

Racine Public Library

Collection Development Policy

I. Purpose

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs. The purpose of this policy is to guide in the selection and withdrawal of materials as well as to inform the public about the principles upon which selection judgments are made.

II. Definition

“Selection” refers to the decisions that must be made either to add materials to the collection or to retain materials already in the collection. “Withdrawal” refers to permanently removing an item from the collection.

III. Goal

The goal of the policy is to provide a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for all age groups, diverse types of material based on demand of the citizens, and materials for the education and recreation of the community.

IV. Responsibility

The Library Board considers and adopts a Collection Development Policy, which they authorize the Library Director to administer. The director designates staff who are qualified by reason of education, training and experience to develop selection and acquisition procedures and to make selection and withdrawal decisions. Because the director must be able to answer to the Board and the general public for selections made by staff, he/she has the authority to reject or select any items contrary to the recommendations of the staff. The director allocates the materials budget annually.

No employee will be disciplined or dismissed for the selection of library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with the written policy and accepted procedures.

V. General Principles

- A.** Basic to this policy are the guidelines established by the American Library Association in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement (appended.)
- B.** The Racine Public Library considers all types and formats of media to be in the realm of human expression and part of the human record. Because the library functions in

a rapidly changing society, it is flexible about changes in materials, both in format and style of expression. Materials in alternative formats are judged in terms of the Criteria for Materials Selection.

VI. Criteria for Materials Selection

A. General Criteria. The selection of library materials involves the following factors and considerations:

1. The experience and knowledge of staff selectors
2. Familiarity with the community, its needs and interests
3. Holding and availability of other area library resources
4. Library's existing collection
5. Library's materials budget

B. Criteria for judging materials

1. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole
2. The material has received attention of critics, reviewers and/or the public
3. Lack of reviews or an unfavorable review is not sufficient reason to reject a title

C. Specific Principles. Preference will be given to materials that meet some, but not necessary all of the following criteria:

1. Accuracy and authoritativeness of content
2. Scope and authority of subject matter
3. Quality of writing
4. Date of publication/copyright
5. Cost and availability of material
6. Availability of space
7. Currency of information
8. Promotion of reading
9. Local importance, and/or historical value
10. Interests, demands and needs of individuals in the community
11. Physical durability and quality of the format
12. Reputation of the author or publisher
13. Quality of organization, readability and style
14. Uniqueness or special features
15. Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
16. Permanent value as source material
17. Importance as a record of the times
18. Vitality and originality

- D. Gifts: The library accepts gifts that will be added to the collection if they meet the same standards as those required of purchased materials. If gifts do not meet these criteria, they will be sold or otherwise discarded. The library will not assign a value to donated materials. The library will, upon request of the donor, provide a receipt for gifts. The library will not return donated material to the donor.
- E. Textbooks: Providing textbooks and curriculum material is generally held to be the responsibility of the schools. Materials will not be purchased for the sole purpose of supporting a curriculum. Textbooks will be considered for the collection when they supply the best or only information on a specific topic.
- F. Requests: All requests and suggestions will be considered using the selection principles described in this policy.
- G. Reference Collection: Librarians may choose to catalog some items to remain in the building at all times. The decision to do that is based on heavy use, cost, or frequency of referral by staff.
- H. Periodical Collection: A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained for browsing purposes and as a supplement to the book collection. Selection of periodicals is reviewed yearly and based on the following criteria:
 - 1. Appeal to the general interest
 - 2. Preservation of a balanced viewpoint within the collection
 - 3. Availability of content via online databases
- I. Racine History Collection: The library maintains a collection of local history materials. Selection guidelines for the Racine History Collection can be found in the Racine History Room Rules and Regulations (appended)

VII Materials for Specific Audiences

A. Materials for Children

- 1. The Youth Services Department serves children from birth through grade eight, parents, guardians and teachers.
- 2. In selecting materials for children, the library's goal is to make available a collection which satisfies patron's informational and recreational needs.
- 3. Materials are selected which meet the general needs of the majority of children. Materials whose qualities make them valuable to children with special needs, talents, problems or interests are also considered.
- 4. Criteria for materials selection are the same as for adult materials, with the addition of vocabulary suitable to the age of the intended audience and quality of the illustrations.

- B. Materials and equipment for people with visual impairments, such as large-print books, magnifiers and audio books are acquired according to patron demand. The

library also encourages patrons with special needs to use the resources of the Wisconsin Talking Books and Braille Library.

VIII. Library Consortium and Interlibrary Loan

The Racine Public Library is a member of the SHARE consortium, which consists of all libraries in Lakeshores Library system and Kenosha County Library System. Libraries in this consortium share a common integrated library catalog. Patrons may place holds on items owned by other libraries in the consortium and those items will be delivered to the library as they become available.

Because of limited budget and space, the library is not able to purchase all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of the library's collection and the collections of the other libraries in the SHARE consortium. In return for this service, the Racine Public Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network.

IX. Weeding and Withdrawal of Library Materials

- A.** Weeding is necessary to maintain a vital, useful and up-to-date collection.
- B.** Selection of materials for weeding is based on the following criteria:
 - 1. Materials worn out through use
 - 2. Ephemeral materials which are no longer timely
 - 3. Materials no longer considered accurate or factual
 - 4. Materials which have had little recent use
 - 5. Excess copies of a title no longer in demand
- C.** Material that is withdrawn may be replaced based on the selection criteria.
- D.** Disposal of materials weeded from the collection is accomplished according to the following priorities:
 - 1. Withdrawn materials may be made available to other tax-supported libraries or institutions, as deemed appropriate by the director.
 - 2. Materials not made available to other tax-supported institutions and deemed to have potential resale value are kept for the Friends of the Library book sale, where they are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - 3. Materials unsuitable for other institutions or resale are discarded.
 - 4. The library will not accept requests to hold weeded materials for individuals.

X. Reconsideration of Library Materials

- A.** The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this policy.
- B.** Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library materials will be sequestered, except to protect them from damage or theft.
- C.** Responsibility of the reading habits of children rests with the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Selection of materials for the collection is not be inhibited by the possibility that items may inadvertently come into the possession of children.
- D.** Patrons requesting that an item be withdrawn from the collection may complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (appended.) Upon receipt of this written request, the director will appoint an ad hoc committee from the professional staff including, but not limited to, the selector for the subject area of the item in question. The committee will make a written recommendation to the director, who will then decide the disposition of the item. The director will, at the earliest possible date, communicate his/her decision, and the reasons for it, in writing to the person who initiated the request. The director will inform the Board of all requests for reconsideration and their disposition.

XI. Cataloging of Library Materials

- a.** All items must be cataloged in accordance with generally accepted professional cataloging principles approved by the American Library Association. For print materials, the Dewey Decimal System and Library of Congress Subject Headings, most current editions, are used.

Approved by the Library Board July 21, 2011; amended November 20, 2014; amended September 15, 2016

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that **equity, diversity, and inclusion** are central to the promotion and practice of intellectual freedom. Libraries are essential to democracy and self-government, to personal development and social progress, and to every individual's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To that end, libraries and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do.

"Equity" takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. Equity, therefore, means increasing diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

"Diversity" can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual.

"Inclusion" means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

To ensure that every individual will feel truly welcomed and included, library staff and administrators should reflect the origins, age, background, and views of their community. Governing bodies should also reflect the community. Library spaces, programs, and collections should accommodate the needs of every user.

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, age, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

Library collections, in a variety of material formats, should include a full range of viewpoints and experiences, serving the needs of all members of the community. Historically, diverse authors and viewpoints have not been equitably represented in the output of many mainstream publishers and other producers. It may require extra effort to locate, review, and acquire those materials.

Therefore, libraries should seek out alternative, small press, independent, and self-published content in a variety of formats. Libraries may benefit from cooperative arrangements and other partnerships to share in the work of locating and acquiring diverse materials.

Interlibrary loan may complement but not substitute for the development of diverse local collections.

All materials, including databases and other electronic content, should be made accessible for people who use adaptive or assistive technology.

To provide equitable and inclusive access, libraries must work closely with diverse communities to understand their needs and aspirations, so that the library can respond appropriately with collections and services to meet those needs. All community members will feel truly welcomed and included when they see themselves reflected in collections that speak to their cultures and life experiences.

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.

Beyond merely avoiding the exclusion of materials representing unorthodox or unpopular ideas, libraries should proactively seek to include an abundance of resources and programming representing the greatest possible diversity of genres, ideas, and expressions. A full commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion requires that library collections and programming reflect the broad range of viewpoints and cultures that exist in our world. Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.¹

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

By challenging censorship, libraries foster an inclusive environment where all voices have the opportunity to be heard. Inclusive materials, programs, and services may not be universally popular, but it is the library's responsibility to provide access to all points of view, not just prevailing opinions. Libraries should prepare themselves to deal with challenges by adopting appropriate policies and procedures. Libraries should respectfully consider community objections and complaints, but should not allow controversy alone to dictate policy.

Governing bodies, administrators, and library workers must discourage self-censorship. Fears and biases may suppress diverse voices in collections, programming, and all aspects of library services.² Libraries should counter censorship by practicing inclusion.

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

American society has always encompassed people of diverse origin, age, background, and views. The constitutional principles of free expression and free access to ideas recognize and

affirm this diversity. Any attempt to limit free expression or restrict access to ideas threatens the core American values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Libraries should establish and maintain strong ties to organizations that advocate for the rights of socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people. Libraries should act in solidarity with all groups or individuals resisting attempts to abridge the rights 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.

In the Library Bill of Rights and all of its Interpretations and supporting documents, the principle of inclusion is clear and unambiguous.

"Origin" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in the circumstances of their birth.

"Age" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in their levels of development and maturity.

"Background" encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are a result of their life experiences.

"Views" encompass all of the opinions and beliefs held and expressed by individuals.

Libraries should regularly review their policies with the goal of advancing equity of access to the library's collections and services. Identification requirements, overdue charges and fees, or deposits for service are examples of traditional approaches that may exclude some members of the community.³

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.

Libraries should not merely be neutral places for people to share information, but should actively encourage socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people to fully participate in community debates and discussions.

Libraries should welcome diverse content in their exhibit spaces and diverse ideas, individuals, and groups in their meeting rooms, even if some members of the community may object or be offended.⁴

Conclusion

To uphold the Library Bill of Rights and serve the entire community, governing bodies, administrators, and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion.

1. "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000
2. "Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014
3. "Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights," Adopted June 30, 1993, by the ALA Council
4. "Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council

Adopted June 27, 2017, by the ALA Council.

Adopted August 17, 2017 by the Racine Public Library Board of Trustees

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

Adopted by the Racine Public Library Board, December 16, 2004, as the cornerstone of the Library's commitment to intellectual freedom.

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 guarantees 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 by the ALA Council January 10, 1990

Adopted by the Racine Public Library Board of Trustees, September 19, 2002.