

Scott Township Public Library
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Title	Collection Development & Management
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“The library is the only social institution whose main ethical underpinning is the collection, preservation, and dissemination of all manner of information.” (Selle, Curley 73)

“Libraries generally employ two basic information policies when building their library collections: collection development policies and selection criteria.” (Rubin 180)

“The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and direction to the Library staff for the development and maintenance of the Library’s collection. . . The continuous review of library materials is necessary as a means of maintaining an active library collection of current interest to users.” (Mt. Lebanon Public Library Policy 20, 1)



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STPL Mission

The Scott Township Public Library's mission is to serve as the community center for lifelong intellectual growth and enrichment, enabling all patrons to explore the limits of their imagination.

STPL Goals & Objectives

- Ensure access to current, quality reading material and research by all members of the community by acquiring, organizing and administering a quality collection of books, journals and other material of cultural, educational, informational and recreational value
- Increase reading interest among citizens, especially our youth
- Provide an important amenity to residents and potential residents
- Promote a convenient area for research and study
- Provide quality programs that seek to enrich the community and the lives of its citizens
- Cooperate with area schools and community groups in promoting library use and encouraging reading and study
- Participate in the state, regional and district library systems
- Provide Scott Township with a library collection and library service sufficient in quality and quantity to meet the library needs of all the residents of the Township within the means of the budget
- The Scott Township Public Library recognizes its responsibility to the children, teens, and adults of the community in promoting enlightened citizenship, providing enrichments of cultural and recreational life, and encouraging people of all ages to educate themselves continuously.

Statement of Purpose Regarding Collection Development

- 1.1. The purpose of the Scott Township Public Library is to give service to individuals of all ages. The library is an educational, cultural, informational, and recreational institution, and its responsibility is to provide the individual with opportunities for continuous learning, personal enrichment, and relaxation through the use of books and related materials. The library will obtain, organize, and make freely available materials in various formats, as well as programs and services.
- 1.2. Scott Township Public Library acquires, organizes, and provides open access to information, resources and services that inspire and help community residents meet their lifelong personal, educational, cultural, vocational, recreational and professional information needs. The Library, as a leading force in the community, emphasizes local resources, popular materials, and educational enrichment for all ages and abilities.
- 1.3. Scott Township Public Library recognizes that the freedom to read is essential in a democracy, and it subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights and to the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association, June 25, 1971. The Library recognizes the attached interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights as guidance for carrying out the Bill of Rights.
- 1.4. Scott Township's Public Library collection must provide a wide range of materials for users of all ages, all educational levels, and all socio-economic backgrounds.

1.5. Definition: The phrase "library materials" as it occurs in this policy includes. But is not limited to, books, periodicals, software, microforms, audio, video and on-line sources.

SELECTION

A. Authority

The selection of materials for the library is made within the framework of the following guidelines established by the Board of Trustees. Final responsibility for the selection of materials lies with the Director. It is at the discretion of the Director to delegate responsibility to members of the library staff.

B. Collection Priorities

The Scott Township Public Library's collection will encompass contemporary titles and notable works of classical literature in every field. The library will provide and make accessible a balance collection of retrospective and contemporary materials in various media that are responsive to a broad range of community interests. The following collection development priorities have been determined for all material formats:

- Non-fiction
- Reference
- Periodicals (Serials)
- Fiction
- Audio Materials
- Visual Materials
- Electronic Resources
- Special Needs

Materials on Pennsylvania are of interest to the residents of Scott Township and will be given priority.

Materials on Celtic culture, heritage, etc. will be collected, as space permits, to provide Scott Township with a unique collection of these materials. The decision to collect these materials was made prior to the establishment of this policy and was tied with giving the library a unique identity within the consortium of libraries in Allegheny County.

C. Materials Not Collected

Due to finite resources, there are certain materials that the Scott Township Public Library does not specifically collect:

- C.1 Rare books. Since it is the public Library's function to make materials available to all users, the Scott Township Public Library does not collect rare or unusual materials that require special handling.
- C.2 Textbooks. Although school and college libraries are the primary resources for students, students at all levels of formal education make up a large part of the Library's clientele, and the Library recognizes students' needs in selecting materials. Textbooks will, however, be purchased in those subject areas where there is little or no material in any other form or in those instances where they substantially add to the collection.

