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Group 1: Small - Medium Academic Library

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Assignment 3

**Collection Development Policy
Stevenson Library at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY**

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I. OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Stevenson Library's Collection Development Policy is to communicate established priorities that guide our collection decisions. These guidelines are intended to assist library staff, the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director in identifying library resources to acquire in building our collections. It also informs students, faculty, administration and other members of our library community, including our consortial partners, of the processes and procedures related to our collection.

Stevenson Library's collection provides students, faculty, administration, staff and other Library members with written and visual resources that support both intellectual growth and personal enrichment. Our collections consist of primary and secondary sources that foster original thought and scholarly works for all members of our community. In providing access to emerging technologies and prominent scholarly resources, we support our users as their needs dictate.¹

A. Vision Statement²

Bard College is first and foremost a place to think. Therefore, the curriculum of the college is diverse and innovative and aims to play a significant role in the revival of the arts and the humanities in education. Bard emphasizes liberal arts instruction offering both a breadth and depth of learning. The Library's vision is in support of these goals. Through a student-centered and collaborative approach, the Stevenson Library aims to unite emerging technologies with traditional resources and services that will broaden horizons for Bard College students, faculty and staff by being the College's foundation for information and research.

B. Mission Statement³

The pillars of a Bard education are the First-Year Seminar, the program- and concentration-based approach to study, Moderation (the transition from the Lower to the Upper College - <http://inside.bard.edu/doso/handbook/index.php?aid=1192&sid=705>), the concept of curricular distribution by modes of thought and the Senior Project. The Library's mission supports this education by being an active partner in the intellectual work of Bard's students, faculty and staff. This includes:

- Developing collections, services and partnerships that help all users become more skilled and productive.

¹ Some the information about the general parameters of the collection is based on *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011) and *Bard College's Library Info* (2012).

² This section has some information based on *Bard College's Library Info* (2012).

³ Some of this section is based on info from the Bard College website (2012).

- Taking a campus leadership role in thoughtfully applying technology and library services to turning information into knowledge.
- Working everyday with students and faculty to assist and support their educational needs.

We see our users gain confidence from working with the library staff and by utilizing our resources. It is our mission to actively promote this kind of collaboration to provide the best liberal arts education possible.

C. Partnerships⁴

Our partnerships are important for providing our users with exceptional resources. Therefore, we partner with other Bard-affiliated libraries including those at The Levy Economics Institute, the Center for Curatorial Studies and the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design and Culture to provide comprehensive access to materials and resources for Bard's diverse user community. The Library also works with the Bard College Visual Resources Center to support visual media needs for students, faculty and staff.

Additionally, we partner with institutions outside Bard to enhance and increase access through resource sharing and to assist in resource purchasing through consortial discounts. This includes ConnectNY, which is a unified catalog of participating academic libraries in New York State that allows for rapid interlibrary loans. We are also a member of the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council (SENYLRC), which offers not only support in developing our collections and services, but also discounted access to electronic resource subscriptions. Our library has membership in the Oberlin Group Libraries, which offers libraries from top-ranked liberal arts colleges a forum for discussing and advancing library issues and concerns.

D. Primary Service Clientele

Stevenson Library's primary service clientele is first and foremost the students, faculty, administration and staff at Bard College. The Library secondarily supports alumni, local high school students and local community members by providing access (although limited) to our resources and services. Through interlibrary loans and collaborative cooperation, students of other academic universities and colleges are an extension of our user community.⁵

E. Program and Patron Needs

Stevenson Library strives to meet the needs of all members of its community. However, the educational needs of the Bard College community, in particular those of students and faculty,

⁴ Some of this information is based on Bard College's *Library Info* (2012).

⁵ Some the information about the primary service clientele is based on *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011), *Sojourner Truth Library Collection Development Policy Info* (2010), and Bard College's *Library Info* (2012).

come first. Therefore, our services and resources are provided with this primary service clientele as our principal consideration; however the needs of secondary users are also considered when appropriate.

The Stevenson library meets the needs of its user community by providing access to the following resources:

- Esteemed scholarly resources and materials
- Seminal scholarly works
- Library guides including area specific subject guides
- Citation guides, and writing and grammar style guides
- Fiction and nonfiction scholarly resources
- Fiction and nonfiction recreational resources
- Local and historical resources as deemed appropriate
- Access to Bard's Senior Projects is also provided by the Library.⁶

F. General Parameters of the Collection

The Stevenson Library primarily collects resources published in English. However, in support of the College's foreign language programs and studies, selective foreign languages publications are included in our collection.

Media Formats:

- Print and electronic journals
- Print periodicals/newspapers
- Microfilm/Microform
- Print and electronic archives
- Monographs available in hardcover, softcover, and in electronic format (ebooks)
- Audio and visual materials: films available through streaming and/or DVD; audio recordings made available via compact disc
- Senior Projects: accessible in electronic and print formats as well as archived on microfilm (prior to 2010)
- Selective recreational reading materials
- Other resources considered if they support the mission and vision of the College and do not inhibit the development of our primary collections

G. General Selection Criteria

⁶ Some the information about the program or patron needs is based on *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011), *Hunter College Collection Development Policy* (n.d.), and Bard College's *Library Info and Research Guides* (2012).

The Stevenson Library welcomes recommendations from the students, faculty and staff of Bard College. However, final authority for selection rests with the Subject Specialist Librarians in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director.

