

*LIBRARY INITIATED PROGRAMS AS A RESOURCE**An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS*

Library initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education and recreation. Article 1 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves."

Library initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the library and to the library's primary function as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Library initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library initiated programs across language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise unserved populations to the resources of the library and provide access to information.

Library initiated programs "should not be proscribed or removed (or canceled) because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article 2 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of material for the library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library initiated programs are a library resource, and as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the library's policy-making body. These guidelines include an endorsement of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library initiated program are handled according to the same written policy and procedures which govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article 5 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The "right to use a library" encompasses all of the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library initiated programs. Libraries do not deny or abridge access to library resources, including library initiated programs, based on an individual's economic background and ability to pay.

Adopted January 27, 1982. Amended June 26, 1990, by the ALA Council.

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## LIBRARY INITIATED PROGRAMS AS A RESOURCE

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Library initiated programming is a library resource that provides information, education, and recreation to library users. Library initiated programming utilizes library staff, books, library and community resources, resource people, displays, and media presentations. The library often incorporates cooperative programming with other agencies, organizations, and educational institutions, as well as other resources, to communicate with library users. Library initiated programs should provide "for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all the people of the community the library serves," as stated in Article 1 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

The American Library Association believes that library sponsored programs, as well as library resources, "should not be proscribed or removed (or canceled) because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" (Article 2 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS).

A person's right to attend a library initiated program "should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views" (Article 5 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS).

A written policy on library initiated programming, approved by the library's policy-making body, should reflect the library's philosophy regarding free access to information and ideas. Similarly, concerns expressed regarding library initiated programs should be handled as they are for library resources.

Selection of library program topics, speakers, courses, classes, and resource materials should be made by library staff on the basis of the interests and needs of library users and the community. Library programming should not exclude topics, books, speakers, media, and other resources because they might be controversial.

Adopted January 27, 1982 by the ALA Council.

30#19.4  
1999-2600

53.1.10

## Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource

### An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education, and recreation. Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights* states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves."

Library-initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library-initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the library and to the library's primary function as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Library-initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise underserved populations to the resources of the library and provide access to information.

Library-initiated programs "should not be proscribed or removed [or canceled] because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article II of the *Library Bill of Rights*. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of material for the library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library-initiated programs are a library resource, and, as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the library's policy-making body. These guidelines should include an endorsement of the *Library Bill of Rights* and set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library-initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library-initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library-initiated programs are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library-initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The "right to use a library" encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries do not deny or abridge access to library resources, including library-initiated programs, based on an individual's economic background or ability to pay.

Adopted January 27, 1982; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000, by the ALA Council.

53.1.10

2000-2001 CD#17  
(2001 ALA Midwinter Meeting)

REPORT TO COUNCIL  
POLICY MONITORING COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 2001

In accordance with policy 5.6 of the *ALA Policy Handbook*, the Policy/Handbook Monitoring Committee (PMC) has reviewed all actions taken by the ALA Council during the 2000 Annual Conference for possible incorporation into, addition to, or changes to the *ALA Policy Handbook*. Based on Council action during the aforesaid meeting, the following additions and changes are recommended:

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Item 1. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.15 (Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation) be amended to read:**

The American Library Association stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including gender or sexual orientation. The Association also encourages librarians to proactively support the First Amendment rights of all library users regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Adopted 1993. Revised 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 CD#19.4)

**Item 2. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.3 (Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program) be amended to read:**

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval and which reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community. School library media professionals resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear or access via electronic means. Adopted 1986, revised 1990, 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 CD#19.4)

**Item 3. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.10 (Library Initiated Programs as a Resource) be amended to read:**

A policy on library initiated programming should set forth the library's commitment to free access to information and ideas for all users. Library staff select programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Libraries servicing multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Adopted 1982, revised 1990, 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Library Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 #CD19.4)

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## LIBRARY INITIATED PROGRAMS AS A RESOURCE

**working draft; do not quote for publication**

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Library initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education and recreation. Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights* states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves."

Library initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the library and to the library's primary function as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Library initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities [should] make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library initiated programs across [that cross] language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise unserved populations to the resources of the library and provide access to information.

Library initiated programs "should not be proscribed or removed (or canceled) because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article III of the *Library Bill of Rights*. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library initiated programs are a library resource, and as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the library's policy-making body. These guidelines [should] include an endorsement of the *Library Bill of Rights* and set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library initiated program[s] are handled according to the same written policy and procedures which govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

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