D. Selection Guidelines

1. General Selection

The selection of materials for the library is governed by the library's general objectives, its assessment of the community's present and future needs, its recognition of and cooperation with other libraries in the consortium, and the limitations of space and budget.

The library recognizes that a good working collection includes standard works, classics and popular titles in all fields related to the needs of the community.

The library is selective in its purchase of current fiction and nonfiction. Within the limits of the budget, it chooses those titles which will be the most useful in satisfying the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community.

The Library will attempt to represent all approaches to public issues of a controversial nature. The Library does not sanction particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given item equivalent to an endorsement of the author's viewpoint. The library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. A person may reject certain items for himself or herself or for his / her family, but he / she does not have the right to restrict access to materials by others. Selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work as it relates to the criteria listed.

Occasionally books of temporary value, such as campaign biographies of fiction about which there is great interest, will be acquired by the library and discarded or donated for the Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale, when they have served their purpose of meeting a strong current, but temporary, demand.

The Scott Township Public Library selects material for its collection in accordance with professionally accepted guidelines.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no item will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft. Responsibility for the use of the library's collection by children, age seventeen and under rests with their parents and / or legal guardians. Further, the library cannot limit its selection to materials suitable for children and adolescents, but must consider its adult audience; therefore, some materials may be deemed by some parents as inappropriate for their children. Since parents' feelings differ and children of the same age differ greatly in levels of maturity, the library will not act as judge of what materials a child is mature enough to borrow. This responsibility must remain with the parent and / or guardian.

Selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that items may come into the possession of minors.

In the selection of materials, consideration is given to reviews in the standard selection tools of the profession such as, but not limited to, Choice, Booklist, New York Times Book Review, and Library Journal, authoritative critical discussions, bibliographies, professional guides such as the Public Library Catalog, indices such as the Short Story Index, and the requests of patrons. Selection depends finally on the informed judgment of qualified staff members.

If a scarcity of information in a particular subject area exists, material in that area may be selected, even though it does not meet the usually applied standards.

2. **Nonfiction**

The Library acquires materials of both permanent and current interests in all subjects, based upon the merits of the work in relation to the needs, interests, and demand of the community. Scott Township Public Library intends to foster independence of mind and to uphold the individual citizen's right and duty to make decisions for him/herself. Each item is evaluated in its entirety and not on the basis of a

particular section. While a single standard cannot be applied to each work, the following general criteria are to be considered when selecting materials for purchase:

- Authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher
- Accuracy of information
- Clarity and fairness of presentation
- Recent data
- Adequate breadth and depth of coverage
- Appropriateness and relevancy of subject to the Library's users
- Popular demand
- Historical significance
- Organization and style appropriate to the material and to the Library's users
- Good quality illustrations
- Special features, such as bibliography and index
- Durable binding and paper
- Cost
- Publication date
- Local author (if the above criteria is also met)

It is recognized that technical manuals related to computer hardware, software, networks, etc. may need to be refreshed on a more regular basis than other works of non-fiction. The above criteria will be kept in mind as well as budget restrictions when refreshing these items.

3. **Reference**

Reference materials are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. They can provide quick, concise, current or historical information or they may serve as an index to other materials in the collection. Since they are typically used by the public and Library staff to answer specific questions, they are designated for use within the Library.

The library recognizes its obligation to provide a well-rounded and up-to-date reference collection for the purpose of research and answering specific questions. However, because large academic libraries and special collections are located in Allegheny County, and because within the rules of inter-library loan, the library may call upon the resources of other libraries in the Allegheny County Library Association and ACCESS PA, it avoids buying highly specialized materials unless a continuing community need warrants such purchase.

