

Westerly Library and Wilcox Park

Memorial and Library Association of Westerly, Rhode Island

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| A. Introduction..... | 2 |
| B. Purpose..... | 2 |
| C. Responsibility..... | 2 |
| D. Goals of the Collection | 2 |
| E. Criteria | 3 |
| 1. Fiction | 3 |
| 2. Nonfiction..... | 3 |
| 3. Children’s..... | 3 |
| 4. Young Adult..... | 3 |
| 5. Paperbacks..... | 3 |
| 6. DVDs..... | 3 |
| 7. CDs..... | 3 |
| 8. Audio Books | 4 |
| 9. Periodicals | 4 |
| 10. Online Databases | 4 |
| 11. Internet..... | 4 |
| 12. Special Collections | 4 |
| 13. Government Publications..... | 4 |
| 14. Express Books | 4 |
| 15. Express DVDs..... | 4 |
| 16. Reference..... | 4 |
| 17. E-books..... | 5 |
| F. Procedures..... | 5 |
| G. Review Sources..... | 5 |
| H. Gifts and Donations | 6 |
| I. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials | 6 |
| J. Weeding..... | 6 |
| K. Review and Revision | 7 |
| Introduction..... | 14 |
| The Rights of Users | 14 |
| Equity of Access | 15 |
| Information Resources and Access | 15 |

A. Introduction

The most basic service a public library provides to its community is its collection of library materials: books, magazines, newspapers, audio recordings and video recordings, online databases, etc.

The selection, acquisition, processing, circulation, and maintenance of this collection are central to our function as a public library.

The Westerly Library is a private, non-profit institution governed by a board of trustees and administered by a library Executive Director with the assistance of other managerial staff.

The library is a member of the Ocean State Libraries (OSL) network and the Library of Rhode Island (LORI).

B. Purpose

The purpose of the Materials Selection Policy is to set forth the principles and procedures used by the library in acquiring books and other library materials.

C. Responsibility

The ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the library Board of Trustees. The authority to interpret and guide staff in the application of the policy is delegated to the library Executive Director. In practice, staff applies this policy in building and maintaining library collections.

D. Goals of the Collection

The library serves individuals and groups of all ages by making available materials and information to meet their educational, recreational, and cultural needs. Materials are acquired with the following objectives in mind:

1. To provide reliable, up-to-date information
2. To supplement formal and informal educational activities, taking into consideration a variety of reading abilities, reading interests, and educational levels
3. To encourage critical thinking skills and an appreciation for ideas
4. To develop reading, viewing, and research habits for learning, leisure, and enjoyment

The library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix I), the Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix II), the Freedom to View Statement (Appendix III), Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks (Appendix IV), and the American Library Association Code of Ethics (Appendix V).

The library recognizes that there are ideas, opinions, and philosophies which are subject to discussion and debate, and that any community will be made up of citizens with divergent viewpoints. The library endeavors to provide access to many points of view within the limits of financial resources and physical space.

E. Criteria

1. Fiction

Fiction is selected on the basis of author, theme, plot, characterization, style, setting, and format.

2. Nonfiction

Nonfiction is selected on the basis of author, permanent or timely value, accurate information, authoritativeness, clear presentation, and social significance.

3. Children's

Children's Materials are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children from birth through grade six and the adults who work with them. Materials are acquired which meet the general needs of the majority of children. Other materials with unique qualities that make them valuable to children with special needs, interests, or talents are also selected. The library is not responsible for purchasing multiple copies of curriculum-based materials. Textbooks are not added unless there is little or no material in another form.

4. Young Adult

Young Adult materials are acquired to meet the needs and interests of people in grades six through twelve. The young adult collection includes fiction and nonfiction books as well as periodicals, DVDs, video games and Playaways. Materials are selected on the basis of author, subject matter, timely value, accurate information, and educational needs.

5. Paperbacks

Paperback are purchased when availability of a title is limited to that form, when satisfying demand for a popular title or subject, and when the paperback is the most suitable format given projected use and cost of acquisition.

6. DVDs

DVDs are selected based on their content, the director's reputation, cast, the public's interest, and production qualities. The objective is to develop a broad collection of instructional, documentary, foreign language, and popular and classic feature films.

7. CDs

Music compact discs are selected based on the popularity and standing of the performer or composer, and the quality of the work. The aim is to develop a broad collection of recordings including classical, folk, jazz, popular, country, rock, and world music.

