

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Adopted by C.A. Friday Memorial Library Board of Trustees: 2/26/1998

Revised: 2/23/2016, 4/24/2018

Purpose

The Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library strives to inform, enlighten, and empower every person in our community. The Library and the Library Board of Trustees uphold the democratic right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thought and ideas.

In support of these ideals, the Carleton A. Friday Memorial Public Library offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive, and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Library Board endorses the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read Statement*, the *Freedom to View Statement*, and all interpretations pertinent to the selection and use of library materials. These supporting documents can be found as appendices at the end of this policy.

Collection Statement

The Library is responsible for providing materials to residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The library collection taken as a whole will be an even-handed and diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth to meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

The collection is presented to provide individual access to information and materials in various formats to serve a wide variety of needs:

- To enhance humanity and the enjoyment of life according to the full exercise of free choice
- To assist in developing the skills and abilities needed for economic success
- To develop the social awareness and knowledge needed for self-government and successful participation in a diverse community
- To encourage and enhance personal, artistic, and intellectual growth

The Library neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political, or social views of the author. Selection of materials by the Library does not mean endorsement of the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

The Board recognizes that library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries through such services as interlibrary loan, electronic delivery, and other methods of information access are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

Responsibility

The responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Director under the authority of the Library Board of Trustees. Direct selection and removal of library materials are delegated to specific staff members. These recommendations are subject to review by the Director.

Factors considered when adding specific material to the Library collection include, but are not limited to:

- Collection objectives
- Present collection composition
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Timeliness
- Public interest
- Level of demand
- Audience for material
- Community relevance
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Effective expression

The Library staff utilizes a number of tools to aid in the selection of these materials. Reviews are the major source of information about new materials. Major sources of reviews are *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, and the *New York Times Book Review*. The lack of review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for selecting or rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests of library patrons and to books discussed on public media. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

The nature of the media and the technical quality of production are additional factors to be considered in selecting audio, video, electronic, and other non-print formats.

Sites selected from the Internet and linked from the Library's homepage are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials.

The Board of Trustees recognizes that full information on issues of public concern may require access to information sources which exemplify those concerns. Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons or staff, may appropriately be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the balance and effectiveness of the Library collection as a whole.

The Library encourages public suggestion of items and subjects to be considered for the collection. Serious consideration will be given to purchasing patron-requested materials when these requests meet collection objectives. Remaining requests may be met through resource sharing with other libraries, electronic retrieval, or other means.

Gift Policy

The Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library welcomes gifts and donations from the community. These gifts and donations become the property of the Library and undergo the same selection criteria that other items in the collection do. In cases in which donors wish to receive an acknowledgement of the donated materials, they will be asked to fill out a Donated Items Receipt Form (available at the front desk). The donor will then receive a receipt from the Library. The Library is unable to provide values for items donated. Donors are instead encouraged to consult a tax advisor and/or the IRS publication 526.

Material not utilized in the Library's collection will be transferred to the Friends of Friday Memorial Library, a non-profit organization, for use in their book sales. The proceeds from the Friends of the Library book sales are donated to the Library in support of our mission, programs, and to enhance the Library's collections.

Intellectual Freedom

The Board of Trustees considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Board believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

Constitutional Protection

The Library Board considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Wisconsin State Constitution.

If a court having jurisdiction over the Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed. Material under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final court ruling is made after all appeals are exhausted.

Collection Review Procedure

Users who wish to comment on a resource may fill out a Request for Reconsideration Form, available as an appendix to this document, and return it to the Library Director. The receipt of the form will be acknowledged via email within 10 business days. The request will be brought before the Board at their next regular meeting. The Library Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding the material's place in the collection. The individual who submitted the request will be notified by mail within 10 business days of the Board's decision regarding the resource in question.

Persons still wishing to express concerns to the Board about materials in the collection shall inform the Library Director at least 72 hours in advance of a regularly scheduled Library Board meeting and will be placed on the agenda or at another time designated by the Board for public expression. The Board, after receiving testimony from the Library Director, will decide whether the actions taken followed library policies.

Collection Maintenance

The Board of Trustees recognizes that withdrawing materials from the collection is an important part of maintaining the library collection. Withdrawal of library materials is vested in the Library Director who may authorize qualified staff to assist. The withdrawal practices of the Library shall include the same factors as the selection practices. Collection maintenance is not intended to sanction the removal of library materials based upon any controversy.

Purchasing Guidelines for Authors and Publishers

The Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library is happy to consider recently published books and other items for our collection. We receive many inquiries from authors, publishers, and publisher's representatives and have created these guidelines to help you.

The Library routinely acquires books published by commercial publishers that fit the Library's collection development plan and meet our selection criteria. We also may acquire self-published books when they include unique local content, fit the scope of the Library's collection plan and meet our selection criteria.

Having your book receive an independent, positive review in one or more of the major review journals (such as Library Journal, School Library Journal, Kirkus Reviews, Booklist and Publisher's Weekly) is the best way to bring a title to our attention. We are more likely to consider adding a self-published book to our collection if it has been reviewed in a major review journal. Paid reviews are not considered.

Unfortunately, we cannot notify you if your book is not selected because of the number of submissions we receive.

