

COLLECTION POLICY STATEMENT

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

REVISED October 2003

Collection Policy
Table of Contents

- I. Purpose of the Collection Policy
- II. Mission of the University Library
- III. Intellectual Freedom and Censorship
- IV. Cooperative Arrangements.
- V. Goal and Objectives for the Collection
- VI. Collection Development Responsibility
 - A. Policies
 - B. Procedures
- VII. netLibrary Collection
- VIII. McNaughton Collection
- IX. General Guidelines for Acquisitions
 - A. Specific
 - B. General
- X. Reference Collection
- XI. Archives/Special Collections
- XII. Government Publications
- XIII. Serials
- XIV. Newspapers
- XV. Microforms
- XVI. Gifts and Exchanges
- XVII. Other Materials

- A. Dissertations and Theses
- B. Music Scores
- C. Textbooks
- D. College Catalogs
- E. Telephone Directories
- F. City Directories
- G. Rare Books
- H. Maps
- I. Audiovisual Materials
- J. Pamphlets and Clippings
- K. E-journals
- L. Electronic databases

XVIII. Weeding

Appendices

ALA Library Bill of Rights

ALA Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries

ALA Freedom to Read

Censorship Form for Challenged Materials/Access

I. Purpose of the Collection Policy

The primary purpose of this collection policy is to enable the library and teaching faculties at University of Louisiana at Monroe to provide strong, well-diversified collections to support the education and research needs of the University. The library also recognizes its responsibility to respond to the research needs of the faculty and students through its commitment to provide access to electronic information sources and to enable the effective and efficient use of information resources and technologies both internal and external..

Policy is not meant to be a description of the present collection but a guide for future development. It will help determine which gifts to encourage and which materials to purchase. It will also be a guide in the equally important areas of replacement of lost and worn-out materials and the weeding of the collection. As the need arises, this policy will be revised to reflect changes in the University=s curriculum, research needs, and interests.

II. MISSION

The mission of the university library is to support the teaching, research, and service programs of the university. This shall be accomplished through instruction, networking, and access using the appropriate technology, acquisition, organization and maintenance of necessary information resources. The university library shall also provide the optimum learning environment for its diverse users.

III. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP

The ULM Library recognizes the rights of the users to access information and ideas, regardless of point of view. Toward that end, we support the *ALA Bill of Rights* (appendix); the *ALA Intellectual Freedom Statement/Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries* (appendix); and the right of users to question materials found in the collection. A form for challenges is included (appendix).

IV. COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

- A. LOUISiana Libraries Union Catalog
- B. LOUIS LIBRARY NETWORK (can request/check out materials from other system libraries.
- C. Interlibrary Loan/WORLDCAT
- D. LALINC Borrowers Card

The ULM Library is part of LOUIS (Louisiana Library Network) and the LOUISiana Union Catalog consortia of college libraries. Within the consortia, ULM users can review the holdings of participating libraries and request delivery to ULM

from any site. A LALINC Borrowers Card enables a user to check out materials directly at a given site.

V. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COLLECTION

GOAL

The university library will provide strong, well-diversified collections in appropriate formats that maintain the balance of primary and secondary resource materials. Every attempt will be made to keep the collection viable, notwithstanding budgetary restrictions, special constraints, and the availability of materials while affirming and supporting intellectual freedom. Library materials will be inspected, on a continuing basis, in accordance with library policies, to determine and address those in need of repair and/or mending and to remove those that are obsolete and/or beyond repair.

Objectives:

1. To work with library personnel in selection, collection development and weeding.
2. To work with faculty representation [and/or the university Faculty Library Committee] to discuss evaluation, selection, and weeding.
3. To obtain a budget adequate to meet the current needs and, hopefully, to fill in glaring deficiencies in the collections; to meet special needs created by accreditation requirements; and to cope with austere situations realistically.
4. To establish and maintain preservation guidelines.

VI. Collection Development Responsibility

Selection and evaluation of materials is the joint responsibility of the Library and the University faculty. This should be a coordinated and effective process involving both groups. Many recommendations for purchase originate from the reference librarians who are responsible for the adequacy of the collection. So that materials may be acquired or

evaluated, the Library must be informed in advance of new programs or changes in existing curricula. Responsibility for coordination of the entire program will rest with the Dean of the Library.

