a representative selection with emphasis on major authors and the most popular examples of any genre. There is no single standard for inclusion in the fiction collection. Each work is evaluated in comparison to the existing collection, other works of fiction, or authors of similar type.

The library has within its fiction collection two separate genre collections of mystery and science fiction. Other categories of fiction such as romances, thrillers, horror, westerns and police procedurals are also purchased in addition to works which do not readily fall into any specific category. First novels receiving favorable reviews or publicity, experimental works, and translations of non-English authors are also considered. Whenever possible, an effort is made to purchase multiple copies of titles on school summer reading lists to insure access.

Because of durability, hard cover copies of titles for the fiction collection are purchased as opposed to paperbacks,

whenever possible. The Special Services Coordinator is responsible for selecting titles for this collection.

PAPERBACKS

The library maintains an uncatalogued browsing collection of paperbacks. The collection is made up primarily of bestselling novels, romances, science fiction, mysteries, and westerns. Non-fiction, self-help, and consumer-oriented titles are represented to a lesser degree. There is generally a rapid turnover of books in this collection due to frequent circulation and the nondurability of paperbacks. Titles are selected for this collection by the Special Services Coordinator.

RENTAL BOOKS

The Rental Book collection consists of multiple copies of bestsellers and other books in great demand, which duplicate titles available in the library's circulating collection. The purchase of these books is currently funded by the Friends of the Leominster Public Library. This fee-based collection is designed to provide patrons with more immediate access to popular titles. Funds generated by these rentals support the continuation of the program. The Special Services Coordinator is responsible for selecting books for this collection.

NON-FICTION

The non-fiction circulating collection emphasizes current titles dealing with a broad range of subjects. While current titles are emphasized, retrospective titles may be added as needed to fill gaps in the collection.

Materials are chosen at an introductory or basic level of coverage. Generally, textbooks are not purchased, but an ongoing effort is made to support school curricula with titles appropriate for students beyond the elementary grades.

Recognizing that both students and adults have varying degrees of reading and comprehension skills, titles designated as "juvenile" in the review literature are added as needed in high-demand areas of the collection.

Duplicate titles are purchased to meet current demand, or where ongoing demand in a particular subject area is perceived or anticipated.

All members of the library's information services staff are involved in the selection of materials for this collection.

CAREER INFORMATION CENTER

The library maintains a separate Career Information Center collection. This collection reflects a consistently high demand from the community for materials on career exploration, post-secondary education, and job searches.

All members of the library's information services staff are involved in the selection of materials for this collection.

REFERENCE

Reference materials are intended for in-library use by adults, students in grades 7 - 12, and the library's information services staff. Some reference materials provide quick, concise, or up-to-date information. Others provide access to materials in the collection and elsewhere.

Standard reference sources are collected and maintained. Other sources are considered if they meet the needs of the users. Materials that contain information subject to change are regularly updated. Back issues of selected reference titles are retained in storage for research purposes, including: *Facts on File*, *Old Farmer's Almanac*, *World Almanac*, and *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. Duplicate copies of reference titles are considered for the circulating collection based on demand and cost.

Special areas of the reference collection include:

- o Business Table
- o Consumer Shelf
- o Telephone Directories
- o Local/Community Information
- o Income tax forms and publications

Non-print reference sources, including CD-ROM and electronic databases will be considered. Additional criteria for deciding to add these sources include: demand for the information in source, ease and efficiency of locating information with source, hardware and software requirements, and cost.

The Head of Adult Services is responsible for selecting titles for this collection.

PAMPHLETS

The library's circulating pamphlet collection contains low- or no-cost materials obtained from a variety of sources. Pamphlets augment both the circulating book collection and the non-circulating reference collection.

The Senior Public Services Support Assistant is responsible for selecting pamphlets and maintaining the collection.

PERIODICALS (MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS)

The current magazine collection provides up-to-date information and entertainment publications for adult library users.

A collection of back issues of magazines is maintained for in-library use to meet the basic research needs of the adult population, as well as homework needs of school-age students. There is a "core" collection of major titles that is kept indefinitely; other titles are retained for shorter periods of time.

The decision to retain a magazine title is based on the following factors: usefulness of information contained in publication, consistency of existing collection, access to information through indexes, space and storage considerations, and availability from other sources. Many magazine titles are bound to facilitate shelving, storage, and retrieval. Magazines that are not retained circulate to the public for one year.

The newspaper collection includes all local newspapers, and selected regional, state, and national newspapers. Back issues of newspapers are kept for three months. After the three month period, the *Fitchburg-Leominster Sentinel & Enterprise* is retained on microfilm. Other local newspapers pertaining to the Leominster area are retained in the Historical Collection.

Unsolicited gift magazines and newspapers are accepted if they meet the library's general selection criteria. Current issues are displayed on a specially designated shelf in the periodicals area, and a back file is not maintained.

The Head of Adult Services is responsible for selecting titles and the Senior Public Services Support Assistant is responsible for maintaining this collection.

