

Camden-Jackson Township Public Library

Collection Development Policy

Objective

The purpose of the Camden-Jackson Township Public Library is to provide the residents of the library's service area with carefully selected books and other materials to aid in their education, provide information, and enhance their leisure time. Due to the library's small size and limited budget the library must consider selection of materials based primarily on community interest and needs; therefore the decision to purchase an item for the collection is often based upon patron request or need. Materials are also purchased to enhance those collections which serve both the children and teens so as best to encourage reading.

The Camden-Jackson Township Public Library supports the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, and the *Freedom to View* statements, all of which are included as a part of this policy statement.

Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the library director, who operates within the framework of the policies as determined by the Camden-Jackson Township Library Board. Materials may be selected by other library staff under the guidance of the director.

Selection Guidelines

The decision to include or exclude a particular item in the library's collection is based upon the following:

1. Interest and needs of individuals of the community
2. Funds and space
3. Relation to other materials and existing areas of coverage in order to maintain a well-balanced collection
4. Timeliness
5. Significance of subject
6. Representation of various points of view
7. Author's reputation or significance
8. Vitality or originality of thought

Material selection is aided by reviews, availability lists, and vendor catalogs. The primary sources of reviews are Booklist, Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, Library Journal, and the New York Times Book Reviews.

Special Collection: Children and Teens

Children's and teen materials are selected by using the same principles that govern the selection of adult materials. Responsibility for the choice of reading material of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials for children and teens is not restricted by the possibility that minors may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate, nor are children limited to borrowing materials from the children's collection.

Books and other materials for the children's and teens' collection are selected with these special considerations:

1. Materials will include those that appeal to diversified tastes, backgrounds, and interests at various age levels
2. The library will strive to provide materials which offer a wide range of reading levels
3. The library will strive to provide materials that are of high quality or special merit, such as books that have won the Eliot Rosewater, Young Hoosiers, Caldecott, Newbery, the Michael L. Printz, or the Coretta Scott King book awards
4. Materials that support local school assignments will be purchased for the collection as the budget allows

Gifts and Donation

The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be evaluated under the criteria used to purchase new materials for the library collection. Those materials that are deemed inappropriate for the collection under these criteria may be disposed of by the director as he/she sees fit.

Memorial gifts of books are also accepted, with suitable bookplates placed in the books, but only if they meet the library's selection criteria. Memorial monetary gifts are accepted to purchase materials, but specific titles are offered only after consultation with the director. If no specific book is requested, the title will be selected by the director.

The library is not responsible for determining the value of donated materials. A list or receipt for gift materials will be given to the donor if requested before the materials have been processed.

Out of Print

The library does not purchase out of print materials for the collection.

Text Books

The library will not purchase text books for the library collection unless the material in some way meets the library's selection criteria and budget constraints.

Reference and Genealogy Collections

The library does not have the space or funds to provide an in-depth reference collection, as many reference materials are costly as well as timely. Genealogy resources are not considered a priority for the library, due to the library's limited space. However, if a patron has a specific reference or genealogy need, the library director will try to find resources to meet the patron's needs, as well as work with the patron to help them best access or borrow the material.

Challenged Materials

The library supports the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read and View Statements. No materials shall be removed from the library collection except through the following procedure:

1. Patrons who object to the presence of specific library materials may file their complaint by filling out a *Reconsideration of Library Materials* form and submitting it to the library director, who will then give the document to the Library Board of Trustees.
2. For the complaint to be considered, complainant must be identified on the form, and must also be a resident of the library's service area.
3. No action will be taken until the matter is brought before the Library Board.
4. An item will be considered for removal only once in a twelve month period.

5. The Library Board will read and examine the challenged material, consider the specific objection voiced by the complainant, and will weigh the complaint against the merits of the material and its value to the collection. If necessary, advice may be sought from other library directors and library boards, especially those in the Carroll County area, as well as from the American Library Association Office for Intellectual Freedom and the Indiana Library Federation Intellectual Freedom Committee.
6. The Library Board will issue a written report within ninety days of the receipt of the challenge containing its decision and recommended action regarding the challenged material.

Weeding Policy

The library continually withdraws items that are outdated, worn or mutilated, are unneeded duplicates, or materials that are no longer of interest to the library community. The library uses weeding guidelines as recommended by the CREW Method of Weeding as summarized below:

Items are removed from the library collection if they are:

1. Outdated or obsolete
2. Worn, ragged, or dirty
3. Damaged or scratched (Tapes, CDs, and DVDs)
4. Books with dated dust jackets or cover art, especially in the children's and teen collections
5. Items that have not circulated in the last 3-5 years
6. Items that are duplicate copies
7. Books are on "hot topics" that were popular more than five years ago
8. Formats that are no longer popular, especially if the technology to use or view them is dated
9. Materials that are no longer important to the collection due to a change in demographics, school curricula, or other factors

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.

Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980;

inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

ALA 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.

ALA 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.