

# FINDLAY-HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

## FINDLAY-HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### **Mission Statement:**

The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library is dedicated to fostering a love of reading, viewing, and listening in our community, empowering individuals of all ages and backgrounds to build a more informed, engaged, and connected community.

### **Philosophy/Goals:**

The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library assumes an 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 that are representative of all races and nationalities and all political, religious, economic, and social views. The library recognizes the American Library Association statements: *The Library Bill of Rights*, *Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read*, and *The Freedom to View* (see appendices).

### **Methods of Selection:**

Since the ability to purchase and store materials is limited by both budget and space, the library has established standards for material purchases 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

- Suitability of the format for library use
- Community requests and/or anticipated popular demand, needs, and interests
- Author is local or content pertains to locale

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 by 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.

### ***Reference***

The reference collection offers patrons current and accessible sources of information. To ensure accessibility, print reference materials do not circulate and must demonstrate a compelling reason for

being limited to in-house use, such as demand (e.g. frequent usage) or importance (e.g. local regulations, codes, or reports).

### ***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:**

The 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.

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 a resident of Hancock County, Ohio objects 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 completed "*Library Materials Evaluation Form*" has been submitted to the library by a resident of Hancock County, Ohio, 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

### 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.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

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Adopted June 19, 1939  
Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948;  
February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980;  
Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, January 29, 2019  
by the ALA Council.

## Appendix 2

### Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article I of the *Library Bill of Rights*: “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.” A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves. This means acquiring materials to address popular demand and direct community input, as well as addressing collection gaps and unexpressed information needs. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered.

A well-balanced collection does not require a one-to-one equivalence for each viewpoint but should strive for equity in content and ideas that takes both structural inequalities and the availability of timely, accurate materials into account. A diverse collection should contain a variety of works chosen pursuant to the library’s selection policy and subject to periodic review.

Collection development, as well as cataloging and classification, should be done according to professional standards and established procedures. Developing a diverse collection requires:

- selecting content in multiple formats;
- considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers;
- seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups;
- evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed;
- including content in all of the languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible; and
- providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

Best practices in collection development assert that materials should not be excluded from a collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial. Refusing to select resources due to potential controversy is considered censorship, as is withdrawing resources for that reason. Libraries have a responsibility to defend against challenges that limit a collection’s diversity of content. Challenges commonly cite content viewed as inappropriate, offensive, or controversial, which may include but is not limited to prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, scientific research, sexual content, and representation of diverse sexual orientations, expressions, and gender identities.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to varying expressions of ideas through which a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be fair and just in defending the library user's right to read, view, or listen to content protected by the First Amendment, regardless of the creator's viewpoint or personal history. Library workers must not permit their personal biases, opinions, or preferences to unduly influence collection development decisions.<sup>2</sup>

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Adopted July 14, 1982,  
Amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008;  
July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development";  
and June 24, 2019 by the ALA Council.

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<sup>1</sup> "Services to People with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" adopted January 28, 2009, by the ALA Council under the title "Services to Persons with Disabilities"; amended June 26, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> *ALA Code of Ethics*, Article VII, adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.

## Appendix 3

### The 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 to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians



have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of

enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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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 for Free Expression  
The Association of American University Presses  
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

## **Appendix 4**

### **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.

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**Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990**

**FINDLAY-HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LIBRARY MATERIALS EVALUATION FORM**

Selection of material for our collection is based upon the library's Collection Development Policy. A copy can be made available for review upon request. We respect each patron's right to evaluate our materials and we appreciate your comments. Please complete one form per title. The library will consider evaluation forms submitted by residents of Hancock County, Ohio.

Patron Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Adult Book \_\_\_\_\_ Teen Book \_\_\_\_\_ Children's Book \_\_\_\_\_ Audio-visual \_\_\_\_\_

Title:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Call number: \_\_\_\_\_

Patron Represents: Self \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Organization)

1. To what in the item do you object? (Please give specific examples, cite pages, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the positive features of this item?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you review the entire item? \_\_\_\_\_ Which sections/chapters? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. If you have further comments, please use the space below or the back of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_