



## **Collection Development Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to serve all the citizens of the Municipality of Anchorage through the continuing management of the collection maintained in accordance with the Library's mission: Anchorage Public Library provides resources to enrich the lives and empower the future of our diverse community while preserving the past for generations to come.

The Library recognizes American democracy depends on an informed and engaged citizenry which can only be realized when a full range of ideas is accessible to people as embodied in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution which protects the free expression of ideas.

The Library's collection is protected by the First Amendment and Article 1 Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska.

### **Selection Responsibility**

Ultimate authority for materials selection rests with the Library Director. The Head of Collection Management recommends policy and implements procedures for the development and management of the Library's collections. Collection management includes assessment of community needs; establishment of policy and budget to support those needs; the selection, acquisition, and promotion of materials; and evaluation of the collection and its effectiveness.

A team of librarians under the direction of the Head of Collection Management assists with collection management. Selection librarians use professional judgment and expertise based on an understanding of user needs and knowledge of authors and publishers or producers.

This policy does not replace the judgment of individual librarians and only provides guidelines to assist them in choosing from the vast array of available materials.

### **Selection Criteria**

There is no single standard which can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials are judged in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value. Others are selected to satisfy the recreational or informational needs of the community. Materials are judged on overall effect rather than specific illustrations, words, passages, or scenes considered to be offensive by some.

Librarians select materials identified from a number of sources including professional and commercial reviews, list serves and web sites, book lists and bibliographies, local culture and events, and public and staff recommendations.

All acquisitions are evaluated using a standard library review source and against the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all the criteria to be selected.

- A. General Criteria for the Evaluation of Library Materials:
  - Appropriateness and effectiveness of format to content
  - Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and public
  - Authority
  - Availability and price
  - Contemporary significance or permanent value
  - Contribution to the diversity of coverage on controversial subjects
  - Inclusion in the standard library indexes
  - Literary and artistic merit
  - Popularity and local demand
  - Present and potential relevance to community needs
  - Prizes, awards, or honors received
  - Relationship to existing collection and other material on subject
  - Representation of cultural diversity
  - Reputation and/or significance of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher or producer
  - Skills, competence, and purpose of author, producer, performer, etc.
  - Suitability of physical format for library use
  - Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
  
- B. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Information and Opinion:
  - Authority of author
  - Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
  - Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
  - Contribution to subject balance of the entire collection
  - Integration of challenging works, including extreme and/or minority points of view
  - Objectivity and integrity
  
- C. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Imagination:
  - Artistic expression, presentation, and experimentation
  - Illustration of genre, trend, or national culture
  - Sustained interest
  - Vitality and originality

### **Self-Published Materials**

The Library does not purchase self-published materials that are not reviewed in established review journals. Exceptions will be made for high-demand materials and/or those of local interest.

### **Intellectual Freedom**

The Library Advisory Board, Library Director and Library staff recognize the responsibility of the Library to provide materials representing the diverse needs, interests, backgrounds, cultures,

and social values of the community. Librarians are inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan.

The presence of an item in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its content by the Library. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents and access is not restricted beyond what is required to protect materials from theft or damage.

The standards stated in this policy apply equally to the materials for children. The Library believes that individuals may reject for themselves and their children—and only for their children—materials which they find unsuitable. Parents who wish to limit or restrict the use of the Library by their children should personally oversee their selections.

The principles expressed in the following documents are basic to this policy and are incorporated herein. (See the Appendix for the full text of these statements):

The American Library Association's  
*Library Bill of Rights*  
*Intellectual Freedom* statement  
*Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks* interpretation

The American Library Association's and the Association of American Publishers'  
*Freedom to Read* statement

The American Film and Video Association's *Freedom to View* statement

Anchorage Public Library's *Internet Use Policy*

### **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Individuals or groups objecting to specific materials in the collection may initiate a request for reconsideration by filling out a "Statement of Concern about Library Materials" form available at all locations. The Head of Collection Management will acknowledge the receipt of the form within seven working days. A committee of three librarians, including the Head of Collection Management and the subject selector, will review the material in question. The item will be reevaluated using the selection criteria, the Library's mission statement, and the documents included in Appendix A. A written reply indicating the Library's position and any action taken will be sent to the person or organization making the complaint within 45 days.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the committee's decision, the Library Director will bring the complaint and supporting documentation to the Library Advisory Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board will choose to either accept the committee's recommendation without further review or continue the review process. The Board will then review the materials and supporting documentation before making a recommendation to the Library Director for the final decision.

## **Donations**

Financial donations to benefit the collection are encouraged and are made directly to the Library or through the Anchorage Library Foundation or the Anchorage Friends of the Library.

The Library accepts donations of like-new materials. Donations of books or media are accepted with the understanding that they will not necessarily be added to the collection. The material is judged by the same criteria as those applied to the purchase of new materials. The Library reserves the right to dispose of donated material through sales at Library fundraising events or discarding.

The Library does not accept the following materials: video cassettes (VHS), audio cassettes, magazines, text books, law books, encyclopedias, or condensed editions. Print materials without an ISBN (International Standard Book Number) will not be added to the collection.

Donations of magazine subscriptions will be accepted by the Library subject to the same selection criteria and retention policies as regular subscriptions. The Library requires gift subscriptions to be for a minimum of a two-year period.

The Head of Collection Management is responsible for the acceptance of all donations to be added to the collection. Any condition or restriction on donated material must be agreed to and stated in writing by the Head of Collection Management in advance of the Library's receipt of the donation.

Appraisal of value is the responsibility of the donor. A gift receipt providing for a description of the material donated and date of the donation is provided when requested.

## **Discarding**

The Library's collection is regularly reviewed by selection librarians and materials deemed no longer of value are removed from the collection. Factors considered include physical condition, frequency of use, obsolescence, number of copies in the system, research value, adequacy of coverage in the subject area, and availability of similar material.

## **Special Collections**

Anchorage Public Library has two special collections—the Alaska Collection and the Loussac Children's Literature Collection. Both collections are housed at the Z.J. Loussac Library.

### **Alaska Collection**

The Alaska Collection is an extensive collection of materials concerned with Alaska. Some materials include information about areas in close geographic proximity to Alaska. The collection consists of books, government documents, newspapers, periodicals, media, maps and microform. The Alaska Collection includes commercially published works on Alaska written for adults in the English language, materials about native cultures, as well as a minor collection of materials in Alaskan Native languages. There are some rare historical materials included in the collection; however, this part of the collection is not actively growing because other nearby institutions cover this subject area more comprehensively.

The purpose of the Alaska Collection is to encourage the appreciation and enjoyment of Alaska's history, culture, development, institutions, and natural resources, as well as to support local, regional and state research. Historical archival materials are available to researchers by request.

The Alaska collection contains documents published by the Municipality of Anchorage as well as documents distributed by outside agencies that consult with the municipality. Documents concerning the public review process are provided to the appropriate neighborhood libraries by local agencies.

The Alaska collection is a partial depository for State of Alaska documents. A limited selection of state documents with reference value are held by the neighborhood libraries.

#### **Loussac Children's Literature Collection**

The collection is intended for adults who work with children with a particular emphasis on resources for early childhood educators and those providing library services for youth. The collection includes bibliographies; studies of children's literature; resources for educators and parents on children's reading instruction; works on literacy skill development; guides to crafts and activities for children; and manuals on library services for youth. There is also a small selection of periodicals related to the subjects in this collection.

**Recommended for approval:** Library Advisory Board  
**Approved By:** Nancy Tileston, Interim Library Director

**Date:** December 14, 2011  
**Date:** December 14, 2011

## **Appendix**

Library Bill of Rights

Intellectual Freedom Statement

Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

Freedom to Read Statement

Freedom to View Statement

Internet Use Policy

## **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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

## Intellectual Freedom Statement

### ***What Is Intellectual Freedom?***

*Intellectual freedom* is our right to seek, receive, hold, and disseminate information from all points of view, without restriction, including those ideas that might be highly controversial or offensive to others. This free expression of ideas, as embodied in the First Amendment (1791), is a basic human right. This right was reaffirmed in 1948 by the United Nations in its "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," Article 19, which 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 and regardless of frontiers." Put simply, all people have the right to read what they want to read, hear what they want to hear, watch what they want to watch, and think what they want to think. As Americans, this right is guaranteed by the First Amendment and upheld by our legal system.

As noted in *Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, the right to privacy is essential to exercising the right to intellectual freedom. Privacy is essential because, without privacy, without confidentiality, people may be too intimidated to access or to ask for information they need or want. For example, a teenager may be too embarrassed to ask for information on homosexuality, eating disorders, or even information about a friend's or relative's medical condition; an adult may be too self-conscious to check out a book on AIDS, sex, or other topics.

### ***Why Is Intellectual Freedom Important?***

Intellectual freedom is the basis for our democratic system. We expect our people to be self-governors. But to do so responsibly, our citizenry must be well-informed. Libraries provide the ideas and information, in a variety of formats, to allow people to inform themselves. The right to vote is not enough—we also must be able to take part in forming public opinion by engaging in open and vigorous debate on controversial matters. As James Madison wrote: "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

The courts have determined that children and young adults, as well as adults, unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information in the library. A lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Fortunately, education helps to protect them. As the National Research Council has pointed out metaphorically, "Swimming pools can be dangerous for children. To protect them, one can install locks, put up fences, and deploy pool alarms. All these measures are helpful, but by far the most important thing that one can do for one's children is to teach them to swim" ("Youth, Pornography, and the Internet").

### ***How Libraries and Librarians Promote and Protect Intellectual Freedom***

As information professionals, librarians are in a unique position to promote and protect intellectual freedom for all people by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology. Librarians have traditionally taken upon themselves the responsibility to provide, through their institutions, all points of view on all questions and issues

of our times, and to make them available to anyone who wants them. This responsibility lies at the heart of the *Library Bill of Rights*, which serves as the library profession's interpretation of the First Amendment.

Librarians also must be prepared to defend intellectual freedom by opposing censorship in all its forms—when a book is removed from a library shelf, when a challenge is brought before a local school board, or when a filter is installed on a library computer to restrict Internet access. When censorship is attempted, not only is our Constitutional right to seek and receive information endangered, but the very essence of our democratic society is jeopardized.

Perhaps no freedom is more threatened than our freedom to read. 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 even purge libraries.

Hundreds of challenges to library and other materials are reported each year, and many more go unreported. There were nearly 460 challenges reported to OIF in 2003. (Since 1990, there have been over 8000 reported challenges.) It is estimated that these account for no more than 20 to 25 percent of the total number of challenges throughout the United States. More than complaints, these challenges are requests to have materials removed from library shelves and curricula, most frequently in our nation's schools.

The advent of technology and the increased demand for information makes the right to intellectual freedom even more critical. To ensure intellectual freedom, libraries should use technology to enhance, not deny, access to information. Regardless of the medium, users should not be restricted or denied access for expressing or receiving constitutionally protected speech. These rights extend to minors as well as adults (see these Interpretations of the ALA Library Bill of Rights: Free Access to Libraries for Minors; Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program; Access for Children and Young People to Videotapes and Other Nonprint Formats). Information retrieved or utilized electronically or by other means is constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court of law with appropriate jurisdiction.

Indeed, libraries are an American value. In communities across our country, they provide a free people with the resources they need to read, learn, and connect to the full spectrum of ideas and information essential to our democracy.

The greatness of our nation's libraries lies in their commitment to intellectual freedom. Libraries have always been a forum for ideas, even those that may be unorthodox, unpopular, or offensive. Libraries embody the belief that information must not be the exclusive province of a privileged few, but that it be widely and freely available to all, regardless of a person's age, race, background, or views. By providing the opportunity for an open, free, and unrestricted dialogue on all issues of concern, libraries preserve those freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

But intellectual freedom can only flourish—and democracy survive—if the right of everyone to choose for themselves what they wish to read, hear, and view at libraries is guaranteed.