Selectors shall use the following criteria as a guide when selecting materials for the collection:⁷

- Currency of information where applicable.
- Intellectual content and scholarly worth.
- Materials contributing to a balanced collection.
- Relevance to curriculum-based needs of students.
- Relevance to instructional needs of the faculty.
- Timeliness and lasting value of materials.

Selection aids include but are not limited to:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE (Primary), Library Journal, New York Times Book Reviews
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Faculty and Student Requests

H. Priorities and Limitations⁸

Priorities:

The Stevenson Library has the following priorities:

- To support the faculty, students, staff and community in their academic work.
- To provide the college members with a high quality, comprehensive and balanced collection of library materials; however, we recognize that our collection is not perfect. Therefore, one of our priorities is to recognize the weaknesses in our collection and work towards improving them. One area identified is to support graduate programs with research level materials.

⁷ Some of the selection criteria listed here is based on information in Portland Community College Library's *Collection Development Statement* (2012) and Sterling College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2005).

⁸ Some of the information about the patron needs and limitations is based on *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011).

- The library gives priority to buying electronic format materials whenever possible, at a justifiable price.

Limitations:

Material Types - The Stevenson Library has the following limitations that relate to the material type of resources collected:

- The library collects only materials that can be accommodated in its collection. We do not collect obsolete material types (Example: VHS tapes, LP records, cassette tapes).
- If such a purchase can be justified in usefulness for the collection, more than one format of the same material or resource may be added to the collection (Example: print and electronic versions of a journal).

Language - The collection is primarily in English, other languages are added selectively.

Chronological Periods - There are no general limitations on the chronological period of the collection materials. However, each subject collection has its own limitations depending on the goals set by the Subject Specialists and the Collection Development Librarian. The chronological period limitations by subject can be reviewed under each subject area in the collection policy.

Duplicates - The library acquires duplicates of heavily used items as well as for the core collection that supports Bard's liberal arts undergraduate program. However, the library strives to limit the number of copies purchased by promoting the use of electronic resources.

Gifts and Donations - The limitations connected to gifts and donations are related to the condition of the materials in question (see Condition of Materials below) and the scope of our collection. Items with special requirements are not generally accepted. Please review the Gifts section of our policy for complete information regarding donations to Stevenson Library.

Condition of Materials - The library acquires materials in new or like new condition; however, exceptions may be granted in regards to gifts and items for special collections and/or replacement of rare materials (see Special Requirements and Conditions below).

Special Requirements and Conditions - The library has limited accommodation for items with special requirements and conditional issues (rare books, expensive art and photography books, special music scores etc.). These materials have restrictions on access and use and do not circulate like regular materials. In order for a patron to access them they must see a librarian or staff member.

I. Cooperative Collection Development

Stevenson Library is involved with a variety of resource sharing relationships, such as ConnectNY, the Oberlin Group Libraries, and the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council (SENYLRC) as outlined under Partnerships. Occasionally items not held by any other participating libraries may be purchased for inclusion in Stevenson Library's collection to support resource sharing initiatives as well as interlibrary loan. Furthermore, Stevenson Library may choose to forgo purchasing an item when another participating library or multiple participating libraries already hold the item.⁹

II. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS AND FORMATS

A. Subject Areas

Each of the following subject areas has individual collection goals and priorities. However, in general our collection collects at a minimum level of supporting instructional needs with the goal of collecting research level materials. The scale below is used to determine the level at which specific subject areas are collected:

Conspectus Levels

- 0 = Out of Scope
- 1 = Minimal Information Level
- 2 = Basic Information Level
- 3 = Study or Instructional Support Level
- 4 = Research Level
- 5 = Comprehensive Level

1. American Studies¹⁰

1.1 Purpose and Program Description

The Stevenson Library seeks to support the American Studies program by providing access to a range of primary and secondary sources that record the American experience. Being a multidisciplinary program, collections for American Studies will be a collaborative effort between subject area specialists. Subject areas that study the American experience are as follows:

⁹ Some the information about the cooperative collection is based on *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011) and Bard College's *Library Info* (2012).

¹⁰ The format of this section is based on Columbia University's *African-American Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

history, literature, politics, economics, culture and society. Additional sources that portray America and the American experience from a global perspective will also be included in the collection.

We collect texts and primary electronic resources in the following genres: essays, novels, autobiographies, photographs, historical documents, newspapers, films, songs and websites. All American time periods are supported.

The library supports the needs of both lower and upper level undergraduate students in the American studies program. Selective resources for faculty will also be considered.¹¹

1.2 General Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

Overall, the Stevenson Library's collection is at the study and instructional support level (level 3); however, the collection development administration is striving to move parts of the collection to the research level (level 4).

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of American Studies.

Selection aids include, but are not limited to:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE (Primary), Library Journal
- Subject Bibliographies: America: History and Life, Historical Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Requests from students and faculty

1.3 Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

Stevenson library collects monographs, periodicals, electronic resources, student projects and reference resources extensively; audio-visual materials, essays, novels, autobiographies, photographs, historical documents, newspapers, films, and songs selectively. Textbooks are excluded.

¹¹ The information listed here is based on Bard College's *American Studies: Academics and Catalogue* (n.d.).

Publishing Dates Covered

We collect 21st and 20th century materials extensively and 19th century and earlier materials selectively.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on topics from all American time periods extensively.

