

ALICE BAKER MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY: Collection Development

Approved by Library Board: December 13, 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the Alice Baker Library has adopted the following collection development policy to guide librarians and to inform the public of the principles upon which collection development and management decisions are based. Collection development is the ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing and making decisions on their inclusion and retention.

The mission of the Alice Baker Library guides the selection of materials, as they do the development of services and allocation of resources.

MISSION:

The Library's mission is to provide information in a variety of formats, be responsive to the public's needs, promote reading, literacy, and lifelong learning, and to uphold the public's freedom of access to information.

The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statements are appended to this document.

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OBJECTIVES

The Alice Baker Library acquires and makes available materials and information which inform, educate, entertain, and enrich persons as individuals and members of society. Since it is not possible for any library to acquire all materials, it is necessary for every library to employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. The Library provides, within its financial limitations, a general collection of reliable materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Included are works of enduring value as well as timely materials on current issues.

The collection offers materials in a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty. "Materials" has the broadest possible meaning and includes but is not limited to print, audiovisual and electronic formats. The collection is defined as materials that are selected; those selected materials may be physically owned by the Library or may be accessed electronically. "Selection" refers to the decision that is made to add a given item to the collection, or to provide access to it through electronic sources. Not all materials and information found via the Internet are part of the collection.

Selection is based on community needs, both those expressed and those inferred from study of community demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

New formats are considered for the collection when, by industry report or national survey results and evidence from local requests, a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. Availability of items in the format, the cost per item, and the Library's ability to acquire and handle the items will be factors in determining when a new format will be collected. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the Library's collection.

Impartiality and judicious selection shall be exercised in all materials acquisition practices. Allocation of the materials budget and the number of items purchased for each area of the collection will be determined by indicators of use, the average cost per item, and objectives for development of the collection. The Library will be aware of the resources available in surrounding libraries and will develop its collection with this in mind. In general, scholarly, highly specialized, or archival materials are beyond the scope of the Library's collections.

All library materials are available for use by all customers. Access to materials is ensured by the way they are organized, managed and displayed, and through staff interaction with library customers. The Library participates in local and national consortia and interlibrary loan networks for the purpose of providing awareness of and access to materials not held in the Alice Baker Library collection.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Responsibility for the selection of library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Staff members who are qualified by reason of education, training, or experience share this responsibility. The Library Director oversees the selection process and ensures that selectors' choices reflect the Collection Development Policy of the Library. No staff member may be disciplined for selecting an item that meets the Library's criteria for selection but that is later deemed to be unsuitable to the Library's collection.

The Library Director tracks the materials budget to ensure a flow of new materials throughout the year, according to budget allocation. Tools used in selection include professional journals, trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials and reviews from reputable sources. Suggestions from staff members not directly involved with selection, and from library customers, are encouraged and given serious consideration as part of the selection process.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Selection involves a general knowledge of each subject area and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, an awareness of the bibliographies on the subject, and recognition of the needs of the community.

To build a well-balanced collection of merit and significance, materials in all forms must be measured by objective guidelines. Since the library does not promote particular beliefs or views,

the collection contains various positions on important questions, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The Library actively strives to ensure that materials representing many differing views and a broad diversity of human thought and creativity are represented in its collection. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not necessarily an equality of numbers.

Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy. Selection does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of the contents of the work. Responsibility for choosing what an individual will read, view, or listen to rests with the individual. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that material may be accessible to children.

The Library recognizes the purposes and resources of other public, special, and academic libraries in Waukesha County, particularly those libraries in the CAFÉ consortium of which the Library is a member, and does not needlessly duplicate materials.

The Library does not acquire textbooks and/or other curricular-related materials unless such materials also serve the general public or unless the information in such materials is not otherwise available.

The Library seeks to select materials of varying complexity and format because it has a public encompassing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, interests, sensory preferences and reading skills.

The Library purchases and maintains audio-visual materials based on the same selection principles and guidelines as those for other materials.

Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents and materials are not sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Several standards and combinations of standards may be used, as some materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, while others are considered because of scholarship, value as human documents, or ability to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

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 material on the subject
- attention by critics and reviewers
- potential user appeal
- requests by the public

Content criteria:

- authority
- comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- skill, competence, and purpose of 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

Special considerations for electronic information sources:

- ease of use of the product
- availability of the information to multiple simultaneous users
- equipment needed to provide access to the information
- technical support and training
- availability of the physical space needed to house and store the information or equipment
- availability in full text

Selection may also be limited by the following factors:

- physical limitations of the building
- price and format
- availability of low-demand materials in other library collections

Selection of library materials will not be influenced by:
the possibility that they may come into the possession of children or young adults
the liability of materials to theft or mutilation

DONATIONS AND GIFTS

Donations of materials are gratefully accepted with the understanding that the Library may add them to the collection if they meet established standards for purchased materials, with emphasis on currency, physical condition, and need. All gifts added to the collection must be available for public use. Materials donated to the Library, whether added to the collection or not, become the property of the Library, and will not be returned to the donor. There is no obligation for the Library to retain ownership of the item.

