



# Material Selection Policy

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Adopted by the Highland Park Town Council

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Highland Park Library  
Material Selection Policy

## PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of the Highland Park Library is to provide high quality public library service which will fulfill the informational, educational, recreational and basic research needs of the community, and to increase public awareness of these services.

The goals of the Highland Park Library are:

1. To select, organize, preserve and make available books and related materials, within the framework of its budget, in order to promote an enlightened citizenship and enrich personal lives.
2. To serve the community as a source of information.
3. To accumulate the best in thought, literature, fiction, children's books, and non-fiction for the use and benefit of the library's patrons.
4. To promote and encourage the maximum use of its resources by the greatest number of its patrons.

The goals of the material selection policy are:

1. To further the stated goals, objectives and functions of the Highland Park Library.
2. To aid the Librarian in the selection of material.
3. To inform the public about selection principles.

The Library upholds and affirms the right of each individual to have access to constitutionally protected material.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Librarian to insure that it remains current and useful.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Highland Park is a heterogeneous community with a stable population of approximately 9,000. Because the Town is enclosed on all sides the population will not vary significantly. Both the educational level and the average annual income are above average. There are thirteen churches in the immediate area, each of which has a library. Because of its central location in the Dallas area Highland Park has a large number and wide variety of resources available. The Highland Park Library is a member of the Northeast Texas Library System (NETLS) and therefore has access to the collections of other libraries that are members through a Resources Sharing project, as well as access to the Dallas Public Library and all other public libraries in the state through state-wide Interlibrary Loan. These resources, especially the local ones, should be considered as the Library selects materials. Unnecessary expenditure of resources for materials easily available is wasteful and should be avoided whenever possible.

## AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Final authority and responsibility for materials selection rests with the Librarian who operates within a framework of policies adopted by the Town Council of Highland Park. The staff will aid in the selection process by using their knowledge of the collection and the observed needs of the Library's patrons.

#### TYPES OF MATERIALS COLLECTED

The following types of materials are currently owned by the Library and will be selected according to the Library's Selection Policy. The collection is not limited to these types of materials, and any new format will also be selected according to the Selection Policy.

Books, both hardbound and paperbound  
Recordings, including audiocassettes and compact discs  
Periodicals, magazines, journals and newspapers  
Videocassettes and DVDs  
Visual materials on electronic format (Videocassettes, DVDs, etc.)  
Filmstrips  
On-line resources and data bases

#### CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

To build a balanced collection, materials will be considered according to objective guidelines and based on the needs of the community.

The presence of materials in the Library must not be construed as a personal endorsement of their contents by any member of the staff or of the Town Council. The Library has a responsibility to collect materials expressing a variety of views and opinions, many of which the persons responsible for maintaining the Library may find personally unacceptable.

The Library subscribes to the principles of the American Library Association's LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT, STATEMENT ON LABELING, FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS, STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, and of the Texas Library Association's INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT. (See Addendum for full texts.)

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Responsibility for the materials that children read rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that items may inadvertently come into the possession of children. Selections will be made on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and the interest of the community. Neither the Library nor its staff has the right or responsibility to serve 'in loco parentis' (in place of a parent).

In general, these basic principles will guide the selection of materials, whether purchased or donated:

1. Contemporary significance or permanent value.
2. Accuracy and objectivity of approach.
3. Authority of the author in the field.
4. Clear presentation and readability.

5. Social significance.
6. Items of doubtful value are occasionally acquired because of their timeliness. These are discarded when they have served their purpose.

Works of imagination should possess qualities of:

1. Representation of important movements, genres, trends or national culture.
2. Vitality and originality.
3. Artistic integrity.
4. Effective characterization.
5. Sustained interest.

Works of information or opinion should possess these qualities:

1. Authority of the author.
2. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment.
3. Objectivity of approach.
4. Accuracy of information.
5. Clarity and logic of presentation.
6. Representation of varying points of view.

