CHICKASHA PUBLIC LIBRARY
MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY
January 2015

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I. PURPOSE OF POLICY

TO FURTHER THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CHICKASHA PUBLIC LIBRARY BY DESCRIBING HOW MATERIALS WILL BE SELECTED FOR ADDITION TO THE COLLECTION, TO GUIDE LIBRARIANS IN THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS, AND TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH SELECTIONS ARE MADE.

II. DEFINITION OF MATERIALS SELECTION

Materials selection is the process of deciding which materials are added to the collection, which materials are retained, and which materials are to be removed.

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The Director of the Library is responsible for the selection of all materials. The Children's Librarian selects all materials for children and teens. Other staff members may recommend items for consideration. The general public may recommend books and other library materials for purchase. All requests will be considered. Ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Director who operates within the guidelines of this policy.

Responsibility for the adoption of materials selection policies lies with the Library Board. The Board and the Director will review the "Materials Selection Policy" annually.

IV. GOAL OF MATERIALS SELECTION

The goal of a materials selection policy is to assure a well-balanced and broad collection of current and retrospective materials in various formats and levels of comprehension which will support the working, cultural, educational, and leisure time needs of persons in the Library service area regardless of their age, social and physical condition, or level of intellectual achievement. The Library will make a special effort to purchase and/or lease books which are best-sellers or otherwise in high-demand.

V. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

A. The Library subscribes to the principles embodied in the FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT and the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS adopted by the American Library Association (see Appendices A and B).

B. Because the Library recognizes its responsibility to provide access to all aspects of the human record, the widest possible variety of subjects and views are included in the collection. Selection is based on the merit of a work in relation to the needs and to the interests of the community. Literary critical judgment is used to select those items best suited to fill these needs. Cost, space, usefulness, demand, and current holdings must also be considered.

The Library will not purchase materials which are pornographic. However, serious works presenting an honest view of some aspect of life will not be excluded solely on the basis of language or frankness. The Library will provide controversial works

representing different points of view on serious and important questions. Materials will not be excluded because of the race, sexual orientation or gender identity, nationality, political or religious view of the author.

The Library will not knowingly add or retain materials that are judicially determined to be illegal under Oklahoma law.

C. The Library provides some supplementary and enrichment materials for the educational programs of the local schools. Some materials will be purchased to aid parents who are home schooling their children. However, the Library will not attempt to supply textbooks. The basis for selection will be the desirability for the book within the total collection.

D. Responsibility for the materials read by children rests with their parents and legal guardians. The Library's selecting of materials for adults will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children. The Library maintains a collection of materials for pre-school and elementary school-aged children, but the children are not restricted to those collections and they have access to the total library collection.

E. Books and other materials are selected which are considered to be of value and interest to children from the pre-reader through pre-adulthood.

F. The proximity of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Nash Library, with its numerous research and specialized collections, has an important influence on the Library's selection policy. Duplication of reference and research materials is avoided unless convenience and frequency of use makes it mandatory. Customers will be referred to these collections whenever their needs can be better served by that institution.

G. The Library recognizes that the printed book is not sufficient as the single standard medium for communication, and, therefore, strives to obtain materials in a variety of alternative formats (e.g., CDs, DVDs, downloadable print and audio, computer software) which represent titles and subjects of known or highly probable demand and/or lasting interest. Particular consideration is given to ease of use, availability of equipment to borrowers, and suitability of the medium to the content and cost. Selection of these materials is made using the same general policies that apply to printed materials.

VI. SELECTION TOOLS

In selecting materials, the Director and Children's Librarian will read critical reviews specifically written for libraries as well as general interest reviews. Following are the primary sources used.

A. Journals published for libraries, such as *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal*, and *Booklist*.

B. Standard sources such as *Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction, Children's Core Collection, Fiction Core Collection.*

C. Specialized lists such as the *Best Books of the Year*, *Best Books for Young Adults*.

D. Newspapers and general interest magazines.

Materials which are best-sellers or otherwise in high-demand will be purchased regardless of reviews.

VII. SELECTION OF SPECIFIC MATERIALS

A. General Materials

1. NON-FICTION BOOKS

Non-fiction selected for the permanent collection is chosen carefully for its usefulness, accuracy, cost, and contribution to a well-balanced collection in all subject areas.

Materials for which there is heavy but temporary demand (e.g., self-improvement, contemporary biographies) are selected with less emphasis on these requirements and are kept as part of the collection until demonstrated interest has decreased. (See VIII. Weeding, page 8)

The following criteria will be used in judging non-fiction materials: (1) Topic (subject), (2) Authoritativeness, (3) Scope, (4) Objectivity, (5) Clarity and accuracy of information, (6) Vitality and interest, (7) Format, (8) Publication date, and (9) Critical reviews.

2. FICTION BOOKS

The Library attempts to provide a permanent collection of standard fiction by recognized authors. In addition, a wide-ranging selection of contemporary fiction is selected. This may include experimental, mystery, western, science fiction, fantasy, and light romance titles. The interests and requests of Library customers are carefully considered. Multiple copies of frequently used titles are provided.

The following criteria will be used in judging fiction: (1) Artistic expression, (2) Originality and imagination, (3) Honesty and integrity, (4) Sustained interest, (5) Consistency in characterization, (6) Critical reviews, (7) Popularity, (8) Popularity of other works by the author, (9) Prizes won, and (10) Major advertising that leads to high demand.

3. MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS

The Library maintains a collection of magazines, including some backfiles, providing information and recreational reading. The current goal of the Library is to maintain backfiles of magazines which are not readily available online.

Newspapers are selected to provide local, state, regional and national coverage. Local newspapers and a selection of the best in national and regional titles are purchased. Backfiles of the *Oklahoman* and *USA Today* are kept for six months, and the Chickasha *Express-Star* is maintained for one year. In addition, a complete run of the *Express-Star*, with varying titles, is maintained in microfilm.

4. REFERENCE MATERIALS

A major function of the Library is to provide the public with accurate, up-to-date, readily accessible information on a wide variety of topics. Encyclopedia, dictionaries, directories, indices, and genealogical and bibliographic tools are purchased on a regular basis. As more information becomes available online, fewer print sources will be purchased.

5. REPLACEMENTS

Books which have become damaged or worn but continue in popularity or are necessary for the balance of the collection will be replaced.

6. GENEALOGY MATERIALS

The Library provides a variety of documents, (e.g., census records, immigration lists, cemetery records, old Grady County newspapers on microfilm, and family group pedigrees) for genealogical research. In addition, the Library houses genealogical materials that are owned by the Grady County Genealogy Society.

7. LOCAL HISTORY

Materials which contribute information about Chickasha, Grady County and Oklahoma history are purchased whenever possible with less regard for quality of presentation than those materials in the general collection.

8. LARGE PRINT

Books and magazines in large print format are purchased. Recent best sellers and titles of proven popularity are added regularly.

9. FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The Library does not maintain a foreign language collection. However, dictionaries of major languages and some instructional materials are purchased. A small collection of works for adults and children in Spanish were purchased with grant funds.

10. AV MATERIALS

The Library maintains a collection of books in digital format, books-on-CD, and access to downloadable audio books. Items are chosen for the popularity of the authors and titles. The collection is predominantly fiction. Both children's and adult works are chosen.

The Library's visual selection is based on the same criteria used for the selection of other library materials. In general, Hollywood movies are not purchased unless they have won major awards or have some special significance. DVDs are selected for those subjects which are best portrayed visually, such as dance instruction. DVDs that cost more than $50 are rarely purchased.

11. GRAPHIC NOVELS

The Library maintains a collection of graphic novels for children, young adults, and adults. The collection is predominantly fiction.

The Library's graphic novel selection is based on the same criteria as that used for the selection of non-graphic books. While quality of writing and illustration are of top priority, general demand is also a consideration.

B. Children's Materials

The children's collection contains books and other materials for children from birth through approximately 14 years of age, and for adults who are interested in children's literature.

Materials are selected to excite the pre-reader and the beginning reader, to fill recreational needs, personal hobbies and interests, to supplement school projects and assignments, and to assist children who are being home-schooled. While quality of writing and illustration are of top priority, general demand is also a consideration. Children as well as adults have various levels of ability and interest, so many types of books and other materials are regularly chosen.

Materials, both fiction and non-fiction, are chosen for all ages of children. Classics and

popular standard titles and authors, and high-demand works are purchased in quantity to allow constant availability.

The following criteria apply to juvenile non-fiction: (1) Authoritativeness, (2) Scope, (3) Objectivity, (4) Clarity and accuracy of information, (5) Format, (6) Publication date, and (7) Interest and reading level. The following criteria apply to juvenile fiction: (1) Style, (2) Plot, (3) Atmosphere, (4) Characterization, (5) Originality and imagination, (6) Interest and reading level, (7) Demand, (8) Prizes won, and (9) Inclusion on standard suggested reading lists.

VIII. WEEDING

Judicious and systematic discarding is important to keep resources attractive and up-to-date, and to assure that the collection can be housed in the space available. It is the policy of the Library to regularly re-evaluate the items in its collection and to withdraw unneeded items. Materials which are worn, outdated, seldom used, or no longer of interest may be withdrawn.

IX. GIFTS

The criteria for selection will also apply to gifts and donations of books and materials to be added to the Library's collection. The only exception will be gifts of materials that would have been added to the collection if the price had not been prohibitive, and those items that would have been added if the materials budget would allow the creation of such a collection. Examples include gifts of expensive art books and gifts of "Hollywood" movies. Gifts not added to the collection will be given to the Friends of the Library for their annual book sales.

X. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Customers and members of the staff may advise the Library Director if they feel that material has been added to the collection in violation of this policy. The concerned person should complete a "Request for Reconsideration of a Book." (This form is Appendix C.) The Library Director will provide information to the Board delineating why the book was selected. The Board will then determine if the book in question was selected according to the Materials Selection Policy. The concerned person will be notified by the Library Director of the Board's decision. Under no circumstances will the personal view or taste of either the Library Director, or the members of the Board, or the perceived views or tastes of the community concerning the material be a criteria in making a ruling. The determination will be made solely on the basis of compliance with the Materials Selection Policy.

XI. APPENDICES

A. 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 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 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~~s~~ 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 differs, 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~~s~~. 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 Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
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

B. 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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

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

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

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

C. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Author: _____

Title: _____

Publisher: _____ Publication Date: _____

Name of individual making this request: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

If individual represents a group, the name of the group: _____

1. What is your objection to this material? Please be specific. Cite pages, scenes from video or DVD, particular lyrics of music.

_____

_____

_____

2. Did you read the entire book, view the entire video or DVD, listen to the entire CD?

Yes: _____ No: _____ If not, what parts did you read/view/hear?

_____

_____

3. Are there other titles you would suggest in the place of this title?_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature Date