LARGE PRINT BOOKS

The library provides a collection of large print books and periodicals for adults who have difficulty using normal print materials. Through deposit collections, large print books are also used by residents of Leominster senior housing complexes, nursing and rest homes, and members of the Leominster Senior Center.

Emphasis is placed on providing materials for recreational reading. Some informational and reference materials are also provided. Large print purchases are greatly dependent on the availability of titles from the publishers of large print books.

The Senior Public Services Support Assistant is responsible for selecting titles for this collection.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The purpose of the foreign language collection is to encourage members of the non-English-speaking community to become library users. Emphasis is on materials that help to meet the basic informational and survival needs of the local non English-speaking population, and that assist this population in learning English. In addition, culturally appropriate materials are provided for enrichment and entertainment. The library will consider establishing a foreign language collection when there is a population that demonstrates a desire for foreign language materials, and when the materials are readily available.

Currently, the library provides materials in a variety of formats in Spanish.

The Head of Adult Services is responsible for selecting titles for this collection.

LITERACY COLLECTION

The library provides a collection of books and cassettes to assist patrons in developing basic English language reading and comprehension skills. This collection is designed for use by tutors and their students or by the students alone. Many of the basic texts include tutor aids for teaching.

Emphasis is placed on providing materials that teach the basics of spelling, reading, comprehension and writing. The collection also contains citizenship manuals and basic life skills information, such as materials on how to write checks and balance a checkbook and how to complete an employment application. Some high interest/low-level fiction and non-fiction titles are included. "Read-Along" book/cassette packages of standard works have been included in the collection to promote reading and pronunciation.

Titles are chosen for this collection by a Selection Committee under the direction of the Literacy Coordinator.

VALUABLE COLLECTION

The Leominster Public Library collects local history items that are considered to be of value and of long range interest. "Local history" is defined as about, or relating to Leominster and its citizens, and may include material about other communities if a relationship exists. Included are: maps, catalogs, photographs, news clippings, postcards, manuscripts, etc. The collection retains publications dealing with the City of Leominster. These include

publications from city and state agencies, along with private publications. The library collects the publications of local authors; books with a Leominster imprint; and manuscripts.

Leominster Public Library has a complete microfilmed run of the local newspaper, the *Leominster Enterprise*, from 1873 to 1973, and in its combined form with the *Fitchburg Sentinel*, from 1973 to present. It has other microfilm, notably, Sanborn Insurance maps, Leominster town and vital records of 1701-1900, several books on Leominster, a church history, and some early newspapers that were published in Leominster.

The library collects art work by local artists, and has portraits of Leominster people. Leominster Public Library collects genealogical information relating to citizens and families of the community, or area, past and present. It maintains a "citizens" file, along with vital records, family histories, town and county histories and personal manuscripts.

The Historical and Genealogical Services Coordinator is responsible for selecting titles and maintaining this collection.

VIDEOCASSETTES

Videocassettes are selected exclusively in VHS format. The Leominster Public Library's aim is to acquire a diverse collection of titles in order to meet the needs of a broad cross section of users. Selections are made by a Video Selection Committee specifically in the following areas:

FEATURE: Full length dramatizations composed primarily of time-enduring classics and award winning titles.

CHILDREN'S: Short and full length films including popular, educational, and award winning titles aimed primarily at young viewers.

BOOK VIDEOS: Full length dramatizations based on a recognizable work of fiction or nonfiction.

MISCELLANEOUS: General interest nonfiction works including documentary, travel, how-to, learning and instruction, sports, music, health films, etc.

REGIONAL VIDEOS: A collection of 15 - 25 videocassettes on free loan to the Leominster Public Library from the Regional AV Center which rotate on a monthly basis. The Leominster Public Library does not own or select these titles.

Titles are chosen for this collection by a Selection Committee.

SPOKEN WORD AUDIOCASSETTES

Spoken word audiocassettes are selected that parallel many areas of the general collection. The collection emphasizes popular best-selling titles and titles of current interest as well as classic works, historical works, biographies, and language instruction programs. New selections are made exclusively of unabridged works. Packaging, durability, and production value of materials affect selection decisions.

Titles are chosen for this collection by a Selection Committee.

COMPACT DISCS

The Leominster Public Library's aim is to acquire a diverse collection of recordings in order to meet the needs of a broad cross section of users. Selections are made in the following areas:

CLASSICAL: Classical, instrumental and vocal works, including opera

JAZZ: Both contemporary and retrospective jazz, including swing, big band, and New Age

MUSICAL SHOWS: Musical shows and movie scores

MISCELLANEOUS: Includes folk music from other countries and cultures, sound effects, patriotic music and marches, and music for special occasions, i.e. weddings and holidays

CONTEMPORARY CLASSICS: Includes a retrospective collection of popular music, recent popular titles, and titles of distinction and critical acclaim

LATIN MUSIC: Popular music representing a variety of Latin American musical styles and performers

Titles are chosen for this collection by a Selection Committee.

