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# Springfield Public Library



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## Collection Development Policy

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May, 2010

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## **I. Purpose & Objectives**

This collection development policy is designed to provide operational guidance for the Springfield Public Library. It serves to inform citizens about how the library manages the collection. As the Springfield community changes, so will the needs of its users. This policy is meant to be flexible and a broad overview of our collection management practices.

## **II. Mission Statement**

The Springfield Public Library strives to provide excellent library services for personal enrichment, lifelong learning, and the enjoyment of all.

## **III. The Community and Library Clientele**

The library values the diversity of its unique community. Springfield citizens vary in economic, racial, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds. The library recognizes the importance of needs assessment in identifying and responding to changing community needs and interests. The library seeks to offer itself as an information access point, community center, and meeting space for community organizations, activities, issues and services.

## **IV. Parameters of the Collection**

It is the policy of the library to select materials that provide general circulation and reference service to adults, young adults and children. The library collects a variety of print and non-print materials, including but not limited to: books, newspapers, periodicals, a variety of audio-visual formats, and electronic formats.

## **V. Responsibility for Selection and Selection Criteria**

The library is dedicated to creating an objective collection for our community. The Library Director is ultimately responsible for the library's collection. Staff within each division will select based on the criteria as outlined in this section, i.e. youth services librarians select materials for the children's and young adult divisions. Other staff select books, music and films of interest to adults. The library cannot be responsible for materials viewed by children and young adults in the library.

Resources are selected which provide the citizen with:

- Information about one's self, one's work, the community, the world, and one's place in it;
- The basic and classic significant works in fields of human endeavor, including science, the arts, and the humanities;
- Materials to further the individual's education, growth, and to encourage freedom of thought;
- Materials for recreation;
- Materials that represent differing viewpoints of issues so that users may be motivated to engage in critical analysis, to explore their own beliefs, attitudes, and behavior, and to make intelligent judgments in their everyday lives.

To build a collection of merit, all materials are evaluated according to the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all these standards in order to be added to the collection. It is recognized that some criteria may be more important than others, depending on the item.

### **General criteria:**

- Meets the needs of the community;
- Suitability of physical format;
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience;
- Suitable for age level;
- Budget and space considerations;
- Permanent value;

- Meets the language needs of the community;
- Importance as a document of the times;
- Popular demand or contemporary significance;
- Relation to existing collections and other material on the subject;
- Inclusion of title in standard or special bibliographies or indexes;
- Availability of material at other libraries and online;
- Patron requests.

**Content criteria:**

- Authority, comprehensiveness, currency, and objectivity;
- Skill, competence, and purpose of the author;
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator;
- Creative, literary or technical quality;
- Relevance and use of the information;
- Format is unabridged to extent possible;
- Authenticity of history or social setting;
- Local interest;
- Representation of diverse points of view;
- Representation of important movements, genres, or trends;
- Readability or ability to sustain interest;
- Consideration of the work as a whole.

**Special criteria for electronic information sources:**

- Ease of use of the product;
- Availability of the information to multiple, concurrent users;
- Technical requirements to provide access to the information;
- Technical support and training;
- Currency and timeliness of updates.

Current, in-print materials will be given priority over out-of-print materials. When possible, the library will attempt to replace heavily used items that are lost, withdrawn or long overdue. Duplicate copies of a title will be purchased when high demand is anticipated or demonstrated as budget allows. The purchase of less popular, but still important, materials will not be neglected.

**Selection aids may include:**

- Reviews in professionally recognized periodicals and journals and from Internet sources;
- Standard bibliographies and booklists by recognized authorities;
- Advice of experienced people in specific subject areas;
- Patron requests for materials.

**VI. Collection Maintenance**

Periodic and regular evaluation and maintenance of the library's collection is necessary in order to ensure that it remains useful and relevant to the community. This evaluation depends on the expertise of professional staff in determining the needs of the community and assessing the content of the collection. Library materials that no longer serve the needs of the community may be removed from the collection.

**Deselection**

Titles are withdrawn from the collection through systematic weeding by library staff or because of loss or physical damage. Staff will evaluate the collection and weed those items that are no longer of value to the community.

Materials withdrawn from the collection may be donated to the Friends of the Library's book sale or to other agencies. Materials that are damaged or otherwise unsuitable for reuse will be recycled or discarded.