In selecting for the reference collections, the primary concern is the Library's patrons and their information needs. In addition to the general selection criteria mentioned above, the following criteria must be considered in acquiring materials for the reference collections:

- Usefulness of the publication, considering the existing collection
- Favorable reviews or inclusion in basic reference collection guides
- Reputation of the author or publisher
- Currency of the topic
- Date of publication
- Cost
- The expense for ongoing maintenance, if the title in question is a serial publication which will require frequent updating

Scott Township ordinances will also be maintained in a binder as non-circulating. These will be updated from time to time.

Duplicate copies of reference materials may be purchased for the circulating collection if the price is not prohibitive. To a very limited extent, items not falling strictly within the reference format but in high demand by Library users, may be included in the reference collection to allow maximum use, for example legal forms, tax forms, college guides and the like, in order to ensure their availability in the Library at all times.

It is recognized that reference materials may need to be refreshed on a more regular basis than other works of non-fiction. Some sources recommend at least every 5 years. The above criteria will be kept in mind as well as budget restrictions when refreshing these items.

4. **Periodicals (Serials)**

Periodicals are publications issued and received on a regular basis. They form an important part of the Library's collection and are intended to complement the book collection. The Library does not subscribe to highly specialized and technical periodicals nor to professional journals other than those in the field of library science. With the availability of online full-text magazine articles for the purposes of research, the periodical collection no longer requires extensive back collections and may be seen to be more of a browsing collection. Periodicals are selected according to the following criteria:

- Indexed in one of the standard indexing resources
- Cost
- Requests by patrons
- Whether the periodical has local or regional interest
- Whether a subject area needs to be expanded to help balance the collection

The retention of most periodicals is limited to a maximum of 1 year, except for **Consumer Reports**, which is retained for 5 years.

Circulation statistics will also be considered when renewing subscriptions of periodicals.

5. **Fiction**

The Library aims to provide a variety of types of fiction and satisfy readers of differing tastes, interests, educational backgrounds and reading skills. There is no single standard by which to judge fiction, which is a form of imaginative literature. In the case of fiction, the following criteria will be considered:

- Popular demand
- Reputation of the author and publisher
- Appropriateness to the Library's users
- Importance as a document of the times
- Relationship to the existing collection and to other titles and authors dealing with the same subject
- Interest and originality of the plot
- Interest and development of the characters
- Style of writing
- Literary merit
- Inclusion in standard Library bibliographies
- The physical qualities of the book
- Cost
- Part of existing series
- Local author

6. **Audio Materials**

Recorded Books. The Library's goal is to provide a collection of recorded instructional, educational, and quality literature that parallels most areas of the general collection. The use of audio players at home and in automobiles has led to a demand for books in audio formats that can be listened to by many people, not only the visually impaired. Efforts are made to select on a variety of topics and to appeal to a range of interests. Both abridged and unabridged selections will be purchased. In addition to the general criteria for selection, the following criteria must be considered when selecting recorded books:

- Authority and competency of producer
- Artistic merit and reputation of the reader
- Quality of interpretation and ease of understanding by Library user
- Technical quality, i.e., sound quality
- Packaging
- Cost
- Popular demand

Recorded Music. The Library's goal is to provide a collection of music in recorded formats that is historically significant, of enduring popularity, and appeals to patrons of all ages. Selections will include instrumental and vocal recordings in the following genres: classical, jazz, world, opera, pop, folk, show tunes, movie soundtracks, and recordings of local interest. The following criteria will be taken into account when selecting recordings:

- Authority and competency of producer
- Artistic merit
- Technical quality
- Availability
- Cost
- Popular demand
- Local Artist(s)

7. **Video Materials**

The Library's goal is to provide a wide variety of entertaining, instructional, educational, and literature-based videos that will enhance the Library's existing nonfiction and fiction collections. Feature film selections will be limited to those videos that are culturally, historically or aesthetically significant and will be added as demand and funds permit.

Scott Township Public Library also maintains an extensive collection of Indian or "Hindi" movies. This collection is enhanced based on the suggestions of the local Indian population.

It is not the Library's intention to duplicate the full spectrum of entertainment videos available in the private sector, but rather to provide quality films of educational or entertainment value.