Request for Reconsideration

Name: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

Address, line 2: _____ City/State: _____

Phone Number: (____) _____

1. Do you represent yourself or are you here on behalf of another?

(Please circle one): Myself Other (please specify): _____

2. Have you read our Collection Development policy? (Please circle one):

Yes No

3. Please identify the resource you are commenting on:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Type (e.g. book, film, etc.): _____

4. Please specify the location of the content to which you object (page number, or time for audio/visual materials):

Page/Time: _____ I object to the entire resource (check): _____

5. Have you read/watched the resource? (Please circle one):

Yes, all of it Yes, some of it No, none of it

(Please see reverse of this form)

6. What brought this resource to your attention?

7. What concerns you about this resource? (Please feel free to ask for more paper)

Please return this form to the staff member at the front desk. The selection and deselection of library materials is at the discretion of the Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library Board of Trustees and the Library Director. Your request will be brought before the Board at their next regular meeting. You will be notified by mail within 10 business days of the Board's decision regarding this resource. Once a decision has been made, you may request a private conversation with the Library Director regarding the Board's decision. Thank you for your feedback.

This form was received by _____ on this date and time: _____

Librarian Signature _____

Patron Signature _____

American Library Association

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

A history of the Library Bill of Rights is found in the latest edition of the [Intellectual Freedom Manual](#).

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

American Library Association

Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

- 4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

- 5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

- 6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

- 7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

[American Library Association](#)

[Association of American Publishers](#)

American Library Association

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

American Library Association

Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the American Library Association's 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, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that 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, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, games, software, and other formats.¹ Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.² Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As “Libraries: An American Value” states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services.” Librarians and library 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 should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

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

Note

1. See *Brown v. Entertainment Merchant’s Association, et al.* 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011): a) Video games qualify for First Amendment protection. Like protected books, plays, and movies, they communicate ideas through familiar literary devices and features distinctive to the medium.. And ‘the basic principles of freedom of speech . . . do not vary’ with a new and different communication medium.”
2. See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975): “Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors.” See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; and July 1, 2014.

American Library Association

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that equity, diversity, and inclusion are central to the promotion and practice of intellectual freedom. Libraries are essential to democracy and self-government, to personal development and social progress, and to every individual's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To that end, libraries and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do.

"Equity" takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. Equity, therefore, means increasing diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

"Diversity" can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual.

"Inclusion" means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

To ensure that every individual will feel truly welcomed and included, library staff and administrators should reflect the origins, age, background, and views of their community. Governing bodies should also reflect the community. Library spaces, programs, and collections should accommodate the needs of every user.

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

Library collections, in a variety of material formats, should include a full range of viewpoints and experiences, serving the needs of all members of the community. Historically, diverse authors and viewpoints have not been equitably represented in the output of many mainstream publishers and other producers. It may require extra effort to locate, review, and acquire those materials.

Therefore, libraries should seek out alternative, small press, independent, and self-published content in a variety of formats. Libraries may benefit from cooperative arrangements and other partnerships to share in the work of locating and acquiring diverse materials. Interlibrary loan may complement but not substitute for the development of diverse local collections.

All materials, including databases and other electronic content, should be made accessible for people who use adaptive or assistive technology.

To provide equitable and inclusive access, libraries must work closely with diverse communities to understand their needs and aspirations, so that the library can respond appropriately with collections and services to meet those needs. All community members will feel truly welcomed and included when they see themselves reflected in collections that speak to their cultures and life experiences.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Beyond merely avoiding the exclusion of materials representing unorthodox or unpopular ideas, libraries should proactively seek to include an abundance of resources and programming representing the greatest possible diversity of genres, ideas, and expressions. A full commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion requires that library collections and programming reflect the broad range of viewpoints and cultures that exist in our world. Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.¹

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

By challenging censorship, libraries foster an inclusive environment where all voices have the opportunity to be heard. Inclusive materials, programs, and services may not be universally popular, but it is the library's responsibility to provide access to all points of view, not just prevailing opinions. Libraries should prepare themselves to deal with challenges by adopting appropriate policies and procedures. Libraries should respectfully consider community objections and complaints, but should not allow controversy alone to dictate policy.

Governing bodies, administrators, and library workers must discourage self-censorship. Fears and biases may suppress diverse voices in collections, programming, and all aspects of library services.² Libraries should counter censorship by practicing inclusion.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

American society has always encompassed people of diverse origin, age, background, and views. The constitutional principles of free expression and free access to ideas recognize and affirm this diversity. Any attempt to limit free expression or restrict access to ideas threatens the core American values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Libraries should establish and maintain strong ties to organizations that advocate for the rights of socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people. Libraries should act in solidarity with all groups or individuals resisting attempts to abridge the rights of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

In the Library Bill of Rights and all of its Interpretations and supporting documents, the principle of inclusion is clear and unambiguous.

"Origin" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in the circumstances of their birth.

"Age" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in their levels of development and maturity.

"Background" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are a result of their life experiences.

"Views" encompass all of the opinions and beliefs held and expressed by individuals.

Libraries should regularly review their policies with the goal of advancing equity of access to the library's collections and services. Identification requirements, overdue charges and fees, or deposits for service are examples of traditional approaches that may exclude some members of the community.³

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Libraries should not merely be neutral places for people to share information, but should actively encourage socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people to fully participate in community debates and discussions.

Libraries should welcome diverse content in their exhibit spaces and diverse ideas, individuals, and groups in their meeting rooms, even if some members of the community may object or be offended.⁴

Conclusion

To uphold the Library Bill of Rights and serve the entire community, governing bodies, administrators, and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion.

1. ["Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights,"](#) Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000
2. ["Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights,"](#) Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014
3. ["Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights,"](#) Adopted June 30, 1993, by the ALA Council
4. ["Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights,"](#) Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council