Items will be considered for removal from the collection if:

- They are worn and beyond repair;
- They contain inaccurate or misleading information;
- They are out-dated or no longer meet the needs or interests of the community;
- Other titles in the subject area provide adequate coverage of the topic;
- Multiple copies are available;
- There is a lack of circulation.

## **VII. Gifts**

The Springfield Public Library welcomes gifts of materials that are consistent with the collection development policy provided there are no restrictions attached to their disposition. The library will make available a "Donation Receipt" (see Appendix) at the request of the donor. The appraisal of a gift and retention of the donation receipt for tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor. Nameplates may be put in gift books that are added to the library's collection upon the donor's request.

Materials received as gifts will be evaluated using the same criteria as purchased materials. Gift additions are subject to the following limitations:

- The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift;
- The format is suitable to library use;
- The library makes the final decision on the condition, use, or other disposition of the gift;
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing and access to the gift;
- The library will dispose of a gift in the same manner as for purchased materials;
- The library may refuse any gift;
- Gifts not added to the collection may be donated to the Friends book sale.

Materials which present a hazard to workers or the collection, such as mold, smoke odor, residue or water damage, will not be accepted.

## **Periodicals**

Gift subscriptions to periodicals may be accepted by the library. Patrons should contact the librarian responsible for periodical maintenance if interested in donating a subscription. The library will decide how long to keep back issues, based on space and user needs. Back issues may be discarded and will not be returned to the donor.

## **Monetary Gifts**

The library welcomes monetary gifts. Donors may designate an area of the library's collection or a library service they would like to support with their donation. Unrestricted gifts will be assigned to the library budget at the discretion of library management.

## **VIII. Intellectual Freedom**

Libraries traditionally value and preserve intellectual freedom. The Springfield Public Library seeks to provide the community with uncensored information on diverse viewpoints. The library provides resources for the learning and enjoyment of the entire community, not favoring any one group or individual. For these reasons, the library, with the endorsement of the Library Advisory Board, subscribes to the American Library Association's position as outlined in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read* statement, and the *Freedom to View* statement (See Appendices), except as directed by City Council (City Council Work Session, March 7, 1994). The library reserves the right to use filtering software on Internet stations in the Youth Services division.

## **IX. Challenges to Library Materials**

Springfield citizens are encouraged to address their concerns about any library materials through the following review process:

1. When a concern is brought to the attention of library staff, staff will acknowledge the concern of the citizen and arrange for a meeting with the librarian or manager responsible for selection in the area where the concern arose.
2. The citizen may present and explain his or her concern to the librarian or manager, who will hear the concern, supply the citizen with a copy of the collection development policy, and discuss the library's mission and protocol for challenges.
3. The citizen may formalize his or her concern by completing a "Statement of Concern Regarding Library Resources" (see Appendix), which will be supplied by the interviewing librarian.
4. The completed "Statement of Concern" and the resource in question will be fully reviewed by the Library Director or division manager. Consideration will be made regarding the resource's position in the collection, the library's mission, the collection development policy, and the citizen's concern.
5. The director or manager will inform the citizen of any decision in a timely manner by written letter.
6. The director or manager will apprise the Library Board of the challenge and resolution.
7. Final authority on decisions resides with the City Manager, to whom citizens may appeal if not satisfied by the library's protocol.
8. Resources under question shall remain in the collection pending final action.

## **X. Appendices**



Statement of Concern Regarding Library Resources

Please fill out this form in its entirety in order to help us consider your concerns. Please return this form to library staff when completed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the resource in question: Title/Author \_\_\_\_\_

Format: (book, recording, DVD, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

What brought this item to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

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Overall, what is your concern about having this resource in Springfield Public Library?

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Did you review the entire resource? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If No, what parts of the resource did you review?

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If you are representing an organization, what is the name of the organization? \_\_\_\_\_

What would be an acceptable resolution for you?

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Springfield Public  
**LIBRARY**  
Where Minds Grow

Donation Receipt

Received in Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

In the Amount of \_\_\_\_\_ As Determined by Donor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_



## *Library Bill of Rights*

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939.  
Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27,  
1967; and January 23, 1980;  
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

## *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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

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

## *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