

Policy Section	BOARD
Collection Development	Adopted 12-1994
ARLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	Revised/Reviewed 10-2015
	Reviewed/Revised 7-14-2018 Reviewed 2-17-2021

COMMUNITY CLIENTELE DESCRIPTION

The primary objective of the library is to serve the community. Arlington is a small rural community. The library's clientele is made up of people of all ages and levels of education. Despite a fairly homogeneous population, Arlington like any community has people with a wide range of experiences and desires. The library's collection must be diversified enough to encompass a variety of needs, tastes and opinions.

PURPOSE OF COLLECTION

Mission Statement: The Arlington Public Library will serve as the community's information center and gathering place. We will strive to provide a welcoming environment to support the development of informed and enlightened citizens. As a popular materials library we feature current, high demand, high interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages. The library also strives to assist the learning process from preschool through adulthood with a variety of educational, reference and other non-fiction materials. We will try to tailor and select the collection to meet the unique needs of this community and the requests of its citizens.

EVALUATION OF COLLECTION

Evaluating the collection is an ongoing process. The methods are outlined in our five year long range plan. Each year the library director looks at a specific area for the following criteria:

1. Date of materials—based on the copyright and varying according to the type of materials being considered.
2. Usage-based on the latest recorded circulation data.
3. Accuracy of materials.
4. Needs and interests of the community.
5. Physical consideration (space assessment)
6. Amount of funding available

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

FICTION: the selection of fiction involves choosing from a large variety of types of novels to meet the recreational needs of the community. We attempt to satisfy a public varying greatly in education, interest, taste and reading ability. The basic collection includes classical and semi-classical novels of the past as well as the works of outstanding contemporary novelists. A certain number of these are purchased as a basic collection without regard to demand. Fiction of substance will be retained over a long period of time whether or not it is in frequent demand. The public's desire for current fiction requires that a large percentage of our purchases be new publications. Novels widely advertised, best sellers, mysteries, westerns, science fiction and romances are purchased because of requests or because circulation figures dictate. Recognizing that much of the demand for current fiction is short-lived, we will attempt to reassess demand frequently and to buy with discretion. Some of the demand for current fiction

can be satisfied with the purchase of paperbacks. This section of the collection will be reevaluated and weeded frequently.

Selection guides used by the director include: New York bestsellers list , amazon.com on-line, and reviews in current magazines and newspapers. We encourage and welcome suggestions from the general public.

ADULT NON-FICTION: In the selection of non-fiction materials the library will make a special effort to consider the needs and interests of the community. The usual criteria of authority, scope, timeliness and overall quality shall be applied to most acquisitions. The library will try to have ample material on timely public issues and will try to represent all sides of controversial issues. Care is exercised in buying material that is non-denominational and which does not have a doctrinal bias.

SELECTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: The same criteria will be used in the selection of Youth and Junior fiction as are employed in the selection of adult materials. Discretion will be exercised in selected works of literary value as well as in meeting recreational demands. An attempt will be made to supplement the public school collection to meet the academic and research needs of the young people of the community.

Special attention will be given to the selection and acquisition of the collection of "Easy" books for the preschool reader. An effort will be made to publicize this collection and bring preschoolers into the library for regular story hours.

In approaching the goal of meeting the needs and interests of all young people, the library makes available some titles and series such as the Babysitter's Club, Boxcar Children and the Hardy Boys which are sometimes criticized as being mediocre or substandard. These books are extremely popular, and the library is more concerned with developing in children the habit of reading than it is with making judgments about the literary value of specific books. Books which are recognized as children's classics and which are of recognized literary merit will be purchased and retained even though they may contain words or phrases which might be considered controversial.

PAPERBACKS: All paperback books will be cataloged.

PERIODICALS: Periodicals are purchased or accepted as gifts for one or more of the following reasons: to keep the library collection up-to-date with current thinking in various fields and to provide material not available in books and to supply popular recreational reading. Recognizing that our funds are limited, we try to select the titles which will serve the greatest number of people. The State Library makes available Gale Resources periodical database on-line to help supplement our periodical requests. The library pays a fee to subscribe to this database of periodicals yearly.

IOWA HISTORY: the Iowa History collection in the Arlington Public Library is a fine collection for a small town. Efforts will be made to add valuable contemporary books on Iowa to the collection, as well as acquire volumes of historical value.

NON-PRINT MATERIALS- The library maintains a collection CD's for both adults and children. These CD's are selected primarily for entertainment rather than educational value. The audio materials include: books on CD and musical CD's.

The library selects DVD's for the entertainment of children and family entertainment.