The Library video collection is not intended to supplement curriculum requirements of educational organizations within the community. The following selection criteria should be considered:

- Favorable reviews in standard Library reviewing sources
- Appropriateness of the subject to the collection
- Appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended users
- Technical quality, i.e., clarity of picture and sound quality
- Authority and competency of the producer
- Artistic merit and reputation of the performers
- Availability of public performance rights

- The need for non-fiction and documentaries to present accurate and current information
- Cost
- Local Production

8. **Electronic Resources**

This section has two basic categories: one for resources contained on media not considered music or video and one for on-line databases and similar resources.

Category 1: Electronic resources also include but are not limited to CD Rom games, games for PS2, GameCube, X-Box, etc., computer-based information resources, and other applications and resources which require either a computer or special hardware to operate. This section does not apply to audio books, standard music CDs, VHS or DVDs. The following criteria should be considered for electronic resources in this category:

- Price of item
- Anticipated demand by Library users
- Favorable reviews in standard Library reviewing sources
- Appropriateness of the subject to the collection
- Appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended users
- Technical quality, i.e., clarity of picture and sound quality
- Authority and competency of the producer
- Artistic merit and reputation of the performers

Category 2: Electronic resources also include but are not limited to: citation or full-text databases and instructional multimedia programs. The following criteria should be considered for electronic resources in this category:

- Compatibility with available equipment and/or existing operating systems
- Ease of use by Library patrons, including enhanced searching capabilities
- Price of print format versus electronic
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Frequency of updates
- Anticipated demand by Library users
- Maintenance requirements and updating of database
- Training requirements for staff and the public
- Licensing fees and usage restrictions

9. **Student Population**

Although school and college libraries are the primary resources for students, students at all levels of formal education make up a large part of the library's clientele, and the library recognizes students' needs in selection of materials. It does not purchase textbooks and other curriculum related materials for particular courses of study, nor does it duplicate materials to satisfy the requirement of mass assignments. However, if donated, the library will make available current textbooks in use in the surrounding schools.

10. **Reserve Pool Responsibilities**

As a member of the Allegheny County Library Association the collection will be enhanced by items from the "reserve pool". These items may be books, DVDs, etc.

Scott Township Public Library will abide by any and all agreements into which it enters.

11. Duplication

Within the limitation of the budget, the library provides duplicate copies of titles so long as use and demand indicate that duplication is needed. In general, titles are not duplicated.

12. Special Needs

Where possible, selection consideration will be made in providing materials which will aid special needs populations. In part, the Large Print books and audio books are intended for the population with visual limitations.

13. Pamphlets

Due to space limitations, the Scott Township Public Library currently does not have a pamphlet file.

14. Pennsylvania Collection

The Pennsylvania Collection at the Scott Township Public Library contains material on the history, description and development of Scott Township, Allegheny County, its residents, and to an extent, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Many of these materials are available only within the library. Duplicate copies are also acquired to be made available for loan. Some background histories of the surrounding area are also included in the collection, covering localities and events closely related to the development of Allegheny County.

Work by or about athletes with limited relevance to Allegheny County will be evaluated individually and only those works that add appreciably to the knowledge of Pennsylvania will be added to the collection. Materials not accepted are restricted collections, undated and unidentified photographs of people, hard copy of newspapers, or books by local authors that are outside the scope of the collection policy.

The Pennsylvania Collection includes works of some Pennsylvania and local authors. Works of local imprint are added only when they contribute directly to the social and cultural history of the region.

E. Selection Process

- **Responsibility for Selection.** The Board of Directors approves the Collection Development Policy for the Scott Township Public Library. The responsibility for administering this policy rests with the Director. The Librarians under the direction of the Director coordinate the actual selection of materials.
- **Community Participation.** Involvement by the community in the selection process is encouraged. Several mechanisms are provided for this purpose:
- **Reserve Requests.** The general public may reserve currently checked out circulating materials at the Circulation Desk. The Library may consider adding duplicate copies to satisfy the expressed demand.
- **Purchase Suggestions.** Library users are encouraged to suggest titles and/or subjects that they would like to see in the collection. A suggestion form is available at the circulation desk for this purpose. In such cases, the stated selection criteria will be taken into account.
- **Reconsideration of Library Materials.** The library recognizes that the inclusion or exclusion of certain materials may be questioned. There may be occasions when a member of the community may be concerned about a particular item in the Library's collection. If a patron wishes the Library to reconsider material that is in the collection, **The Citizen's Request for Reconsideration** of Library Materials form must be completed and signed (Addendum 1). This form is available at the circulation desk. This form must be completed in its entirety and returned to a Library staff member or to the Director.