A. Policies

1. Changing financial means will mean that additions or subtractions to the University Library Collection are not arbitrary, but are done out of necessity and on a "most pressing need" decision-making process.

2. Books and materials orders are deemed priority when

departments are completing academic accreditation procedures, with regard to actual need and fiscal realities.

3. Non-mandatory requests will be processed as funding is available.

4. Collaboration and cooperation among disciplines is both encouraged and required for effective and fair collection development.

5. Final judgment of collection development and acquisitions decisions will be made with inherent good faith and fairness concerning all academic disciplines, curricula, and graduation requirements criteria and based upon available funding.

6. Final judgment of Collection Development and Acquisitions matters are to be reserved for the library following established procedural policy.

7. The Library recognizes the rights of the users to access information and ideas, regardless of point of view. Toward that end, we support the ALA Bill of Rights (Appendix 1) and the Intellectual Freedom Statement (Appendix 2), and the right of users to question materials found in the collection. A form for challenging materials in the collections is included (Appendix 3).

B. Procedures

1. University Library will accept book orders from faculty members with their understanding of our current budget restraints.

2. Library faculty are encouraged to send advertisements from vendors concerning book and materials to their respective faculty department contacts for consideration by each department for their own purchases rather than Library purchases.

3. Library faculty are expected to communicate frequently with departmental faculty.

4. The library faculty process book orders forms and submit them to the Acquisitions Librarian. When there is sufficient funding available, the books are then purchased through the standard library procedures.

5. The Library will return to requesting faculty at the end of the fiscal year order forms for all unordered books.

6. University Library will discard all book order requests submitted by faculty who are no longer employed by the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

7. The Collection Development and Acquisitions Committee will write an open letter at the beginning of each Fall semester to faculty members at University of Louisiana at Monroe encouraging them to provide input and welcoming their suggestions as to future acquisitions, but making no promises or implications of purchase on demand.

VII. netLibrary Collection

netLibrary is a collection of nearly 20,000 electronic books that may be reviewed and "checked out" to the users. Each user must create a logon to netLibrary from within the ULM Library.

VII. McNaughton Collection

This is a collection of rented books available for circulation. Popular fiction and non-fiction is available on a rotating basis. As many as 120 books are available at one time for the users.

IX. Guidelines for Acquisition

A. Material formats

ULM Library will secure materials in a variety of formats as the depth of academic programs at ULM expands and new formats and ways of accessing information are developed.

B. Specific considerations in choosing individual items.

1. Lasting and scholarly value of content.
2. Appropriateness of the level of treatment.
3. Strength of present holdings in same or similar subject areas.
4. Cost of item.
5. Suitability of format to content.

C. General guidelines

1. Cooperative acquisition plans will be considered for infrequently used research materials.
2. Materials will be acquired in any suitable format.
3. Duplicate copies will be purchased when justified by heavy and continued use. If the Library holds materials in one format, duplicate copies in other formats will not normally be purchased.
4. The Library will consider very carefully the purchase of specialized materials for research projects. Faculty and graduate students may utilize interlibrary loan to obtain research materials not owned by the Library.
5. Worn and missing materials will be considered individually for replacement.

X. Reference Collection

A Reference book is designed by the arrangement and treatment of its subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. The Reference books are located on the first floor of the library and are restricted to use in the library. These books are identified in the catalog with the abbreviation REF. above the call number.

The Reference Collection consists of books and other materials that are useful for supplying authoritative information or identifying sources, kept together for convenience in providing information service and generally not allowed to

circulate.

The Ready Reference Collection, located near the Reference Counter, consists of standard reference tools, set aside from the general reference collection for the purpose of providing rapid access to information of a factual nature. Examples of reference sources typically located in the Ready Reference Collection are almanacs, dictionaries, and directories.

