

# **Collection Development**

## **Purpose of the Collection Development Plan**

The Collection Development Plan is used to guide the staff in acquiring, maintaining, and weeding library materials. The plan also serves to inform patrons of the philosophy behind these practices. The primary goal of collection development is to provide the best possible materials collection within the limits of space and funding.

## **Collection Review**

The Library Board supports the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and considers all materials selected under the Collection Development Plan to be protected.

The Library Board does recognize the right of patrons to question library materials. Patrons who wish to dispute a book or other material may speak with the Library Director. The patron will be given a copy of the Collection Development Plan. If, after reading the plan and/or discussing the matter with the Director, the patron is not satisfied, the patron may file a completed Request for Reconsideration form. A copy of the Request for Reconsideration form may be found at the end of this policy. These forms are also available at the circulation desk. The Director will review the title and write a letter of response to the patron. If there is further action requested by the patron, the Library Director will name a committee to examine the item in question. This committee will include the Director, a staff member, and a Library Board member. The committee will check reviews and determine whether the item conforms to the selection standards of this policy. The patron will be advised in writing of the committee's decision within 30 days.

## **Evaluation Policy**

The library collection is evaluated routinely. Materials are reviewed by staff members to locate collection weaknesses/strengths, missing items, and selections for weeding. Various methods are used to evaluate materials and may include one or more of the following: circulation reports, volume counts, patron requests, accuracy and currency of information, condition, and comparison to standard lists.

## **General Selection Criteria**

The following are the criteria for materials selected for inclusion in the library's collection, whether through purchase or gift:

- Current and anticipated needs and interests of the public
- Affordability
- Timeliness and accuracy of information
- Author's, artist's, or publisher's qualifications and/or reputation
- Inclusion in professional reviews
- Receipt or nominations for major awards or prizes
- Suitable format for library use

- Relationship to other items in collection
- Regional/local interest
- Quality of production
- Accessibility through Inter-Library Loans
- Existing subject coverage

No book or other material will be excluded because of the race, national origin, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious, or social views of the author or creator. Judgment for selection is made on the material as a whole and not on a particular passage, page or scene alone.

## **Gifts of Materials or Money for Memorial Purchases**

The library is grateful for unconditional gifts, and its collections have been enriched by contributions from individuals and groups. In accepting a gift, the library makes the following stipulations:

- The library reserves the right to decide whether a gift should be added to its collection. Gifts will be added if they meet the guidelines established by this policy. The following types of gift materials will not be added to the collection:
  1. Publications excluded by the collection development policy
  2. Out-of-date materials not of historical value
  3. A duplicate of an item already in the collection
  4. Material in poor physical condition
- The library reserves the right to remove items from the collection.
- Memorial books and materials will be selected with suggestions provided by the donor, if those suggestions meet the guidelines of this policy.

## **Principles of Access**

SWCPL serves as a resource for the various opinions and beliefs of the community, including controversial or opposing positions. The Library strives to support a collection that represents these diverse points of view. The inclusion of any item in the Library's collection does not constitute an endorsement of the item's content by the Library or the Board of Trustees.

The SWCPL Board of Trustees recognizes that full and confidential access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their rights as citizens. The Board also believes that reading, listening, and viewing of materials are individual and private matters. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others cannot be restricted.

The Library does not stand *in loco parentis*. We strongly encourage all parents and guardians to establish guidelines for their own children's use of library materials. Selection of adult collection materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that minors may see or utilize the materials.

The library collection will be organized and maintained to facilitate access. All materials are shelved on open shelves, freely accessible to the public. While materials may be organized to

facilitate use, they will not be labeled, restricted, sequestered, or altered because of any controversy about the subject matter, the author, or the potential audience. Materials will only be restricted to protect valuable or fragile items from theft or damage.

The Board recognizes the principles of the American Library Association's ***Freedom to Read Statement***, ***Freedom to View Statement***, and the ***Library Bill of Rights*** and includes them as part of the SWCPL Collection Policy. A copy of all of these is kept at the circulation desk for patron examination.

## **Resource Sharing**

The SWCPL participates in resource sharing with other libraries in order to meet patron requests and to complement the collection. The Library is a member of Evergreen Indiana and LSC--Libraries Serving Communities consortium. Resources are shared among these libraries according to organization bylaws and policies set by the member libraries.

Patrons using the online catalog can view the holdings of more than 100 libraries. Materials may be borrowed from these libraries if they are unavailable at SWCPL. These requested items may be obtained through Inter-Library Loan (ILL) or the Statewide Remote Circulation Service (SRCS).

The Library receives shared items twice per week, and patrons are notified when materials arrive. Please note that most libraries do not lend valuable items, genealogy materials, new releases, or audio-visual materials.

## **Responsibility for Selection**

The SWCPL Board of Trustees delegates to the Library Director the authority and responsibility for materials selection and management. The selection and management for all materials is ultimately shared among staff members who are qualified to assist in this process. Patrons are also an important part of materials selection, and may request items for purchase by filling out a Materials Request Form which is available at the circulation desk or may also be downloaded from our website at [www.swcplib.com](http://www.swcplib.com). An individual request from a patron is honored if the request conforms to the guidelines outlined in this policy, and the item is available.

## **Selection Tools**

The following sources are among those used for review, evaluation and selection of material:

- *Library Journal*
- *Booklist*
- *New York Times Review of Books*
- *Kirkus Reviews*
- Other vendor and online reviews

## **Weeding Policy**

As a part of evaluation, items may be purged from the collection. Materials are selected for weeding after staff review of circulation reports, consideration of materials on similar topics, attention to currency of information and condition of the material.

*Updated and Approved 5/12/2016*

*Revised and Approved by the Board of Trustees 8/8/2019*

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## **Freedom to Read**

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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee*

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association

Association of American Publishers

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

The Association of American University Presses, Inc.

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

## **Freedom to View Statement**

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.

To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.

To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

*Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council*

*Revised and approved 5/12/2016*

*Revised and Approved by the Board of Trustees 8/8/2019*

*Revised and Approved by the Board of Trustees 6/9/2022*

## **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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate



about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

*Adopted June 18, 1948.*

*Amended February 2, 1961, January 23, 1980, January 23, 1996, and January 29, 2019  
by the ALA Council.*

## Request for Reconsideration

The South Whitley Community Public Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the American Library Association June 27, 1967 and its subsequent amendments. This document reads, in part: "As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community."

We realize that everyone's tastes are different, and that it is our responsibility to provide materials, programs and displays on a multitude of subjects and viewpoints, and in many styles. If you truly feel that a book or other item in our collection, or a program or display we provide does not belong in the library of a free society, we invite you to fill out this form and leave it at the front desk. Also, if you believe a program or event is something the library should not be affiliated with, please fill out this form. The staff member will see that it is given to the Director, who will be in touch with you regarding your concern.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Group you represent (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Type of resource you'd like reconsidered

\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_ DVD \_\_\_ Audiobook \_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_ Program \_\_\_ Display

\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Item \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Program topic \_\_\_\_\_

Display topic \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. How does this material, display or program violate the Library Bill of Rights and Collection Development Policy and criteria?

### 3. What brought this resource or program to your attention?

4. Have you examined the entire resource or attended the program? If not, what parts have you examined or attended?

5. What concerns do you have about this resource or program? (Please be specific.)

6. What would you like SWCPL to do regarding this material, display or program? (Please be specific)

7. Are there resource(s) or program topics you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised and approved 5/12/2016  
Revised and Approved by the Board of Trustees 9/9/2021  
Revised and Approved by the Board of Trustees 6/9/2022*