



Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement/Purpose of Policy

The mission statement of the Eager Free Public Library, adopted in 2014, is an affirmation of the library's purpose and is the main guiding force in the development of the library's collection.

The Eager Free Public Library opens doors for curious minds by encouraging literacy, inspiring learning, and connecting people.

To accomplish this mission the library has selected the following roles for itself:

- Create Young Readers
- Stimulate Imagination and Satisfy Curiosity
- Serve as a portal to the Digital World

Because of the volume of publishing as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a collection development policy with which to meet community interests and needs if it is to fulfill its mission and roles. This policy is used to select, maintain, and weed materials and also to serve to acquaint the general public with the principles of collection development. The ultimate responsibility for collection development, as with all library activities, rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board.

Collection Development Philosophy

EFPL provides recorded knowledge in several different types of formats including, but not limited to, books, e-books, serials, microforms, pamphlets, maps, art works, films, audio and video recordings, kits, games, e-readers, and online databases. Whenever possible EFPL strives to provide materials in formats suitable for persons with disabilities.

The library recognizes its responsibility to have available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its users. The library takes no sides on public issues; does not attempt to promote any beliefs or points of view; nor does it endorse the opinions expressed in the materials held. The library provides materials representing various points of view, within the limitations of space, budget, and availability, to enable people to make their own decisions. The Eager Free Public Library supports the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#) statements which affirm that free and convenient access to ideas, information, and the creative experience, is of vital importance to every citizen today (see appendices).

Separate collections are maintained for adults, young adults, and children. These collections are available to all and no attempt will be made to censor the use of library materials by an individual or group, regardless of age, race, sex, creed, occupation, education level, or economic status. Responsibility for the selection of reading materials by minors rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of adult material will not be limited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of minors. New formats shall be considered for the collection when, by industry report, 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. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the Library's collections.

Selection of Library Material: Criteria for Evaluation

The selection of library materials involves the following factors and considerations: the experience and knowledge of staff selectors, familiarity with the community and its needs and interests, holdings and availability of other area library resources, EFPL's existing collection, and its materials budget. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

Reviews in professional journals (such as *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal*, *VOYA* and other professional and popular periodicals) are used in the selection process and are sought whenever possible. Opinions on selected works may also be solicited from area authorities or from electronic discussion groups. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review is not sufficient reason to reject a title for which there is demand.

Selection of library materials will not be influenced by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children or young adults or the liability of materials to theft or mutilation. The Library does not attempt to meet curriculum needs of education programs. Textbooks are acquired if they serve the general public by providing information on subjects where little or no material is available in any other form.

Criteria for the selection of nonfiction materials regardless of format:

1. Qualification of the author in the subject field
2. Scope and authority of the subject matter
3. Quality of the writing (i.e., style, readability)
4. Appeal to the general-interest reader
5. Date of publication
6. Reputation of the publisher
7. Organization of the contents (use of indexes, bibliographies)
8. Illustrations
9. Relationship to the existing collection
10. Physical format (binding, typography, design, etc.)
11. Price

Criteria for the selection of fiction materials regardless of format:

1. Popularity of the author (patron requests)
2. Appeal to the general-interest reader
3. Relationship to the existing collection
4. Quality of the writing
5. Characterization (constructive, realistic portrait)
6. Literary merit
7. Reputation of the publisher
8. Price

The Periodical Collection

A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained for browsing purposes and as a supplement to the book collection. Requests for periodicals which fall outside the scope of the collection may be filled through the interlibrary loan network. The collection is evaluated on an annual basis. Selection of these materials is based on the fiction and nonfiction criteria previously listed.

Audio Recordings

The library recognizes sound recording as a major form of publication. Because of the cost and diversity of titles available, the aim of this collection is to represent a cross-section of available material, particularly with respect to music of established and lasting value. Ephemeral materials may be added where demand warrants. Recordings are selected on the basis of reviews in professional and general publications and the popularity of artists or authors whose works appear in this format. Patron requests are also taken into consideration. Dramatic and documentary recordings, such as books on CD, are selected based on fiction or nonfiction selection criteria and on the quality of the production.

Visual Recordings

This collection is intended to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community. The collection is designed to be general in nature and does not contain specialized materials for the exclusive use of one particular group. Generally speaking, selection decisions are based upon reviews in professional and general publications and the selector's knowledge of community needs. Because of the great diversity of materials available, no single set of criteria can be applied to all items. In addition to the selection criteria listed above for fiction and nonfiction materials, visual items such as DVDs may be evaluated by the prizes, awards, etc., given by critical organizations or institutes. Specific attention shall be paid to items that provide a presentation most effectively or appropriately delivered by the visual format.

The Local History Collection

The library maintains a collection of local history materials, including microfilm of the local paper, transcripts of oral histories, cemetery records and publications of the Evansville Area School District, the Chamber of Commerce, and community organizations. The collection also contains a collection of municipal documents. The library actively solicits materials for this collection, requesting from all city departments,

boards, commissions, committees, and the common council any document prepared for the city of Evansville which contains public information. Minutes of municipal meetings are kept for the current year. See the History Room Collection Development Policy for more information.

Electronic Materials

Electronic materials include online and digital resources such as e-books. Titles and/or services are intended to supplement and, in some cases, replace print materials. Selection of electronic products and services is based on the previously stated criteria for nonfiction or fiction and on the material's accessibility and ease of use.

Gift Materials

Materials donated to the library are not automatically added to the collection. These items are reviewed according to the selection criteria set forth in this section. A letter itemizing the objects given is available upon request of the donor. Library staff cannot assign a dollar value to any gift. See the Gift Policy for more information.

Weeding of Library Materials

Weeding, removal of materials, is necessary to maintain a vital, useful, and up-to-date collection. This task takes skill, care, time, and knowledge of the materials to do a competent job. Selection of materials for weeding is based on the following criteria:

1. Materials worn out through use.
2. Ephemeral materials which are no longer timely.
3. Materials no longer considered accurate or factual.
4. Materials which have had little recent use and/or are of questionable value.
5. Excess copies of a title no longer in demand.

Replacement of materials that are withdrawn is not automatic. The need for replacement is based on the following criteria:

1. Number of duplicate copies.
2. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject.
3. Demand for the specific title or for material in that subject area.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this policy. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library materials will be sequestered, except to protect them from injury or theft.

Patrons requesting that an item be withdrawn from the collection may complete a "Request for Reconsideration" form, a copy of which is included as part of the appendix to this policy. The reconsideration will be placed on the agenda of the next regular

meeting of the Library Board of Trustees and will be guided by the same criteria through which materials are selected for the collection. The decision made by the Board of Trustees will be final.

Appendix

Library Bill of Rights

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

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 that 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.

The Freedom to Read Statement

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.

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:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Freedom to View Statement

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.

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.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Your complaint or concern is about (please check):

- Book
- Audio Item
- Video Item
- Other, please explain _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

What is your concern about this material or resource? (Please tell us all you can to help us understand your concerns.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Revised and adopted by the Eager Free Public Library Board of Trustees on November 24, 2020.