



# Collection Development Policy

Adopted: April 25, 2023

Revised and Amended: \_\_\_2023

## A. Purpose

The Ellsworth Public Library supports and connects Ellsworth community members by providing free and open access to information, materials, and services that contribute to lifelong learning and enjoyment for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Library strives to build a collection of materials of popular and current interest as well as enduring value. The basis of selection shall be inclusivity. Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a collection development policy. This policy is used by the library staff in the selection, withdrawal, and reconsideration of materials. It also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The responsibility for this policy governing the inclusion of materials in the library collection rests solely with the Library Board of Trustees.

## B. Selection

The actual task of selection has been delegated to the Library Director who chooses materials for residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The Library Director uses a variety of resources to select materials for the collection such as professional journals and reviews, material demand levels, and requests from patrons. When evaluating items for selection, consideration will be given to but not be limited by the following criteria:

- Is the item in popular demand?
- Is the item relevant?
- Existing library holdings. Does the item contribute to a useful, balanced, and diverse library collection?
- Is the item's information current/up to date?
- Is the item's information grounded in good scholarship?
- Is the format suitable for the collection and for community needs?
- Does the item's purchase fit into the library's budget?

The collection should reflect the diversity of people and experiences worldwide. The collection should also contain the various positions expressed on important or controversial questions, including unpopular or controversial beliefs or views. This provides an arena for individuals to freely examine issues and make independent decisions. Selection of a given item for the library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

The Library's primary, but not exclusive, sources of reviews are Booklist, ALA recommended lists, area newspapers, the New York Times Best Sellers/Review of Books, book seller reviews and other library journals. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for not selecting a title which meets other selection criteria. The library also depends heavily, but not exclusively, upon library user demand for materials when making purchasing decisions.

Because of limited budget and space, the Library is not able to purchase all requested materials, the Library participates in the MORE Consortium and uses interlibrary loan to fulfill patron requests beyond the scope of the Library's collection.



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### C. Intellectual Freedom

The Library and the Library Board of Trustees uphold the democratic right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thoughts and ideas. The Library Board of Trustees considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Library Board of Trustees believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library and the Library Board of Trustees adhere to the principles stated in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement published by the American Library Association (appendices A, B, and C). The Library Board of Trustees have also adopted a Resolution Against Book Bans (appendix D). These supporting documents can be found as appendices at the end of this policy. The Library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

### D. Constitutional Protection

The Library Board of Trustees considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Wisconsin State Constitution. If a court having jurisdiction over the Ellsworth Public Library, decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed. Material under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final court ruling is made after all appeals are exhausted.

### E. Gifts & Donations:

The Library may accept a limited number of new or current lightly-used donations by applying the same criteria as would be applied to the purchase of new materials. The Director must deem them needed and/or appropriate for the collection per this collection development policy. Likewise, memorial gifts of specific book titles or other items may be accepted after consultation with the Library Director. When funds are gifted specifically for materials but no specific title or item is requested, the Library Director will make the selection according to this policy. By law, the Library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

Donations may also be directed to Friends of the Ellsworth Public Library per the organization's donation guidelines.



## F. Withdrawal

A current, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a process of continual withdrawal and replacement called weeding. Items may be withdrawn based on these criteria: lack of item demand, item condition, current relevance or accuracy, usefulness, publishing date, availability of newer or more valid materials, and space limitations.

Withdrawn materials will be disposed of responsibly through the Library's relationships with reselling and recycling vendors. Some items may be donated to local book sales. This ongoing process is authorized by the Board of Trustees and is the responsibility of the Library Director.

## G. Reconsideration of Materials

Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding a materials' suitability. The Library will challenge the censorship of any materials in an effort to provide complete and accurate information on all sides of an issue and to foster intellectual freedom.

Parents and legal guardians always have the right and the responsibility to educate their minor children about the books and other materials that may be best for them. No other adult should make those decisions for other parents' or guardians' children.

Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

### Procedure for Requesting Material Review/Reconsideration

Library users with a concern about a material owned by the Library may:

- Complete a "Request for Material Review" form (appendix E) which is available in the Library
- Submit the completed form to the Library Director in the supplied envelope
- Attend public library board meetings

Library Response:

- The Library Director reviews the request and presents findings to the Library Board of Trustees.
- Alternately, the director may request that Library Board president appoint an ad hoc committee comprised of three (3) Library Board of Trustees; none of whom posed the challenge, is related to the challenger, or is affiliated with the organization bringing the challenge; to review the request with the director and to present findings to the full Library Board of Trustees.
- In all cases, materials are to be judged based on the entire work, not on selected excerpts.
- The individual requesting material review will be notified of meeting dates.
- The library item under review shall remain in place and accessible throughout the entirety of the process.
- One copy of the final report from the Library Board of Trustees shall be given to the petitioner, one copy to the Library Director, and one copy shall remain in the Library Board of Trustees' official records. The decision of the Library Board of Trustees will be final.
- Requests to reconsider materials, which have previously undergone the reconsideration process, will not be reevaluated unless more than 60 months (five years) have passed since completion of the last review.



## Appendix A: Library Bill of Rights

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

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

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

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

## Appendix B: Freedom to Read Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We therefore affirm these propositions:

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

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic

system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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



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society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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

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

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

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

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

*A Joint Statement by:*

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

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

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





## Appendix C: Freedom to View

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**





## Appendix D: Ellsworth Public Library Resolution Against Book Bans

**WHEREAS**, reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms; and

**WHEREAS**, libraries provide access to books that offer teachable moments for readers of all ages and expand our understanding of people with different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs; and

**WHEREAS**, books are tools for understanding complex issues; and

**WHEREAS**, limiting people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues; and

**WHEREAS**, all people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's collection; and

**WHEREAS**, librarians are professionals trained to not impose their own thoughts and opinions on which ideas are right, but to make knowledge and ideas available so that people have the freedom to choose what to read; and

**WHEREAS**, removing and banning books from public libraries is a slippery slope to government censorship and the erosion of our country's commitment to freedom of expression; and

**WHEREAS**, a large majority of Americans across the political spectrum oppose book bans; and

**WHEREAS**, book bans harm communities; then

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Trustees of the Ellsworth Public Library, Ellsworth, WI endorse the following statement:

*Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. Further, no one should make decisions for other parents' or guardians' children about what they read.*

*We, the Trustees, are united against book bans.*

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Ellsworth Public Library Board of Trustees will act to protect the rights of everyone to access a variety of books and materials in libraries and online.



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## Appendix E: Request for Material Review/Reconsideration

The Library is committed to the fundamental rights of all people to read, access materials, resources, and other media services. The Trustees of the Ellsworth Public Library have established a procedure for gathering input about items owned by the library. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to make a statement of concern or request review of a library resource, please return the completed form to the Library Director in the supplied envelope.

Material being challenged **must be read or viewed in full**. Please use additional paper and refer to question numbers to fully complete this form.

**If the form is incomplete or unsigned by the petitioner, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed. Only one form from a household will be accepted at a time.**

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Who do you represent?

My Self     Organization    Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of material being addressed:

Book                                       Audio Book                                       DVD  
 Magazine                                       Newspaper                                       Library Program Content  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author /Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain your concerns by answering the following questions:

1. Did you read/listen to/view this entire item?    Yes \_\_\_\_\_ / No \_\_\_\_\_\*

\*For "No" responses, no further action is needed. If the entire material has not been reviewed by the petitioner, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed.

2. If "yes," please explain how you learned about this material?



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3. Explain the purpose of this material.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What positive qualities does the material present?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What are your concerns about this material? Provide supporting citations and quotations.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How has the material been assessed in professional review sources? Provide supporting citations and quotations.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Provide professional citations in support of your objections.



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8. Explain how the material fails to meet Intellectual Freedom standards.

9. Who would be negatively impacted by this material and how? Provide supporting evidence and citations (required).

10. What is your desired action for this material?

11. If removed, with what would you replace this material? Include titles and professional reviews of your suggested replacement material.

The library material under review shall remain in place and accessible throughout the entire review process.

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

**If the form is incomplete or unsigned by the petitioner, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed. Only one form from a household will be accepted at a time.**

**Return completed form in the provided envelope.**