Without this freedom, our nation's citizens would be severely limited in their ability to explore issues and questions necessary to their education, enlightenment and self-governance.

Libraries have always stood for more access, not less. That's why they continually strive to provide a full range of information in all forms—print and electronic. Not only are libraries offering what has been considered traditional resources, such as books, magazines, and reference materials, but most offer videos, CD-ROMs, and computers. In fact, Internet access in public libraries is as common as books. Almost all public library outlets offer public access to the Internet and have Internet use policies.

The freedom of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment is uniquely fulfilled by the library. Newspapers provide information, but it is naturally abridged and tends to reflect the prejudices of an editor or publisher. Schools educate but according to a program to fit the many and imposed by educators and administrators.

It is in the library—and in the library alone—that self-directed learning to the limits of one's own abilities and to the limit of what is known, can take place. Libraries allow us to be well informed so we can make the decisions our Constitution says are ours to make. It is the library where intellectual freedom finds its staunchest advocate.

## **Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks**

### ***An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS***

#### ***Introduction***

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information.<sup>1</sup> Libraries and librarians protect and promote these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology.

The American Library Association expresses these basic principles of librarianship in its Code of Ethics and in the Library Bill of Rights and its Interpretations. These serve to guide librarians and library governing bodies in addressing issues of intellectual freedom that arise when the library provides access to electronic information, services, and networks.

Libraries empower users by providing access to the broadest range of information. Electronic resources, including information available via the Internet, allow libraries to fulfill this responsibility better than ever before.

Issues arising from digital generation, distribution, and retrieval of information need to be approached and regularly reviewed from a context of constitutional principles and ALA policies so that fundamental and traditional tenets of librarianship are not swept away.

Electronic information flows across boundaries and barriers despite attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to channel or control it. Even so, many people lack access or capability to use electronic information effectively.

In making decisions about how to offer access to electronic information, each library should consider its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.

#### ***The Rights of Users***

All library system and network policies, procedures, or regulations relating to electronic information and services should be scrutinized for potential violation of user rights.

User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association, including Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities.

Users' access should not be restricted or denied for expressing or receiving constitutionally protected speech. If access is restricted or denied for behavioral or other reasons, users should be provided due process, including, but not limited to, formal notice and a means of appeal.

Information retrieved or utilized electronically is constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court of law with appropriate jurisdiction. These rights extend to minors as well as adults (Free Access to Libraries for Minors; Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program; Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials).<sup>2</sup>

Libraries should use technology to enhance, not deny, access to information. Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. Contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users should not violate this right. Libraries should provide library users the training and assistance necessary to find, evaluate, and use information effectively.

Users have both the right of confidentiality and the right of privacy. The library should uphold these rights by policy, procedure, and practice in accordance with Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

### ***Equity of Access***

The Internet provides expanding opportunities for everyone to participate in the information society, but too many individuals face serious barriers to access. Libraries play a critical role in bridging information access gaps for these individuals. Libraries also ensure that the public can find content of interest and learn the necessary skills to use information successfully.

Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be equally, readily and equitably accessible to all library users. American Library Association policies oppose the charging of user fees for the provision of information services by libraries that receive their major support from public funds (50.3 Free Access to Information; 53.1.14 Economic Barriers to Information Access; 60.1.1 Minority Concerns Policy Objectives; 61.1 Library Services for the Poor Policy Objectives). All libraries should develop policies concerning access to electronic information that are consistent with ALA's policy statements, including Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities, and Resolution on Access to the Use of Libraries and Information by Individuals with Physical or Mental Impairment.

### ***Information Resources and Access***

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing materials for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material. In order to preserve the cultural record and to prevent the loss of

information, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained electronically. Libraries have an obligation to provide access to government information available in electronic format.

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to electronic information because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Furthermore, libraries and librarians should not deny access to electronic information solely on the grounds that it is perceived to lack value.

