

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Valley City Barnes County Public Library

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Valley City Barnes County Public Library

LIBRARY MISSION

Our commitment is to preserve the past, embrace the present, and build the future.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PURPOSE

This policy of the Library Board of Directors serves to:

1. Guide staff in designing budgets and in making decisions about selection, management and maintenance of library materials and resources.
2. Inform the public of the principles that govern collection development.
3. Declare the library's commitment to the principles of free access to ideas and information, and to provide collections that reflect a variety of viewpoints.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIALS AND RESOURCE SELECTION

Each year the Library Board approves a budget which includes specific categories of expenditure for library materials and resources. Responsibility for materials selection is assigned to the Library Director who, in turn, delegates specific selection responsibilities for collection areas to members of the professional staff. Suggestions from library users are always welcome and given serious consideration.

PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

The library makes available, as the budget allows, a wide range of ideas and viewpoints in a variety of formats and in support of an informed citizenry. It supports the individual choice and judgment of library users in seeking information and upholds the freedom of users to read, view and listen. It is understood that a major purpose of the library is to provide current, attractive and useful materials for every age group, and to provide popular, high-demand items in a timely manner and in compliance with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement and Freedom to View Statement. (See Appendices 3, 4, 5.)

Over time actual demand for and use of materials will result in expanding collection areas of high demand and adding new formats as they become available. Quality is pursued by applying professional discretion and standards established by the library profession and through the use of appropriate selection aids, including book reviews in Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, Booklist, The New York Times Book Review, and other appropriate tools. Best seller lists from Publisher's Weekly and The New York Times Book Review are routinely used. Children and teen librarians may use The Horn Book, VOYA, and other appropriate tools, in addition to the above. Recommended purchase lists from the various library journals and sources are consulted. Decisions to select or retain an item are intended to be based on the merits of each work or information source as it relates to the goals and coverage of the collection. The value of each item is considered in its entirety, not on specific passages or sections of the item itself. Materials are not excluded because of their creators' origin, background or views, or because they represent an aspect of life, frankness or expression or controversial subject matter. Inclusion of an item does not constitute endorsement of its content. Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by possible exposure to youth. Responsibility for children's and teen's use of library collections rests with their parents, guardians or caregivers as to the suitability of materials on controversial or sensitive topics. Special emphasis will be placed on Valley City and Barnes County history, North Dakota history, and other pertinent topics.

Practical necessity limits the scope of the library's collections. Many citizens will have needs which require access beyond local and area resources. For this reason, the library will actively participate in state, regional and national library consortia. Consideration is given to the adequate availability of materials for the visually handicapped.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

1. General criteria include:

- * Widely recognized popularity and/or attention of reviewers.
- * Suitability of subject and style for intended audiences.
- * Insight into human and social conditions.
- * Present and potential relevance to community needs and interests.
- * Contemporary significance or permanent value.
- * Relation to existing collection.
- * Scarcity of information in subject area.
- * Availability of material elsewhere in the community. (Holdings of other libraries within the area are considered in developing the collection and reducing unnecessary duplication. Lack of local availability may be rationale for purchase.)
- * Price and format.

2. Specific criteria for works of information and opinion include:

- * Authority.
- * Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment.
- * Clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation.
- * Currency

Specific criteria for works of imagination include:

- * Representation of significant social or literary trends.
- * Vitality and originality.
- * Artistic presentation and experimentation.
- * Authenticity of historical, regional or social setting.

3. Specific criteria for Children (through Grade 6) include:

- * Appropriate content for the age group.
- * Appropriate vocabulary for the general age group.

* Determined value for stimulating reading interest.

4. Specific criteria for Teens (through Grade 12) include:

- Widens the scope of adolescent thinking.
- Fulfills emotional and recreational needs.
- Determines value for growth and life enrichment.
- May duplicate children's or adult collections, since teens often use a wider range of library materials than any other age group.

5. Purchased electronic resources selection includes some additional criteria:

- * Comparison of cost with other formats.
- * Enhancement of print equivalent (if any) and continued access to retrospective information when desirable.
- * Ease of use and availability of remote access to multiple users.
- * Networking capabilities, hardware and software requirements, including maintenance.
- * Vendor support and contractual arrangements.

6. Free worldwide web connections are offered to provide opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Featured sites are selected based on the quality, relevance, and accuracy of information provided. (Note: a separate Policy on Open Access to Internet Resources establishes guidelines for general Internet access by minors.)

7. Gifts and donations are handled as follows:

All such items must meet the same criteria as detailed above. Attached conditions of the donor as to use, location or disposition will not be permitted. All gifts, when accepted, become property of the Library and receipt will be acknowledged; however, no statement of financial value for tax or other purposes will be made. Staff is empowered to give a general receipt for donations; a more detailed receipt letter acknowledging the character of the item(s) donated will be provided upon request. Unneeded donations will not be retained and will be disposed of in a manner similar to withdrawn items (see below).

WITHDRAWAL AND REPLACEMENT

On a regular basis and to keep collections up-to-date, the library withdraws outdated materials, duplicates, worn or mutilated copies, items no longer in demand or relevant, and selected periodicals (magazines), newspapers and serials for which there is lack of storage space. Replacement decisions are based on specific selection criteria; lost, damaged, or worn items are not necessarily replaced. Rebinding is considered only when a title is out of print, contains valuable materials not readily accessible elsewhere, and when no alternative titles and/or editions are available. The Library does not remove materials from its collections for the purpose of selling them to individuals. Withdrawn items are disposed of in the following manner: (1) to other area libraries when useful and desired; (2) to the Friends of the Library book sale, with proceeds coming back to the Library for various projects; or (3) as a last resort, to the recycle bin when items are worn, mutilated or out-of-date.

