



MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set broad guidelines for library staff in selecting materials for the library's collections. It also serves to inform the public of the principles upon which selections for the library are made. These functions are undertaken to further the objectives and mission of the library. Basic to this policy is the **Library Bill of Rights** as affirmed by the Board of Trustees.

II. Objective

The Galesburg Charleston Memorial District Library ("Library") is a popular materials library. Materials are selected to meet patron needs and reflect a variety of viewpoints and opinions, both current and long-lasting.

The library strives to provide current, factual information in a variety of formats to supplement and enrich individual learning, and to provide materials for recreational reading and other leisure time activities. This information shall be available to the total community regardless of gender, age, education, language, religion, ethnic and cultural background, or mental and physical ability.

III. Responsibility for Selection

The responsibility for selection lays with the Director or his/her designee. Staff and members of the public may recommend materials for consideration, however the ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees.

The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the funds budgeted for collection development are allocated appropriately depending upon the needs of the library.

IV. Standards for selection

The term "library materials" (or "materials") means books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, or other synonyms as they may occur in the policy. It does not, however, include Internet sites that may be available through the library's computers or Internet connection.

Materials are selected to meet patron needs and reflect a variety of viewpoints and opinions. Criteria for consideration include popular demand, literary merit, enduring value, accuracy,

authoritativeness, local interest, social significance, timeliness, cost, scarcity of information on the subject, availability elsewhere, and quality and suitability of format. Selection is not made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of a work, without regard to the race, nationality, political, or religious views of the writer.

- **Fiction** – The Library maintains a representative collection of novels and works of fiction to satisfy a wide range of tastes. Ideas of literary merit vary greatly with individuals, therefore, the library purchases fiction in many categories.
- **Non-Fiction** – The Library attempts to provide a general collection of reliable materials embracing the broader fields of knowledge. Legal and medical works will be selected to the extent that they are useful to the lay person.
- **Media** – The Library recognizes its responsibility to provide access to information, cultural enrichment, and recreation through as wide a variety of media as possible. Media is evaluated by the same criteria as printed materials.
- **Digital Materials** – Digital items such as eBooks and eAudiobooks shall be selected using the same criteria as printed materials as described above. In situations where library staff are not able to select individual titles, the selection of a third-party service will be evaluated on the company’s reputation and overall content offerings.
- **Online Databases** – The Library makes available a variety of online resources purchased to supplement and enhance the library’s collection. These resources are evaluated on the basis of timeliness, ease of use, and ability to meet patrons’ information needs.

The library will not mark materials to show approval or disapproval or develop rating systems for items in the collection, and no cataloged book or other item will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft. The use of rare items may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm, but no further.

The library’s selection of material shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that an item may come into the possession of children. Items in the library collections are organized by age group. While the library respects a parent’s right to supervise their child’s choice of reading materials, staff do not have the right to act *in loco parentis* (in place of the parent).

We encourage parents to engage in their child's reading journey, to be active participants in helping their children select library resources, and make appropriate selections based on their child's needs. Parents may choose to select or decline an item for their child without interference. Library staff will assist parents in finding information on the content of their selections if requested.

No materials will be removed from the library's collection until all steps in the library's procedure for handling complaints about library material have been completed, or by the order of a court or competent jurisdiction.

V. Gifts

The library will accept gifts with the understanding that all materials donated become the property of the library without restrictions. A gift to the library may consist of materials or funds for the purchase of materials. The library accepts restricted gift funds only if the material to be purchased has been jointly approved by the donor and the library.

The library cannot undertake a formal appraisal of donated items or assign a monetary value to gifts for tax purposes. However, a "Materials Donation Receipt" can be completed acknowledging the gift. An appraisal by a third party does not imply endorsement by the library. Unconditional gifts are accepted by the library without commitment as to their final disposition. The same criteria used to select purchased materials will also apply to gifts and donations. Donations which cannot be added to the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library for sale.

The library reserves the right to refuse any offered donations.

VI. Evaluation and Review of Existing Materials

The library recognizes regular weeding as an important part of collection maintenance and good stewardship of library space. Without regular weeding, the collection would quickly outgrow the existing facility.

Materials purchased and placed in the library collection may over time lose their value to the collection and library users. Library materials need to be continually evaluated for their usefulness and may be "de-selected" under the following guidelines:

- Materials are physically damaged or worn out.
- Information contained in materials may be inaccurate or outdated.
- Duplicate copies of titles may no longer be needed.
- Materials have not circulated for a designated period of time.
- Physical limitations of space available.

Worn out or outdated materials may be replaced by new materials, either in the same format or in a different format. Different titles may be substituted if exact replacement is not possible. Not all withdrawn materials are replaced.

All library materials withdrawn will be removed from the library's records and clearly marked as withdrawn. Withdrawn materials will be disposed of as follows:

- Inaccurate or Outdated Materials - These materials will be disposed of in a manner that precludes their future use. They may be recycled, shredded, put in the garbage, taken to a landfill, etc.