ART PRINTS

The library maintains a browsing collection of art prints available for loan to the public. Generally, reproductions of artworks and photographs representing a variety of artistic styles are chosen. Additional criteria for selection include quality of reproduction, framing, matting, glazing, size, and cost. The purchase of the circulating art prints has been supported by the Friends of the Leominster Public Library. Art prints are chosen by a Selection Committee.

PROFESSIONAL/OFFICE COLLECTION

The library maintains a collection of professional books and periodicals related to library management, collections, programs, and services. Materials for this collection are selected by library staff and are purchased primarily for their use.

EVALUATION AND MAINTENANCE OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

An ongoing program of evaluation and maintenance of the library's collections is essential so that users--staff and the public--find up-to-date, relevant, and attractive materials. Careful acquisition must be balanced by prudent de-acquisition.

Evaluation--those activities which determine the shelf life of library materials--and Maintenance--those activities which insure the usefulness of the collection as a whole and the viability of individual components of the collection--are, of necessity closely related. Both are processes whose ultimate goal is to present and preserve an effective, aesthetically pleasing, and efficient collection which meets the library's stated service objectives. Materials which no longer meet those objectives must be discarded if the institution is to maintain its credibility as a community-based and focused resource.

For evaluation and maintenance purposes, the library's collections can be divided into four "life-span" groups:

EPHEMERAL MATERIALS whose content is not appropriate for retention for extended periods of time (usually one year or less) include circulating periodicals, annual consumer publications, college catalogs, schedules of events, and the like.

LIMITED-LIFE MATERIALS whose shelf life is defined by policy (e.g. non-circulating periodicals and regularly updated reference works) or by condition (e.g. audio-visual materials and uncataloged paperbacks).

PERMANENT MATERIALS which are primarily of a research or historical nature are retained indefinitely for their uniqueness or long-term local interest.

VARIABLE-LIFE MATERIALS include the greater part of the library collections. These materials require continuous evaluation using guidelines which complement the selection criteria.

Every attempt is made to retain library materials that are worn, but still meet selection criteria, by repair/rebind or by transfer to less active areas of the collection. Ephemeral and limited-life materials generally are discarded when they are unserviceable. Other materials are reviewed using the criteria for discard as guidelines for retention. Once the decision is made to keep an item, the Head of Technical Services, or, in the case of historical materials, the Historical and Genealogical Services Coordinator, determines the most cost-effective means--in-house repair, professional re-binding, or replacement--that helps insure

the materials will be available for use as long as they continue to contribute to the library's service goals. Serviceable, but no longer needed, materials may be donated or disposed of in any other way approved by the Board of Trustees.

CRITERIA FOR DISCARD

Material may be recommended for discard if one or more of the following applies:

- o It contains misleading and/or factually inaccurate information.
- o It is worn beyond mending or rebinding
- o It is superseded by a new edition or a better book on the subject.
- o It no longer has discernible literary or scientific merit.
- o It is obtainable from other sources, such as interlibrary loan.
- o It is no longer relevant to the needs and interests of the community.

All members of the library's staff participate in evaluation and maintenance activities. The Head of Adult Services, the Head of Children's Services, the Young Adult Services Coordinator, and the Head of Technical Services share responsibility for the scheduling and carrying out of collection evaluation and maintenance.

NETWORKS & CONSORTIA

Participation in networks and consortia allows libraries to share information and supplement the resources available in any single library, since it is not possible for every library to provide direct access to all information and resources.

The Leominster Public Library is a member of the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS), a consortium of geographically related, cooperating public libraries supported by an interlibrary delivery system. Cooperation in CMRLS allows access to the resources available in other consortia and networks. CMRLS also offers Telephone Information Service (TIS) to assist its member libraries with informational requests.

The Leominster Public Library also participates in an automated telecommunications network consisting of public, academic and special libraries in Central and Western Massachusetts (C/W MARS). This network is directly linked to other networks across the state, and to selected networks throughout the country.

As a user of library networks and consortia, the Leominster Public Library is, of course, expected to share its circulating resources with other libraries.

GIFTS & DONATIONS FOR THE LIBRARY'S PRINT AND NON-PRINT COLLECTIONS

The Leominster Public Library accepts gifts of money and materials for its print and non-print collections. The Library also accepts such gifts on behalf of the Friends of the Leominster Public Library.

Donors are encouraged to speak with the library staff member responsible for a collection area before making a gift. All gifts become the property of the Leominster Public Library or Friends of the Leominster Public Library, and may be used or disposed of in any way by the Library unless other arrangements have been made with the donor at the time of the gift. The Library may refuse any gift or part of any gift.

MONETARY DONATIONS

Gifts of money are accepted for books, periodical subscriptions, and other materials. The library staff members responsible for a collection area select materials that best meet the needs of the library and the wishes of the donor, using the library's established selection criteria.

All donors of money receive a letter of acknowledgement from the Library Director. New materials are plated with a gift plate according to the wishes of the donor.

NEW MATERIAL DONATIONS

Gifts of new books and other materials are accepted for possible inclusion in the library's collections. Magazine subscriptions are generally not accepted. The library staff members responsible for a collection area evaluate all gifts, using the library's established selection criteria.

