

*The Mamaroneck Public Library Board of Trustees hereby adopts certain statements and materials promulgated by the American Library Association (ALA), as specified and attached below. In adopting these materials as library policies, we embrace the general principles set forth therein as overarching values that will guide the Library's response to the various situations inevitably arising in the course of operation.*

*We adopt these policies subject to applicable laws, rules and regulations at the local, state and federal levels, and recognize that each specific situation will warrant individual consideration.*

# Policies of the American Library Association

## Bill of Rights

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

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

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



## Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe.

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.

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. 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. Only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these.
2. Librarians do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. 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
3. It is contrary to the public interest for librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.
  4. We 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.
  5. 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.
  6. Democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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.

(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.)

## 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 prejudicing 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.

Adopted: May 8th 2024

Reviewed: May 8th 2024

Amended:

Next review: 2029