

# FINDLAY - HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## FINDLAY-HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### **Mission Statement:**

The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library encourages and supports lifelong reading, viewing, and listening in the pursuit of knowledge and joy.

### **Philosophy/Goals:**

The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library assumes a unique role as an unbiased repository for the expression of thought and culture and as a protector of intellectual freedom in a free society. The library is committed to providing a comfortable and equitable environment for our patrons and to meet their needs by collecting, organizing, and disseminating information as cost-effectively as possible. The library has the responsibility for selecting print materials, non-print materials, and electronic sources that reflect the community's diverse citizenry. These materials reflect a wide variety of ideas and may contain controversial points of view. Therefore, the library's collection includes materials which are representative of all races and nationalities and all political, religious, economic, and social views. The library recognizes the American Library Association statements: *The Freedom to Read*, *The Freedom to View*, and *The Library Bill of Rights*. (see appendix).

### **Methods of Selection:**

Since the ability to purchase and store materials is limited by both budget and space, the library has established standards for materials purchase and retention. These criteria are developed, implemented, and reviewed by personnel who are knowledgeable in adult, juvenile (children and teens), reference, local and family history, extension services, and electronic services.

Materials are selected in accordance with one or more of the following criteria:

- Recognized reviewing sources
- Timeliness of materials
- Relative importance in comparison with other materials available on the subject
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Availability and accessibility of the same materials in the local area and SEO consortia
- Authority and competence of author, publisher, producer, composer, filmmaker, etc.
- Price in relation to total budget
- Clarity and accuracy of information
- Availability of materials for purchase
- Awareness of significant new trends in literature, technology, and formats
- Community requests and/or anticipated popular demand, needs, and interests
- Author is local or content pertains to locale

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Final responsibility for the selection of all materials rests with the library director who administers this policy approved by the library Board of Trustees. The library staff, through virtue of their education and training, selects all titles in all media/formats. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content. Items represent a diversity of views and expressions of artistic taste. Suggestions for purchase by the public and the staff are encouraged and given sincere consideration.

Heavy demand for a popular title is sufficient reason for considering duplication, depending on importance and budget. The library does not attempt to duplicate all materials in sufficient quantity to meet the needs and required reading assignments in the local schools and colleges.

### **Specific Policies in Selected Areas:**

#### ***Donations:***

Donations are received only with the understanding that they become the sole property of the library. If they cannot be used in the library, items may be sold at the Friends of the Library's Book Cellar, with the proceeds benefiting the library.

#### ***Interlibrary loan:***

Interlibrary loan is the process of requesting materials from a library outside the SEO consortia. Interlibrary loan is meant to expand the range of materials available to library users. Some fees may apply.

#### ***Local & Family History Collection:***

The library maintains a special collection of materials, which contains genealogy and local history information with an emphasis on Hancock County and Ohio. The library also retains microfilm copies of local newspapers for preservation.

#### ***Memorials and Honorariums:***

Memorials and honorariums are always appreciated. However, they must meet the library's selection criteria to become a part of the collection. Money can be donated toward the purchase of a specific item as a memorial or honorarium.

#### ***Textbooks:***

Textbooks are purchased when they supply the best information or when they are the only source of information on a subject.

## **Collection Evaluation:**

In order to ensure a vital and relevant collection for the community, it is necessary to continually evaluate the usefulness of materials and resources previously added to the collection. The purpose of collection evaluation is to:

- Review the collection for content and balance
- Become aware of the changes in the way the community uses the collection
- Determine patterns of use
- Enhance accessibility of materials to patrons
- Maximize available space
- Increase circulation

## **Collection Maintenance:**

Findlay-Hancock County Public Library is not a library of historical record. Materials must be timely, accurate, and attractive in order to provide the best possible service. To ensure a vital collection of continued value to the community, materials that are worn, outdated, or no longer in demand are removed from the collection on a systematic and on-going basis.

Criteria for removal from the library's collection include:

- Physical condition
- Material no longer in demand
- Excess multiple copies
- Accuracy of materials
- Availability of more current and better materials in the field
- Popularity of the title or subject
- Depth of the library's collection on a subject

The same criteria for the evaluation of donations, memorials, and honorariums are used when withdrawing these items from the collection.

Items are replaced according to the selection criteria of this document. Replacement items may be purchased to take the place of specific titles formerly in the library collection. Withdrawn, lost, or damaged materials are not automatically replaced.

## **Controversial Materials:**

The library has a responsibility to provide a representative collection of materials on varied subjects of interest to the community, including controversial matters. The library provides information that represents balanced coverage of diverse opinions so individuals can examine all sides of an issue. Materials are chosen on the basis of content as a whole and not excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

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Materials in any format that contain frank treatments of certain situations, language, or illustrations, which may be objectionable to some individuals, are included if they meet general selection criteria. Each work must be judged on its own merits, considering the audience for whom it is intended. Responsibility for minors use of library collections rests with their parents, guardians, and/or caregivers.

If there is an objection to the library's ownership of a particular item or items, the following procedure will apply:

1. A manager will be called to discuss the item(s) with the patron. If this is not resolved satisfactorily, the patron must complete a "*Library Materials Evaluation Form*" (see appendix).
2. Once the "*Library Materials Evaluation Form*" has been submitted to the library, a copy will be forwarded to the library director. The challenged material will remain in the collection until a final decision is made.
3. The Collection Development Committee will meet within thirty days to review the challenged item. A recommendation will be made to the library director.
4. The library director will review the committee's recommendation and the complainant will be notified of the decision in writing. A copy will be sent to the library's Board of Trustees.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, written appeal must be made to the library's Board of Trustees within thirty days. The appeal will be added to the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the library's Board of Trustees.
6. A final decision will be made by the library's Board of Trustees in writing to the complainant within thirty days.

## Appendix 1

### 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 books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label “controversial” books, 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 the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the Freedom to Read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts 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 to reject it. 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.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger portion of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressure 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 uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident ideas becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

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 hearsay, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which comes the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

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We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards 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 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 which 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 which 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 contained in the books 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 books 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 thoughts. 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 determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.**

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A book should be judged as a book. 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 which 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 on 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 taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which 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 book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or 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 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 the 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 had the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon 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 expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for the 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 their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, 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 books. We do so because we believe that they are good, 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, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

**Subsequently Endorsed by:**

American Booksellers Association  
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)  
American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
Association of American University Presses  
Children's Book Council  
Freedom to Read Foundation  
International Reading Association  
Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression  
National Association of College Stores  
National Council of Teachers of English  
P.E.N.—American Center  
People for the American Way  
Periodical and Book Association of America  
Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.  
Society of Professional Journalists  
Women's National Book Association  
YWCA of the USA

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## **Appendix 2**

### **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 or 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**

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## **Appendix 3**

### **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 bases, 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.

**Appendix 4**

**Library Materials Evaluation Form**

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