Donors of new materials which are added to the collection receive a letter of acknowledgement from the Library Director. New materials may be plated with a gift plate according to the wishes of the donor.

The library is under no obligation to accept or acknowledge unsolicited or anonymous donations of new materials that do not meet the established selection criteria.

USED MATERIAL DONATIONS

Gifts of used books and other materials are accepted for possible inclusion in the library's collections. Used magazines, newspapers, and textbooks are generally not accepted. The library staff members responsible for a collection area evaluate all gifts, using the library's established selection criteria. The library is highly selective in adding used materials to its collections.

Emphasis is placed on currency, condition, and potential for use. Currently, materials not added to the collection are given to the Friends of the Leominster Public Library for annual booksales with the proceeds benefiting the library.

Upon request, donors of used materials are issued a receipt or letter stating the donor's name, date, and number of items donated. The library does not appraise any donation of used books or materials.

PATRON SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY'S PRINT AND NON-PRINT COLLECTIONS

Every patron has the right to suggest materials for addition to the Leominster Public Library's print and non-print collections.

These suggestions allow the library to consider the opinions of its patrons, who are not directly involved in the materials selection process.

All suggestions are routed to the library staff member responsible for a particular collection area-- adult, children's, or young adult. The staff member evaluates the suggestion in terms of the library's established selection criteria, and makes a decision that best meets the needs of the library.

If the library decides to purchase the suggested material, then the patron will be notified according to established reserve procedures.

If the library decides not to purchase the suggested material, then every effort will be made to borrow the material from another library, using established inter-library loan procedures. Materials less than one year old may not be requested through inter-library loan.

The extent to which the library can purchase materials suggested by patrons is largely dependent on the annual materials budget.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

-GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every resident of Massachusetts has the right to question materials in the library's collections.

The Leominster Public Library subscribes in principle to the statements of policy on library philosophy as expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretations, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements, copies of which are appended to and have been made part of this policy.

The purpose of the Request for Reconsideration Procedure is to consider the opinions of members of the community who are not directly involved in the Leominster Public Library's materials selection process.

The Leominster Public Library expects that a patron questioning an item in the library's collections will have read/viewed/listened to the entire item.

The Leominster Public Library will review the selection decision for the item in question following the established Request for Reconsideration Procedures, and will respond to the patron's concern in a timely manner.

Access to the item in question will not be restricted during the reconsideration process.

A decision to sustain a challenge to an item shall not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the library staff involved in the selection and/or use of the material.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURE

-INFORMAL REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

A patron may make an informal statement of concern by presenting an oral or written statement about an item in the library's collections. The library shall attempt to resolve the issue informally.

The Library Director or other appropriate staff shall explain the library's material selection philosophy and selection criteria.

If this explanation does not satisfy the patron, then he or she shall be given the opportunity to file a formal Request for Reconsideration. The Library Director shall mail a Request for Reconsideration Packet and a copy of the Leominster Public Library Collection Development and

Management Policy to the patron to begin the formal Request for Reconsideration process.

-FORMAL REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The patron must meet the following conditions to file a formal Request for Reconsideration:

1. The patron must be a resident of Massachusetts.
2. The patron must read/view/listen to the entire item.
3. The patron must receive and read the Request for Reconsideration Packet and the Leominster Public Library Collection Development and Management Policy.
4. The patron must complete and return the Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form to the Library Director.

The Library Director shall notify the Chairman of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees of the receipt of the completed Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form. The Chairman shall appoint a Reconsideration Committee consisting of: two (2) members of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees, the Library Director, the Assistant Library Director, and the Department Head responsible for the area of the collection in question.

Members of the Reconsideration Committee shall perform the following duties:

1. Examine and discuss the patron's Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form.
2. Read/View/Listen to the item in question in its entirety.
3. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the item.
4. Weigh the values and faults of the item and analyze the item as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
5. Evaluate the item in relation to the entire collection and review the selection decision based on the Leominster Public Library's Collection Development and Management Policy.
6. Evaluate the item in relation to the principles of intellectual freedom as presented in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretations, and the Freedom to View Statement.
7. Prepare a written report for the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The Library Director shall respond to the patron in writing, and shall include a copy of the Reconsideration Committee's Report.

The Library Director shall keep a copy of the Reconsideration Committee's Report for the Library's files.

The Leominster Public Library shall attempt to respond to the patron within sixty (60) days of receipt of the completed "Statement of Concern About Library Resources" form.

If the patron is not satisfied with the Reconsideration Committee's decision, then he or she may appeal by making a request in writing to the Chairman of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of this request, the Chairman shall schedule a public hearing at a posted open meeting with the entire Board of Trustees, the Library Director, and the patron.

The patron's initial Request for Reconsideration shall be kept confidential. If the patron appeals the Recommendation Committee's decision to the Board of Trustees, then the patron's Request for Reconsideration will no longer be confidential. State law requires that all meetings of the Board of Trustees must be open to the public.