Specifically, materials considered for inclusion in the Library's collection must meet one or more of the following standards:

1. Importance of subject matter to collection.
2. Serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.
3. Permanence.
4. Timely value.
5. Purpose or intent of the material
6. Accuracy and/or authority of content.
7. Potential for promoting reading incentive.
8. Historical value.
9. Readability or visual appeal.
10. Scarcity of material on the subject.
11. Reputation and significance of author, illustrator, editor, artist, performer, translator, etc.
12. Popular demand.
13. Local interest.
14. Reputation and professional standing of publisher or producer.
15. Reasonable price.
16. Appropriate format.
17. Availability of material elsewhere in the community.
18. Appearance of title in reputable bibliographies, especially local bibliographies and reading lists.

Periodicals will be evaluated according to the following criteria, in addition to the above standards:

1. Indexed in READER'S GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE.
2. Frequency of use.
3. Interest, as indicated by patron requests.
4. Reputation and quality of publication.
5. New titles on subjects of current interest.

The Library reserves the right to exclude titles which it judges to have been written purely to appeal to a taste for sensationalism and/or pornography. However, a serious work which illuminates some problem or aspect of life will not be excluded only because its language or subject matter may be offensive to some readers.

Books on controversial issues and current problems which are inflammatory, sensational, or prejudiced are not generally purchased. Works by national or world figures, even if prejudiced or violent, may be acquired because they have influenced thinking either in our own times or in the past.

Other items are not deemed suitable for collection by the Library. These include:

1. Textbooks. The Library will not attempt to furnish materials needed for formal courses of study offered by elementary and secondary schools or institutions of higher learning, or to furnish textbooks. Donated textbooks may be added to the collection depending on their condition, accuracy, datedness and value to the collection.
2. Materials of religion and philosophy deemed to have as their primary purpose proselytizing converts, rather than informing the reader, will not be acquired; and if donated will not be added to the collection.
3. Collector's items. The Library does not have the resources or the staff for this specialized kind of collection.

#### USE OF SELECTION AIDS

Ideally every item added to the Library should have been read/seen/heard before purchase by a Librarian with trained judgment, knowledge of the Library's present resources, and acquaintance with the requirements of local readers. Where circumstances make such reading impossible or unnecessary, the staff makes skilled use of selection aids, such as basic general lists, current general lists, special bibliographies for reference books and particular subject materials, and reviewing journals. While reviews are a major source of information about new titles, they are not followed blindly. No one publication is relied upon exclusively; the critical opinions of reviewers are checked against each other whenever feasible.

The Librarian will use the following professionally recognized aids in the selection of materials:

1. PUBLIC LIBRARY CATALOG, FICTION CATALOG, CHILDREN'S CATALOG, and other Wilson catalogs
2. BOOKLIST
3. LIBRARY JOURNAL
4. NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW
5. American Library Association bibliographies

## 6. PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY

7. and others as deemed appropriate.

## MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

The value of the Library to the community is dependent on the quality of the collection much more than the quantity of the collection. Therefore, the collection will be examined periodically for the purpose of "weeding" materials to maintain a balanced, timely and attractive collection. "Weeding" is the process by which worn, unused, soiled and outdated materials are withdrawn from the Library's collection, or placed for rebinding, repairing or replacement. Basically the intellectual and artistic worth, currency and/or probable usefulness as well as physical condition and demand for the material, determine whether it should be retained, mended, rebound, discarded and/or replaced. But also to be considered are how much or how little information on the same subject the Library has, how many multiple copies, and how many volumes on the subject the Library may need at one time. Again, the focus is on quality rather than quantity.

Reasons for withdrawal of materials from the collection are poor physical condition, datedness or inaccuracy of information, and lack of reader interest as evidenced by lack of use. A mediocre, outdated book that is not read is actually a liability to the Library because it takes up space, it obscures the worthwhile books from potential readers, and it costs money and staff time to be merely maintained in the collection. Weeding is an integral part of book selection. As such it is a professional job requiring a knowledge of books and of the community. It should be done continuously to the materials that are returned after being checked out, and periodically to the entire collection so as not to miss the books that sit on the shelf unused and unneeded.

The controversial nature of material shall not be deemed sufficient reason for removal unless and until the material has been subjected to a full formal review as outlined in this document.

## GIFTS

The Library appreciates gifts in the form of money, books, memorials, periodicals, audiocassettes, compact discs, DVDs, videocassettes, periodical subscriptions, etc., and will treat them in the same manner as purchased materials.

