

Section 7 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Waterford Public Library's ("the Library") Collection Development Policy supports the Library in its mission and values and provides direction for the growth and development of collections. This policy applies to materials in all formats in the Library's collection. The Library strives to select, acquire, curate and provide free and easy access to materials, in differing formats, that meet the varied needs and interests of the community. This policy provides guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials that anticipate and meet the needs of the community. It also addresses collection maintenance, and replacement and weeding of materials.

The Library makes every effort to provide library materials for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents. Library materials should represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. The Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents.

Specific acquisitions may include items that may be unorthodox, unpopular or controversial in nature. The Library's acquisition of such items does not constitute endorsement of their content but rather allows for their free expression. The library is a forum for all points of view on current and historical issues. The Library adheres to the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the [First Amendment to the United States Constitution](#) (appendix A), and adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights (appendix B), Freedom to Read (appendix C), and Freedom to View (appendix D) statements. No library material, display or program shall be removed, or programs be cancelled, because of origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of Connecticut's general statutes.

KEY DEFINITIONS

The Library's collection is the assemblage of books and other materials, in a variety of formats (print, electronic media, downloadable audio books, digital, etc.), owned or licensed and maintained by the Library and made available to the public at no cost.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Waterford Public Library's Board of Trustees delegates the oversight and management of the collection, within the guidelines of this policy, to the library director and, under their direction, staff that are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and educational materials. Responsibility for the selection, maintenance, replacement, and weeding of materials rests with the designated professional staff under the overall direction of the Director. The Library's consortium-level collections may be governed by an additional set of collection criteria.

PROCEDURES

1. SOURCES FOR SELECTION

Reviews in library and publishing industry periodicals are primary sources for materials selection. Award lists, standard bibliographies, booklists, and the advice of recognized individuals and/or entities in specific subject areas also are used. Suggestions from library staff and community members are also considered.

2. SELECTION

- a. In order to build and maintain its high quality and diverse collection, based on professionally accepted standards of material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age appropriate or grade-level material, continued demand of material the Library applies the following general criteria when considering materials for acquisition:
 - i. Public demand, interest or need
 - ii. Accuracy and effectiveness of material
 - iii. Anticipated potential for long-term public interest
 - iv. Favorable assessments by reputable critics, reviewers, or organizations in professionally recognized publications
 - v. The quality and/or uniqueness of the item
 - vi. Prominence and credibility of author and publisher
 - vii. Relation to existing collection and other material on the subject
 - viii. Timeliness and importance of material as a document of the times; current or historical significance of the author or subject
 - ix. Value as resource material
 - x. Items of local interest and/or written by local authors
 - xi. Suitability of subject or style for intended audience
 - xii. Availability and affordability
 - xiii. Compatibility of format for Library use and shelving capacity
 - xiv. Public's ability to procure item from alternative sources
 - xv. Availability of electronic bibliographic records
- b. Selection of materials is informed by the professional knowledge and judgment of Library staff whose expertise includes familiarity with all types of materials, knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection and awareness of the needs and interests of the community. Library materials, displays and programs shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the displays and programs policies. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this policy shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.
- c. Textbooks will generally not be considered for the collection unless they are the best or only available source of information in their subject area and serve the general public and adult learning community. The Library does not purchase multiple copies of textbooks for use by students, a responsibility of the Board of Education.
- d. Purchase suggestions from patrons are always welcome. The library will consider all requests from library users and potential library users within the Waterford community using the same selection criteria that we use for the collection. The library will make every effort to obtain via Interlibrary Loan, upon request by cardholders, items which are not represented in our collection and do not meet our purchase selection criteria.

- e. Donated items and self-published books by local or Connecticut authors will be considered for the Library collection if they meet the Library's standards of quality, and are determined to be of suitable interest to the public.
- f. Wherever possible, the Library makes electronic information available in the Library and remotely. In choosing to purchase or license electronic databases, the Library applies the same standards for selection as for print materials. However, the Library recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its physical materials. The Library will make every effort to provide assistance and ensure that the public is instructed in the use of its electronic resources and databases.
- g. Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:
 - i. Copyright and licensing
 - ii. Redaction of personally identifiable information
 - iii. Any restrictions on use or circulation
 - iv. Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

3. MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

The primary objective of the collection is to provide books and other materials for children and teens that promote a lifelong love of learning and reading. Materials are chosen in response to the needs and interests of youth in the community with a focus on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and teens rests with the parent or caregiver.