Languages

We primarily collect materials in the English-language; however, other languages will be collected selectively as they relate to the American Studies program.

Place of Publication

We collect American publications extensively and foreign publications selectively.

2. Art and Art History¹²

2.1. Purpose and Program Description

The Library seeks to support research in the history of Western art for all periods (including contemporary and popular art), classical art, Islamic art, Asian art and African art. Since the focus of Bard College's art program is on visual arts and culture, this is our main emphasis with selecting materials. Our collection in conjunction with the Bard College Visual Resources Center supports the needs of undergraduate students, the teaching faculty and visiting artists and lecturers.

2.2. Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The Library's current collection commitments, based upon available resources, are at level 3. This is across all subjects in art and art history. Our goal is to eventually collect at level 4 for the increasing research needs of our students and faculty.

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Art and Art History.

Selection aids include, but are not limited to:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog

¹² This section is based on Columbia University's *Fine Arts Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.) and information from Bard College's Art Program homepage.

- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE
- Subject Bibliographies: Art Abstracts, Art Index Retrospective, ARTBibliographies Modern, Bibliography of the History of Art
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Faculty and Student Requests

2.3. Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, electronic resources, periodicals, reference materials and scholarly series extensively. Artist books, annuals and microforms are collected selectively. Textbooks, maps and dissertations are rarely acquired. We do not presently collect newspapers, manuscripts, audio-visual materials or catalogs dealing with this subject. The Bard College Visual Resources Center is in charge of collecting visual media materials.

Publishing Dates Covered

The Library collects current publications and 20th century materials extensively, 19th century and earlier materials rarely.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on all chronological periods.

Language of Materials

We collect works in English extensively; and French, German, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish selectively.

Place of Publication

We collect American, British and Canadian materials extensively; French, German, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish materials selectively.

3. Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures¹³

3.1 Purpose and Program Description

Bard's Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures (FLCL) program focuses on the interdisciplinary approach to the critical appreciation and mastery of languages. Areas of concentration include all levels of linguistic skills as well as a critical analysis of the culture and literature of the language studied.

¹³ The format of this section is based on Columbia University's *Italian Languages and Literatures Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

The FLCL's state-of-the-art Center for Foreign Languages and Cultures offers primary support for the program. The Stevenson Library collections act as supplemental support to the Center by providing additional resources for foreign language study in the following subject areas: literature, philosophy, history and theology, art history, music and cinema.

The library supports undergraduate study in the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Ancient Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.¹⁴

3.2 Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The Library's collection is at the study or instructional support level (level 3).

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures.

Selection aids include, but are not limited to:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE (Primary), Library Journal
- Subject Bibliographies: Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Foreign Language and Literature Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography
- Curricular Information (including Course Catalog)
- Requests from students and faculty

3.3. Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, periodicals, electronic resources extensively; senior projects, reference resources, and audio-visual materials selectively. Textbooks and juvenile materials are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

We collect current and 20th century materials extensively and 19th century and earlier materials selectively.

¹⁴ The information listed here is based on Bard College's *Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures: Academics and the Center for Foreign Languages and Cultures* (n.d.).

Chronological Scope

We collect current, 20th century, 19th century, and earlier publications extensively.

Languages of Materials

We collect Spanish, Italian, Chinese, and Russian extensively and Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Ancient Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit selectively.

Place of Publication

We collect North American and Western European publications extensively and Latin American, Eastern European, and Asian publications selectively.

4. Historical Studies¹⁵**4.1 Purpose and Program Description**

The Stevenson Library supports the College's Historical Studies program in the following areas: global history, African and African diaspora studies, American history, European history, Asian history and Russian and Soviet history. All periods including ancient, medieval, early modern and modern are supported. Additionally, the Library supports the program's topical and disciplinary specializations which include environmental history, urban history, diplomatic history, ethnic history, African American history, history of gender and sexuality, history of ideas, history of science and technology. The collection supports the needs of undergraduate students and faculty.¹⁶

4.2. Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The Library's collection is at the study or instructional support level (level 3).

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Historical Studies.

Selection aids include, but are not limited to:¹⁷

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)

¹⁵ The format of this section is based on Columbia University's *History of the United States & Western Europe Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

¹⁶ The programs listed here are based on information in Bard College's *Historical Studies: Curriculum* (2005).

¹⁷ Some of the selection aids listed here are based on information in Stevenson Library's *Historical Studies Subject Guide* (2012).

- Current Reviews: CHOICE, Library Journal
- Subject Bibliographies: America: History and Life, Bibliography of Asian Studies, Historical Abstracts, International Medieval Bibliography, ITER – Gateway to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance
- Curricular Information (including Course Catalog)
- Requests from students and faculty

4.3 Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, periodicals, electronic resources, student projects and reference resources extensively; audio-visual materials selectively. Textbooks are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

We collect 21st and 20th century materials extensively and 19th century and earlier materials selectively.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on topics from all time periods extensively.

Languages of Materials

We collect English, French and German extensively and Chinese, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish selectively.

Place of Publication

We collect American, British, Canadian, French and German materials extensively and Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish materials selectively.

5. Mathematics¹⁸

5.1 Purpose and Program description

Mathematics is considered to be the core of all scientific research and education, and sometimes even life itself. The interdisciplinary approach that is used at Bard College gives the faculty and student body the opportunity to acquire knowledge, work on research or simply follow their own need of knowledge in areas that are of particular interest and value to them. The library's purpose is to support the Mathematics department on that journey by providing the most valuable and current information available that will benefit all patron levels - undergraduate, graduate, faculty and staff.

¹⁸ Some of the information here is based on Bard College's Mathematics Department website (n.d.) as well as Columbia University's *Mathematics Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

The following areas of specialization are connected with the Mathematics Department's research focus:

- Pure mathematics
- Applied mathematics
- Algebra and computational mathematics
- Geometry
- Knot theory
- Probability

5.2 Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

According to our collection goals and scope, resources in mathematics are currently collected at level 3 with some advanced research materials at level 4.

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Mathematics.

Some of the selection aids that we use are:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE
- Subject Bibliographies: MathSciNet
- Curricular Information (including Course Catalog)
- Requests from students and faculty
- Subject specialists, faculty and students requests and recommendations

5.3 Formats and coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, periodicals and series extensively; electronic resources, student projects, faculty research work and reference resources selectively; audio-visual materials and textbooks are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

The focus of our collection is to provide the most current information available; therefore we collect titles from the 20th century to the present, extensively. All other publications dates are selectively collected, based on merit, recommendations and request from faculty and members, overall value to the curriculum and library collection.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on the 20 century extensively, other periods selectively.

Languages of Materials

The Library collects Western European languages extensively, and other language materials selectively.

Place of Publication

We focus primarily on North American and Western European publications. Other places of publication are considered selectively depending on the value of the material for the department.

6. Music¹⁹

6.1. Purpose and Program Description

The Stevenson Library seeks to support the Bard music program and its focus on performance, composition and historical analysis. Through examining theory, history and performance, the program covers four major areas of specialization which include:

- Jazz and related African American traditions
- European and American classical music
- Electronic and experimental music
- Ethnomusicology

The Library also supports the Bard College Conservatory of Music by providing access to materials and resources that aid training and performance. We support the needs of undergraduate and graduate students, the teaching faculty and staff members in all aspects of musical studies and research at Bard.

During the last ten years the Bard music program has seen expansion along with the addition of the Bard College Conservatory of Music program. There are now more undergraduates and graduate students as well as faculty teaching in this subject area. These new courses emphasize both traditional music studies and also interdisciplinary approaches to musical education.

Bard College also houses the John Cage Trust and its archives (<http://johncage.org/symposium.html>), so we have an extended focus on collecting materials related to electronic and experimental 20th century music. This is an area where research level materials are emphasized.

¹⁹ Some of the information listed here is based on Bard College's website (n.d), Bard College's Music Department (n.d) and Columbia University Libraries' *Music Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

6.2 Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The Library's current collection commitments, based upon available resources, for music are at level 3. Our collecting goal, however, is at level 4 due to the recent expansion of the music programs.

The Library's areas of established concentration in this subject include:

- Music theory – 3
- Musical performance – 3
- Music history – 3
- Ethnomusicology – 3
- Electronic and experimental music – 4
- African American music including jazz and blues – 3
- Popular music – 3
- Musical Scores – 3

Our musical score collection includes the works of prominent Western music composers (over 300) as well as works in other musical traditions including folk, American popular music, blues, jazz and rock. We only select full and/or study scores for purchase (those without parts). This is due to security and maintenance issues with our score collection.

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Music.

Selection aids include but are not limited to:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE (Primary), New York Times Book Reviews
- Subject Bibliographies: RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale)
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Faculty and Student Requests

6.3 Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs and scores without parts extensively; electronic resources, reference materials, compact discs, periodicals and scholarly series selectively; scores with parts, textbooks, LP records and other audio-visual materials are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

Our collection has current and 20th century publications extensively and 19th century and earlier materials selectively.

Chronological Scope

The Library collects materials on current, 20th century, 19th century, and earlier dates extensively.

Language of Materials

We collect works in English extensively; and French, German, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish selectively.

Place of Publication

We collect American, British and Canadian materials extensively; French, German, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish materials selectively.

7. Philosophy²⁰

7.1 Purpose and Program Description

The Stevenson Library supports the College's philosophy program in the following areas:

- History of Philosophy
- Ethics
- Metaphysics
- Epistemology
- Logic
- Philosophy of Language and Aesthetics

Furthermore, the Library supports the program's several annual seminars that are dedicated to the work of one philosopher. The seminars concentrate on the following philosophers: Aristotle, Plato, Freud, Hegel, Heidegger, Hume, William James, Kant, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre and Wittgenstein. The collection supports the needs of undergraduate students and faculty.²¹

7.2 Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

²⁰ The format of this section is based on Columbia University's *Philosophy Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

²¹ The programs listed here are based on information in Bard College's *Academics: Philosophy* (n.d.).

The Library's collection is at the study or instructional support level (level 3).

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Philosophy.

Selection aids include, but are not limited to:²²

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE, Library Journal
- Subject Bibliographies: Religion & Philosophy Collection (Ebsco)
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Faculty and Student Requests

7.3 Formats and Coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, periodicals, electronic resources, student projects and reference resources extensively; audio-visual materials selectively. Textbooks are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

We collect 21st and 20th century materials extensively and 19th century and earlier materials selectively.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on topics from all time periods extensively.

Languages of Material

We collect English, French, and German extensively and Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin and Russian selectively.

Place of Publication

We collect American, British, Canadian, French and German materials extensively and Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish materials selectively.