Criteria for inclusion in the Ready Reference collection includes the following:

1. Frequently used.
2. Provides complete answers to specific questions.
3. Provides primary reference sources.
4. Provides basis for first stage of student research.
5. Difficult to use without prior bibliographic instruction.
6. Works subject to theft or destruction.
7. Requires frequent maintenance or mechanical adjustments.
8. Requires frequent maintenance for currency or relevance.

XI. Archives/Special Collections

A. Purpose

University of Louisiana at Monroe is the major academic institution in Monroe, Louisiana; therefore, it bears a responsibility for preserving the history of the area.

B. Special Collections Unit

The main function of the Special Collections unit is to collect, organize, preserve, and make available those materials which have lasting historical and research value and which pertain to the origins, development, and accomplishments of an eleven-parish region. Those parishes are: Caldwell, Catahoula, Concordia, East Carroll, Franklin, West Carroll, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, and Tensas. Types of materials include: correspondence, diaries, ledgers, photographs, legal documents, scrapbooks, maps, audio recordings (Oral Histories), books, and journals.

C. University Archives Unit

The University Archives unit collects, organizes, preserves, and makes available materials that pertain to the history and development of University of Louisiana at Monroe and persons

affiliated with the university. Materials included are student government records, inter-office memos, catalogs, yearbooks, newspapers, committee reports, employee newsletters, alumni publications, speeches, books, reports, and lectures by faculty and staff, and theses and dissertations from all departments. Also included are photo-lab proofs, photographs, and slides.

XII. Government Publications

Any informational matter, regardless of format, originating in or produced by the authority of or at the expense of any government agency, is considered a government publication.

A. United States Government Publications

University Library is a partial depository for U.S. Government publications distributed through the depository program. Publications such as annual reports, bibliographies, laws, rules and regulations, statistical compilations, etc. are selected on the basis of educational and research needs of library users. Publications not received automatically through the depository program are acquired as needed.

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) reports on microfiche are purchased on subscription from ERIC Document Reproduction Service and available online via E-Subscribe.

B. State Publications

University Library is a complete depository for Louisiana State publications. In addition, an attempt is made to acquire Louisiana publications of educational value which are not received through the depository program.

Publications of other state governments are acquired selectively as requested by faculty and librarians.

XIII. Serials

Serials include periodicals, newspapers, annuals, proceedings, transactions, memoirs or societies, etc.

A. Current Subscriptions

University Library subscribes to periodicals in all courses of study offered at University of Louisiana at Monroe. Because of the large number of serials published and the costly commitment involved once a title is selected, faculty and librarians must be highly selective when requesting new titles.

In general, we acquire:

1. Serials containing the results of professional scholarship.
2. Serials devoted to the informed discussion of public affairs.
3. Serials containing serious literature, criticism and discussion of the arts.
4. Serials presenting factual information concerning social, political, and economic happenings and scientific and technical knowledge.
5. Selected popular periodicals that support the instructional programs of the University and the general information needs of faculty, staff, and students.
6. Serials needed to meet minimum collection levels for accreditation purposes.

As a rule, only serials that are indexed are selected for purchase. However, if a title is proved to be essential for a particular course of study, it will be considered.

B. Back Files

The Library would like to have complete holdings of the leading serials in each area of study. However, a certain amount of selectivity must be employed. Increased costs and limited storage space make selection on the basis of priorities essential in terms of back volumes purchased.

Back issues of serials may be purchased if specifically requested by faculty or librarians and if funds permit.

C. Requests

Serial requests should be submitted to either the Serials Librarian or subject specialist assigned to the college. All requests should identify the importance of the title(s). The Library will gather the cost per title information and when funds are not available, return the lists to the requesting department/faculty.

XIV. Newspapers

University Library currently has a sampling of major out-of-state and Louisiana newspapers.

Relevance to specific courses, depth of study, extent of need and relatedness to several disciplines are the factors to be considered in selecting new subscriptions. These factors will also apply to the selection of newspapers which are historically significant but are no longer published.

A back file of each title is kept for a limited period of time or until the microform copy is received.

XV. Microforms

Any form of photographic record, on a reduced scale, of printed or other graphic materials is considered to be microform (including microfilm, microfiche and microcard).