The children's collection serves children from birth through age thirteen, as well as their parents, teachers, caregivers, and other professionals working with children, by providing books and other media of the best available quality for recreational use, general information, and curriculum support for early childhood through middle school. Literary excellence, reading level, accuracy and timeliness of factual material, and high-quality art and illustrations are the standards met in materials selected for the library's collections.

The teen collection is designed to address the recreational, developmental, academic, and informational needs and interests of youth ages thirteen to eighteen. The materials chosen cover a wide range of topics, reading skills and developmental levels.

4. DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AND DATABASES

The Library offers access to a variety of digital resources. These materials include databases, e-books, e-audiobooks, and collections of downloadable and streaming media where the content is selected and maintained by the vendor and not by the Library. Therefore, it is not possible for the Library to control when and what titles are added or removed from these collections. In addition to standard criteria used in selecting other formats, the Library must consider special selection criteria for electronic materials. The Library bases its decisions to provide access to these collections on a variety of factors, including ease of use, uniqueness of content, technology requirements, vendor reputation and customer service, availability for remote access, licensing agreements, and cost. The Library also provides access to digital collections that are offered to all Connecticut library cardholders via the Connecticut State Library. The Library refers to the Connecticut State Library's collection policy for materials provided through their subscriptions.

5. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of the collection includes discarding, replacement, rebinding and repair. If an item is lost or damaged, it may not necessarily be replaced or repaired depending upon a variety of factors, including:

- a. Number of duplicate copies or similar materials in the Library's collection
- b. Availability to borrow through inter-library loan
- c. Availability and price from book vendors
- d. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject field
- e. Currency of the information
- f. Demand for the specific author, title or subject.

It is sometimes preferable to purchase current materials rather than replace older ones. The staff serves as arbiter in such instances.

6. WEEDING

Weeding is a term used by libraries to describe the removal of materials from their collections. Such items may contain outdated or inaccurate information, have duplicate copies, no longer be a topic of interest, inconsistent with evolving community standards, or in poor condition. At the Library, weeding is performed on a systematic and continuing basis by qualified staff and the library director in the interest of keeping all collections current and useful. Weeded materials in good condition may be sold, donated, or disposed of however the Library deems appropriate. Generally, standard titles of permanent value and materials of local significance are spared weeding even if they may meet the criteria for so doing.

7. GIFTS AND DONATIONS

The Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials for the collection and applies to them the same standards of selection that govern purchases. Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that those that meet the Library's selection criteria may be retained and those that do not may be donated to another organization, sold in the library's book sale or discarded.

Gift materials will not be accepted with restrictions and/or conditions that necessitate special and separate housing, processing, or treatment. The only form of donor or memorial identification will be a bookplate.

The Library cannot give a dollar valuation for gifts of materials; on request, the Library will provide the donor with a statement verifying the number and type of materials donated. Arrangements for memorial gifts and monetary donations to the library may be made with the library director.

8. CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall library patron community.

Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among these sub-collections based on the age appropriateness of the content. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The removal, exclusion or censoring of any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive is prohibited.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents,

and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

The decision by an author, publisher, or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP

The Library recognizes not all users will greet all materials with the same degree of enthusiasm and regard. Therefore, some materials selected for the collections may seem controversial and even distasteful to some Library users. It is the right of the individual not to read, view or hear materials that the individual considers objectionable. It is never the right of any Library user or users to deny access to Library materials to others. The freedom to choose from a broad range of informational and artistic materials will not be abridged. When evaluating library materials the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements from the American Library Association are used as guiding documents. (See attached addendum.)

LIBRARY MATERIAL REVIEW AND RECONSIDERATION POLICY

The Waterford Public Library's Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of hearing from the public regarding material selection. The Library Administration and Staff seriously consider suggestions made by Waterford residents and taxpayers. The completion of the Request for Reconsideration form does not guarantee either accession to the collection or removal from the collection but does ensure the attention of Library Staff to user opinion, interests, and concerns. The library limits consideration of requests to reconsider materials, displays or programs to Waterford residents.

Please see our Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy and form for further information on this process.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This policy can be accessed on the Waterford Public Library website at: www.waterfordpubliclibrary.org, under the About Us section.

This policy is in accordance with Connecticut Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323.

The Waterford Public Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection.

Board of Trustees – November 18, 2025

CONSTITUTION ANNOTATED

Analysis and Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution

Constitution of the United States

First Amendment

First Amendment Explained

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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.

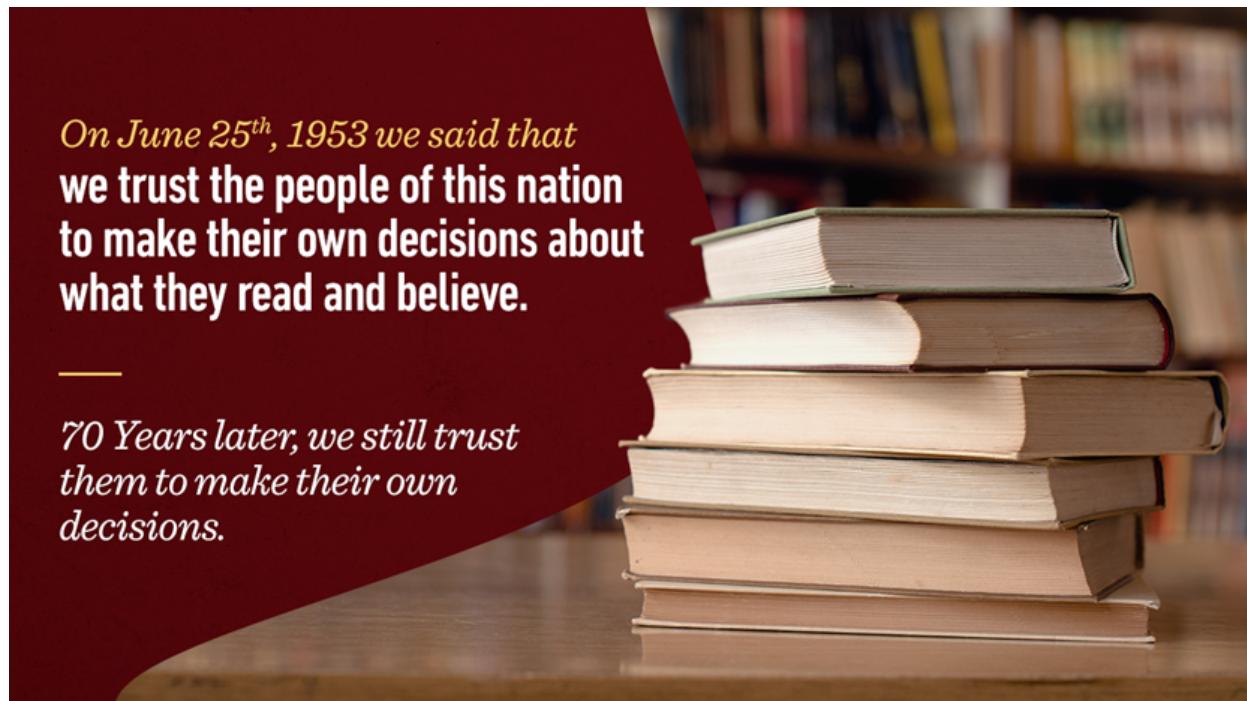
- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide 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.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>).

The Freedom to Read Statement



On the 70th anniversary of the Freedom to Read Statement, we are asking for individuals, authors, organizations, and associations to sign on to support the freedom to read.

TAKE ACTION: SIGN YOUR NAME! (<https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/freedomtoread/>)

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.



Freedom to View Statement

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

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or 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

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 pre-judgment 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.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association (/)
Association of American Publishers (<http://www.publishers.org/>)

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers for Free Expression (<http://www.bookweb.org/abfe>)
The Association of American University Presses (<http://www.aaupnet.org/>)
The Children's Book Council (<http://www.cbcbooks.org/>)
Freedom to Read Foundation (<http://www.ftrf.org>)
National Association of College Stores (<http://www.nacs.org/>)
National Coalition Against Censorship (<http://www.ncac.org/>)
National Council of Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org/>)
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression