

3.1 Collections Development

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the public with an understanding of the purpose and nature of Richland Community Library's collection and to give guidance to library staff for collection development.

Mission, Vision, and Core Values

A. Mission: We serve as a community hub by connecting our patrons to all forms of literacy, lifelong learning, and growth.

B. Vision: Welcoming, inspiring, and connecting our community.

C. The Library and The Board fully endorse the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A), the Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix B), and the Freedom to View Statement, (Appendix C).

Support for Intellectual Freedom

Richland Community Library provides an impartial environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions. The library board affirms the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View policy statements in support of acquiring and managing collections.

Selection Policy Objectives

Richland Community Library's materials collection is developed and managed to meet the majority of the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of the library's service area. The collection development librarian builds and maintains a patron-oriented collection by anticipating and responding to needs and expectations.

Collection decisions are made in conjunction with the strategic initiatives, especially the following

- Positioning the library as the preferred partner for lifelong learning by connecting community members to library collections and resources
 - Committing to excellence in service to improve effectiveness and provide barrier-free access to resources for the community that are most in demand.

- Providing an inclusive, rather than exclusive, collection that represents a diversity of viewpoints, including materials that reflect differing social, cultural, political, and religious views.

Responsibility for Selection

Staff contributes to the development of patron-oriented collections by

- Engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with library patrons and recognizing that individuals have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, or other characteristics
- Interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness
- Handling all requests equitably
- Working in partnership with one another to understand and respond to community needs
- Understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy diverse needs of library users
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing measurement
- Reviewing the collection on a regular basis to identify areas of community interest that may need to be strengthened

Selection Criteria

Public libraries are diverse and represent a broad demographic. With a patron base that can include infants to the elderly, selection criteria should take into account the various interests and needs of the patrons the library serves. Criteria for selection of materials should also depend on the goals and mission of that particular library. In general, public libraries provide collections containing a wide variety of material formats, including print, audio-visual, and electronic. In selecting materials and developing collections for adults, as well as for children and teens, library staff includes materials that represent the broad range of human experience, reflecting the ethnic, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity not only of the region it serves but also the larger global perspective. Library collections will provide a broad range of opinion on current issues.

Collections contain popular works, classic works that have withstood the test of time, and other materials of general interest. Works are not excluded or included in the collection based solely on subject matter or on political, religious, or ideological

grounds. In building collections, library staff is guided by the principle of selection, rather than censorship. Furthermore, the selection of a given item for a library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint. To build a collection of merit, materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all of these criteria in order to be acceptable.

General Criteria

- Present and potential relevance to community needs
 - Suitability of physical form for library use
 - Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
 - Cost
 - Importance as a document of the times
 - Relation to the existing collection and to other materials on the subject
 - Attention by critics and reviewers
 - Potential user appeal
 - Requests by library patrons
- Content Criteria:
- Authority
 - Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
 - Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
 - Reputation and significance of the author
 - Objectivity
 - Consideration of the work as a whole
 - Clarity
 - Currency
 - Technical quality
 - Representation of diverse points of view
 - Representation of important movements, genres, or trends
 - Vitality and originality
 - Artistic presentation and/or experimentation
 - Sustained interest
 - Relevance and use of the information
 - Effective characterization
 - Authenticity of history or social setting
 - Cultural significance and critical acclaim

Recommended Public Library Reviewing Sources

- Booklist
- New York Times Book Review
- Publishers Weekly
- Library Journal

- School Library Journal
- Kirkus Review
- Goodreads

Acquisitions Procedures

The Richland Community Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of collection materials to the Library Director and their decision to assign library staff the responsibility of acquiring material.

- The collection development librarian of the Richland Community Library has the system-wide responsibility for the overall selection and maintenance of all materials and formats within the collection of the library. This responsibility is monitored by the library director, and is delegated to this individual as a result of their education, training, experience, and job classification.
- Approved materials can be selected for the various collections within Richland Community Library by the collection development librarian, library director, assistant director, and library staff who are qualified to do so by reason of education, training, experience, or job classification.

Selection of Materials on Controversial Topics

A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. Selection is based upon criteria stated in this policy. The race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection.

All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, the library has procedures that patrons may use in requesting the reconsideration of materials.

Gifts and Donations

Accepting gifts and donations is an important way for the public library to benefit from the generosity of the community it serves.

Gifts and donations of materials are reviewed using the same criteria as purchases. The library reserves the right to dispose of any gifts that are given to the library. The library will determine how to best incorporate such materials into the existing collections.

Materials not added to library collections may be used for programs or given to other local organizations such as schools, senior centers, or Friends of the Library group.

Gifts received by the library that are not added to the library's collection shall be forwarded to the appropriate Friends of the Library group for their disposition at a future sale. The proceeds from this sale shall accrue directly to the benefit of the library, in a fashion consistent with accepted library policies and services as determined by the Board of Trustees. Any items unsold by the Friends of the Library may then be donated to another organization or discarded.

Funds may be given for the purpose of acquiring materials recommended by library staff as prescribed in this policy, or for purchase of specific items suggested by the donor. When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the library staff must make the selection with the general selection principles set forth in this policy.

Collection Maintenance and Weeding Policy

The library keeps its collections vital and useful by retaining and replacing essential materials, and by removing on a systematic and intentional basis, basing its decisions on a number of factors, including:

- Publication date
- Circulation statistics
- Community interest
- Outdated or obsolete information and sources that have been superseded by new titles or editions
- Availability of items through Interlibrary Loan or digital sources
- Fiction that was once popular but no longer in demand
- Physical condition of material

Items dealing with local history are an exception, as are certain classics and award-winning books.

Appendix A

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. VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Appendix B

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read. Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression. These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference. Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections. We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights. We therefore affirm these propositions: 1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority. Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it. 2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated. Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not

foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper. 3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say. 4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression. To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others. 5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous. The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them. 6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information. It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship. 7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and

diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one. The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support. We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours. This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004. A Joint Statement by: American Library Association Association of American Publishers Subsequently endorsed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression The Association of American University Presses 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 "The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed May 31, 2023) Document ID: aaac95d4-2988-0024-6573-10a5ce6b21b2

Appendix C

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 "Freedom to View Statement", American Library Association, May 29, 2007. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement> (Accessed May 31, 2023) Document ID: 95444382-9c6c-e904-0962-be3aa96cdb5