A. Serials

Microforms may be purchased for back sets not held in printed copy. Paper copies of periodicals subject to heavy use, loss, and mutilation may be replaced with microform when available.

B. Newspapers

Newspapers will be retained permanently in microform only. The single exception is the *Pow Wow* of University of Louisiana at Monroe.

C. Monographs

Microform editions of single monographs may be purchased only if printed editions are not available or if the printed editions are too costly.

D. Microform Project Series

The Library subscribes to large microform project series which support the instructional and research programs of the University. Early English Books, American Periodical Series, Library of American Civilization and Library of English Literature are examples of these series.

XVI. Gifts and Exchanges

A. Offers of donations of books and/or materials to University Library must be addressed to the Director or Assistant Director to determine if he books and/or materials would be a useful and appropriate addition to the University Library Collection and to make the necessary arrangements.

B. Gifts and endowments may be accepted at any time, and only under exceptional circumstances should stipulations as to use, placement, and donor recognition be made.

C. Donations of books and materials may be made at any time, with the understanding that University Library, upon receipt of said books and materials, takes full legal possession, and may keep, sell, destroy, or display as deemed necessary by the appropriate library faculty.

D. The Library cannot legally appraise gifts for tax purposes; however, assistance will be given the donor in where to obtain prices, if available.

E. The Acquisitions Unit is responsible for the receipt of and the processing of gifts, except for periodicals which are handled by the Serial Unit. The reference librarians will evaluate each item to determine suitability for the collection.

F. University Library will offer to other libraries unneeded copies of books and serial issues.

G. Lists of items available for exchange from other libraries will be checked against our holdings to determine needs. Publications will be selected in accordance with the collection policy.

XVII. OTHER MATERIALS

A. DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

1. Two copies of ULM dissertations are retained permanently by the library.
2. Other dissertations may be purchased in microform or hard copy at the request of faculty and librarians to meet the instructional and research needs of the University.
3. The Library does not acquire dissertations for individual use. Most U.S. doctoral dissertations are retrievable through Dissertation Abstracts International and may be purchased by the Individual from University Microfilms International, Inc., either in microform or in hard copy.

B. Music Scores

The Library attempts to acquire music scores needed in current instructional and research programs when requested.

C. Textbooks

In general, a textbook is acquired only when it is valuable in its own right or when it is a reference book for courses or research programs. The acquisition of a textbook when it is the adopted text for a course is discouraged.

E. College Catalogs

A complete list of all the four year colleges in the United States is available through COLLEGE SOURCE, a database, located on the ULM Library Homepage.

F. Telephone Directories

Only free telephone books are obtained. More complete listings are available via the web..

G. City Directories

Only the Monroe-West Monroe City Directory is acquired and in an electronic format.

H. Rare Books

Rare books, per se, are not purchased. If a strong research or instructional need develops and if provisions are made in the

budget, items such as rare books may be purchased.

I. Maps

Maps that support the instructional program may be purchased, if requested by faculty and librarians. The Sanborn maps are available via LLN on our web page

J. Audiovisual Materials

Audiovisual materials such as filmstrips, slides, videocassettes, transparencies, etc., with instructional value, may be purchased, taking into consideration budget and space restrictions. See also Section XI for policy concerning microforms.

K. Pamphlets and Clippings

These materials may be acquired when needed to support the instructional program of the University.

L. E-journals

The Library receives two types of electronic journals (e-journals): those received with

out LOUIS/LLN participation and those directly ordered by the University Library. The

later are relatively few in number and are acquired when received free with paper subscriptions and/or now replace print journals in their entirety.

M. Electronic databases

With few exceptions, electronic database access is acquired via our LOUIS/LLN participation. What is and is not included is recommended by a statewide committee of librarians and decided upon by the academic Dean of the Library as a group.

XVIII. Weeding

Withdrawal from the collection and/or storage of marginally useful materials on a continuing basis is imperative for optimum use of space and materials. Such weeding of a collection should have the same priority as selection, but must be done by skilled people, and where appropriate, should be based on more than one individual's opinion. Weeding will be performed on a regular basis.

I. Appendix

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.

