

COLLECTON DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Revised July 20, 2005, July 2009, June 2013, July 2017

Reviewed July 21, 2021

The purpose of this policy is to aid the library staff in selecting and acquiring, and deselecting a useful, representative collection of books and other materials to meet the needs of the community. This policy provides information to the public regarding the principal criteria for selection and deselection of materials and for declining to add materials to the collection.

SELECTION:

While a selection policy cannot replace the judgment of the librarians, by stating goals and indicating criteria, it will assist them in selecting from a vast array of available materials. This policy is created to clarify the process used when adding materials to the collection. It does not refer to readers' advisory service.

The Mabel C. Fry Public Library Board and staff believe in the right of free access to the library collection for all persons of all ages is essential to the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. Accordingly, the Library Bill of Rights* and Freedom to Read* statement have been adopted as a part of this policy.

The goal of the Mabel C. Fry Public Library is to serve as an educational institution by providing informational, educational, cultural, and recreational resources to groups and individuals of all ages in the service area, which is all of Canadian County.

To fulfill this goal, the library's objectives will be to:

Acquire, organize and make conveniently available to all people of the county a variety of materials including books, periodicals, newspapers, recordings (audio and video) and other print and non-print materials, in a variety of formats.

Maintain an up-to-date collection of materials, in all reasonable fields of knowledge, that are of permanent value, plus useful materials on current issues and items in current demand.

Consider the needs of not only the general public, but also the needs of business, labor, industry, professionals, government and community organizations. Special consideration will also be given to including materials, and referral service, to meet the needs of persons with visual or physical challenges who are unable to use conventional library materials.

*See attachments

Ultimate responsibility for the selection of library materials rests with the Librarian/Director. The Librarian/Director delegates to staff members the authority to interpret and apply the policy in developing the library collection. All staff members assigned responsibility for selecting library materials apply their professional knowledge and experience, as well as using other selection tools like professional journals, established lists and online reviewing source in making decisions. Suggestions of materials from library patrons are invited and given serious consideration.

Each piece of material or work must be considered in terms of its own merit and intended audience. All additions to the library collection must meet some of the following criteria:

1. Appeal to the interests and needs of individuals in the community
2. Permanent value as source materials
3. Vitality and originality of thought
4. Contemporary significance
5. Literary, artistic, or graphic quality
6. Entertaining presentation
7. Degree to which it provides viewpoints and subject coverage not otherwise found in the collection
8. Relevancy to Oklahoma and local heritage
9. Accuracy and documentation
10. Popular demand
11. Justifiable cost

Should a patron desire access to materials not included in our collection and not available in another Canadian county library, for whatever reason, the library staff will attempt to supply the material through the interlibrary loan process.

The library recognizes that some library materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some persons. Selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and serving the diverse interests of the library's patrons.

The library will not knowingly purchase pornographic materials and will not knowingly add or retain materials that are judicially determined to be illegal under Oklahoma or United States law.

Library materials will not be marked or labeled to show approval or disapproval of the contents. Responsibility for the reading interests of children rests with their parents and guardians. Selections of materials for adults will not be inhibited by the possibility that the materials may come into the possession of children. The library maintains a collection of materials for pre-school and elementary age children, but the children are not restricted to those collections and have access to the total library collection.

Responsibility for the selection of reading materials for children rests solely with their parents or legal guardians.

Patrons requesting materials in the collection be reconsidered may complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form.* After filing the request with the Librarian/Director, the library's professional staff members engaged in materials selection will review the request and respond to the patron.

If a patron does not agree with the decision of the Librarian/Director and staff, they may request a review of the decision by the Library Board. The Librarian/Director will report this information to the Library Board. The Library Board, at its next regularly scheduled meeting, will then determine if the material in question was selected according to this policy. The patron will be notified by the Librarian/Director of the Library Board's decision. Materials under reconsideration will remain in the collection until a final decision is made. Under no circumstances will the personal view or taste of the Librarian/Director, Staff or Library Board concerning the material be criteria in making a ruling. The determination will be made solely on the basis of compliance with the Collection Development Policy.

DESELECTION:

To maintain the effectiveness of the library's total collection, the library will, on an ongoing basis, attempt to systematically remove materials no longer useful. The library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Need for replacement is weighed with regard to several factors: number of duplicate copies, existence of adequate coverage of a field, similar material in the collection, later or more authoritative materials, as well as current demand for the particular title or subject. Memorial, honor and award materials will be deselected using the same standards as other materials in the collection.

Used materials brought to the library are being donated to the Friends of the Library for their book sale. The Librarian may select books from those items if selection criteria is met; especially in the instance of the need of a replacement copy. Subjects for memorial and honorarium materials may be suggested when money is contributed. However, selection criteria will still be met.

*See Attachment

Mabel C. Fry Public Library
Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

The Mabel C. Fry Public Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library materials to the Librarian, who, in turn, may assign this duty to other staff members. If you wish to request reconsideration of any library materials, please complete and return this form to the Librarian.

Title of item _____ Book__ Magazine__ Other__

Author of item _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Do you represent

___ Yourself

___ An organization (name) _____

___ Other group(name) _____

1. Did you read or view the entire work? _____ What parts did you read or view?

2. To what in the work do you object? (Be specific; cite pages, sections etc.)

3. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

4. In your opinion, is there anything good about this work?

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this work?

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this work by reviewers?

7. What would you like the library to do about this material?

___ Do not allow my child to check the material(s) out

___ Take it to the Library Board for reconsideration

___ Withdraw it from the collection

8. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated? _____

Signature _____ Date _____

This request will be reviewed by the Library's professional staff engaged in materials selection and you will receive a response.

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 which 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.

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.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses
The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores

National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression