



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

SELECTION

The objective of collection development for the Polk County Library is to select, organize and make accessible Library materials to meet the expressed and anticipated needs and interests of the diverse public in the Library District. As a public service agency, the Library must strive to provide the residents of Polk County with a comprehensive collection of materials in a variety of formats that record human knowledge, ideas and culture; to organize these materials for ready access; to offer guidance and encouragement in their use; and to serve the community with reliable and easily available sources of information and reference.

Materials should be selected and services planned to satisfy residents both as individuals and as members of groups, with concern for all ages, backgrounds, interests, abilities, and levels of education. Materials and services should be held in sufficient quantity to make the Library a dependable resource for most of the people most of the time.

The Library has an obligation not only to serve its current users but also to search for materials and methods that will meet the needs of community members who have not traditionally been Library users. Cooperation with governmental, academic, and special resource centers in the area continues to be increasingly important in meeting needs of Library patrons.

PRIORITIES OF SELECTION

- Materials to meet informational needs, both expressed and anticipated, of patrons of all ages.
- Materials to meet the recreational needs of patrons of all ages.
- Materials to meet the educational needs of pre-school children, out-of-school adults, and all other patrons who are not served by an educational institution.
- Materials to meet the needs of the business community.
- Materials to support civic and cultural activities of individuals, groups, and organizations.

AGE APPROPRIATENESS

The library's collections are split into different age recommendations for ease of use. Patrons are not limited by these age recommendations. All patrons are welcome to checkout any materials in our collections:

- Picture Books, Early Readers, and Easy Non-Fiction
 - These collections are intended for ages 0-7
- Chapter Books, Juvenile Fiction, and Juvenile Non-Fiction
 - These collections are intended for ages 8-12
- Young Adult
 - This collection is intended for ages 13 and above
- Adult Fiction, Large Print, Inspirational Fiction, and Adult Non-fiction
 - These collections are intended for adults over 18
- Videos
 - Videos have the MPAA rating on label. Videos that do not have a MPAA rating are categorized as TV, Not Rated or Non-Fiction. TV category contain both network and streaming series.

There will be some variation in the age appropriateness of each collection. In general, decisions to place particular items are done by the standard of the average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that material, taken as a whole, appeals to the age recommendation applied. The Library also relies on publisher's suggested age range, if available.

The responsibility for materials used by minors rests completely with their parents or legal guardians. Materials selected for the Adult and Young Adult collection are intended for mature readers. Checkouts to minors from these collections are allowed with the signed parental permissions on a minor's library card application. Separate collections are available for children and young people, but it is not the responsibility of the Library, its Board of Trustees, staff, or volunteers to determine which collection they should use or what item in the collection is suitable for an individual.

This section is required by Missouri Regulation 15 CSR 30-200.015. (Section added 6/27/2023)

SELECTION PROCESS

The Library should plan to acquire, within its budgetary limitations, all types of Library materials needed to meet its obligations. Library materials may include books, periodicals, audiovisual materials, software, on-line databases, and artifacts.

Holdings of other Missouri Evergreen Libraries will be considered when selecting subject areas for intensive collection or large purchase items. Consideration will be given to both the privileges and responsibilities of cooperative acquisition plans and interlibrary loan procedures.

The number of copies of any title shall be dependent upon demand by patrons and the size of the population served. Demand is a valid factor in materials selection.

The Library will not purchase text books except in cases where no other material on a given subject exists or where the demand of the patrons is greater than can be met by the existing collections.

For the most part, the library does not purchase self-published material unless there is a demand for an item or the subject matter is authoritative and cannot be obtained elsewhere.

Materials that should not be acquired or added to the collection include literature in languages not justified by community needs, religious materials designed to be used for proselytizing, or purely propagandistic literature.

Addition of an item to the Library's collection in no way represents an endorsement of any theory, idea, or policy contained in the material.

The responsibility for selection of Library materials is delegated to the Director and, under his or her direction, to those members of the staff who are qualified by their education, training, and experience. The judgments of experts, of professionally trained staff members, and of qualified reviewers provide a balance of opinion as the basis for selection. Though a variety of criteria is used for each subject, final decision is based on the value of the material to the Library and its public regardless of the personal taste of the selectors.

In selecting materials, the librarians will use as many selection and bibliographic management tools as possible, including: reviews, curated lists from book vendors; book selection periodicals such as Booklist and Publishers Weekly; best seller lists, professional journals such as American Libraries and Library Journal; databases such as

OCLC; and bibliographies such as Magazines for Public Libraries, Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries, and any other useful bibliographic reference works.

Librarians will strive to find review of items before considering purchase. However, because only a small portion of all published material is ever reviewed, librarians will also consider purchase of items based on author demand, advertisements, author tours, television and radio coverage, and direct mail. (section revised 6/27/2023)

CENSORSHIP

The Library recognizes the pluralistic nature of the community and the varied needs of Polk County citizens. The public Library does not promote particular beliefs or views. It provides a resource where the individual can examine issues freely and make his or her own decisions.

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some Library users. Selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection. The collection must contain the various positions expressed on important, complicated, or controversial subjects, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The choice of Library materials for personal use is an individual matter; while anyone is free to reject materials of which he or she does not approve, no one has the right to exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of use and/or access to others.

The selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that such materials may inadvertently come into the possession of minors. The freedom of access for minors may be restricted only by the child's own parents or legal guardians. The Library will not restrict use of any materials by any patron because of the patron's age.

The Library affirms the principles of each individual's freedom to read and view. Each item considered for selection must be evaluated on its own merits. Works that depict an aspect of life honestly will not be excluded because of frankness of expression, vivid descriptions of sex or violence, the philosophy, politics, or religion of the author, or any other factor which might be objectionable to some Library users.

All materials will be judged as a whole rather than by isolated passages.

CHALLENGES TO LIBRARY MATERIALS

A person residing in the library's legal service area who has concerns about Library material, displays, programs or other resources has the right to file a **request for reconsideration** form. (Revised 6/27/2023)

After receiving a Request for Reconsideration Form, the Library Director or designee will respond to the request in writing within 10 business days regarding the disposition of the request.

If the matter is not resolved to the person's satisfaction, the person has a right to appeal this decision to the Library Board of Trustees for final determination.

Librarians are expected to defend the principle of the freedom to read and view as a professional responsibility. Only rarely is it necessary to defend an individual item. Laws governing obscenity, subversive material, and other questionable matter are subject to interpretation by courts. Library materials found to meet the standards set in the selection will not be removed.

DISCARDING (WEEDING) MATERIAL

GENERAL GUIDELINES

In order to maintain an active working collection of high quality, the Library staff will periodically examine the collection for items that should be withdrawn (or weeded). Overall authority for weeding of the collection lies with the Director, who in cases of dispute serves as mediator and makes the final decisions. Whenever necessary, the Director will be consulted before an item is discarded from the collection.

Weeding will be done on a schedule of continual review of the collection on a consecutive basis. The Library uses the CREW (Continual Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) method to evaluate material for discarding. CREW: a weeding manual for modern libraries by Jeanette Larson and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission is available for perusal at the Bolivar Library. Materials that are weeded from the collection will be disposed of in the most appropriate manner, which may include sale to the public, donation to another Library or organization, exchange with another Library, or discarding as recycled material.

CRITERIA FOR WEEDING

Materials in poor physical condition will be weeded; if desirable materials must be discarded because of physical condition, the Library will replace if possible and budgetary concerns allow and the demand for the material is still good.

Superfluous or unneeded duplicate volumes will be weeded from the collection.

Materials containing information no longer useful or accurate or that are no longer of historical value will be weeded from the collection.

Weeding should not bias the collection in favor of or against any viewpoint.

Weeding will not be done solely on the basis of circulation statistics or past use, although these factors merit strong consideration in evaluating an item. As shelf space is limited, the Library must give more weight to circulation/use statistics than must a research or academic Library.

GIFTS

All forms of materials may be accepted as gifts. All gifts are used at the discretion of the Director.

GIFTS AND CASH REQUESTS FOR MATERIALS

The Library will not accept donations of materials in poor condition, magazines, text books, reader's digest condensed, encyclopedias, and unsupported formats.

The Library will be happy to accept monetary donations. Patron may ask for monies to be spent in a particular area. The Library Director will make every attempt to accommodate such requests.

LIMITATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

The Library cannot legally provide a monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes.

The Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift and will make the final decision on the use or disposition of the gift.

The Library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access of gift materials.

Gift subscriptions of one year or longer will be shelved with the circulation periodical collection, providing that the periodical meets the conditions of the collection development policy.

MEMORIALS

Any funds given for memorial purchases will be received by Director.

Funds will be spent according to giver in cooperation with Collection Development Policies.

Director must approve memorial donation if it is considered material. The Director will approve gifts based on the guidelines set out in the Collection Development Section.

Patron must inform the Director that the donation is for a memorial.

A Memorial Donations Form must be filled out.

APPENDIX A: 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.

APPENDIX B: 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, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

APPENDIX C: 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:

1. 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 guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.

APPENDIX D: LABELING AND RATING SYSTEMS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections or in resources accessible through the Library. The presence of books and other resources in a Library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the Library. Likewise, providing access to digital information does not indicate endorsement or approval of that information by the Library. Labeling and rating systems present distinct challenges to these intellectual freedom principles.

Many organizations use or devise rating systems as a means of advising either their members or the general public regarding the organization's opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, websites, games, or other materials. The adoption, enforcement, or endorsement of any of these rating systems by a Library violates the American Library Association's [LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS](#) and may be unconstitutional. If enforcement of labeling or rating systems is mandated by law, the Library should seek legal advice regarding the law's applicability to Library operations.

Viewpoint-neutral directional labels are a convenience designed to save time. These are different in intent from attempts to prejudice or discourage users or restrict their access to resources. Labeling as an attempt to prejudice attitudes is a censor's tool. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward Library resources.

Prejudicial labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment that the content, language, or themes of the resource, or the background or views of the creator(s) of the resource, render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the resource. Such labels sometimes are used to place materials in restricted locations where access depends on staff intervention.

Viewpoint-neutral directional aids facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. Users may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion.

Directional aids can have the effect of prejudicial labels when their implementation becomes proscriptive rather than descriptive. When directional aids are used to forbid access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement, the effect is the same as prejudicial labeling.

Libraries sometimes acquire resources that include ratings as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse the inclusion of such rating systems; however, removing or destroying the ratings—if placed there by, or with permission of, the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation (see "Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the [LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS](#)"). In addition, the inclusion of ratings on bibliographic records in Library catalogs is a violation of the [LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS](#).

Prejudicial labeling and ratings presuppose the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is appropriate or inappropriate for others. They presuppose that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The fact that libraries do not advocate or use proscriptive labels and rating systems does not preclude them from answering questions about them. The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read or view.

Adopted July 13, 1951, by the ALA Council; amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990; January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009; July 1, 2014.