Publicly funded libraries have a legal obligation to provide access to constitutionally protected information. Federal, state, county, municipal, local, or library governing bodies sometimes require the use of Internet filters or other technological measures that block access to constitutionally protected information, contrary to the Library Bill of Rights (ALA Policy Manual, 53.1.17, Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries). If a library uses a technological measure that blocks access to information, it should be set at the least restrictive level in order to minimize the blocking of constitutionally protected speech. Adults retain the right to access all constitutionally protected information and to ask for the technological measure to be disabled in a timely manner. Minors also retain the right to access constitutionally protected information and, at the minimum, have the right to ask the library or librarian to provide access to erroneously blocked information in a timely manner. Libraries and librarians have an obligation to inform users of these rights and to provide the means to exercise these rights.<sup>3</sup>

Electronic resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide access to information presenting all points of view. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement. These principles pertain to electronic resources no less than they do to the more traditional sources of information in libraries (Diversity in Collection Development).

<sup>1</sup>Martin v. Struthers, 319 U.S. 141 (1943); Lamont v. Postmaster General, 381 U.S. 301 (1965); Susan Nevelow Mart, The Right to Receive Information 95 Law Library Journal 2 (2003).

<sup>2</sup>Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969); Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853, (1982); American Amusement Machine Association v. Teri Kendrick, 244 F.3d 954 (7th Cir. 2001); cert.denied, 534 U.S. 994 (2001)

<sup>3</sup>"If some libraries do not have the capacity to unblock specific Web sites or to disable the filter or if it is shown that an adult user's election to view constitutionally protected Internet material is burdened in some other substantial way, that would be the subject for an as-applied challenge, not the facial challenge made in this case." United States, et al. v. American Library Association (PDF), 539 U.S. 194 (2003) (Justice Kennedy, concurring).

Adopted January 24, 1996, by the ALA Council; amended January 19, 2005.

## Freedom to Read Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the

diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the

application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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

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

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association  
Association of American Publishers

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.  
The Children's Book Council  
Freedom to Read Foundation  
National Association of College Stores  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National Council of Teachers of English  
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

## **Freedom to View Statement**

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

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

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

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

## Internet Use Policy for Wired and Wireless Access

The Anchorage Public Library (APL) provides public access to the Internet in support of its mission and ensures equal access for all.

Staff is available to provide assistance identifying sites and to aid with issues specific to the Library's procedures, e.g., how to print or reserve a computer. Staff cannot provide one-on-one instruction.

APL upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected materials. APL upholds and affirms the right and responsibility of parents and legal guardians to determine and monitor their children's use of Library materials and resources including the Internet. Library staff is available to help identify and locate resources to assist parents and legal guardians in overseeing their children's use of the Internet.

Internet access is subject to Federal, State and Municipal laws and Municipal and Library policies and procedures. Computers are in public areas and APL does not guarantee privacy for the use of Internet-accessible computers.

Illegal activities and activities that interfere with or disrupt users, services or equipment are prohibited. APL staff is required to take action to enforce applicable Federal, State and Municipal prohibitions and Municipal and Library policies. Failure to comply with all laws, policies and procedures may result in loss of computer privileges or the loss of library privileges or prosecution in some cases.

Patrons must use their own library account when accessing the Internet. The Municipality of Anchorage, APL and their Internet service providers do not control and are not responsible for Internet content.

APL does not endorse and does not warrant the accuracy, correctness or suitability of any data acquired via the Internet. Users are responsible for complying with copyright law, licensing agreements and the policies of the individual websites accessed.

APL has installed filtering software in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act. Filtering software aims to block access to objectionable sites. It cannot block all objectionable sites and it sometimes blocks useful sites. Unfiltered access for adults age 18 and older is optional at login.

APL offers wireless Internet access in all its libraries. Connection to the Library's wireless network with a personal wireless device signifies that the user agrees to abide by the Library's applicable policies and procedures. The Library's wireless network is not secure and is unfiltered. Library support is limited to current protocols. Library staff cannot provide technical assistance. APL is not responsible for changes made to the user's device settings and cannot guarantee that hardware will work with the Library's wireless connection.

Recommended for approval: Library Advisory Board. January 21, 2009

Approved by: Karen Keller, Library Director. January 21, 2009