- Poor Physical Condition - Depending on the condition of the item, these materials may be recycled, put in the garbage, sold, or donated to qualified organizations. Materials damaged in the circulation process will become the property of the patron if the patron pays for the item.
- Duplicate copies or materials that are not being used – Materials withdrawn for these reasons may be sold, donated to qualified organizations, or recycled.

Withdrawn materials may be donated to the Friends of the Galesburg Library for sale in regular book sales. They may also be donated to other libraries, or to non-profit or governmental organizations such as childcare centers, senior centers, detention facilities, etc.

VII. Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library Board, Director, and staff support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's **Library Bill of Rights** and its statements on *Freedom to Read and Freedom to View*. We provide equal access to all library resources within the guidelines of Michigan law and the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Patrons are free to select or reject items for themselves but may not make that decision for others.

The library purchases materials from a wide variety of viewpoints and value systems and makes these materials available to guests regardless of age. No patron will agree with all materials in the collection, but a patron's right to read, seek information and speak freely is important to our democratic society and allows individuals to learn from one another.

The library responds to requests for reconsideration of library materials from residents of the library's service area in writing. Requestors must have read, heard, or viewed the entire work to have their challenge considered.

The Library Director, along with two members of the Library Board, will review the item considering the patron's concern, the library selection policy, and professional reviews of the title.

The committee's decision will be communicated in writing to the requesting party via a letter sent by the Library Director within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written complaint.

Adopted: June 20, 2023

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

January 23, 1980

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

"Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 2006.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed July 25, 2023)

The Freedom to Read Statement

(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.)

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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.

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.

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.

"The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed July 25, 2023)

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

"Freedom to View Statement," American Library Association, May 29, 2007.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement> (Accessed July 25, 2023)

Statement of Principle – Intellectual Freedom*

Adopted by the MLA Board of Directors on September 10, 2021

The Michigan Library Association (MLA) actively advocates and educates in defense of intellectual freedom – the rights of library users to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession, and a basic right in our democratic society.

Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas without restriction. Viewed as an integral component of a democratic society, intellectual freedom protects an individual's right to access, explore, consider, and express ideas and information as the basis for a self-governing, well-informed citizenry. Intellectual freedom comprises the bedrock for freedoms of expression, speech, and the press and relates to freedoms of information and the right to privacy.

The United Nations upholds intellectual freedom as a basic human right through Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which asserts:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

Intellectual freedom encompasses many areas including issues of academic freedom, Internet filtering, and censorship. MLA values an individual's right to choose informational concepts and media to formulate thought and opinion without repercussion, restrictions to access and barriers to privacy of information constitute intellectual freedom issues. MLA opposes any restrictions to access which may include:

- banned books, book burning, and challenges to literature,
- censorship in any form,
- self-censorship by authors, editors, journalists, or library materials selectors,
- measures that diminish net neutrality, and
- government information and freedom of information laws.

In addition, MLA supports upholding an individual's right to privacy of information. Some of these challenges include:

- data mining and surveillance,
- data protection and information privacy laws and practices,
- confidentiality of library users' records of access, and

- legislation that suspends civil liberties in the name of national security such as the Patriot Act and the Homeland Security Act.

Not only does MLA oppose censorship of materials, but we are also proponents of the accessibility to materials without prejudice to every member of the community.

As the digital world continues to evolve, libraries help ensure that people can access the information they need – regardless of age, education, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, income, physical limitations or geographic barriers.

** This statement of principle on Intellectual Freedom is attributed in whole to an array of articles and sessions documented through the all-encompassing work done by the American Library Association (ALA).*

<https://www.milibraries.org/assets/docs/FINAL%20Statement%20of%20Principle%20-%20Intellectual%20Freedom.pdf> (Accessed July 25, 2023)

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APPENDIX E – Request for Reconsideration Procedures and Form

Requests For Reconsideration of Library Materials Procedures

Galesburg Charleston Memorial District Library responds to requests for reconsideration of library materials from residents of the library's service area.

Reconsideration requests must be in writing. Requestors must have read, heard or viewed the entire work to have their challenge considered.

The Library Director, along with two members of the Library Board, will review the item considering the patron's concern, the library selection policy, and professional reviews of the title.

The committee's decision will be communicated in writing to the requesting party via a letter sent by the Library Director within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written complaint.

SAMPLE

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Your Name: _____ Library Barcode: _____

Are you a GCMDL service area resident? (Only residents may complete this form.) Yes / No

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ Township: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

I Represent: _____ Myself _____ An organization

Name of Organization: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____ Pub. Date: _____

Format: ___ Book ___ eBook ___ Audiobook ___ DVD / Blu-Ray

Have you read, viewed or heard the entire work? Yes No
(Requestors must read, hear or view the entire work to have their challenge considered.)

Have you read any professional reviews of this work? Yes No
If yes, please list the publications here: _____

For what age group is this work intended? _____

What do you believe is the theme and/or major intent of this work?

What is your objection to this work? Please be specific.

In its place, what work of equal literary quality would you recommend the library purchase that would cover the same subject or content?

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received by / date: _____ Director / date: _____