Materials not added to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. The library cannot place a monetary value on gifts for tax purposes, but receipts are provided upon request.

Monetary gifts are always welcome and may be designated as memorials. When monetary gifts are intended for the purchase of materials, the Library Director or staff will make the determination of what titles to buy, using the same criteria as for all other purchases.

EVALUATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF MATERIALS

An attractive, up-to-date, currently useful collection is maintained through a continual discarding and replacing process. Materials may be withdrawn from the library collection after careful consideration of these factors:

- physical condition
- currency of information
- lack of use
- superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject
- space needs
- cost of replacement

Although every effort will be made to replace needed materials which are withdrawn, the Library takes the position that it is better to have no information on a subject than to have materials which are inaccurate or in poor physical condition.

Materials withdrawn from the collection may be given to the Friends of the Library Book Sale or disposed of by other means. Individual items that are being withdrawn will not be saved for specific individuals.

REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

The choice of library materials by library users is an individual matter. While an individual may reject materials for himself/herself, he/she cannot restrict access to the materials by others. Recognizing that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration of their selection, a Request for Reconsideration Procedure (appended) has been developed to assure that objections or complaints are handled in an attentive and consistent manner. Once an item has been approved for purchase, based on the selection policy of the Board of Trustees and the criteria for selection, it will not be automatically removed upon request.

ADDENDA:

Library Bill of Rights

Freedom to Read

Request for Reconsideration Procedure

Citizen's Opinion Concerning Specific Library Materials

Adopted by Library Board: December, 2010

THE 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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens 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 citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

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 need the help of censors to assist them in this task. 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.

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 or unpopular with 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 with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it 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 the citizen. 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.

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.

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 citizens 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, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association and Association of American Publishers

Subsequently Endorsed by:

American Association of University Professors
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Society of Journalists and Authors
American Society of Newspaper Editors
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Association of American University Presses
Center for Democracy & Technology
The Children's Book Council
The Electronic Frontier Foundation
Feminists for Free Expression
Freedom to Read Foundation
International Reading Association
The Media Institute
National Coalition Against Censorship
National PTA
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
People for the American Way
Student Press Law Center
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Alice Baker Memorial Public Library

Procedure: Request for Reconsideration

Adopted by Library Board: December 13, 2010

A. Any individual expressing an objection to or concern about library materials should receive respectful attention from the staff member first approached. This staff member should use his or her own best judgment in attempting to answer the concerns or clarify the situation. If the individual is not satisfied with the explanation received, the staff member should offer the options of speaking with a supervisor or filling out a "Citizen's Opinion Concerning Specific Library Materials" form. The following procedure will be followed if a form is given out in response to a complaint:

- 1) A "Citizen's Opinion" form must be completed and signed for the request to be considered. The form may be returned to any staff member, who will forward it to the library director. The director may respond in writing to the individual, advising him/her that there will be reconsideration of the item and enclosing a copy of the statement on principles and guidelines used in materials selection from the Collection Development Policy of the Alice Baker Library.
- 2) The director will appoint an ad hoc reconsideration committee of at least three staff members, one of whom will be designated committee chair. The director may be a committee member. One of the committee members will be the selector for the subject area or format of the material under reconsideration. A committee member will be assigned to locate reviews and other appropriate material to be used by the committee in its evaluation. Copies will be sent to each committee member.
- 3) The committee members will put their comments in writing to the committee chair prior to the meeting to discuss the title.
- 4) The committee chair will convene a meeting of the reconsideration committee, compile the comments, and forward the comments and reviews to the director along with a recommendation.
- 5) The director will then make a decision regarding the disposition of the material. The director will communicate this decision, along with the reasons for it, in writing to the individual who initiated the request.
- 6) The above steps will be carried out in a timely manner. During the review process, the material in question will remain available for circulation.

B. If the individual desires further action, he/she may appeal in writing to the Library Board of Trustees, requesting a hearing before the board. If a hearing is granted, the individual will be notified of when he/she may appear before the Board. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Alice Baker Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the director.

ALICE BAKER MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

CITIZEN'S OPINION CONCERNING SPECIFIC LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library values your opinion. If you have an objection to library materials, please complete this form, indicating as clearly and legibly as possible the nature of your concern. Please use the reverse side of this form if you need additional space for your answers. Once completed, this form becomes a matter of public record (Wisconsin Statutes 19.32).

YOUR NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ (day) _____ (evening)

1. LIBRARY MATERIAL(S) CONCERNED:

_____ Book	_____ Video
_____ Magazine/Newspaper	_____ Other Audiovisual Material
_____ Audio	_____ Other

2. Title _____

Author or Producer _____

3. What brought this item to your attention? _____

4. Did you read, view or listen to the entire work? ____ Yes ____ No If no, what parts?

5. What is your objection to the material? Please be specific; cite pages if necessary:

6. Is there anything positive about the material? _____

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

8. Are you aware of how literary critics and reviewers judge this material? ___Yes ___No

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

10. What action would you recommend the library take regarding this material?

11. What material would you recommend that would convey a valuable picture and perspective of the subject treated? _____

YOUR SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Name of group represented (if any) _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: