

# **MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Schiller Park Public Library is a center of learning by providing resources, technology and gathering spaces to meet the diverse needs of the community. The Library provides materials and services to assist primarily patrons residing within Schiller Park to meet their informational, leisure, cultural, historic and intellectual needs. Special emphasis is placed on providing information services and furnishing current popular materials. The Library also serves patrons from a wider range through its participation in the statewide reciprocal borrowing program. The Schiller Park Public Library maintains an open door policy to all patrons. It serves preschoolers to senior citizens and continues to reach out to nonusers.

The Schiller Park Public Library is affiliated with Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS). In conjunction with this entity, the Library utilizes an interlibrary loan system to meet patron's requests where budgetary restraints or limited appeal prohibits addition of the materials to the collection.

## **II. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS**

Selection of materials is influenced by:

- A. Anticipation of and response to continuing and changing needs and interests of the community and individuals.
- B. Current and historical significance.
- C. The attention of critics and reviews.
- D. Budgetary and space considerations.
- E. Authenticity.
- F. Patron demand.
- G. Professional judgment.
- H. Since part of the Library's responsibilities to the card holders of the Schiller Park Public Library is to the students, selections are made on the basis of supporting the school curriculum.

The Library staff has selected a general representative collection, for all ages at a variety of reading levels, but the collection is also attuned to the specific needs of the Schiller Park Public Library card holders. Because of the volume of material produced today, the librarians cannot read, review or purchase all items available and many valuable works are never reviewed. Book selection sources, such as Library Journal, Booklist, and School Library Journal, will not be followed solely. Consideration will also be given to award winners of various genres and format types. Patron demand still must be considered even if reviews are not favorable. In most instances, the Library will purchase a title if there are three requests for it, because the importance of on-demand purchasing is recognized.

Materials are to be selected in a variety of formats, print, non-print and electronic format, reflecting the diversified needs and preferences of the Schiller Park Public Library card holders. It shall be the policy of the Library to provide materials in whatever format will best meet the needs of the community.

Widely diverse points of view, including controversial and unorthodox subjects, will be available in the collection. It is the duty of the staff to acquire materials which meet the needs of the community even though the materials may present views contrary to the personal beliefs of staff members, Library board members, community organizations, or individuals. No employee may be disciplined or dismissed for the selection of Library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with this written Materials Selection Policy. Inclusion in the collection does not imply Library approval or agreement with the contents. The Schiller Park Public Library Board of Trustees and staff recognize that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selections will not be made on the merits of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of all of the readers.

Responsibility for the reading by children rests with their parents and/or legal guardians. Selection and display will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children. The present laws dealing with obscenity should be vigorously enforced.

The Schiller Park Public Library Board of Trustees upholds the principles set forth in the most recent Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement, by the American Library Association Council and Freedom to Read Committee.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION:**

#### **BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees of the Schiller Park Public Library to review and approve this Material Selection Policy. The Board is responsible for protecting the rights of the Library user and ultimately answering any and all questions regarding the policy and preservation of an individual's right to know. In accordance with the recommendation of *Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Libraries*, the Schiller Park Library will allocate not less than the recommended percentage of its operating budget on materials for patrons annually.

In accordance with Illinois Library Law, specific selection, ordering, maintaining and weeding of all Library materials shall be delegated to the Library Director.

#### **LIBRARY STAFF RESPONSIBILITY:**

The Library Director will delegate selecting, ordering, maintaining and weeding the Library collection to the appropriate staff as outlined by the Board of Trustees of the Schiller Park Public Library's Materials Selection Policy. (Under the Library Director's direction, such members of the professional staff who are qualified by education and training, will participate in selection and weeding of Library materials.)

#### **IV. POLICY ON GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

The Library is grateful for donations, and its collection has been greatly enriched by many fine donations of materials which the Library might otherwise not have been able to afford. However, in accepting a donation, the Library reserves the privilege of deciding whether it should be added to the collection. Because many books are donated to the Library each year, a portion of the materials cannot be used by the Library, because any book, though of value to itself, may be: (1) a duplicate of an item which the Library already has in sufficient numbers; (2) a title which is not of sufficient reference or circulating use for the Library; (3) in poor physical condition which would not add to the Library's collection; (4) does not conform to the standards presented in the Material's Selection Policy which has been developed to provide the Library with a balanced quality collection. Gift materials will be integrated into the general collection with a bookplate identifying the donor if applicable. Cash gifts will be expended by the Library Director and/or staff in accordance with this policy, the recommendations of the donor, and the needs of the Library.

The Library will offer no pick-up service of donations or onsite evaluation of materials. Books and other materials will be accepted on the condition that the Library Director has the authority to make whatever disposition of the materials is deemed advisable in accordance with criteria applied in this Material Selection policy.

#### **V. WEEDING AND REPLACEMENT OF MATERIALS**

The Library's collection is continuously evaluated by the professional staff in order to maintain a useful collection. This is a positive activity performed in order to find areas that need to be strengthened as well as identify materials that need to be withdrawn. Outdated and unused materials are withdrawn. Lost books are replaced if further use seems likely.

Books, periodicals and non- print materials from the Library's collection may be discarded, sold, given to local philanthropic, educational, cultural, governmental, or other non-for-profit organizations.

#### **VI. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS**

The Schiller Park Public Library subscribes to the selection principles contained in the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements of the American Library Association. (Appendix A)

Patrons who request the reconsideration of Library materials are asked to put their request in writing by completing and signing the Materials Reconsideration Form. (Appendix B)

## APPENDIX A

# Library Bill of Rights

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

A history of the Library Bill of Rights is found in the latest edition of the [Intellectual Freedom Manual](#).

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

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# The Freedom to Read Statement

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The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is

free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

[American Library Association](#)  
[Association of American Publishers](#)

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

[American Booksellers 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

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The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the [\*\*First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States\*\*](#). In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**

## APPENDIX B



### Materials Reconsideration Form

#### ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE

AUTHOR

PLEASE CHECK ONE:  BOOK  PERIODICAL  A/V (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_  ELECTRONIC MATERIALS

PUBLISHER DATE OF PUBLICATION

1. To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific. Cite Pages.)
  
2. Did you read the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, what parts did you read?
  
3. What do you feel might be the result of reading this work?
  
4. Are you aware of judgments of this work by literacy critics?
  
5. What would you like your Library to do about this work?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Do not lend it to my child.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Return it to the staff selection committee of reevaluation.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Additional comments.

#### REQUEST INITIATED BY

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

DO YOU REPRESENT:  YOURSELF  AN ORGANIZATION (NAME) \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHER GROUP (NAME) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Received By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_