

## **DCPL COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

The Board of Trustees of the Dodge City Public Library establishes the policy that materials will be selected and purchased to support the purposes, interests, and needs of the area which it serves. This policy will provide books and other library materials, of both current interest and permanent value, for all ages, which will meet patrons' educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs.

The Library Board of Trustees subscribes to the Freedom to Read statement, the Freedom to View statement, and the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association; which enlarge on the above.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Dodge City Public Library will provide appropriate library materials to all residents of the community in the pursuit of information, education, research, recreation, and culture. The accountability for the material selection policy lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board delegates to the Library Director, and other staff members designated by the Director, the responsibility of the selection of materials and the development of the collection in all viable formats.

### **GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT:**

No addition to the collection is made simply because the work represents a specific area or subject field. Each prospective selection is evaluated to the greatest degree possible and either purchased or rejected on its own merit.

The Library does not cater to nor discriminate against any religious group or political ideology. Purchase of such works is of a general nature, with collections of titles recognized as classics, standard reference works, titles on major world religions, or titles about local religious interests.

The existing collection must always be kept in mind when selecting so that subject areas that are completely void or below standard in content may be supplemented with standard works and new materials, as they become available. Care must be taken to avoid over-purchasing in particular areas to the exclusion of areas that have gaps. Also, other collections in Dodge City will be considered in order to avoid unnecessary duplication. Books and materials that are not owned by the Dodge City Public Library may be obtained by interlibrary loan requests to other libraries in order to meet patron needs.

### **SPECIFIC SELECTION GUIDES:**

Patrons and staff are encouraged to suggest titles for consideration for purchase. Such suggestions will be weighed against normal purchase criteria and if determined to be worthwhile will be purchased. Other materials, either specific titles or subject areas, that are not available in the collection and are not to be purchased at the time, will be requested from other library sources through the interlibrary loan process.

### **NONFICTION:**

Materials selected in this area are the mainstay in fulfilling the library's most important aims of

information and education. Materials have been written which are recognized as authoritative standards in certain fields and so are acquired as a matter of course. However, the vast majority of nonfiction works must be handled in a different manner. The selector must try to judge impartially and evaluate critically, using the following as the basic criteria:

- The authority and competence of the author.
- Book reviews by subject authorities.
- Comprehensiveness and scope.
- Clarity and accuracy of presentation.
- Degree of accomplishment of purpose.
- Historical significance or educational value.
- Potential usefulness.
- Importance as a contemporary record.
- Relation to existing collection.
- Relative importance in comparison with other books on the subject.
- Placement in special lists, such as: *New York Times* bestsellers' list, *Publishers Weekly*, and selection aids.
- Placement in a recognized canon for the core collection of that genre or topic.  
Example: *Public Library Core Collection Nonfiction and Fiction Catalog*.

However, any selection must be balanced against regional interests and relevance.

### **FICTION:**

In selecting materials for fulfilling the recreational aims of the library, it becomes necessary to attempt to satisfy a wide variety of readers with great differences in taste, interests, reading levels, and purposes.

Most novels are normally purchased on the basis of reviews in recognized book review media such as *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Fiction Core Collection*, *Publishers Weekly*, etc. Patron demand for any particular title is sufficient reason for consideration of purchase. Other sources are core lists, staff recommendations, and trends in use.

The Library will provide patrons with bestsellers, fiction and nonfiction, as shown in one or more of the generally accepted bestsellers lists, such as those published in the *New York Times* and *Publishers' Weekly*. Standing orders have been established for bestselling authors to be sure none of the most in-demand books and series are missed.

### **YOUTH MATERIALS**

The main objective in selecting children and teen (young adult) materials is to encourage the child's joy in reading. Books are selected which offer adventure of mind and spirit to the growing child, cultivating an appreciation of literature, both oral and written, and encouraging the creative use of leisure time by inquisitive young minds.

Criteria for selection include:

- Age and interest-appropriate content and presentation.
- Emphasis on quality, critically acclaimed materials as demonstrated in awards, specialized bibliographies and/or reviews.
- Quality and aesthetics of illustrations to stimulate the imagination.
- Stories and information which represent the richness and diversity of young children's local and world community.
- Materials which meet the particular development needs of children at different stages.
- Materials which meet the recreational needs of children at different stages of development.
- Materials which meet the interests and educational needs of children.

### **GENERAL REFERENCE**

Reference materials are intended for use in the library only. Reference works, by their nature and by the treatment of their subject matter, are meant to be consulted for definite factual information and are not designed to be read through consecutively or completely. Their main purpose is to inform rather than to entertain, and the reference collection serves to complement and supplement the circulating collection. Reference sources include (but are not limited to) such works as indices, encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories, almanacs, and bibliographies. The reference department also participates in the Kansas government documents program. Reference materials are weeded on an ongoing basis, and the collection is kept as current as budget constraints allow. The general criteria for selection of reference materials include:

- Inclusion in standard lists of core reference works
- Authority and competence of author and/or publisher
- Accuracy
- Currency of information
- Comprehensiveness and scope
- Format and ease of use (Computer-based resources may sometimes be selected over print.)
- Local need, demand, and interest
- Potential usefulness
- Cost

### **NON-BOOK & MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS**

- A. **PERIODICALS:** The library subscribes to many standard, general periodicals and newspapers. New periodicals of a general nature and some specialized titles will be added where interests are ascertained and as budget permits. The library keeps back copies of periodicals insofar as the budget and space requirements permit.
- B. **ADUIO-VISUALS:** The library's goal is to provide a collection which will meet the informational and entertainment needs of the Dodge City community.

Titles usually will be selected from:

1. Traditional library selection aids

2. Patron requests
3. Award winners
4. High demand items showing long-term popularity potential.

**C. MISCELLANEOUS:** Other materials which fall outside these usual formats will be collected according to the standard collection criteria used in other areas.

## **WEEDING AND UPDATING**

Weeding/de-selection is the process of determining if an item should remain in the core collection. The core collection is the collection that will satisfy most demands for information. Due to the fact that books and other library materials are constantly being purchased to add to the collection, the problem of physical space available must be met. A partial solution to this problem is the withdrawal and discarding of books and other materials. Those to be withdrawn are evaluated on the same basis as new purchases, such as relative importance, relation to existing core collection, comprehensiveness and scope, clarity and accuracy, lack of use, *etc.*, as well as physical condition. Items with heavy past usage and current active usage are core collection materials and are rarely candidates for weeding. Any valuable title withdrawn because of physical condition will be considered for replacement. Lost or stolen materials may be replaced, depending on an evaluation using the above mentioned criteria. Classics and standard works are usually retained. Materials related to local history are rarely considered for weeding. Tools, such as the *Public Library Catalog* and other professional sources, will be consulted in the process.

## **PROCEDURE FOR PATRON COMPLAINTS**

A citizen objecting to the inclusion of materials in the Dodge City Public Library collection will be provided with the MATERIALS RECONSIDERATION PROCESS form, if the patron wishes to make a formal complaint. Then the completed complaint form will be referred to the director. Upon receipt of the written request from the patron, the material(s) will be reviewed by the "Selection Evaluation Committee," who will make a decision about whether or not to remove the material(s). If the patron wishes to appeal the decision, the complaint will then be given to the library board for review. The decision of the library board is final.

The patron must keep in mind that the library holds parents and guardians responsible for children's circulation, and does not act *in loco parentis* in regards to what minors check out.

## **GIFTS AND DONATIONS:**

The library is grateful for material gifts and cash donations. Its collection has been greatly enriched by many such contributions. The library reserves the privilege of using cash donations in a manner that will best serve the library and its patrons.

If cash donations are made with requests for specific purchases, the above mentioned selection policies and standards will apply. If said specific requests do not meet library standards and policies, substitutes shall be suggested by the library. If donors do not wish to accept the library's suggestion of substitute material(s), the

donor(s) may request the return of their cash donations, and said requests. If promptly made, the refund shall be honored by the library.

A receipt for donated items, for tax or other purposes, will be issued to the donor at his/her request. However, the library will not assign an estimated market value to the items donated.

Gifts may be accepted by the library director on behalf of the library providing the above conditions are met. All gifts will be reported in a timely manner to the board of trustees.

Gifts of items other than materials or monetary funds, not covered by written selection policies, shall be considered by the board of trustees before acceptance of said gifts. It is the desire and intention of the board to expend the funds available in the wisest and most economical manner possible.

**APPENDIX A:**  
**DODGE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIALS RECONSIDERATION PROCESS**

**Dodge City Public Library  
Materials Reconsideration Process**

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of providing a method whereby opinions from the public regarding materials selection can be voiced. Therefore, it has established a procedure which will apply to all complaints including:

1. Those about materials represented in the collection
2. Those about materials **not** represented in the collection

To comply with this procedure, a complaint must be in writing. Forms are available at the circulation desk, and, upon completion, may be mailed or delivered to the Library Director. Upon receipt of the signed form the Library Director will convene the Selection Evaluation Committee, which will:

1. Examine the material in question, the issues raised and the circumstances involved.
2. Make a decision to remove or retain the material in question.
3. Respond in writing to the complainant within one week of receipt.
4. Provide the complainant with a copy of this policy, and inform the individual of the availability of a Board hearing. Should the complainant feel that the decision of the Committee is not supported by the policy, the complainant may request a Library Board hearing by notifying the Director who will make the necessary arrangements. Following the hearing, the decision of the Board will be final.

Above all, the Library Board has as its concern the fairness of such a hearing so as to protect the rights of all persons who are involved.

**Selection Evaluation Committee**

Director of Library  
Public Service Librarian  
Reference Librarian  
Children's Department Coordinator  
A Board of Trustees Representative

**Dodge City Public Library**  
**Statement of Concern about Library Resources**

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Organization? \_\_\_\_ Which one? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, please do so before completing this form.
3. Have you read the relevant literary/academic criticism or reviews concerning this work?
4. What brought this title to your attention? (Please be specific, citing page numbers or exact minutes. Use other side if needed.)
  
5. What do you like or find positive about this item? Please be specific.
  
6. What resource(s) do you suggest to provide a possible alternative or opposing viewpoint to this resource?

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B:**  
**FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT**  
**FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT**  
**LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS**

## 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 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

**American Library Association**  
**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**

# 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.