This means that: all gifts are subject to meeting the Library's criteria for selection; any material not deemed necessary to the Library's collection will be passed on to developing Libraries, usually through the office of the Northeast Texas Library System, and other non-profit organizations; gifts added to the collection will be handled in exactly the same way as materials purchased with tax moneys; when gift materials are no longer needed in the collection they will be discarded on the same basis and in the same manner as materials purchased with tax moneys.

When the Library receives a cash donation for the purchase of materials, selection must be based primarily on the needs of the Library.

If the donor needs a list of titles donated it must be prepared by the donor before donation of the materials, and the list will be signed at the time of donation. The Library will furnish a printed form receipt which will be signed by a member of the Library staff. (See Addendum for example.)

A very attractive bookplate giving the donor's name can be placed on donated material if the donor so wishes. Memorials will have bookplates giving both the name of the donor and the person honored.

No estimate of value for donated items can be furnished as no member of the staff has this expertise, and the IRS places this responsibility with the donor.

## PATRON REQUESTS

The Library welcomes patron interest in the collection and will seriously consider all requests that specific materials be acquired. Every attempt will be made to acquire requested materials that meet the Library's Criteria for Selection.

## REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Libraries of all sizes and types have been under increasing pressures from persons who wish to use the Library as an instrument of their own tastes and views. Such individuals and groups are demanding the exclusion or removal of materials that do not support their views. In a pluralistic society tastes and opinions differ and some materials in a library may be offensive to some patrons. In a democracy which incorporates the rights of free press and speech into its basic system of law, the minority does not have the prerogative to curtail the free access to published materials by the majority. Just as important, the majority does not have the right to curtail free access to published materials by the minority, or the individual. The Library will protect intellectual freedom, promote literacy, encourage lifelong learning, and provide library materials and information services.

In view of these facts, it seems desirable to set forth a few basic principles that may help in preserving the freedom and professional integrity of the Highland Park Library in the community.

The basic document that explains why certain materials are part of or excluded from the collection is the **HIGHLAND PARK LIBRARY MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY**. If a patron objects to material held by the Library he may submit a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials." In no instance will material be removed on demand. All considerations of requests to remove materials will be reviewed using the principles of this selection policy statement as a guide.

If a patron wishes his complaint to be acted upon he must:

1. Be a registered borrower of the Highland Park Library.
2. Have read the entire book, viewed the entire movie, listened to the entire audiocassette, etc.
3. File a completed "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" in full with the Library Director.
4. Supply his full name and address. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

After the completed form is received, the Librarian will review the reasons for the complaint and the material in question. She will attempt to answer the complaint to the patron's satisfaction. If the patron is not satisfied with the Librarian's action, he may request that the material be reviewed by a Materials Review Committee. This committee will be composed of the Councilman appointed to the Library, a second representative from the Council, and the Library Director. The decision of the Materials Review Committee shall be final.

ADDENDUM

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HIGHLAND PARK LIBRARY

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Type of material: book / audiocassette / videocassette / CD / \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a registered borrower of this Library? \_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you read/heard/seen this material in its entirety? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, what part? \_\_\_\_\_

2. To what do you object? (Please be specific. Cite pages) \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What do you feel might be the result of using this material? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What do you believe is the theme of this material? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Is there anything good about this material? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Have you read any reviews of this material? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, which ones?

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7. In its place, what material of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture of and/or perspective on the subject?

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Signature of complainant Date

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Receipt for Donated Materials

HIGHLAND PARK LIBRARY  
4700 DREXEL DRIVE  
HIGHLAND PARK, TX 75205-3198  
214-559-9400, FAX 214-559-9335

The Highland Park Library gratefully acknowledges receipt of your donation.  
Items donated to the Library are tax-deductible.  
The IRS places with the donor the responsibility for estimating the "fair market value" of the items.  
Your copy of this form is the official receipt; you may list your donations on the back.  
Thank you.

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Signed

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Date

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Revised

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 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980 by the American Library Association Council.

## 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 idea 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.

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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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991 by the American Library Association 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  
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  
P.E.N. - American Center  
People for the American Way  
Periodical and Book Association of America  
Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.

Women's National Book Association  
YWCA of the U.S.A.

## STATEMENT ON LABELING

### An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:

1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor's tool.
2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.
3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the Library Bill of Rights.