Once the form is received, the Director will review the request, using the criteria used in selecting the item, its place in the collection, and reasons for including the item in the collection. The Director will then contact the patron.

If the Library user is not satisfied at this level, they will be invited to attend the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The Board, after hearing the complaint, may either wish to appoint a special review committee or recommend a policy regarding the item in question. In either case, a letter will be sent to the Library user informing him or her of the Board's decision.

- **Selection Tools.** Professional staff members are expected to read current Library and Review journals in order to suggest materials for purchase. These journals include among others: Publisher's Weekly, Library Journal, Kirkus Reviews, Choice, Booklist, School Library Journal, The Hornbook, and Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books. In addition, librarians should be aware of materials that are being reviewed in other sources such as: the major national newspapers, local publications, weekly newsmagazines, as well as the broadcast media. Since the majority of published materials are not reviewed in the standard selection tools, publishers' catalogs and bookstores may be potential sources of information about this type of elusive material.

F. Material Formats

Although the majority of the Library's collection is offered in the traditional print format, valuable information is also available in audio-visual and electronic formats. Materials will be selected and purchased in the most appropriate format for Library use.

Hardcover Books: Books are generally purchased in hardcover editions because of their durability.

Paperbacks: This format includes paperback books which are comparable in size to hardcover editions but which are typically lower in cost.

Trade: Trade paperbacks are preferred in those cases where the hardcover edition is extremely expensive and the title would be either used infrequently or would be removed from the collection in a few years.

Mass Market: The paperback fiction collection will be primarily limited to those titles published only in mass market paperback format.

Serials: Serials are publications issued in successive parts bearing numeric or chronological designations and intended to be continued indefinitely. This format includes periodicals, newspapers and annuals or continuations retained in the reference collections. They may include the following physical formats: print, microform and electronic. Decisions as to retention of back issue periodicals and reference annuals or continuations are made on a title by title case. The following factors must be considered in any retention decision:

- Cost
- Usage rates
- Shelf space required or computer system compatibility
- Availability of the title in another format such as electronic format
- Existing indexing in one of the Library's indexing services

Any periodical or newspaper that the Library determines should be retained for historic or research value may be retained in print format indefinitely.

Large Type Books: See Large-Print Books below.

Microforms: Microforms are not used by Scott Township Public Library.

Video: Videos are selected in the VHS and DVD format. Special consideration is given to those titles available in closed caption format.

Audio: The recorded books are available in cassette and CD formats. Both abridged and unabridged titles are included in the Library's collection. This format also includes musical and instructional recordings.

Compact Discs: Musical recordings are most readily available on compact disc. This format is distinguished by its durability and technical quality. Therefore, the Library will collect recorded music primarily in this format. Works previously available on audiocassette (such as language instruction and recorded books) may be purchased on compact disc as they become available.

Electronic Materials: The electronic format includes on-line databases and CD-ROM resources and non-music, video or book . . . Citation databases provide references to sources of information rather than the actual text or information. Full-text databases include complete articles, documents, and any other resources that provide actual text and information.

G. Special Collections

Large-Print Books: Books printed in larger than 16-point type are in demand by those persons in the community with visual impairments. The Library attempts to provide a variety of titles in this format, particularly in fiction, and maintains several standing orders with large-print publishers for the purpose of maintaining and developing this collection. The large print format may also be considered for those books that are out of print in regular print formats.

Young Adult: See below.

Resources for Parents of Children with Special Needs: ??? (Where is the collection we developed for the Parent Resource group?)

Local History:

Consumer:

Hindi Collection:

H. Collections for Different Age Groups

Easy Picture Books: The Easy collection is comprised of picture books of interest to all ages. Because the illustrations are the predominant feature, they are generally designed for adults to read to children. Although most picture books are intended for the young child, there are a growing number of picture books that are specifically written and illustrated for the older child.

Early Readers. Early Readers are intended for kindergarten through early third-grade readers. A controlled vocabulary, large print, heavy use of illustrations, and a limited number of pages characterize these books.

Juvenile. The Juvenile collection is comprised of popular fiction and non-fiction material. It targets students through the eighth grade and can be as old as fourteen. Other determining factors for inclusion in this collection are: materials that are clearly reviewed and/or labeled as juvenile, characters of similar ages, and the theme or subject matter is of interest to and intended for juveniles. The Juvenile fiction and non-fiction collections have their own sections within the library.

Fiction. This collection serves students from late second grade through eighth grade. The books feature age-appropriate vocabulary and subject matter.

Non-fiction. The Juvenile non-fiction collection includes materials to serve the information needs of preschoolers, elementary-age, and middle school students. The subject matter, vocabulary, organization and scope must be age-appropriate.

Young Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction. The Young Adult collection is comprised of popular fiction and non-fiction targeting high school students in the ninth through twelfth grades. These people may be as young as fourteen and as old as eighteen. Other determining factors for inclusion in this collection are: materials that are clearly reviewed and/or labeled as young adult, characters are of high school or college age, and the theme or subject matter is of interest to and intended for young adults. The Young Adult fiction collection is integrated in the Adult fiction collection. The Young Adult non-fiction collection is gathered in its own area.

Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction. The Adult collection includes fiction and non-fiction titles for adults of all ages and reading abilities.

I. De-selection of Library Materials and Replacement of Library Materials

De-selection. De-selection of Library materials, or weeding, is an integral part of collection development. An active and continuous de-selection program is essential in maintaining a viable and useful collection. Materials are withdrawn from the Library's collection through systematic weeding or because of loss or physical damage. The following categories of materials should be considered for de-selection:

- A worn, shabby, or damaged duplicate copy
- Duplicate copies of seldom used titles
- Materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information
- Superseded editions of specific titles
- Materials no longer of interest or demand

Replacement. While the Library tries to maintain copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn due to loss or damage. Decisions concerning the replacement of individual items are based on the following considerations:

- Demand for the specific item
- The number of copies held
- The existing coverage of the subject within the collection
- The recency of its contents
- The availability of the title for reorder
- The cost of mending versus the cost of replacement
- Availability of the title from other libraries

Discarding: Material which are no longer useful are withdrawn from the library. Discarding of these items may occur by one of the following methods:

- If the material is still in "good shape" the material will be donated to the Friends of the Library for the Annual Book Sale.
- If other libraries have expressed a need they will be donated to them. (Ex. Libraries recovering from natural disasters.)
- If possible the items will be submitted to a recycling facility.
- If none of these options are reasonable, then they will be put in the trash.

J. Gift Policy

Gifts of books and other materials will be accepted by the library with the understanding that the library reserves the privilege of deciding whether such material shall be added to its collection. Gifts which cannot be used will be returned to the donor upon written request at the time of the donation, sold for the benefit of the library or disposed of to the best advantage.

Memorial and Honorarium titles will receive a library book plate and be shelved within the collection.

Gifts of money, real property, and/or stock shall be accepted and recorded. If any conditions are attached, they must be stated and/or explained in writing to the Board. Acceptance shall depend on the Board's decision to agree to these conditions.

Library materials donated to the Library and books given as memorials must meet the same standards as other materials selected for inclusion in the Library's collection. If a donated item is not added to the collection of the Scott Township Public Library, it may be given to another library or to the Friends of the Scott Township Public Library to sell as part of their fund-raising efforts.

ADDENDUMS

The Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Title:			
Author:			
Publisher:			
Request Initiated by:		Telephone:	
Address:			
Complainant represents	Self:	Organization:	Other:

Did you review all of the material?

If no, what parts did you review?

To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages or sections, frames, etc.)

What do you believe is the theme of this material?

What do you feel might be the result of using this material?

For what age group would you recommend this material?

Is there anything good about this material?

Are you aware of the judgment of this material by literary critics?

What would you like the library to do about this material?

In its place, what material of equal literary quality would you recommend the library carry in its place that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

Signature:

Date:

Basic Intellectual Freedom Policies

1. First Amendment of the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution

CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECTING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION, OR PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF; OR ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS; OR THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE PEACEABLY TO ASSEMBLE, AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT FOR A REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES.

The Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on December 15, 1791

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/firstamendment/firstamendment.htm> (4/14/06)

2. American Library Association's (ALA) 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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.htm> (4/14/06)

3. 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.

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 Foundation for Free Expression](#)
[The Association of American University Presses, Inc.](#)
[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](#)

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/ftstatement/freedomreadstatement.htm> (4/22/06)

[Freedom to View Statement](#)

4. 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

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/ftvstatement/freedomviewstatement.htm> (4/22/06)

5. The Universal Right to Free Expression An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association, and the corollary right to receive information.

The American Library Association endorses this principle, which is also set forth in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Preamble of this document states that “. . . recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. . .” and “. . . the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people. . .”

Article 18 of this document states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19 states:

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 regardless of frontiers.

Article 20 states:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

We affirm our belief that these are inalienable rights of every person, regardless of origin, age, background, or views. We embody our professional commitment to these principles in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and [Code of Ethics](#), as adopted by the American Library Association.

We maintain that these are universal principles and should be applied by libraries and librarians throughout the world. The American Library Association's policy on International Relations reflects these objectives:

“. . . to encourage the exchange, dissemination, and access to information and the unrestricted flow of library materials in all formats throughout the world.”

We know that censorship, ignorance, and limitations on the free flow of information are the tools of tyranny and oppression. We believe that ideas and information topple the walls of hate and fear and build bridges of cooperation and understanding far more effectively than weapons and armies.

The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights and intellectual freedom; the two are inseparably linked and inextricably entwined. Freedom of opinion and expression is not derived from or dependent on any form of government or political power. This right is inherent in every individual. It cannot be surrendered, nor can it be denied. True justice comes from the exercise of this right.

We recognize the power of information and ideas to inspire justice, to restore freedom and dignity to the oppressed, and to change the hearts and minds of the oppressors.

Courageous men and women, in difficult and dangerous circumstances throughout human history, have demonstrated that freedom lives in the human heart and cries out for justice even in the face of threats, enslavement, imprisonment, [torture](#), exile, and death. We draw inspiration from their example. They challenge us to remain steadfast in our most basic professional responsibility to promote and defend the right of free expression.

There is no good censorship. Any effort to restrict free expression and the free flow of information aids the oppressor. Fighting oppression with censorship is self-defeating.

Threats to the freedom of expression of any person anywhere are threats to the freedom of all people everywhere. Violations of human rights and the right of free expression have been recorded in virtually every country and society across the globe.

In response to these violations, we affirm these principles:

- The American Library Association opposes any use of [governmental prerogative](#) that leads to the intimidation of individuals that prevents them from exercising their rights to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. We urge libraries and librarians everywhere to resist such abuse of governmental power, and to support those against whom such governmental power has been employed.
- The American Library Association condemns any governmental effort to involve libraries and librarians in restrictions on the right of any individual to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. Such restrictions pervert the function of the library and violate the professional responsibilities of librarians.
- The American Library Association rejects censorship in any form. Any action that denies the inalienable human rights of individuals only damages the will to resist oppression, strengthens the hand of the oppressor, and undermines the cause of justice.

- The American Library Association will not abrogate these principles. We believe that censorship corrupts the cause of justice, and contributes to the demise of freedom.
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Adopted January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council.

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<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=interpretations&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=8662> (4/22/06)

6. Libraries: An American Value

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.

To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

**Adopted February 3, 1999, by the
Council of the American Library Association**

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/americanvalue/librariesamerican.htm> (4/14/06)

7. Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other potentially controversial topics.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities.

Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the [Library Bill of Rights](#): "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." A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the [First Amendment](#), no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community the library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990.

[ISBN 8389-6552-0]

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/interpretations/diversitycollection.htm> (4/14/06)

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