GIFTS: The library welcomes gifts of all types. Gifts of cash are especially welcomed since they can most easily and quickly be used to implement the library's programs. All other gifts are subject to the discretion of the Director and the Board of Trustees. Gifts of money for the purchase of books or other materials as memorials are welcomed. Books purchased for this purpose will be appropriately identified. An attempt will be made to match the content of memorial books to the interest of the person to be honored. These books will be shelved with the regular collection.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: The Arlington Public Library endorses the principles of intellectual freedom set forth in the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and "The Freedom to Read." (See attached copies.) The library, along with the

public school, is the community's repository and conveyor of knowledge. A strong commitment to intellectual freedom will ensure that the community will continue to have open access to the information necessary for contemporary life.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS:

Reconsideration of Materials: Because of the rich diversity of human experience and opinion, it is inevitable that some materials in the library's collection will be objectionable to some people in the community. The staff sometimes purchases materials which they may find personally objectionable. The library, in the very real sense, belongs to the whole community - to the minority as well as the majority. That responsibility includes providing for needs and interests that may offend a few or even a great many of people.

A sincere effort is made to provide a balanced collection. The library attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues. In no case does the library take an official stand on any public question. The function of the library is to provide information, not to advocate specific points of view. The library welcomes comments and criticisms of its collection. A patron who wishes to object to specific books or other library materials will be requested to complete the form, REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS, available from the librarian.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

The following procedure will be followed by individuals or groups of individuals who have objections to materials included in the collection of the Arlington Public Library:

1. Any patron of the library may formally challenge materials purchased by the library on the basis of appropriateness.
2. Any patron of the library who objects to materials that are on loan from other libraries will be directed to the loaning library.
3. The library will keep on hand and make available reconsideration request forms. All formal objections must be made on this form.
4. The reconsideration form shall be signed by the complainant and returned to the library.
5. The request will be discussed at the next board meeting with a date set for further consideration.

RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE

Initial meeting

The Reconsideration Committee shall be made up of the library director and the library board members. The presiding officer of the board shall call upon another member to take over the chair of this committee: the presiding officer shall take his or

her place as a member of the committee. The procedure for the first meeting following receipt of a reconsideration request form is as follows:

1. Distribute copies of the written request form.
2. Give complainant or group spokesperson an opportunity to talk about and expand on the request form.
3. Distribute reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the materials when available.
4. Distribute copies of the challenged materials as available.

Subsequent meeting or meetings

At a subsequent meeting (if needed), interest persons, including the complainant, may have the opportunity to share their views. The committee may request that individuals with special knowledge be present to give information to the committee.

The complainant shall be kept informed by the library board concerning the status of his or her complaint through the committee reconsideration process. The complainant and known interested parties shall be given appropriate notice of the meeting.

At the second or subsequent meeting, as desired, the reconsideration committee shall make its decision in open session. The committee's final decision, by a majority vote of its members, will be:

1. to take no removal action
2. to remove the challenged material from the collection

The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the complainant and to all interested parties.

Arlington Public Library

REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Name _____

Address _____ PhoneNo. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Do you represent (please check one)

_____ Yourself

_____ An organization (name) _____

_____ other group (name) _____

Title _____

Author _____

Publisher/Producer (if known) _____

Use back side of this page or additional pages if necessary.

1. Specifically, what are your objections? (Cite pages.) _____

2. What brought this title to your attention? _____

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this material? _____

4. Is there anything good about the material? _____

5. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the entire work? ___Yes ___ No

(If not, with which parts are you familiar?) _____

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

7. What do you believe is the theme of this work? _____

8. What would you suggest be done with this item? How would you be willing to help with the solution?

9. In its place, what material of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated?

Date of initial board meeting

Signature of complainant

Date of Reconsideration Committee

Complainant's filing date

Date of subsequent committee

WITHDRAWAL OF MATERIALS: The collection of the Arlington Public Library shall be weeded on a regular basis in order to maintain the attractiveness and currency of the collection. Factors to be considered in the weeding process shall include the following:

1. Date of material - based on the copyright and varying according to the type of material being considered.
2. Usage - based on the latest recorded circulation data.
3. Literary merit.
4. Accuracy of materials.
5. Needs and interests of the community.
6. Physical considerations.

The library director shall retain the right to dispose of discarded material in any way which may be deemed proper and feasible. A reasonable attempt will be made to recycle weeded materials.

Exceptions to the general policy on weeding include local history materials, books of historical value, memorial items and art works. These will not be discarded unless considered on an individual basis by the board of trustees.

Periodicals are weeded annually and put out to the public. A one year back-file is retained in the library. The Strawberry Press Journal is retained until we receive a microfilmed copy.

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

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed
January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

THE FREEDOM TO READ

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 orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it 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:
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
Freedom to Read Foundation