8. Audio Books

Unabridged audio books on compact discs are selected based on the criteria used for fiction and nonfiction materials, with consideration given to quality of performance.

9. Periodicals

Periodicals are selected on the basis of subject coverage, local interest, and readability. The library subscribes to magazines for the general reader and for students through high school. The broad collection also includes periodicals that provide information on a wide variety of recreational pursuits.

10. Online Databases

Online databases are selected on the basis of subject coverage, ease of use, cost, and patron interest.

11. Internet

The Internet offers unique and universal access to information of all types. However, since the Internet is unregulated, data found in this manner cannot be governed by standard selection criteria.

12. Special Collections

The Special Collections department includes local history and genealogy materials. The purpose of Special Collections is to acquire, organize, and store information on Westerly, RI, Pawcatuck, CT, and the surrounding communities. Fiction and nonfiction books, non-print items, periodicals, maps, and photographs are selected on the basis of their relevance to Westerly and the surrounding communities.

13. Government Publications

The library is a selective depository for United States government documents and for Rhode Island state documents. Additional federal and state materials are selected as needed.

14. Express Books

The Book Express collection provides extra copies of bestselling books. The books in this collection supplement the regular circulating collection by providing duplicate copies of titles in high demand. The collection is primarily fiction, with non-fiction purchased when demand warrants.

15. Express DVDs

The DVD Express collection provides extra copies of the most popular, current DVDs.

16. Reference

Reference materials are selected on the basis of authoritativeness, accurate information, permanent or timely value, and clear presentation. Materials are acquired to meet the needs of people aged twelve through adult. Reference materials include books and electronic resources.

17. E-books

E-books are acquired cooperatively by representatives of the Ocean State Libraries' E-Zone (Overdrive) working group. Selection of materials is based on popularity, patron use and availability.

F. Procedures

1. Adult materials, both print and non-print, are selected by the Collection Management Librarian, with input from the staff and the public. Materials selected must be reviewed in at least one professional established source. Exceptions may be made for self-published materials by Westerly and Stonington authors writing about local subjects. All other self-published materials are subject to the same review requirements as items published by commercial publishers.
2. Juvenile materials, both print and non-print, are selected by the Children's Librarian, with input from the staff and the public.
3. Young adult materials, both print and non-print, are selected by the Young Adult Librarian, with input from the staff and the public.

G. Review Sources

The library uses the following professional materials as selection tools.

Adult materials:

- Allmusic.com
- Audiofile
- Baker & Taylor publications
- Booklist
- Library Journal
- Midwest Tape publications
- The New York Times Book Review
- Popular magazines including People and Entertainment Weekly
- Publishers Weekly
- Thorndike Press publications
- Video Librarian

Children's materials:

- Booklinks
- Booklist
- Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
- Horn Book
- Publishers Weekly
- School Library Journal

Websites:

- AICL: American Indians in Children's Literature
- ALSC: ALA's Association for Library Service to Children
- Brown Baby reads
- CCBC: University of Wisconsin Co-operative Children's Book Center
- Guys Read
- Kirkus online
- A Mighty Girl
- OYATE: Native American materials

Young adult materials:

- Alan Review
- Amazon.com
- Horn Book
- No Flying No Tights – Graphic novels reviews
- School Library Journal
- Science Books and Films (AAAS)
- VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

Reviews from other periodicals and newspapers are occasionally used for consideration of current materials.

H. Gifts and Donations

The selection criteria used for adding gifts and donations to the collection are the same as those used for purchasing materials. Publications must be reviewed in the standard review sources listed above, except for books about Westerly and Pawcatuck authored by Westerly or Pawcatuck writers. Self-published items are subject to the same selection criteria. Gifts and donations may be added to the library's collection, sold for the benefit of the library, or disposed of in a manner appropriate to their condition and usefulness. The library will, if a patron wishes, provide an acknowledgement letter (Appendix VI). Federal regulations prohibit the library giving estimates of value for donated materials.

I. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Should a patron object to the inclusion or exclusion of specific materials, he or she may request a review of the selection decision by completing and signing the appropriate form (Appendices VII and VIII) and submitting it to the library Executive Director. The library Executive Director will acknowledge the patron's request within two weeks. The library Executive Director will convene a committee made up of Westerly Library professional librarians who will review the patron's request. The Executive Director will communicate a decision to the patron within two weeks of the committee's meeting. Should the patron not be satisfied with the decision, a final appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees.