8. Physics²³

²² Some of the selection aids listed here is based on information in Stevenson Library's *Philosophy Subject Guide* (2012).

²³ Some of the information listed here is based on Bard College's Physics Department website (n.d) and Columbia University's *Physics Subject Policy Statement* (n.d.).

8.1 Purpose and Program description

Our library seeks to support the Physics Department in its theoretical, research and experimental studies at the undergraduate level as well as for faculty and staff members working in the field. The Physics department has a partnership program with University of Moscow and we have a selected physics collection in Russian as well.

The following areas of specialization are connected with the Physics Department at Bard College:

- Condensed Matter Physics
- Cosmology and Astrophysics
- High Energy Physics
- Nuclear Physics,
- Mathematical Physics,
- Particle Physics
- Biophysics

8.2 Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The library collects materials for physics at level 3. However, some of our periodicals and research resources are collected at level 4 (Periodicals are one of the most important additions to the collection in the effort to keep our students and faculty current with events, news and recent developments in the field of physics).

The Subject Specialist Librarian in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director is responsible for selecting materials in the area of Physics.

Some of the selection aids that we use are:

- WorldCat (OCLC)
- Connect NY Union Catalog
- GOBI (Global Online Bibliographic Information)
- Current Reviews: CHOICE
- Recommendations at <http://phys.org/>
- Curricular Information (including the Course Catalog)
- Faculty and Student Requests

8.3 Formats and coverage

Formats Collected

We collect monographs, periodicals and series extensively; electronic resources, student projects, faculty research work and reference resources selectively; audio-visual materials and textbooks are excluded.

Publishing Dates Covered

Our collection is focused on keeping our faculty and staff current, therefore our priority is on collecting editions of the 20th and 21st centuries, and especially on works published in the last 15 years. 19th century and earlier publications are rarely collected.

Chronological Scope

We collect materials focusing on most current chronological period.

Languages of Materials

The Library collects major Western European languages as well as some Slavic languages, more specifically Russian, Czech and Ukrainian selectively.

Place of Publication

Most of our collection focuses extensively on North American and major Western European places of publication, however we do have a selection of materials published in other countries, for example China.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Gifts²⁴

The Stevenson Library welcomes and encourages gifts that support the educational mission and activities of Bard College. From modest gifts to large contributions (including bequests and endowments), we rely on donors to help us sustain our mission and provide valuable resources and special collections to our users.

Gifts of money are greatly appreciated and provide the Library opportunities to expand current collections and subscriptions to electronic resources. The Library also appreciates gifts of the following materials that are appropriate to the scope of our collection and which are in good to excellent condition. This includes:

- Books
- CDs
- Music scores

²⁴ Some of the information listed here is based on Cornell University Library Gift Policy and Stevenson Library's *Donor Information* [Brochure] (n.d.).

- DVDs

The library does not accept gifts that are individual issues of journals or incomplete runs of journals, outdated materials or equipment, LP recordings or videos. The library will also refuse gifts that are in poor condition.

The following represent key aspects for donating materials to the Stevenson Library:

- The donor should contact the Collection Development Librarian or the Library Director to discuss and review all gifts.
- The donor should provide the library with a detailed list of materials being donated. For each item please indicate title, author/composer, ISBN, publisher and copyright/publishing date as well as the general condition.
- All donated materials must be accompanied by a completed Gift Form (Appendix 3).
- The acceptance of a gift does not insure that all items will be added to our collection.
- Donated items that are not added to the Library's collection may be sold, donated or disposed of as determined by the Library staff.
- Once the Library accepts the gift, the donor has no rights in determining what happens to the gifted materials. All materials become the property of the Stevenson Library.
- The Library generally will only accept gifts without restrictions on the retention, location, cataloging treatment, and other considerations related to its use, maintenance, or removal.
- The Library will only provide a title list of items added to the collection. We will not supply a list of materials that are not added to our collection.

We also suggest that donors, for their own interests, obtain appraisals of their gifts for income tax purposes. Such appraisals are the responsibility of the donor and should be done before materials are given to the Library. Stevenson Library cannot by law supply valuation of the item(s) for tax purposes. This is in accordance with the IRS publication 561: "Determining the Value of Donated Property" (Rev. April 2007) that states on pages 10 and 11 that a "Qualified Appraiser" excludes individuals, such as "the donee of the property." The acceptance of a gift does not in any way imply Stevenson Library's endorsement of its appraisal.

The following IRS Forms relate to library donations:

- Publication 561 - Determining the Value of Donated Property
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p561.pdf>
- Publication 526 – Charitable Contributions.
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf>
- Form 8282 – Donee Information Return
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8282.pdf>

- Form 8283 – Noncash Charitable Contributions
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8283.pdf>
- Instructions for Form 8283
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i8283.pdf>

B. Electronic Resources²⁵

1. Purpose

Stevenson Library aims to provide members of the Bard College community with digital access to information resources through personal computers in offices, dorm rooms and at home as well as through public terminals available in the library, at the campus computing centers and other locations on campus. We offer a variety of electronic resources to cover an array of informational needs that our patrons have, and we are also committed to teaching our users how to use these resources. This commitment in meeting our users' needs involves participating in consortia like the Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, which offers discounted access to more electronic resources than we could purchase on our own. We also review our electronic resource subscriptions yearly to assess their continued value to our community. These decisions account for budget, usage, and information quality and access in determining which resources remain vital to the college and its educational mission. Our goal is to offer a breadth and depth of digitally-accessed information to support Bard College's curriculum and our users.

2. Selection Guidelines (see the Conspectus Levels for explanation of collection levels)

The Library generally collects electronic resources at levels 3 and 4 to provide support for instructional needs and faculty and student research.

3. Selection Criteria for Electronic Resources

Subject matter relevant to Bard's educational mission and curriculum are of primary concern for selection. This includes selecting electronic resources that:

- Have an appropriate intellectual level, quality of information and depth of coverage.
- Come from reputable and authoritative producers.
- Contain information that is accurate and up-to-date.
- Offer electronic formats that enable fast and reliable accessibility.

4. Formats

²⁵ Some aspects of this electronic resources policy are based on the Columbia College Chicago library's *Electronic Resources Collection Development Policy* (2011).

The Library selects electronic resources that offer the following formats (with preference given to full-text access):

- Citation/abstract databases
- Full-text article and reference sources
- Graphics and multimedia files
- E-books

5. Access

The Library delivers access to electronic resources via our website and through our online catalog. We rely on IP authentication to provide access to users on campus. Off campus users have remote access through our proxy server. Therefore, the selection of materials for electronic access is based on meeting these standards in terms of accessibility.

User-Friendliness

We select electronic resources based on their meeting conventional expectations in regards to:

- Availability of on-screen help and tutorials.
- Basic and advanced search capabilities.
- Compatibility with Mac, PC and other platforms as well as standard web browsing software.
- Ability to print, save and email results or articles.
- Capability to export and save citations.

Cost & Vendor Factors

The following relates to considerations when dealing with cost and vendor support in providing electronic resources to our users:

- Cost-effectiveness (including availability of backfiles) and our capability to sustain the cost in the long term.
- Potential usage and uniqueness of information.
- Preference is given to vendors that provide responsive and comprehensive technical support as well as training and thorough documentation of their resources.

Technical Factors

This section relates to technical needs in regards to the selection of electronic resources. We select materials based on whether they:

- Meet the technical standards of the industry.
- Allow for local customization and adequate administration of resources.

- Are compatible with the Library's existing (and future) hardware/software.
- Offer accurate and reliable usage statistics.

Special Considerations

The following selection criteria pertain to choosing an online version of a journal or reference source over its print counterpart. The electronic version will be considered if:

- The electronic format offers enhancements or increased informational value to our users.
- The electronic format has the same or extended coverage of a title.
- The electronic version is more cost-effective.

6. License Agreements

The Stevenson Library purchases access to and data from a variety of publishers and vendors who often require signed license agreements. Therefore, the library negotiates these licenses based on meeting the needs of our users and supporting the curriculum and mission of the College. The Collection Development Librarian, the Information Technology Librarian and the Library Director coordinate and participate in this process to review and submit signed license agreements on a case-by-case basis. The library also relies on consortial representation in negotiating access to further electronic resources.

7. Requests for New Subscriptions/Acquisitions

All requests for new electronic resources should be directed to the Information Technology Librarian and will be reviewed in conjunction with the Collection Development Librarian, the Library Director and the reference staff for inclusion in our electronic collections.

The following measures will be taken in this process:

- Consulting with faculty and appropriate library staff to determine whether the product(s) fulfill our selection criteria for electronic resources.
- Determining our purchasing options (including consortial pricing).
- Requesting and starting a free trial of the product(s).
- Reviewing and evaluating the product(s) taking into consideration student, faculty and library staff feedback.

Based on cost, perceived need and usage and the degree to which the product fulfills our selection criteria, the Library will: 1) Decide whether or not to acquire the resource and 2) If a decision to acquire is made, prioritize its purchase in relation to other electronic resources within budgetary constraints.

8. Review of Electronic Resources For Cancellation

The following represents criteria for which the library may choose to cancel a subscription to an electronic resource. These include, but are not limited to:

- Low usage statistics over a significant period of time.
- Pricing or cost-effectiveness becomes prohibitive of our continued subscription.
- The content no longer meets the needs of the Bard College user community.
- A more competitive and better version of the product becomes available.
- Changes are made to the license agreement or the parties involved cannot reach an agreement.
- The product's content is duplicated in another database or resource.

C. Evaluation²⁶

Keeping existing collections current and in usable condition is part of the evaluation process that the Collection Development Librarian oversees at the Stevenson Library with the help of Subject Specialists and the Library Director. Final evaluation decisions regarding the condition and value of library materials in consideration of repairing, weeding, recycling and replacing lost or stolen items is the responsibility of the Collection Development Librarian. This position also evaluates the collection based on recommendations of the Subject Specialists, faculty and students and determines which selection aids are used to evaluate current and potential resource purchasing. The Collection Development Librarian also works with the Information Technology Librarian and Library Director in evaluating electronic resources. All final decisions in regards to evaluation are overseen directly by the Library Director.

D. Duplicate Copies²⁷

Stevenson Library will acquire one copy per title in the general circulating collection. However, in unusual circumstances, additional copies will be considered. The maximum number of copies to be retained at any one time is three.

When duplicate copies are acceptable:

- When materials are produced by faculty members
- When materials are expected to be in high demand
- When additional materials are needed to support the curriculum

²⁶ Some of the information listed here is based on Daemen College Library's Collection Development policy.

²⁷ The format of this section is based on Hope College's Library's *Collection Development Policy Statement* (2009).

Audio-visual materials: We do not purchase duplicate copies of audio-visual materials. However, in some circumstances, a DVD copy will be purchased to replace a VHS tape, particularly when requested for course reserves.

Course Reserves: One copy of any library item needed for a course should support the class size. If additional copies are needed, then the library will consider acquiring the materials.

Music Recordings: Generally, we have one copy per recording. However, in unique circumstances, duplicate copies will be considered for purchase.

Senior Projects: Two copies of each Senior Project will be acquired as part of the library's collection. The library receives one copy in print and one copy in digital format as part of the formal submission process for senior theses through our Digital Commons online repository.²⁸

E. Deselection and Weeding²⁹

The periodic weeding of the Stevenson Library collection is a vital function of collection management. This function is essential in sustaining an effective and up-to-date library collection that reflects the current curriculum. Subject Librarian Specialists in consultation with the Collection Development Librarian and the Library Director are responsible for weeding the collection in their respective subject areas.

Materials considered for withdrawal include:³⁰

- Audiovisual and other digitized resources that are in formats no longer supported by the library.
- Items superseded by new editions or new formats (e.g. electronic).
- An item that is in such poor condition that it is not economically feasible or intellectually necessary to repair.
- Materials which no longer support the current curriculum.
- Materials with outdated or inaccurate information.
- Multiple copies of seldom used materials.
- Newspapers older than 24 months.

Print journals are kept indefinitely.

²⁸ Some of the information listed here is based on Daemen College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2011), Sojourner Truth Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2010), and Bard College's *Library Info* (2012).

²⁹ Some of the information listed here is based on Hunter College Libraries' *Collection Development Policy* (n.d.) and Daemen College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2011)..

³⁰ Some of the criteria listed here are based on information in Daemen College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2011) and Hunter College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (n.d.).

F. Library Material Challenges³¹

Bard College and more specifically Stevenson library both strive to avoid and discourage censorship, and guard intellectual freedom in all its forms. Therefore, we hope that by making our collection development process transparent, our collection policy available online for review by our patrons, and giving background information on the processes of censorship and intellectual freedom challenges that our patrons will gain a better understanding of what our values and procedures are when intellectual freedom is concerned.

However, it is the library patron's right and privilege to challenge materials from our collection based on their own opinions, views and understanding. If you would like to exercise that right, please contact the librarians at the reference desk or print out the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form (see Appendix 2).

In a situation when a material owned by the library is challenged, we follow the procedures listed in Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials (see next). In our quest for intellectual freedom a great help is the information and support provided by the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom>), and we strongly encourage any patron considering Library Material Challenge to review this informaton. For more information on censorship and intellectual freedom, please see Appendix 1 Intellectual Freedom, Challenges and Censorship.

G. Reconsideration of Library Materials

Stevenson Library's materials selection process actively involves members of the community by taking into consideration recommendations and requests by faculty, staff and students on equal ground. However, each member of Bard College (faculty, staff and/or student) and each patron of Stevenson Library has the right to challenge any particular item included in our collection.

If you have objections or concerns about a particular material, we encourage you to follow our guidelines for raising your concerns in the library.

Guidelines for Raising a Library Material Concern

- If you have concerns about a material your first step will be to contact the library and discuss your concerns with our staff. Our staff is specially trained to address such issues and can provide information, policies and legal references to help you with your concerns.

³¹ Some of the information here is based on Arizona State Library's Archives and Public Records, *Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Policy* (2010).

- If you feel that the issue has not been resolved and you would like to take a further step, our library staff will offer for you to file a Reconsideration of Library Materials Form. The process of submission of such a request involves the following steps:

Filing Reconsideration of Library Material Form

Step 1

Print and fill out the Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form (see Appendix 2)

Step 2

Submit the already filled form in person at Bard College or email it to the Collection Development Librarian at cdlib@bard.edu.

Step 3

Wait a thirty day period to receive an official follow up response from the Library.

IV. APPROVAL AND REVISIONS³²

A. Collection Development Policy Approval

The creation of this Collection Development Policy represents a collaborative effort between the Collection Development Librarian, the Library Director and other library staff. The College's Dean of Academics has final approval of the collection policy in regards to it meeting the standards and limitations necessary to support the mission and goals of the College.

B. Approval Procedure:

1. The Collection Development Policy is developed and created by the Collection Development Librarian. Suggestions from other library professionals and staff are at the discretion of the Collection Development Librarian.
2. Once complete, the policy is presented to the Library Director, and revisions will be addressed as necessary.
3. Upon approval, the Library Director presents the Collection Development Policy to the Dean of Academics.
4. Once the Dean of Academics has approved the Policy, it is considered official.

³² The format of this section is based on Daemen College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2011).

C. Revisions Procedure:

1. Revisions of the Collection Development Policy will follow the same process as the approval procedures.
2. A review of the Collection Development Policy will be conducted on a yearly basis by the Collection Development Librarian.
3. Subject Area Policies will be reviewed periodically with a complete assessment once every three years.
4. All revisions and updates will be indicated in the footer of the Policy.³³

³³ Some of the information listed here is based on Daemen College Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2011) and Walter T. Helmke Library's *Collection Development Policy* (2008).

V. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Intellectual Freedom, Challenges and Censorship

1. What is intellectual freedom?³⁴

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights states the description of intellectual freedom:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, accessed through <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a19>, 6/18/2012)

2. Censorship

2.1 What is censorship?

The form of control over any kind of information, as to access or content of the same, is considered a form of censorship. Censorship may involve official inquiries about materials (books, audio, video etc.) and/or the forcing of limitation, changes in access or content to these materials, as well as unofficial and intimidating tactics in severe cases. Censorship might engage the whole content of the material, for example a whole book, or only parts of the material (particular phrases or sections of the book).

2.2. Types of Censorship in the Library

It is important to understand that the censorship has many faces, and sometimes behind censor actions are hiding good intentions. This is particularly valid for the “hidden censorship” that is often misunderstood and misrepresented.

Explicit Censorship

External Censorship

In cases of external censorship, the censor is not connected to the library in any way. Such censors can be organizations (for profit or nonprofit), institutions, Government and its agencies, public administration and individuals.

³⁴ Some of the information here is based on Universal Declaration of Human Rights, retrieved through the United Nations' official website.

Internal Censorship

Cases of internal censorship are based on censor behavior amongst the library administration and staff including the library's director, library supervisors, subject specialists, librarians and supporting personnel.

Hidden Censorship

Self-censorship

This is one of the most important types of censorship to understand because often people do not realize that they engage in it. For example, making selection decisions based on reasons to reject rather than to acquire is a common type of self-censorship in collection development. Also when trying to avoid personal biases in making selection decisions, librarians do not often realize that they are becoming their own censors.

Selection as form of censorship

Not only materials that are already acquired by the library are threatened by censorship, but also materials that intentionally get omitted in the selection process. By actively avoiding titles that are known to be challenged, the collection development librarian may promote censorship.

2.3 Who can be a censor?

A censor can be practically anyone:

- The person making the selection decision (self-censorship)
- Government and institutions
- Organizations and members of the community
- Library staff
- Patrons
- Anyone with objections regarding the content or access of a particular material

2.4. Top reasons for censorship and banned books³⁵

Although statistics show that the percentage of challenged books in academic libraries is relatively smaller compared to public or school libraries (view these statistics online at: <https://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/frequentlychallenged/challengesbytype/index.cfm>), it is not unheard of for such events to occur. Potential reasons for challenges in academic libraries include:

- Obscenity and audience appropriateness
- Racism and Gender/Sex/Sexual-orientation issues

³⁵ Some of the information here is based on the American Library Association's *Challenges Statistics* (n.d.).

- Lack of balance in representing controversial issues
- Questionable source/truth of materials

Appendix 2. Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form³⁶

Please fill out and return in person at the Stevenson Library or via e-mail cdlib@bard.edu.

Stevenson Library, Bard College
Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

1. Personal information

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization (if applicable) _____

Address 1 _____

Address 2 _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____

Preferred method of contact: ___ phone ___ e-mail ___ regular mail

Are you a Member of Bard College: Yes / No (Please circle the appropriate answer)

2. Material for reconsideration information

a) Type of material (Please, circle all that applies)

Book Textbook Video Magazine Serial Article Audio Recording Newspaper
 Electronic resource Library Program Other

b) Title _____

c) Author (if applicable) _____

d) Electronic address (if applicable) _____

e) Reasons for reconsideration request

2. What action/position are you expecting the college library to take after reviewing your reconsideration form?

³⁶ Some the information here is based *Daemen College Library Collection Development Policy* (2011).

3. Have you personally reviewed this material: Yes / No / Other_____

4. Any other details/information you would like to provide in addition to the requested information?

What happens next?

Once you submit this form, the Collection Development Librarian will review and present it to the attention of the Library Director, who will bring it to the attention of the Bard College Dean of Academics and the Vice President. In thirty days you will receive a written response to your request.

This form has been reviewed and approved by the Stevenson Library Director.

Date 6/19/2012

Appendix 3. Gift Form**Gift Form - Stevenson Library, Bard College***Please include this form with all donated materials.*Contact the Collection Development Librarian at
(845) 758-7620 or cdlib@bard.edu with questions.**Date of Gift:** _____

<i>Donor Information</i>
Name: _____
Email: _____
Address: _____ _____ _____

1. Please indicate the total number of items being donated by material type:

Hardcover(s): _____ Paperback(s): _____ CD(s): _____ DVD(s): _____ Other: _____

2. Please attach a detailed list of materials being donated. For each item please indicate title, author/composer, ISBN, publisher and copyright/publishing date as well as the general condition.**3. Should this gift receive an acknowledgement?** [] Yes [] No*If yes, please give the name and address of the acknowledge (if different from the donor information above).*Name:
_____Address:

_____**4. Should gifts accepted for addition to our collection be given a gift plate?** [] Yes [] No

If yes, please provide the wording you would like put on the gift plate:

5. Use the following space to supply any additional information pertaining to this gift that you consider important. You may give further information about the donor or indicate reasons why this gift is being given to Stevenson Library.

The donor gives Stevenson Library of Bard College the item(s) described above and agrees that the library will hereafter have sole discretion in the use, display and disposition of these items. In donating these materials to the Library, there is no guarantee that the items will be added to the collection. Items not added to the collection may be sold, donated or disposed of as determined by the Library Staff.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 4. 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 that 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.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.³⁷

³⁷ This information is based entirely on the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* (1996).

Appendix 5. 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, 2004.³⁸

³⁸ This information is based entirely on the American Library Association's *Freedom to Read Statement* (2004).

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