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

II APPENDIX

Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries:

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

A strong intellectual freedom perspective is critical to the development of academic library collections and services that dispassionately meet the education and research needs of a college or university community. The purpose of this statement is to outline how and where intellectual freedom principles fit into an academic library setting, thereby raising consciousness of the intellectual freedom context within which academic librarians work. The following principles should be reflected in all relevant library policy documents.

1. The general principles set forth in the Library Bill of Rights <<http://www.ala.org/work/freedom/lbr.html>> form an indispensable framework for building collections, services, and policies that serve the entire academic community.
2. The privacy of library users is and must be inviolable. Policies should be in place that maintain confidentiality of library borrowing records and of other information relating to personal use of library information and services.
3. The development of library collections in support of an institution's instruction and research programs should transcend the personal values of the selector. In the interests of research and learning, it is essential that collections contain materials representing a variety of perspectives on subjects that may be considered controversial.
4. Preservation and replacement efforts should ensure that balance in library materials is maintained and that controversial materials are not removed from the collections through theft, loss, mutilation, or normal wear and tear. There should be alertness to efforts by special interest groups to bias a collection through systematic theft or mutilation.
5. Licensing agreements should be consistent with the *Library Bill of Rights*, and should maximize access.
6. Open and unfiltered access to the Internet should be conveniently available to the academic community in a college or university library. Content filtering devices and content-based restrictions are a contradiction of the academic library mission to further research and learning through exposure to the broadest possible range of ideas and information. Such restrictions are a fundamental violation of intellectual freedom in academic libraries.
7. Freedom of information and of creative expression should be reflected in library exhibits and in all relevant library policy documents.

8. Library meeting rooms, research carrels, exhibit spaces, and other facilities should be available to the academic community regardless of research being pursued or subject being discussed. Any restrictions made necessary because of limited availability of space should be based on need, as reflected in library policy, rather than on content of research or discussion.
9. Whenever possible, library services should be available without charge in order to encourage inquiry. Where charges are necessary, a free or low-cost alternative (e.g., downloading to disc rather than printing) should be available when possible.
10. A service philosophy should be promoted that affords equal access to information for all in the academic community with no discrimination on the basis of race, values, gender, sexual orientation, cultural or ethnic background, physical or learning disability, economic status, religious beliefs, or views.
11. A procedure ensuring due process should be in place to deal with requests by those within and outside the academic community for removal or addition of library resources, exhibits, or services.
12. It is recommended that this statement of principle be endorsed by appropriate institutional governing bodies, including the faculty senate or similar instrument of faculty governance.

Approved by ACRL Board of Directors: June 29, 1999
Adopted July 12, 2000, by the ALA Council.

from a letter dated November 15, 2000, to Judith F. Krug, director, Office for Intellectual Freedom, from the American Association of University Professors <<http://www.aaup.org/>>:

A copy of the new ACRL/ALA statement on Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries: An Interpretation of the 'Library Bill of Rights' was forwarded to one of our Council members and considered by the AAUP Council in its meeting on November 11, 2000.

The AAUP Council is pleased to endorse the statement, but wishes to preface that endorsement with the following language from the Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians, as contained in AAUP: Policy Documents and Reports, 1995 edition:

"College and university librarians share the professional concerns of faculty members. Academic freedom, for example, is indispensable to librarians, because they are trustees of knowledge with the

responsibility of ensuring the availability of information and ideas, no matter how controversial, so that teachers may freely teach and students may freely learn. Moreover, as members of the academic community, librarians should have latitude in the exercise of their professional judgment within the library, a share in shaping policy within the institution, and adequate opportunities for professional development and appropriate reward.”

Please convey to the members of the ACRL Board and ALA Council our concern that college and university librarians are designated the same rights afforded to other faculty in regard to intellectual freedom.

III APPENDIX

THE FREEDOM TO READ

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

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The

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

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

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

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

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

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that

has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

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

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

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association & Association of American Publishers

Subsequently Endorsed by:

American Booksellers Association
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Association of American University Presses
Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
International Reading Association
Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression
National Association of College Stores
National Council of Teachers of English
PEN American Center
People for the American Way
Periodical and Book Association of America
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
Society of Professional Journalists
Women's National Book Association