J. Weeding

Outdated materials are discarded on a regular basis. Worn-out materials are discarded or replaced on a regular basis. Materials are considered for replacement based upon the same selection criteria as those used for purchasing materials initially. Uncataloged periodicals, such as newspapers and business services are discarded. Discarded materials will not be stockpiled or held for patrons. The Westerly Library staff reserves the exclusive right to determine which items in its collection are to be discarded and to the final disposition of such materials.

K. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed periodically and revised as needed.

Appendix I – Library Bill of Rights

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 that 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, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix II – Freedom to Read

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

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

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

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

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

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and

librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Endorsed by the Rhode Island Library Association at the Spring Meeting, May 11, 1971

Appendix III – Freedom to View

THE FREEDOM TO VIEW

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 and endorsed by the American Library Association in 1990.

Appendix IV – Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC INFORMATION, SERVICES, AND NETWORKS: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Rights of Users

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

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

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

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

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

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

Equity of Access

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

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

Information Resources and Access

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing materials for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present special problems. Some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each

user to determine what is appropriate. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material. In order to preserve the cultural record and to prevent the loss of information, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained electronically. Libraries have an obligation to provide access to government information available in electronic format.

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

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

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

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

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

³If some libraries do not have the capacity to unblock specific Web sites or to disable the filter or if it is shown that an adult user's election to view constitutionally protected Internet material is burdened in some other substantial way, that would be the subject for an as-applied challenge,

not the facial challenge made in this case." United States, et al. v. American Library Association (PDF), 539 U.S. 194 (2003) (Justice Kennedy, concurring).

See Also: Questions and Answers on Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

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

Appendix V – Code of Ethics

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.

Appendix VI – Donation Acknowledgement

**WESTERLY LIBRARY AND WILCOX PARK
Donation Acknowledgement**

The Westerly Library gratefully acknowledges your donation of the following number of items

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Hardcovers | _____ |
| Paperbacks | _____ |
| Magazines | _____ |
| Non-print | _____ |
| Other materials | _____ |

From _____

All donated materials become the property of the Westerly Library. Such materials may be added to the library’s collection according to selection criteria as specified in the library’s Materials Selection Policy, sold for the proceeds to benefit the library, or disposed of in a manner appropriate to their condition and usefulness.

Date _____

Received by (staff member)

Appendix VII – Request for Reconsideration

WESTERLY LIBRARY AND WILCOX PARK Request for Reconsideration

Westerly Library and Wilcox Park subscribes to the American Library Association’s Bill of Rights and its interpretations. Our collections, displays, and private use of meeting space are developed, maintained, and provided on equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use. We do not advocate for or endorse the viewpoints expressed in materials we collect or subject matter to be discussed or the ideas for which the group advocates at a private Event. We have policies in place that guide us in the materials we select for our collections, displays and public events.

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual, but maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility and right to guide the values of their children. As such, parents and legal guardians are responsible for the materials that their children borrow and should make decisions accordingly. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others.

Westerly Library and Wilcox Park supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association (ALA) Freedom to Read Statement ([opens in a new tab](#)), Freedom to View Statement ([opens in a new tab](#)), the Library Bill of Rights ([opens in a new tab](#)) and all relevant interpretations ([opens in a new tab](#)). Area residents requesting reconsideration of library materials, Events, or displays must complete the Request for Reconsideration form ([below](#)) in its entirety. Only signed forms will be considered. The Executive Director will acknowledge receipt of the form within two weeks.

Relevant library staff will review all pertinent data to ascertain whether the material, Event, or display meets the standards set forth in all policies, and will make a written recommendation to the Executive Director as to the validity of the request. During this process the material, programs, or displays in question will remain as is.

The Executive Director, after reviewing the recommendation, will render a decision as to whether the library material remains on the shelf or is removed from the collection and will notify the patron of said decision. A final appeal may be made to the Library Board of Trustees.

Decisions regarding materials or programs that are part of a series may be applied to the entire series.

A copy of the request form without identifying patron information will be sent to the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom. The request form in its entirety may be made publically available per RIGL 38-2.

“Display” is defined as a selection of items (either physical or virtual) with little to no accompanying text or provided interpretation. Displays may be ancillary to an Event or stand

on their own. The purpose of a library display is to communicate meaning through a collection of items (bibliographic, physical, or digital).

“Group” is defined as any association, organization, corporation, or gathering of individuals or, singularly, an individual however denominated.

“Event” is defined as any meeting, program, gathering, or performance.

“Participant” is defined as anyone attending or planning to attend the Event.

“Fundraising Event” is any Association Initiated Event that is developed to raise funds for Library and Park expenses.

“Material” refers to books, videos, magazines, audiobooks, digital content, and any other media or items purchased by the Library for use by the public.

“Meeting Room” includes the Auditorium, Terrace Room, Roberts Room and the Hoxie Gallery.

“Co-hosted Event” is defined as an Event designed and organized by the Library in conjunction with an outside Group. The Library typically provides staff, facilities and equipment in conducting the Event as well as promotional support.

“Co-sponsored Event” is defined as an Event designed and organized exclusively by an outside Group in which the Library supports or participates to a limited degree by providing staff, facilities or digital assistance.

This Request for Reconsideration Policy and Form were Revised and Approved by the Memorial and Library Association Board of Trustees February 21, 2023

Request for Reconsideration

Please complete this form in its entirety and return to a staff member.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Do you represent yourself or a group? myself group

Name of Group: _____

Have you read our Collection Development Policy? yes no

Have you read our Private Meeting Room Rental Policy? yes no

Have your read our Public Events and Displays Policy? yes no

What Material/Event/Display are you commenting on? _____

If commenting on a Material, please complete the following:

Type of material (book, magazine, newspaper, CD, DVD, etc) _____

Author/Editor _____

Title _____

Publisher/Producer _____

If commenting on an Event or Display, what is the Event title and the date held?

If commenting on a Display, where is the Display and when did you see it?

Did you read, watch, or listen to the entire work, watch the entire Event, or view the entire Display? If not, which portion? (Please be specific; cite pages, excerpts, scenes, examples.)

Other comments:

Patron's signature _____ Date _____

Received by staff member _____

Thank you for your comments. The Executive Director will contact you regarding your concerns. A copy of the request form without identifying patron information will be sent to the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom. Please use the back of this page for further comments if necessary.

Appendix VIII – Consideration of Library Materials

WESTERLY LIBRARY AND WILCOX PARK

A Request for Consideration of Library Materials

(When this form is completed, it will be submitted to the Executive Director and will acknowledge the patron’s request within two weeks. The Executive Director will convene a committee made up of Westerly Library professional librarians who will review the patron’s request. The Executive Director will communicate a decision to the patron within two weeks of the committee’s meeting. Should the patron not be satisfied with the decision, a final appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees.)

Type of material (book, magazine, newspaper, CD, DVD, etc) _____

Author/Editor _____

Title _____

Publisher/Producer _____

Request initiated by

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Do you represent an organization or group? _____

If so, please identify _____

Work should be in adult, young adult, or children’s collection?

What are your reasons for suggesting this material be included in the Library? Please be specific.

What community needs would this material satisfy?

Have you read/seen/listened to the entire work? yes no

If not, which parts have you read/seen/listened to?

Have you checked reviews of the work? If yes, please cite.

Other comments:

Patron's signature _____

Date _____

Received by staff member _____

Appendix IX

WESTERLY LIBRARY AND WILCOX PARK

Internet Policy

In response to advances in technology and in keeping with its mission, the Westerly Library endeavors to develop resources and services that meet the information, educational, and recreational needs of the community. It is within this context that the Library offers access to the Internet.

The Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content or accuracy. Users of the Internet must not send, receive or display text or graphics that may be construed as obscene under General Laws of Rhode Island (Title 12, Chapter 27).

Parents and guardians of children under 18 years of age are responsible for their children's use of the Internet. We recommend that parents and guardians read "A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety" and discuss with their children "Kids Rules for Online Safety" and "Internet Safety for Kids and Teens".

Any activity which disrupts the Library or its network is prohibited and may result in loss of access. All decisions regarding the use of the computers are at the sole discretion of the Library.

Provision of this networked information service does not constitute any endorsement of the content of that information by the Library.

Adopted June 18, 2002 by the Board of Trustees of the Memorial and Library Association