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library's jurisdiction, the library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to materials or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings – if placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder – could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.

Adopted July 13, 1951. Amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990, by the American Library Association Council.

## FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS

### An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library policies and procedures which effectively deny minors equal access to all library resources available to other users violate the Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users. Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities which fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, level of education, or legal emancipation.

The selection and development of library resources should not be diluted because of minors having the same access to library resources as adult users. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Librarians and governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions on access to library resources in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections from parents or anyone else. The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries do not authorize librarians or governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents or legal guardians. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents – and only parents – have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children – and only their children – to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users. Librarians have a professional commitment to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free and equal access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, by the American Library Association Council.

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, 1981

## Introduction

Since 1939 the American Library Association has recognized the importance of codifying and making known to the public and the profession the principles which guide librarians in action. This latest revision of the CODE OF ETHICS reflects changes in the nature of the profession and in its social and institutional environment. It should be revised and augmented as necessary.

Librarians significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, librarians are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and freedom of access to information and ideas to present and future generations.

Librarians are dependent upon one another for the bibliographical resources that enable us to provide information services, and have obligations for maintaining the highest level of personal integrity and competence.

## CODE OF ETHICS

I. Librarians must provide the highest level of service through appropriate and usefully organized collections; fair and equitable circulation and service policies; and skillful, accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests for assistance.

II. Librarians must resist all efforts by groups or individuals to censor library materials.

III. Librarians must protect each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.

IV. Librarians must adhere to the principles of due process and equality of opportunity in peer relationships and personnel actions.

V. Librarians must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of an institution or professional body.

VI. Librarians must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the employing institution.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981 by the American Library Association Council.

## THE TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT

### A. PREAMBLE.

The Texas Library Association holds that the freedom to read is a corollary of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press. Freedom of choice in selecting materials is a necessary safeguard to

the freedom to read , and shall be protected against extra-legal irresponsible attempts by self-appointed censors to abridge it. The Association believes that citizens shall have the right of free inquiry and the equally important right of forming their own opinions, and that it is of the utmost importance to the continued existence of democracy that freedom of the press in all forms of public communication be defended and preserved. The Texas Library Association subscribes in full to the principles set forth in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS of the American Library Association, Freedom to Read Statement, and interpretative statements adopted thereto.

## B. AREAS OF CONCERN

1. LEGISLATION. The Texas Library Association is concerned with legislation at the federal, state, local, and school district level which tends to strengthen the position of libraries and other media of communication as instruments of knowledge and culture in a free society. The Association is also concerned with monitoring proposed legislation at the federal, state, local and school district level which might restrict, prejudice or otherwise interfere with the selection, acquisition, or other professional activities of libraries, as expressed in the American Library Association's LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and the Freedom to Read Statement.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee works with the Legislative Committee to watch proposed legislation, at the various levels, which would restrict or interfere with the selection, acquisition, or other professional activities of libraries.

2. INTERFERENCE. The Association is concerned with the proposed or actual restrictions imposed by individuals, voluntary committees, or administrative authority on library materials or on the selection judgment, or on the procedures or practices of librarians.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee attempts to eliminate restrictions which are imposed on the use or selection of library materials or selection judgment or on the procedures or practices of librarians; receives requests for advice and assistance where freedom has been threatened or curtailed; and recommends action to the Executive Board where it appears necessary.

3. MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY. The Texas Library Association believes that every library, in order to strengthen its own selection process, and to provide an objective basis for evaluation of that process, should develop a written official statement of policy for the selection of library materials.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee encourages all libraries to develop a written statement of policy for the selection of library materials which includes an endorsement of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

4. EDUCATION. The Texas Library Association is concerned with the continuing education of librarians and the general public in understanding and implementing the philosophy inherent in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and the ALA Freedom to Read Statement.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee supports an active education program for librarians, trustees, and the general public.

5. LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. The Texas Library Association, in order to encourage a united front in defending the right to read, shall cooperate with other organizations concerned with intellectual freedom.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee advises on TLA positions and cooperates with other organizations.

Adopted September 15, 1972 by the Texas Library Association Council.

Reaffirmed April 17, 1995 by the Texas Library Association Council.