

Silas Bronson Library Display Policy

Purpose

The Silas Bronson Library's ("Library") Display Policy provides a basis for library staff to create displays of library materials and loaned materials, 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: "The Silas Bronson Library provides free public access in order to foster ideas, to promote education, to disseminate general information and to make a positive contribution to the cultural heritage of Waterbury and its environs, serving as the focal point for the enrichment of the community."

Principles and Criteria

Library displays are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all Waterbury residents. Library displays provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of Waterbury residents. Library displays are a resource for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas, promoting free expression and free access of ideas by Waterbury residents.

The final responsibility for the display of library materials is held by the Library Director, but day-to-day responsibility is shared by library employees who are professionally trained to curate and develop displays. Library staff use 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 range of varied and diverging 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 provides displays created or curated by librarians or other trained Library staff members as well as allowing displays created by members of the public or community groups to be exhibited in the Library with prior approval from the Library Director. Acceptance of a display or exhibit topic by the Library does not constitute an endorsement by the Silas Bronson Library of the content of the display or exhibit, or of the views expressed in the material 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 Connecticut 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.

The Silas Bronson Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the American Library Association (ALA) Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, and the Library Bill of Rights and all relevant interpretations.

Selection of materials for display 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.

Procedures for the Questioning of Library Displays

The Library limits consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individual residents of Waterbury. Please see our Review and Reconsideration Policy and Request for Reconsideration Form for further information on this process.