



**MANISTEE COUNTY LIBRARY**  
**95 MAPLE STREET, MANISTEE MI 49660**  
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**WWW.MANISTEELIBRARY.ORG**

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## **Materials Selection Policy**

### **Manistee County Library Mission Statement**

Empowered by the trust and support of our community, Manistee County Library sparks imagination, increases well being and social diversity, builds connections, and provides learning and fun to enhance the quality of life and enable greater success for everyone we encounter.

### **Purpose of Selection Policy**

The policy provides a clear statement regarding the type of materials purchased as well as procedures for adding new materials and formats in the future. It will avoid personal bias in selection, while demonstrating the library's clear commitment to serving all members of its community. The policy provides guidelines for acquisition and weeding of materials and the formal framework to address challenged materials.

### **Appendices**

The Manistee County Library affirms its support of the following documents and bases this Material Selection Policy on the following library standards and the American Library Association, the Michigan Library Association which are included as Appendices in this policy:

Appendix A: The Library Bill of Rights

Appendix B: Freedom to Read Statement

Appendix C: Freedom to View Statement

Appendix D: Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Appendix E: Restricted Access to Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Appendix F: Access for Children and Young Adults to Non-Print Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Appendix G. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

*Further, for more specific interpretations, MCL relies on the Intellectual Freedom Manual of the American Library Association, 9th edition, Copyright 2015.*

### **Criteria for Selection**

- I. Value of the materials in relation to the whole collection
- II. Accuracy, effectiveness, and comprehensiveness of presentation of subject matter
- III. Current interest or patron demand for subject
- IV. Present and potential relevance to community needs
- V. Timeliness
- VI. Suitability of the format to library use

- VII. Suitability of the subject and style for the intended audience
- VIII. Interest the item has received from critics, reviewers and public
- IX. Reputation and authoritativeness of the author and/or publisher
- X. Price
- XI. Anticipated long-term use of material
- XII. Availability through other avenues, such as interlibrary loan, websites, digital access, online databases, etc
- XIII. Quality of physical characteristics (binding, print size, number of pieces, etc)
- XIV. Readability
- XV. Local interest or a prominent local author
- XVI. Existing commitment to a series or subject matter
- XVII. Diversity of viewpoint
- XVIII. Additional Criteria for Electronic Resources
  - A. Ease of Access, use and number of access points
  - B. Hardware and software requirements, including maintenance
  - C. Vendor support and contractual requirements
  - D. Comparison of content with other formats available
  - E. Networking capabilities
  - F. Ownership of product
- XIX. As a general rule, the library does not acquire textbooks for academic coursework

### **Gifts**

Gifts are evaluated in the same manner as materials considered for purchase by the Library. The library retains unconditional ownership of all gifts and reserves the right to reject any gift.

Gifts in good condition are encouraged and welcomed. Gift books and other materials are evaluated branch by branch using the same selection criteria as other materials. The library makes all decisions as to use, display, store, or other disposition of donated materials. Gift materials not meeting selection criteria may be given to the Friends of the Library or other organizations, sold, exchanged, discarded or recycled. Gifts with contingencies cannot be accepted.

The Library gladly accepts monetary gifts, memorials and bequests and will make every effort to use these gifts in accordance with the wishes of the donor. Receipts indicating the quantity and nature of the gifts will be provided on request. However, the Library does not provide appraisals or evaluations of the gifts for tax purposes.

### **Weeding/Book Withdrawal/De-Selection**

Systematic and ongoing removal of materials is necessary in order to maintain a current library collection reflecting community needs. Since withdrawing materials from the collection is selection in reverse, many of the same criteria for selecting materials and the same selection tool are used in the process. In addition the following criteria may be applied:

- I. Insufficient use
- II. Obsolete or misleading information
- III. Irreparable damage to materials
- IV. Changes in local interest
- V. Shelf space availability
- VI. Existence of duplicate copies
- VII. Existence of new or superseding editions
- VIII. Availability of material through interlibrary loan
- IX. Availability of material through digital/electronic means

### **Equity of Access - The Freedom to Read**

The Constitution of the State of Michigan, Article 8, Section 9 provides for access to public libraries by Michigan residents as provided for in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, PA 453 of 1976. Because Michigan public libraries are required to provide access to Michigan residents the public library board must make all facets of library service available to all residents, regardless of classification.

The MCL board of trustees opposes restricting access to library materials and services for minors and holds that it is the parents - **and only the parents** - who may restrict their children - **and only their children** - from access to the library materials and services. Parents who would rather restrict access should so advise their children. The library and its staff are responsible for providing equal access to library materials and services for all library patrons.

### **Suggestions and Objections**

The central thrust of the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read is to protect and encourage the free flow of information and ideas. The MCL welcomes material suggestions from its patrons. The suggestions are evaluated using the established criteria for selection stated in these policies. Suggestions are not a guarantee of purchase. Availability of materials through established vendors, perceived community interest are some of the factors in selecting works.

Such policies and procedures govern and protect the library materials, special collections, and the planning of library programs which otherwise could become a convenient means for removing and restricting access to controversial materials, limiting access to programs or for discriminating against specific groups.

### **Challenged Resources**

The MCL supports the ALA position on challenges resources, including this excerpt:

*Challenged resources which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extralegal pressure. The Library Bill of Rights states in Article 1 that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article 2, that "Materials should not be*

*proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression by only a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is part of this procedure.*

*Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extralegal to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.*

Adopted 6-25-71; amended 7-1-81; amended 1/10/90, by the ALA Council (full text see <http://www.ala.org>)

### **Request for Reconsideration**

The Board of Trustees recognizes the right of citizens to request that the library reevaluate any item in the collection. Individuals wishing reconsideration of an item must complete and sign a request for "reconsideration of library materials" form available at each MCL branch and the main library and on-line. The completed form should be forwarded to the Library Director. The Director will appoint a staff committee to research published reviews and evaluate the material requested for reconsideration. Neither selection nor removal of material will be determined by pressure from the requesting group or individual. The staff committee will determine if the item under consideration meets the criteria of the library's materials selection policy and will make a recommendation to the Library Board President, who will prepare a written reply based on the committee's conclusions. The decision may result in maintaining the same status, changing the location, or removing the item from the collection.

**Board Approved: April 15, 1998**

**Amended and Board Approved: September 1, 2020**

## **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, age, 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: 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:

- I. 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.

- II. *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.

- III. *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.

- IV. *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.

- V. *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.

- VI. *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.

- VII. *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 C: 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:

- I. 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.
- II. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
- III. 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.
- IV. 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.
- V. 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: Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages. Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users is in violation of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of library resources, based solely on the chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V. This includes minors who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign a library card application or permission slip. Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness should be able to obtain a library card regardless of library policies related to chronological age.

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of providing Library services and should be determined on an individual basis. Equitable access to all library resources and services should not be abridged based on chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, legal status, or through restrictive scheduling and use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them. Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

Article VII of the Library Bill of Rights states, "All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use." This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's - and only their children's - access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor's access to materials.

Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

*Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association, et al.* 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011).

*Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975): "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*. 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

"Privacy: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," adopted June 19, 2002, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 2014; and June 24, 2019.

"Libraries: An American Value," adopted on February 3, 1999 by ALA Council.

"Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," adopted on June 30, 2015, by ALA council; amended June 25, 2019.

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.

## **Appendix E: Restricted Access to Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Restricting access to library materials violates the basic tenets of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

Some libraries block access to certain materials by placing physical or virtual barriers between the user and those materials. For example, materials are sometimes labeled for content or placed in a "locked case," "adults only," "restricted shelf," or "high-demand" collection. Access to certain materials is sometimes

restricted to protect them from theft or mutilation, or because of statutory authority or institutional mandate.

In some libraries, access is restricted based on computerized reading management programs that assign reading levels to books and/or users and limit choices to titles on the program's reading list. Titles not on the reading management list have been removed from the collection in some school libraries. Organizing collections by reading management program level, ability, grade, or age level is another example of restricted access. Even though the chronological age or grade level of users is not representative of their information needs or total reading abilities, users may feel inhibited from selecting resources located in areas that do not correspond to their assigned characteristics.

Physical restrictions and content filtering of library resources and services may generate psychological, service, or language skills barriers to access as well. Because restricted materials often deal with controversial, unusual, or sensitive subjects, having to ask a library worker for access to them may be embarrassing or inhibiting for patrons desiring access. Even when a title is listed in the catalog with a reference to its restricted status, a barrier is placed between the patron and the publication. Because restricted materials often feature information that some people consider objectionable, potential library users may be predisposed to think of labeled and filtered resources as objectionable and be discouraged from asking for access to them.

Federal and some state statutes require libraries that accept specific types of federal and/or state funding to install content filters that limit access to Internet resources for minors and adults. Internet filters applied to Internet resources in some libraries may prevent users from finding targeted categories of information, much of which is constitutionally protected. The use of Internet filters must be addressed through library policies and procedures to ensure that users receive information and that filters do not prevent users from exercising their First Amendment rights. Users have the right to unfiltered access to constitutionally protected information.

Library policies that restrict access to resources for any reason must be carefully formulated and administered to ensure they do not violate established principles of intellectual freedom. This caution is reflected in ALA policies, such as "Evaluating Library Collections," "Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors," "Preservation Policy," and the ACRL "Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians."

Donated resources require special consideration. In keeping with the "Joint Statement on Access" of the American Library Association and Society of American Archivists, libraries should avoid accepting donor agreements or entering into contracts that impose permanent restrictions on special collections. As stated in the "Joint Statement on Access," it is the responsibility of a library with such collections "to make available original research materials in its possession on equal terms of access."

A primary goal of the library profession is to facilitate access to all points of view on current and historical issues. All proposals for restricted access should be carefully scrutinized to ensure that the purpose is not to suppress a viewpoint or to place a barrier between users and content. Libraries must maintain policies and procedures that serve the diverse needs of their users and protect the First Amendment right to receive information.

"Labeling Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted June 30, 2015 by ALA Council.

"Access to Digital Resources and Services: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," adopted January 24, 1996 by the ALA Council, amended January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009 *under previous name* "Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks", and June 25, 2019.

"Evaluating Library Collections: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," adopted February 2, 1973, by the ALA Council: amended July 1, 1981; June 2, 2008; and June 25, 2019.

"Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," adopted June 30, 1972. by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.

"Code for Ethics for Special Collections Librarians" approved by ACRL in October 2003.

"ACRL/SAA Joint Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries" approved by ACRL in July 2009.

Adopted February 2, 1973, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004; January 28, 2009; and July 1, 2014.

## **Appendix F: Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Library collections of nonprint materials raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors. Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The American Library Association's principles protect minors' access to sound, images, data, games, software, and other content in all formats such as tapes, CD's, DVDs, music CD's, computer games, software, databases and other emerging technologies. ALA's Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights states:

The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to and use of library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills or legal emancipation or users violates Article V.

Parents - and only parents - have the right and responsibility to restrict access of their children - and only their children - to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of the parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Policies that set minimum age limits for access to any nonprint materials or information technology, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Age limits based on the cost of the materials are also unacceptable. Librarians, when dealing with minors, should apply the same standards to circulation of nonprint materials as are applied to books and other print materials except when directly and specifically prohibited by law.

Recognizing that librarians cannot act in loco parentis, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Libraries should provide

published reviews and/or reference works that contain information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences for nonprint materials. These resources will assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship.

In some cases, commercial content ratings, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings, might appear on the packaging or promotional materials provided by producers or distributors. However, marking out or removing this information from materials or packaging constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA movie ratings, Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) game ratings, and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing (Expurgation of Library Materials). For the library to add ratings to nonprint materials if they are not already there is unacceptable. It is also unacceptable to post a list of such ratings with a collection or to use them in circulation policies or other procedures. These uses constitute labeling, "an attempt to prejudice attitudes" (Labels and Rating Systems), and are forms of censorship. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the Library Bill of Rights.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people's access to materials and services that reflect diversity of content and format sufficient to meet their needs.

Adopted June 28, 1989, by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 2004.

**Appendix G: Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials**

The Manistee County Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library materials to the Executive Director, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those materials. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of the library materials, please return the completed form to the Executive Director, Manistee County Library.

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent an organization?    Yes    No    If yes, how many members are there? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a current library card with the Manistee County Library?    Yes    No

Title of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Composer/Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Published: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Type (Circle One):

- Book                      Audiobook                      DVD/Blu-Ray                      Music CD                      Magazine                      Newspaper
- Video Game                      Hands on Kit                      Online Database                      Website Link                      Library Program

Did you read, view or listen to the entire work?    Yes    No

What brought this resource to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

What concerns you about this resource? (Use additional pages if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or viewpoints on the topic of this resource? \_\_\_\_\_

What action are you requesting the committee to consider? \_\_\_\_\_