At any time during the Request for Reconsideration process, the Reconsideration Committee or Board of Trustees may choose to consult other library professionals and/or community members with subject expertise or related professional knowledge.

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY RESOURCES

This form has been authorized by the Trustees of the Leominster Public Library. Please return the completed form to the Library Director. Feel free to use additional space if necessary.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone No. _____

If you represent an organization or group, please give its name and address:

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

_____ Book	_____ Videocassette
_____ Magazine	_____ Audiocassette
_____ Newspaper	_____ Content of Library Program
_____ Other	

TITLE _____

AUTHOR/PRODUCER _____

2. Did you read/listen to/view the entire book/recording/video? _____

*****IN ORDER TO PROCEED WITH A FORMAL COMPLAINT, YOU MUST HAVE READ/LISTENED TO/VIEWED THE MATERIAL IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

3. What brought this title to your attention?

4. Have you read any published reviews of this material?
If so, please list the sources.

5. To what do you object? (Please be specific and cite pages if a book.)

6. Did you find anything of value in this material?

7. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey an equivalent perspective of the subject treated?

8. What do you suggest the library do about this matter?

Signature of Requester

Date

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LEOMINSTER COMMUNITY PROFILE

Leominster is a city of 38,145 people located in north central Massachusetts. The land area covers 28.5 square miles and approximately one-third of the land area is protected open space. Leominster, Fitchburg, and the neighboring towns comprise the Montachusett area. Leominster has excellent access to other parts of the state with Route 2 and Interstate 190.

Leominster's small downtown is primarily a service--business area with few retail establishments. Most retail outlets are located outside the downtown area. The Montachusett area's major shopping mall, Searstown, is located in Leominster.

Housing consists primarily of single-family homes spread widely over the community. Areas of multiple-family homes and apartment and condominium complexes are scattered throughout the city but there is no area with an "inner city" feel.

During the 1980s, Leominster experienced a period of tremendous growth in population (10.5%) and residential housing (18%). These rates were among the highest for cities in the state. Land is still available for development and the growth of housing will probably continue. Much of the building growth was concentrated in the south side of the city. Local studies have determined that the growth of comparatively low cost housing attracted a large number of young people from outside the area. Many Leominster residents now commute to work out of the city.

The plastics industry became the mainstay of Leominster's economy during the post-World-War-II era. Although the plastics industry is still important, the city's manufacturing base is diversifying and modernizing. During the recession of the early 1990s, Leominster experienced one of the higher rates of unemployment in the state. The 1989 median household income was \$35,974.

Throughout its history, Leominster's industries have attracted immigrant groups who have come here for jobs and have integrated into the community. Recent immigrant groups include peoples from Latin America, the Asian Pacific, and the Asian Continent. Currently, the largest group are Latinos, primarily from Puerto Rico and Uruguay. Problems arise in counting this group in the census, but there are estimates that Latinos could represent up to one-fifth of Leominster's population.

According to the 1990 census, preschool and school-age children make up one-quarter of Leominster's population. On a recent statewide educational assessment test measuring proficiency in reading, mathematics, science and social studies, Leominster students scored below a desirable level and just below the state average. The school dropout rate is 4%.

Out of Leominster residents 25 years of age or older, three-quarters have at least a high school diploma, and almost one-third have at least a bachelor's degree.

During the past decade, a number of cultural and educational institutions have come to Leominster. They include the National Plastics Center and Museum, a local symphony, community theater, and satellite campuses of three colleges. These institutions contribute positively to the quality of life in Leominster.

LEOMINSTER COMMUNITY STATISTICS - JANUARY 1993

POPULATION	1980	1990	1995 (proj.)	2000 (proj.)
Leominster	34,508	38,145 (10.5%)	38,651 (1%)	40,018 (5%)
Worc. Co.	646,352	709,700 (9.8%)	726,468 (2%)	759,422 (7%)
				(MISER*)

POPULATION - AGE BREAKDOWN

Age	1990	
0 - 4	2,975	(8%)
5 - 11	3,318	(9%)
12 - 17	2,582	(7%)
18 - 64	24,296	(64%)
65+	5,001	(13%)
		(MISER*)

POPULATION - LEOMINSTER - COMPOSITION

White	93.1%
Black	2.3%
American Indian	.2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1.6%
Other	2.8%

Hispanic Origin	U.S. Census:	3,161	(8.3%)
Leominster Spanish American Center	estimate:	10,000	(22%)

3,161	38,145
+ 6,839 (UNCOUNTED)	+ 6,839 (UNCOUNTED)
10,000	44,984

(10,000 is 22% of 44,984/)
(MISER* and Leominster Spanish American Center)

HOUSING GROWTH - UNITS

	1980	1990	
	12,988	14,834	(18%)
			(U.S. Census)

*University of Massachusetts. Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER)

HOUSING GROWTH - LOCATION

Housing Projects Completed or Under Construction,
1982 -1986.

(Subdivisions and Complexes/Condominiums)

Ward 1 - 240

Ward 2 - 50

Ward 3 - 793

Ward 4 - 140

Ward 5 - 0

(City of Leominster, Open Space and Recreation Plan, 1992)

EDUCATION

Of the 25,415 Leominster residents over 25 years of age:

Leominster: Worc. Co. avg.:

High School Diploma or higher 75.2% 77.4%

Bachelor's Degree or higher 29.3% 22.2%

(The Fact Book for Central Massachusetts)

LEOMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1992-93: 6,195 enrollment K -12.

Dropout rate 1991-92: 4% (59 students)

(Leominster School Dept.)

On a 1992 Massachusetts Educational Assessment Test
measuring proficiency in reading, mathematics, science and
social studies:

Leominster students: State average:

4th grade 14% 21%

8th grade 22% 27%

12th grade 27% 29%

Percentage shows students who score at or above a
desirable level of proficiency: "to reason and communicate
clearly and apply knowledge in a variety of contexts".

("Few Make Grade on State Tests," *Sunday Worcester Telegram*
November 29, 1992)

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Median Household Income, 1989 - Leominster - \$35,974

Worcester Co.- \$35,774

(The Fact Book for Central Massachusetts)

Unemployment rate for Fall 1992 is 10.5%. The unemployment
rate in the Fitchburg/Leominster area is higher than the
average for the state and Worcester County.

("Region on the Upswing," *Telegram & Gazette*, Jan. 20, 1993)

1,073 businesses in Leominster with total annual payroll of \$332,663,000.

(*The Fact Book for Central Massachusetts*)

$\$332,663,000 / 1,073 \text{ businesses} / \$21,080 \text{ (avg. annual wage)} = 14.70 \text{ workers per business.}$

Top Employers in Leominster:

(*The Fact Book for Central Massachusetts*)

Number of employees:

Number of companies:

350 - 999

2

250 - 349

4

165 - 249

8

(North Central MA Chamber of Commerce)

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, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980,
by the ALA Council.

FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Library policies and procedures which effectively deny minors equal access to all library resources available to other users violate the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities which fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, level of education, or legal emancipation.

The selection and development of library resources should not be diluted because of minors having the same access to library resources as adult users. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Librarians and governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions on access to library resources in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections from parents or anyone else. The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries do not authorize librarians or governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents or legal guardians. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents - and only parents - have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children - and only their children - to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Librarians have a professional commitment to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free and equal access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, by the ALA Council.
[ISBN 8389-7549-6]

2.2

REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING ACCESS TO LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

American libraries exist and function within the context of a body of law derived from the United States Constitution, defined by statute, and implemented by regulations, policies, and procedures established by their governing bodies and administrations. These regulations, policies, and procedures reflect the function and character of the library, define its operations, and protect its mission and the rights of its users.

"The library is one of the great symbols of our democracy. It is a living embodiment of the First Amendment because it includes voices of dissent."¹ Libraries of all types adhere to this ideal. Publicly supported libraries serve as traditional public forums, open to the collection, use, and dissemination of all forms of recorded human expression that are expressly dedicated to the unfettered competition of the marketplace of ideas. It is essential to this purpose that the library function as neutral ground in that marketplace. Viewpoint-based discrimination has no place in publicly supported library collections or services; for the library to espouse partisan causes or favor particular viewpoints violates its mission.

"A public library is not only a designated public forum, but also a quintessential, traditional public forum whose accessibility affects the bedrock of our democratic system. A place where ideas are communicated freely through the written word"² and other means of recorded expression "is as integral to a democracy and to First Amendment rights as an available public space where citizens can communicate their ideas through the spoken word."³ The fact of public sponsorship of a

1. *Richard R. Kreimer v. Bureau of Police for the Town of Morristown, et al.*, 765 F. Supp. 181 (D.N.J. 1991).

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

library in no way implies endorsement of any of the myriad viewpoints contained within a library's collection. Nor should a funding source dictate its contents. The United States Supreme Court has recognized that "the university is a traditional sphere of free expression so fundamental to the functioning of our society that the Government's ability to control speech within that sphere by means of conditions attached to the expenditures of Government funds, is restricted by the vagueness and overbreadth doctrines of the First Amendment. . . ."⁴ The same principles apply with equal force to publicly supported libraries. These principles restrict any attempt to control expression within a publicly supported library or to dictate or limit the contents of its collections, programs, displays, or publications through conditions attached to funding.

Libraries serve the function of making ideas and information available to all members of the society, without discrimination. Publicly supported libraries provide access to information for all without imposing barriers which limit or prevent library users, including the indigent or the economically disadvantaged, from exercising their full constitutional rights. Publicly supported libraries' traditional commitment to free public service is integral to their nature and function. Publicly supported libraries, like public schools and universities, are supported in part from a recognition that information and education are essential components of informed self-government.

The right of free access to information for all individuals is basic to all library service. The central thrust of the Library Bill of Rights is to protect and encourage the free flow of information and ideas. Article 5 protects the rights of an individual to use a library regardless of origin, age, background, or views. The American Library Association urges all libraries to set policies and procedures that reflect the basic tenets of the Library Bill of Rights, within the framework of constitutional imperatives and limitations.

Many libraries adopt administrative policies and procedures to govern their order and use, the comfort and safety of patrons and staff, and the protection of resources, services, and facilities. Such policies and procedures affect access, and must not become a convenient means for removing or restricting access to controversial materials, limiting access to facilities, programs, or exhibits, or for discriminating against specific individuals or groups of library patrons. Administrative policies and procedures which infringe on equitable access to library buildings, services, and resources, the privacy of the individual, or the right to read, violate the Library Bill of Rights. Further, if such policies have the effect of impermissible discrimination against individuals or particular groups of

4. *Rust, et al. v. Sullivan*, 59 U.S.L.W. 4451, 111 S.Ct. 1759 (1991).

library users, they are likely to violate First Amendment rights. The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that "the right to receive ideas follows ineluctably from the sender's First Amendment right to send them. . . . More importantly, the right to receive ideas is a necessary predicate to the recipient's meaningful exercise of his own rights such as speech, press, and political freedom' (emphasis in original) *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 866-67 (1982) (plurality opinion)."⁵ Respect for these rights is central to the function of any government supported library for these rights define the library's purpose.

Because publicly supported libraries are institutions dedicated to the free flow of information, it is essential that the regulations, policies, and procedures which libraries develop and use embody the principles of free expression. Information about their operations must be made available in full compliance with confidentiality, privacy, freedom of information, and sunshine laws. The application of policies and procedures for the use of library services and resources should be consistently applied to both members of the public and library employees. Policies and procedures for responding to complaints about library materials—including individual items in a collection, library programs and services, or publications and other material produced or published by the library—should be uniformly applied regardless of the source of the complaint, whether coming from a member of the public, staff, or governing authority.

5. *Richard R. Kreimer v. Bureau of Police for the Town of Morristown, et al.*, 765 F. Supp. 181 (D.N.J. 1991).

Adopted January 1982, as Administrative Policies and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Resources and Services; amended with title change July 3, 1991, by the ALA Council.

STATEMENT ON LABELING

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and/or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:

1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor's tool.
2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.
3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library's jurisdiction, the library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to material or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings -- if placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder -- could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.

Adopted July 13, 1951. Amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990, by the ALA Council.

[ISBN 8389-5226-7]

ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO VIDEOTAPES AND OTHER NONPRINT FORMATS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Library collections of videotapes, motion pictures, and other nonprint formats raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people have access to materials and services that reflect diversity sufficient to meet their needs.

To guide librarians and others in resolving these issues, the American Library Association provides the following guidelines.

Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS says, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

ALA's FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS: An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states:

The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

. . .[P]arents - and only parents - have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children - and only their children - to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Policies which set minimum age limits for access to videotapes and/or other audiovisual materials and equipment, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Further, age limits based on the cost of the materials are unacceptable. Unless directly and specifically prohibited by law from circulating certain motion pictures and video productions to minors, librarians should apply the same standards to circulation of these materials as are applied to books and other materials.

Recognizing that libraries cannot act *in loco parentis*, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Published reviews of films and videotapes and/or reference works which provide information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences can be made available in

conjunction with nonprint collections to assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship. This material may include information provided by video producers and distributors, promotional material on videotape packaging, and Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) ratings if they are included on the tape or in the packaging by the original publisher and/or if they appear in review sources or reference works included in the library's collection. Marking out or removing ratings information from videotape packages constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing*. For the library to add such ratings to the materials if they are not already there, to post a list of such ratings with a collection, or to attempt to enforce such ratings through circulation policies or other procedures constitutes labeling, "an attempt to prejudice attitudes" about the material, and is unacceptable. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

*For information on case law, please contact the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom.

See also: STATEMENT ON LABELING and EXPURGATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS, Interpretations of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

Adopted June 28, 1989, by the ALA Council; the quotation from FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS was changed after Council adopted the July 3, 1991, revision of that Interpretation.

[ISBN 8389-7351-5]

EXPURGATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Expurgating library materials is a violation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other library resources by the library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which state that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval," and that "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all library users, by limiting access to ideas and information.

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981; amended
January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

RESTRICTED ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Attempts to restrict access to library materials violate the basic tenets of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

Historically, attempts have been made to limit access by relegating materials into segregated collections. These attempts are in violation of established policy. Such collections are often referred to by a variety of names, including "closed shelf," "locked case," "adults only," "restricted shelf," or "high demand." Access to some materials also may require a monetary fee or financial deposit. In any situation which restricts access to certain materials, a barrier is placed between the patron and those materials. That barrier may be age related, linguistic, economic, or psychological in nature.

Because materials placed in restricted collections often deal with controversial, unusual, or "sensitive" subjects, having to ask a librarian or circulation clerk for them may be embarrassing or inhibiting for patrons desiring the materials. Needing to ask for materials may pose a language barrier or a staff service barrier. Because restricted collections often are composed of materials which some library patrons consider "objectionable," the potential user may be predisposed to think of the materials as "objectionable" and, therefore, are reluctant to ask for them.

