



## Material Selection and Collection Development Policy

*Approved by the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees on 08/19/1996. Revised 04/18/2001; 12/18/2006; 09/21/2015; 08/15/2022. Proposed review date: 8/18/2025.*

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### Introduction

#### 1. Purpose of the Collection Development Policy

The purpose of this document is to inform our community's understanding of the purpose and nature of Lawrence Public Library's [hereinafter referred to as "the Library"] collection as well as provide guidance and direction to the Library staff for the development and maintenance of the Library's collection.

#### 2. Library Collection Objectives

The primary objective of the Library's collection is to meet the informational, intellectual, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. The Library selects materials to meet the diverse interests of our community in accordance with the [Library's Equity Commitment Policy](#).

Selection of materials for the Library's collections reflects the community's needs and interests. The use of existing materials also provides a helpful indicator of the potential appeal of new selections and is therefore closely monitored. Staff considers data such as checkout statistics, suggestions for purchase, and number of holds placed on materials to inform the selection process.

In general, the Library's collection emphasizes up-to-date information that reflects a variety of viewpoints; Library staff retains or replaces older materials if they are considered standard works, are useful, or are in demand. Collection guidelines typically give preference to general treatment that support informal study over those that are specialized, scholarly, or intended for professional use. Textbooks are not generally selected.

While a limited number of selections are made for research use in the Helen Osma Local History Collection and the reference collection, for the most part, materials are intended for public use and circulation. The Library strives to add materials in new formats as they become commonly used throughout the community

### 3. Controversial Material

The Library selects representative material espousing various points of view, so that the free individual may examine a variety of presentations and make their own decisions. The Library seeks to provide materials that represent differing approaches to issues of a controversial nature. The selection of any given material is not an endorsement of the creator's views.

### 4. Responsibility for the Selection and Management

The responsibility for materials selection and management rests in the hands of the Library's governing body—the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees [hereinafter "the Board"]. The Board delegates the selection and management of materials and development of the collection on a day-to-day basis to Library staff.

## **Guidelines and Review Sources**

### 1. General Selection Guidelines

Collection Development staff use their training, knowledge, and expertise, along with the following general guidelines to select materials for the collection:

- Extent of current or anticipated popular demand, professional reviews, and publicity
- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Suitability of subject, writing or artistic style, and reading level for the intended audience
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, artist, publisher, or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted by the editing and publishing industry
- Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Local significance of the author or subject
- Relationship to the existing collection
- Value of material in relation to cost
- Availability from established library vendors
- Library materials budget
- Suitability of format for library circulation and use

- Availability and accessibility of the same materials from another library.
2. Recommendations from the Public

Library staff give serious consideration to suggestions from the public concerning possible purchase of materials and use the same guidelines that inform decisions on all other materials the Library purchases. Patrons can submit suggestions using a form made available to facilitate this process.

3. Duplicates

To meet demand, the Library may purchase materials in quantity for mass use and limited retention. In addition, the Library purchases additional copies of materials based on a ratio of holds to copies.

4. Review Sources

Collection Development staff use reviews from professionally recognized publications as their primary source for materials selection. Additionally, library staff may consult local and national media, booklists by recognized authorities, and the advice of experts in specific subject areas.

5. Material Types

Library staff consider the addition of new material types to the collection when industry reports, national survey results, and local requests indicate a demand for a new format and a significant portion of the community has the capacity to make use of it. Other factors that are considered include availability, cost, maintenance needs, and the Library's ability to acquire, process, store, and circulate items when adopting or discontinuing formats.

## **Gifts and Tax Deductions**

The Library accepts gifts or donations of books or other materials with the understanding that they may be used or disposed of as the Library staff deems appropriate, using the guidelines set forth in this policy for the purchase and maintenance of materials. Donated materials should not be expected to be returned to the donor. Staff also consider the costs associated with processing materials for use in the collection as well as the condition of the gift material. Gifts that Library staff choose not to add to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library. Under existing law, gifts to the Library may be deductible, however Library staff shall not provide appraisals or establish value. Valuation of the gift is the responsibility of the donor.

## **Interlibrary Loan and Cooperation**

The Library cooperates with the State Library of Kansas and regional and national systems to provide interlibrary loan service to its patrons. Interlibrary loan is not intended as a substitute for providing books and other materials in frequent demand, but as a means to supplement the collection by providing access to those materials which are less frequently requested, no longer available for purchase, or outside the guidelines set forth in this collection development policy.

## **Access to Materials**

### **1. Commitment to Intellectual Freedom**

The Board and staff believe that the right to read and view is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is a basic to democracy. American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix A), Freedom to View Statement (Appendix B), and the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix C) guide the Library in the selection of materials for its collection. The Board has a legal responsibility for the collection and its protection under the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution.

### **2. Access**

The Library assures free and open access to its holdings. Adults and minors alike may use all collections of the Library. Responsibility for reading and viewing activity of minors rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library does not intrude on that relationship.

Processing and shelving of materials does not reflect a value judgment. The Library uses directional and information labeling to make it easier for patrons to locate and select materials; it does not use labels to discourage use or suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement. The Library shelves all physical materials in their proper order on open shelves, freely and easily accessible to the public, with the exception of a limited number materials used for reference and programs, and when curatorial or environmental requirements are exceeded.

### **3. Reconsideration of Library Materials**

A patron may request reconsideration of a library item by completing a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form which can be found on the [Policies](#) page of the Library's website.

If the patron is not satisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the decision to the Board for consideration. In the event of such action, the Board's sole responsibility will

be to determine whether the Library Director's decision was in compliance with this policy. The Board's decision will be final.

## **Maintenance of the Collection**

### **1. Evaluation**

The Library evaluates the materials in its collection on a regular basis to determine if the collection meets the needs of the community. Methods used may include: analysis of turnover rates, circulation statistics, checks of holdings of titles from selected bibliographies, or other means.

### **2. Material Withdrawal Policy**

The deaccessioning of materials is an integral part of the collection development cycle. In general, the Library is informed by the guidelines set by the [CREW Method](#), a standard developed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission used by small and medium-sized libraries across the U.S., with exceptions and additions as noted in the Collection Development Manual. Age, usage, and the following factors are considered in decisions to withdraw items from the collection:

- Dated or no longer of interest
- Worn beyond repair
- Superseded by a newer edition
- Irrelevant to community needs
- Easily available elsewhere

In addition, staff may withdraw items from the collection if the curatorial or environmental requirements exceed the resources of the Library.

### **3. Disposition of Withdrawn Materials**

Withdrawn materials in acceptable condition will be given to the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library for sale. Materials that are deemed to be too damaged for sale by the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library will be recycled accordingly.

### **4. Replacements**

Replacements for items that have been withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear are not made automatically but are decided based upon general selection guidelines. Damaged books of intrinsic value that are no longer in print or that have high replacement costs may be mended if the physical conditions permit.

## Appendix A



### 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.

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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

## Appendix B



### 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 guarantee 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.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

## Appendix C



### 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 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these

principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).