

Uxbridge Free Public Library Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement

The mission of the Uxbridge Free Public Library is to provide community members with global access to informational, educational, and recreational resources in order to meet their cultural and social needs. The Library will fulfill this mission and achieve the following:

- Encourage and promote literacy in children, teens and adults
- Provide exploration of the community through historical, artistic and informative programs
- Educate patrons about the multiple collaborative networks that are available for research and enjoyment
- Maintain a well-informed staff that is enthusiastic and dedicated to patron needs

Purpose

In accordance with its mission, the Uxbridge Free Public Library assumes the responsibility for providing materials that are responsive to the cultural, informational, and recreational needs of our community. The purpose of this policy is to assist professional library staff in building and maintaining collections and to inform the public about the processes and principles upon which the Library's collection is built. This involves the selection, organization, preservation, and withdrawal of library materials, the evaluation of donations, and the protection of intellectual freedom. Libraries in Massachusetts are required by law to adopt a written policy for the selection of library materials (M.G.L. Ch. 78, Sec. 33).

Guiding Principles

The Uxbridge Free Public Library supports intellectual freedom and upholds the principles set forth in the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement, the Library Bill of Rights and its relevant interpretations by the American Library Association Council¹, and the Freedom to View Statement. These documents (see Appendices A-C) affirm the free and convenient access to ideas, information, and the creative experience and serve as guiding principles for this collection development policy.

The Library provides the best possible collection with the financial resources available. The decision to select any item for the collection is based on demand, anticipated need, and the effort to maintain a wide and balanced collection. Materials are selected on the basis of the work as a whole and are not excluded because of isolated passages or because of frankness of expression or detail. Library materials present a diversity of viewpoints and experiences, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy.

¹ A full list of these interpretations is available at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations> (accessed September 20, 2022).

The Library's collection is available to all, and the Library upholds the right of the individual to secure these materials, even when the content may be controversial or offensive to others. The Library does not place restrictions on the materials that patrons of any age can use or check out. Parents and guardians have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening and viewing choices of their own children.

Scope of the Collection

The Library provides, within its budget parameters, a general collection of materials on a wide range of topics to meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of the residents of Uxbridge. The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, level of difficulty, and language to maximize accessibility. Through selection, the Library aims not only to meet the current needs of the community but also to anticipate their future needs. An overview of the Library's collection is provided below:

Print Materials - Books (hardcover, paperback, large print, and board books), Magazines, Newspapers, and Graphic Novels

Non-Print Materials - Audiobooks, Music CDs, Film (DVD & Blu-ray), and Video Games

Recreational Materials - Children's games, Mobile hotspots, and other non-traditional circulating materials

Electronic Resources - The Library offers e-content in the form of e-books, e-audio, and e-video on various platforms. The Library is committed to exploring alternative platforms and modes of acquiring e-content. It is essential for staff to monitor technological developments so that wise and cost-effective collection decisions are made for Uxbridge residents.

Reference Materials - The majority of reference materials are now purchased in online format, thus providing 24/7 access inside and outside of the library. In addition to those databases acquired by the library, library patrons also have access to databases purchased by the state and by the CW MARS consortium.

Local History Collection - This collection consists of print documents and audiovisual and visual media that document the history of Uxbridge, MA and the Blackstone Valley. The management of this collection is guided by the library's Local History Collection Development Policy.

Special Collections - These collections consist of books, manuscripts, and other objects that are of unique value and importance to the institutional history of the Uxbridge Free Public Library.

Materials selected for children and teenagers are intended to encourage and facilitate reading skills, support recreational reading, stimulate and widen their interests, and supplement their educational needs. While the Library can work cooperatively to support school curricula, it does not routinely prioritize its materials purchases to support school curricula.

The Library also maintains a "floating" collection of shared Large Print books and audiobooks with libraries in the Blackstone Valley. Additionally, interlibrary loan services assure access to the extended

resources of other public and academic libraries throughout the CW MARS library consortium and the state of Massachusetts. Duplicate items may be acquired to meet high patron demand. Out-of-print items, used items, or items that require Library staff to go beyond the scope of normal purchasing procedures are usually not purchased.

Responsibility for Collection Development

The authority and responsibility for selection and management of all library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees. The Library Director delegates the selection and development of the Library's collection to appointed Library staff members.

Selection Criteria

All library materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Community need and interest
- The importance and relationship of the subject matter within the collection
- Reputation and authority of the author, creator, and/or publisher
- Local significance
- Timeliness of the material
- Accuracy of the material
- Literary merit, as indicated by favorable reviews in professionally recognized publications
- Representation of diverse points of view and experiences
- Format, durability, and ease of use
- Cost of the material and space limitations
- Availability of the material in the CW MARS consortium

Sources for selection decisions encompass, but are not limited to, published reviews from standard review sources, publisher/vendor catalogs and advertisements, professional and trade bibliographies, and patron requests and recommendations. The Library strongly encourages patron input — all requests and recommendations are subject to the selection criteria outlined above.

Collection Maintenance

Continual evaluation is a vital part of collection maintenance and ensures that the collection is current, attractive, diverse, responsive, and useful to patrons. The withdrawal of materials from the collection follows similar criteria as when the item was first selected, but circulation statistics and physical condition are primary considerations. The Library also considers whether the content is outdated, incorrect, or if a new edition is available. Materials that have been lost, damaged, or withdrawn may be replaced with newer editions or materials with more up-to-date information on the subject, using the same criteria as for selection.

Gifts and Donations

The Library welcomes gifts and donations, in accordance with the Library's Gifts and Donations Policy. Gifts are accepted with the understanding that they become the property of the Uxbridge Free Public Library and can be retained or disposed of at the discretion of the Library. Gifts and donations of

materials are subject to the same process as purchased materials. The Library can provide a receipt for tax purposes stating the number and type of items donated but cannot assign a monetary value to them.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library welcomes citizens' expressions of opinion concerning materials purchased. Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the library are encouraged to informally discuss their concerns with the Library Director or the Assistant Director. They will inform the patron of relevant library selection procedures and policies.

Any Uxbridge resident who wishes to formally request that a specific item be reconsidered for inclusion in the collection is asked to complete and sign the Request for Reconsideration Form after they have read, viewed, or listened to the item in its entirety. Copies of this form are available at the Uxbridge Free Public Library and, upon completion, should be submitted to the Library Director.

The Director, in consultation with appropriate professional staff, will evaluate the item in question. The patron's request will be considered within the principles and selection criteria of the Library's Collection Development Policy. The Library Director will prepare a written determination regarding the item's retention or removal, citing the specific reasons for the decision.

If the patron is not satisfied with the Library Director's decision, a written appeal may be submitted to the Board of Library Trustees. The Board of Library Trustees will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with the Library's Collection Development Policy. The decision of the Board of Library Trustees is final.

For the duration of the reconsideration process, the item in question will remain in circulation in the Library's collection.

Appendix A

The 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.

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.

Appendix B

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:

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.

To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.

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.

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.

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 C

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](#).

Request for Reconsideration

By submitting this form, you are asking the Uxbridge Free Public Library to remove or reclassify a particular item from the collection. This form is only to be submitted if you are an Uxbridge resident and have read, listened to, or watched the item in its entirety. Please use additional pages if necessary. The Library takes very seriously all concerns expressed by its patrons. Professional library staff will review your comments and evaluate the work using the principles and selection criteria of the Library's Collection Development Policy.

1. Format (book, DVD, etc.) _____
2. Title _____
3. Author/Performer _____
4. What brought this item to your attention?
5. What concerns you about this item? Please be specific – cite page numbers, etc.
6. What do you think might be the result of someone using this item?
7. Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or viewpoints on this topic?

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Staff Use Only

Received By: _____ Date: _____