Barriers between the materials and the patron which are psychological, or are affected by language skills, are nonetheless limitations on access to information. Even when a title is listed in the catalog with a reference to its restricted status, a barrier is placed between the patron and the publication (see also "Statement on Labeling").

There may be, however, countervailing factors to establish policies to protect library materials--specifically, for reasons of physical preservation including protection from theft or mutilation. Any such policies must be carefully formulated and administered with extreme attention to the principles of intellectual freedom. This caution is also in keeping with ALA policies, such as "Evaluating Library Collections," "Free Access to Libraries for Minors," and the "Preservation Policy."

Finally, in keeping with the "Joint Statement on Access" of the American Library Association and Society of American Archivists, restrictions that result from donor agreements or contracts for special collections materials must be similarly circumscribed. Permanent exclusions are not acceptable. The overriding impetus must be to work for free and unfettered access to all documentary heritage.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, by the ALA Council.

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THE UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO FREE EXPRESSION

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association, and the corollary right to receive information.

The American Library Association endorses this principle, which is also set forth in the UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Preamble of this document states that "... recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. . . ." and "... the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people. . . ."

Article 18 of this document states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.

Article 20 states:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

We affirm our belief that these are inalienable rights of every person, regardless of origin, age, background, or views. We embody our professional commitment to these principles in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, as adopted by the American Library Association.

We maintain that these are universal principles and should be applied by libraries and librarians throughout the world. The American Library Association's policy on International Relations reflects these objectives: "... to encourage the exchange, dissemination, and access to information and the unrestricted flow of library materials in all formats throughout the world."

We know that censorship, ignorance, and limitations on the free flow of information are the tools of tyranny and oppression. We believe that ideas and information topple the walls of hate and fear and build bridges of cooperation and understanding far more effectively than weapons and armies.

The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights and intellectual freedom; the two are inseparably linked and inextricably entwined. Freedom of opinion and expression is not derived from or dependent on any form of government or political power. This

right is inherent in every individual. It cannot be surrendered, nor can it be denied. True justice comes from the exercise of this right.

We recognize the power of information and ideas to inspire justice, to restore freedom and dignity to the oppressed, and to change the hearts and minds of the oppressors.

Courageous men and women, in difficult and dangerous circumstances throughout human history, have demonstrated that freedom lives in the human heart and cries out for justice even in the face of threats, enslavement, imprisonment, torture, exile, and death. We draw inspiration from their example. They challenge us to remain steadfast in our most basic professional responsibility to promote and defend the right of free expression.

There is no good censorship. Any effort to restrict free expression and the free flow of information aids the oppressor. Fighting oppression with censorship is self-defeating.

Threats to the freedom of expression of any person anywhere are threats to the freedom of all people everywhere. Violations of human rights and the right of free expression have been recorded in virtually every country and society across the globe.

In response to these violations, we affirm these principles:

- o The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental prerogative that leads to the intimidation of individuals which prevents them from exercising their rights to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. We urge libraries and librarians everywhere to resist such abuse of governmental power, and to support those against whom such governmental power has been employed.
- o The American Library Association condemns any governmental effort to involve libraries and librarians in restrictions on the right of any individual to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. Such restrictions pervert the function of the library and violate the professional responsibilities of librarians.
- o The American Library Association rejects censorship in any form. Any action which denies the inalienable human rights of individuals only damages the will to resist oppression, strengthens the hand of the oppressor, and undermines the cause of justice.
- o The American Library Association will not abrogate these principles. We believe that censorship corrupts the cause of justice, and contributes to the demise of freedom.

Adopted by the ALA Council, January 16, 1991

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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 books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, 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 the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts 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 to reject it. 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.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio, and television. 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 uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

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 stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which 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 towards 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 which 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 which 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 contained in the books 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 books 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 determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

A book should be judged as a book. 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 which 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 literature 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 taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which 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 book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.*

The idea 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 expended on the trivial; it is frustrated 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 their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, 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 books. We do so because we believe that they are good, 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, 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 Booksellers Association
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Association of American University Presses
Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
International Reading Association
Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression
National Association of College Stores
National Council of Teachers of English
P.E.N. - American Center
People for the American Way
Periodical and Book Association of America
Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.
Society of Professional Journalists
Women's National Book Association
YWCA of the U.S.A.



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:

1. To provide the broadest possible 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 and 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. Additional copies may be obtained for \$1.00 (to cover postage and handling) from: American Film & Video Association, 920 Barnsdale Road, Suite 152, La Grange Park, Illinois, 60526. (312) 482-4000.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTION TOOLS

Selection tools used by library staff include, but are not limited to, the following:

Advance (Ingram)

American Libraries

Billboard

Booklist

Forecast (Baker & Taylor)

Hennepin County Library Cataloging Bulletin

Horn Book Magazine and Guide

Hot Picks (Baker & Taylor)

Library Journal

New York Times Book Review

Prime (Brodart)

Publisher's Weekly

Publishers' Catalogs

Rolling Stone

School Library Journal

Street Date (Valley Distributors)

VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

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