VENDORS

Materials are purchased through a variety of local, regional and national vendors. Criteria for selection taken into consideration include: discount, speed of delivery, reliability, and availability of vendor-supplied preparation services.

PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT MATERIAL

The Library Board of Directors recognizes the importance of providing a process whereby opinions and/or complaints from the public regarding materials selection can be voiced. Therefore, this procedure has been established to apply to all opinions/complaints including:

- (1) those about materials represented in the collection and,
- (2) those about materials not represented in the collection.

Complaints are to be submitted in writing. Forms requesting removal of material (Request for Reconsideration of Material) are available at the Circulation Desk, the Reference Desk and on the website. Upon completion, the form may be mailed or delivered to the Library Director.

Upon receipt, the Director will:

- * Examine the material or assign it to a professional staff member to examine it, the issues raised, and the circumstances involved.
- * Make a decision to remove or retain the material in question.
- * Respond promptly in writing to the complainant, normally within two weeks.
- * Provide the complainant with a copy of this policy and inform the complainant of the right to carry the complaint forward to a Library Board of Directors hearing if so desired.

Should the complainant feel that the decision of the Director is not supported by the policy, the complainant may request a Library Board of Directors hearing by notifying the Director who will make the necessary arrangements for the Board to meet within a reasonable time. Following this hearing, the decision of the Board will be final.

Above all, the Library Board of Directors aims for fairness so as to protect the rights of all persons who are involved.

APPENDIX 1

Reconsideration Policy

Valley City Barnes County Public Library

Intellectual Freedom

The Valley City Barnes County Public Library is committed to the principles of intellectual freedom and affirms the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement [Appendix] and the Library Bill of Rights [Appendix]. As such, materials representing diverse viewpoints on topics, including controversial ones, are actively collected. Selection of an item does not indicate that the Library, its Board, or its Staff agrees with the ideas and viewpoints it presents.

Reconsideration Requests

When a complaint about library items is made, the following steps will be followed:

1. Informal:
 - a. The consideration will be listened to calmly and courteously.
 - b. The Library's selection policy and commitment to intellectual freedom will be explained, to help the patron understand the value of a diverse library collection and that ownership of an item does not indicate agreement or endorsement of the ideas, values, or principles expressed therein. This will be done respectfully and in a fashion that acknowledges and restates the patron's concerns.
 - c. If the patron has recommendations for other materials on the topic, they will be noted, and if appropriate, procured.
 - d. If the patron is not satisfied, advise the patron of the library's policy and procedures for handling a reconsideration request, and provide the patron with a copy of the Library's Selection Policy and of the Request for Reconsideration Form.
2. Formal:
 - a. If the form is filled out, make sure a prompt written reply related to the concern is sent.
 - b. The item shall remain part of the collection until a decision has been made.
 - c. Notify the Director and/or the Library Board of the complaint and assure them that the Library's procedures are being followed. Present full, written information giving the nature of the complaint and identifying the source.
 - d. Notify the Chairperson of the North Dakota Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee that a reconsideration request has been filed.
 - e. The Director and staff involved in collection development shall review the request for reconsideration. This includes:
 - i. Reading/viewing/listening to the challenged item in its entirety.
 - ii. Considering the objections in terms of the Library's Selection Policy, the principles of the Library Bill of Rights, and the opinions of various reviewing sources used in materials selection.

- f. If the reviewed material does not meet the criteria set forth in the Selection Policy, the Library shall acknowledge that the material is unsuitable and it will be withdrawn from the collection.
 - g. If the material does meet the selection criteria, the item shall remain part of the collection
 - h. The Director will respond to the request clearly and precisely, stating the reasons the material was withdrawn or retained. This response will also inform the requestor how to pursue the matter further.
3. Appeal:
- a. If the requestor feels that the problem has been dealt with inadequately, a final appeal to the Library Board can be made.
 - b. A public hearing will be conducted with the Board acting as the decision-making body.
 - c. The Director will notify the American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Office, and their advice will be enlisted.
4. Hearing:
- a. An open meeting will be held—the location, beginning, and ending times of the meeting will be publicized in advance of the meeting.
 - b. The meeting will be conducted by the Director or Assistant Director.
 - c. The Library Board will act as the decision-making body. A quorum must be present.
 - d. News coverage will be arranged by the Director.
 - e. Persons wishing to speak must register prior to speaking, giving their name, address, and organization represented (if any).
 - f. Each speaker will be given four minutes in which to present his/her point of view. A timekeeper will be appointed prior to the meeting.
 - g. Library Board members will be given time to ask questions following each testimony.
 - h. Each speaker should present a written copy of his/her testimony to the Library Board members.
 - i. The Board will review the testimonies heard. They will vote at a later date after they have had time to weigh and consider the testimonies. The Board will issue its opinion within 14 working days after the hearing.
 - j. The Board will make their decision public and the Library will take action in accordance with that decision.

Request for Reconsideration Form
Valley City Barnes County Public Library

Title: _____

Author/Producer: _____

Location: _____

Type of material: Book Music (CD) Video (DVD) Magazine/Newspaper Other

Date request received by staff: _____ Staff initials: _____

Request initiated by: _____

Signature: _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone: _____

Representing: Self Organization

Organization address: _____

Organization telephone: _____

What concerns you about this material? Please be specific. Cite pages.

Did you read/listen/view the entire item? If no, what parts?

Is there any age group for which this material might be appropriate? If so, please specify.

Are there, in your judgment, any positive elements in this material? Please describe.

Are you aware of any literary reviews of this material? If so, please cite.

What material(s) can you suggest to counterbalance the point of view of this material or provide additional information on the subject?

APPENDIX 3

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 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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

APPENDIX 4

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.

Appendix 5

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/or 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 AFV A 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