

Nicolet Federated Library System

Trustee Training

August 2021



American Library Association

Founding of the American Library Association

- During the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, 103 librarians, 90 men and 13 women, responded to a call for a "Convention of Librarians" to be held. At the end of the meeting, according to Ed Holley in his essay "ALA at 100," "the register was passed around for all to sign who wished to become charter members," making October 6, 1876 the birthday of the American Library Association.
- Attendees came from as far west as Chicago and from England.
- The aim of the Association, in that resolution, was "to enable librarians to do their present work more easily and at less expense."
- The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world.

American Library Association

Mission

- To provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

Core Values of Librarianship

- In pursuing this mission, the ALA's core value statements define it's deepest aspirations and how librarians approach their work together.
- These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded, and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association, such as:
 - [Freedom to Read statement](#)
 - [Library Bill of Rights](#)
 - [ALA Mission Statement](#)
 - [Libraries: An American Value](#)
- These policies have been carefully thought out, articulated, debated, and approved by the [ALA Council](#). They are interpreted, revised or expanded when necessary. Over time, the values embodied in these policies have been embraced by the majority of librarians as the foundations of their practice.

Core Values of Librarianship

Access

- All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users. [ALA Policy Manual B.2.1.14 Economic Barriers to Information Access](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Confidentiality/Privacy

- Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship. [ALA Policy Manual B.2.1.17 Privacy](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Democracy

- A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry. The First Amendment mandates the right of all persons to free expression, and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the community the library serves. [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights, Economic Barriers to Information Access](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Diversity

- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve. [ALA Policy Manual B.3 Diversity, Libraries: An American Value](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Education and Lifelong Learning

- ALA promotes the creation, maintenance, and enhancement of a learning society, encouraging its members to work with educators, government officials, and organizations in coalitions to initiate and support comprehensive efforts to ensure that school, public, academic, and special libraries in every community cooperate to provide lifelong learning services to all. [ALA Policy Manual A.1.1 Introduction](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Intellectual Freedom

- We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources. [ALA Policy Manual B.2 Intellectual Freedom](#), [ALA Code of Ethics, Article II](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

The Public Good

- ALA reaffirms the following fundamental values of libraries in the context of discussing outsourcing and privatization of library services. These values include that libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in democratic societies. [1998-99 CD#24.1, Motion #1](#)
- 2018 Forbes Op-Ed "[Amazon Should Replace Local Libraries to Save Taxpayers Money](#)" by Panos Mourdoukoutas
- Why Libraries Matter in 2018: <https://www.wpr.org/shows/librarian-explains-why-libraries-still-matter-2018>
- Library Calculator: <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/what-libraries-do/calculator>

Core Values of Librarianship

Preservation

- The Association supports the preservation of information published in all media and formats. The association affirms that the preservation of information resources is central to libraries and librarianship. [ALA Policy Manual B.8.3. Preservation, Preservation Policy](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Professionalism

- The ALA supports the provision of library services by professionally qualified personnel who have been educated in graduate programs within institutions of higher education. It is of vital importance that there be professional education available to meet the social needs and goals of library services. [ALA Policy Manual B.7.1 Graduate Programs in Library and Information Studies](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Service

- We provide the highest level of service to all library users. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession. [ALA Code of Ethics](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Social Responsibility

- ALA recognizes its broad social responsibilities. The broad social responsibilities of the American Library Association are defined in terms of the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society; support for efforts to help inform and educate the people of the United States on these problems and to encourage them to examine the many views on and the facts regarding each problem; and the willingness of ALA to take a position on current critical issues with the relationship to libraries and library service set forth in the position statement. [ALA Policy Manual A.1.1 Mission Priority Areas, Goals](#)

Core Values of Librarianship

Sustainability

- ALA is supporting the library community by showing its commitment to assisting in the development of sustainable libraries with the addition of sustainability as a core value of librarianship. This consists of practices that are environmentally sound, economically feasible and socially equitable. Libraries play an important and unique role in promoting community awareness about resilience, climate change and a sustainable future. They are also leading by example by taking steps to reduce their environmental footprint. [ALA Policy Manual A.1.4 Core Organizational Values](#)

Libraries: An American Value

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

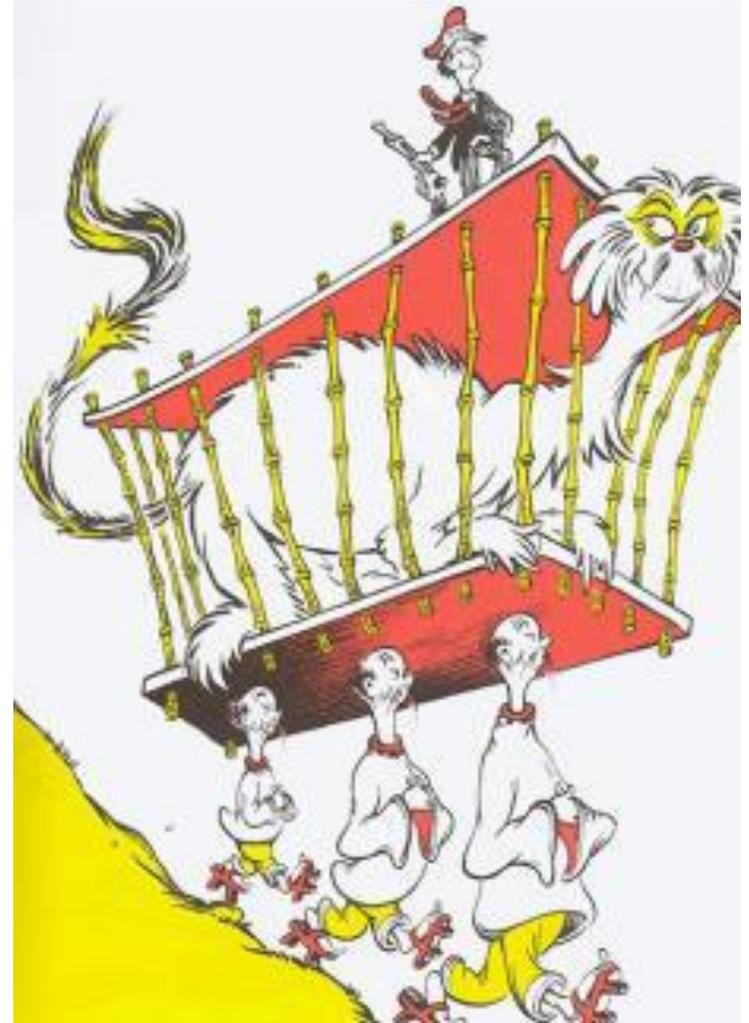
By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

Balancing Act

How do librarians balance competing values?

Censorship from the Right and Left

- Pulling Dr. Seuss books from the shelves for offensive stereotypes.
 - "If I Ran The Zoo" written in 1950



Censorship from the Right and Left

- Top 3 Most Challenged Books of 2020
 - **George** by Alex Gino - Reasons: Challenged, banned, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, conflicting with a religious viewpoint, and not reflecting “the values of our community.”
 - **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You** by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds - Reasons: Banned and challenged because of author’s public statements, and because of claims that the book contains “selective storytelling incidents” and does not encompass racism against all people.
 - **All American Boys** by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely - Reasons: Banned and challenged for profanity, drug use, and alcoholism, and because it was thought to promote anti-police views, contain divisive topics, and be “too much of a sensitive matter right now.”

Access to the Library

- 2018 ALA statement that libraries could not exclude hate groups from using meeting rooms.
- When situations arise in which individual values collide, particularly those around access, social responsibility, diversity, and intellectual freedom, how do librarians decide what value takes precedence?

Balancing Values

- Intellectual Freedom vs. Safe Space
- All Points of View vs. Fake News
- Cameras vs. Privacy
- “Traditional” Culture vs. Existing Culture
- Censorship vs. Selection
- We are the Government vs. We are for Everyone
- Filtering Computers vs. Intellectual Freedom
- Limited vs. Unlimited Resources
- Public Access vs. Public Health