

Douglas Library's Display Policy

Purpose

The Douglas Library's Display Policy provides a basis for the display of library materials by library staff, informs the public about the principles and criteria upon which these decisions are made, and promotes the purposes of the library's mission, which is: **"To provide a cultural center for all residents of the town of North Canaan and surrounding communities. The library is committed to providing free, equal access to information, ideas, and knowledge through books and other resources. The library believes in and supports intellectual freedom for all."**

Policy

The Douglas Library recognizes the importance of displays as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents. With a strong focus on encouraging the love of reading, lifelong learning, and creativity, we establish responsive connections between the diverse needs of our community, our collections, our digital services, and an array of engaging displays. Our displays play an essential role in informing and inspiring individuals of all ages and diverse backgrounds. Displays are provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all residents, represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of residents. These displays reflect our commitment to the community and show that we believe an engaging library plays a role in building a strong community.

Principles and Criteria

The final responsibility for the display of library materials is held by the Library Director. Library staff uses the following criteria in making decisions about display topics, materials, and accompanying resources:

- Community needs and interest
- Availability of display space
- Historical, cultural, or educational significance
- Connection to other community or national programs, exhibitions, or events
- Relation to library collections, resources, exhibits, and programs
- The Library may partner with other community agencies, organizations, educational institutions, or individuals to develop and present co-sponsored displays and exhibits.

The Library will strive to include a wide spectrum of opinions and viewpoints in library initiated displays and exhibits, as well as offer displays and exhibits that appeal to a range of ages, interests, and information needs. Library-initiated displays and exhibits should not exclude

topics, books, media, and other resources solely because they may be considered to be controversial.

The Library Director and librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop library displays. Acceptance of a display or exhibit topic by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Douglas Library of the content of the display or exhibit, or of the views expressed in the materials on display.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual but maintains that individuals can apply their values only to themselves. The selection of library materials is predicated on the customer's right of access to information and freedom from censorship. Selections will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the material itself.

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Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of or be seen by minors. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others. It is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to determine which library materials are appropriate for their children. The Douglas Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association (ALA) Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, the Library Bill of Rights and all relevant interpretations.

Controversial Materials

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

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

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.

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

Procedures for the Questioning of Library Displays by Patrons

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider programs to individuals/residents of North Canaan. Please see our Statement of Concern Policy and reconsideration form for further information on this process. The process requires the library director to evaluate the request for reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety, evaluate the challenged display against the collection development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date of receiving such request. The library director shall provide a copy of the library director's decision and report to the individual who submitted the form.

A library director is permitted to consolidate any requests for reconsideration of the same challenged display.

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Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

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

Location

This policy is housed on the Douglas Public Library

Website: <https://www.douglaslibrary.canaan.org/policies/>

A copy is maintained in the Library's Administration Office. This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168 Sec. 322, 323.

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