

# **Leroy H. Pollard Memorial Library (1987) [New Braintree Public Library (1853)] Policies**

**Adopted July 27, 2023**

## **Mission Statement**

The L. H. Pollard Memorial Library is a welcoming place that is free and open to all that provides resources and programs of all kinds to encourage lifelong learning and to enrich the lives of the people of New Braintree and the greater community.

## **Collection Development Policy**

### **Purpose of Policy**

- To support the mission, vision and goals of the Library.
- To guide the library staff in the selection of materials.
- To inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.
- To provide definitive guidance for challenges and reconsideration of material(s).

### **Responsibility for Selection**

“Selection” refers to the decisions that must be made either to add or remove materials or to retain materials already in the collection.

Final authority for the determination of the policies in this document are vested in the Library's Board of Trustees. They have delegated the responsibility for implementing this policy to the Library Director. It is the responsibility of the Director and the Board to see that this policy is updated should new collecting areas be added or should priorities for the collection be revised.

It is the function of the Library Directors to select and to withdraw library materials, and to advise on their use. They are qualified through training and expertise, however they must of necessity work within the limitations of space and budget. Recognizing that sensitivity to the needs and interests of the

community is essential to the development of library collections, the Leroy Pollard Memorial Library welcomes advice and suggestions from patrons.

## **Collection Development Philosophy and Goals**

It is the aim of the Library to meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of our patrons, by providing materials and information sources in a variety of formats and reading levels in accordance with the mission and goals of this Library, the varied interests of our patrons. The Library strives to meet these needs within the limitations of space, staffing and budget.

Collection Development goals include:

- Provide for the information and entertainment needs of the community and beyond.
- Foster literacy skills and a love of reading for a lifetime of learning for people of all ages.
- Provide electronic resources to patrons who are offsite.
- Supplement formal study and encourage self-education.
- Stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the country, and the world.

## **Intellectual Freedom**

The L. H. Pollard Memorial Library respects the freedom of information for its patrons and follows the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements (appendices A, B, C) when acquiring and managing collections. The Library strives to supply a diverse collection with the intent to reach all members of the community. Acquisition or use of any item does not imply approval or endorsement of the contents. Children and adults are equally free to use the entire Library and to borrow all materials in the circulating collections. Anyone, of any age, may use any materials in the Library and is not to have that privilege limited by any staff member. Limitations to be placed upon the reading and viewing materials of young people are left to the discretion of the parents and caregivers. The Library opposes any attempts by individuals or groups to censor items in its collection. Challenges regarding Library resources are handled in accordance with the Library's Reconsideration Policy (Appendix D).

## **Selection Criteria**

The Library makes an attempt to judge materials as a whole, not as an isolated part. Books and other materials are selected based on the following general criteria; however they need not meet all criteria to be selected:

- Prominence, authority, and or competence of author, creator or publisher
- Local relevance including historical
- Popularity based on patron interest and or contemporary significance
- Authoritativeness and accuracy of information
- Timelessness of the materials
- Clarity of presentation and community need
- Recommendations and requests from library users

For materials not available at our library, the library depends on CW MARS (Central and Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing) and the Massachusetts Library System for inter-library loan service and delivery. The Library does not have control over the content of certain electronic collections, including those administered through CWMARS or the state, or over materials that may be available through interlibrary loan from other libraries.

Digital Collections are a variety of materials provided in digital format. One of the digital collections is the CW MARS Digital Catalog, which is a shared collection of materials in various electronic formats including eBooks, audiobooks, magazines and videos. This Digital Catalog is curated by an Econtent Selection Policy developed by CW MARS.

## **Gifts and Donations**

Gifts to the Library are evaluated under the same conditions as stated in the Selection Criteria Section. The Library Director and the Board of Trustees may decline to accept for the Library any gift of material that seems inappropriate to the collection.

Once in the Library's possession, the Library reserves the right to add said items to the Collection or donate or dispose of them where appropriate. Patrons may ask for a receipt at the Circulation Desk.

## **Weeding the Collection**

Weeding is a regular part of the life cycle of library materials. To make space for new materials, other materials must be removed. The following criteria are used when weeding:

- Condition of item
- Frequency of circulation of item
- Relevance of item to Collection as a whole
- Currency or accuracy of information in an item ( i.e., old travel guides, self-help law books, etc.,)

Weeded items may be sold at book sales, given away, recycled or discarded.

## **Requests for Reconsideration:**

Complaints made by any resident of New Braintree with an active CW MARS library card about any material(s) owned by the L.H. Pollard Memorial/ New Braintree Public Library and part of the Library's materials collection will be handled as follows:

- The patron will be courteously directed to the Library Director.
- The Director will listen to the concerns and will inform the patron of relevant library selection procedures and policies.
- If the user is dissatisfied with an item, they will be asked to fill out the Request for Reconsideration Form listing the concerns that they have about the item. Form is at Appendix D
- The form will be forwarded to the Director, who will review the item(s) in question from the standpoint of the concerns expressed.
- The Director will review the items in question based on the guidelines in the Collection Development Policy. Upon request, a response will be sent to the user explaining the option chosen.
- A copy of the Director's letter to the user, as well as the user's written statement of concern, shall be given to the Library Board's Chair for informational purposes.
- The user may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Trustees for appropriate consideration by the full Board.
- Materials in question, will remain on the shelves and in circulation until a final decision is made.

## Appendix A

### Library Bill of Rights

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

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

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

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

## Appendix B

### The Freedom to Read Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose*

*their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

*A Joint Statement by:*

[American Library Association](#)  
[Association of American Publishers](#)

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

[American Booksellers for Free Expression](#)  
[The Association of American University Presses](#)  
[The Children's Book Council](#)  
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)  
[National Association of College Stores](#)  
[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)  
[National Council of Teachers of English](#)

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression



## **Appendix C**

### **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**

## Appendix D

### Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library invites patrons to fill out this form if there is a book or another item in our collection that you think does not belong in the Library. The Library takes very seriously all concerns expressed by its patrons and will attempt to respond as quickly as possible. Library staff will review your comments and evaluate your recommendation using the Library's mission and Collection Development Policy as a guideline.

Please be aware that all communication to and from the Town of TOWN is public record; and subject to public disclosure per Massachusetts General Law c.66, §.10.

### Request for Reconsideration Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Library Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you asking on behalf of yourself or an organization? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization? \_\_\_\_\_

This will involve a written response. How may we best reach you?

Item you are asking for reconsideration (be as descriptive as possible):

Have you read the entirety of the item? YES or NO Please be as specific as possible with your objection. Use back of page or additional page if necessary:

For Staff use only  
Initials of staff member accepting form: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_