

Ely Public Library Collection Development Policy

Page 1

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

The primary purpose of the Ely Public Library is to purchase, organize and make readily accessible books and other materials, to stimulate interest and give guidance in their free use to everyone in the community – regardless of age, sex, race, creed or social, economic and educational level.

The objectives of the Ely Public Library are:

- A. To facilitate informal self-education of all people in the community.
- B. To enrich and further develop the subjects on which individuals are undertaking formal education.
- C. To help meet the informational needs of all.
- D. To support the educational, civic and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
- E. To encourage wholesome recreational and constructive use of leisure time.

THE RIGHT TO READ AND VIEW

As citizens in a freedom-loving nation, the Ely Public Library Board upholds the “first” freedoms: freedom to speak, to hear and to read as protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The Board therefore ascribes to principles outlined in the FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT and FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT as adopted by the American Library Association Council and the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS as adopted by the American Library Association Council. These documents are attached as Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C.

RESPONSIBILITY:

The Ely Public Library Board designates the librarian to select materials as authorized in Section 6, paragraph 6, of the Library Ordinance, as adopted by the Council of the City of Ely on December 8, 1975.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

The library shall provide materials for all ages, from earliest childhood through maturity, on as nearly as possible all subjects of human interest.

The library shall study the community and know its general character and special characteristics such as cultural and racial elements, local activities, and learning interests, and select material accordingly.

While demand is primarily the basis and reason for supply, it must be remembered that the great works of literature are the foundation stone in the library’s own structure and, therefore, some items of permanent value must be selected, regardless of whether or not they will be widely used.

Impartiality in selection must be maintained, with no special hobbies or opinions in controversial and sectarian subjects shown favoritism.

“Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with the parents and/or legal guardians. Selection of adult material will not be limited by the possibility that the material may inadvertently come into the possession of minors. A separate juvenile fiction collection is maintained for the convenience of young borrowers.”

Ely Public Library
Collection Development Policy

Page 2

QUESTIONABLE MATERIALS:

If a patron wishes to challenge materials selection, the librarian will review specific material upon the written request of a patron on the library's REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL form. A copy of this form is attached as Appendix D. Material questioned will be reconsidered by the library board.

MEMORIAL BOOKS:

Memorial books may be placed in the library. The titles selected should be of long-term value to the collection, provided that the donor makes no stipulation regarding the library's use or disposal of such materials.

GIFTS:

Gifts of library materials may be accepted by the library provided that the donor makes no stipulation regarding the library's use or disposal of such materials.

The library board retains the right to refuse gifts offered to promote the special interest of the donor. The library is not to be used as a propaganda agency by any individual or group.

The library will not attempt to assign value to gift books and other library materials. Such evaluation is the responsibility of the donor.

WEEDING:

Weeding is a thorough and conscientious effort to achieve a well-balanced collection suitable to the clientele served and should be a continuous, consistent process. Some items to consider for weeding are:

- A. Material in poor physical condition.
- B. Slow-moving material not listed in the standard catalogs.
- C. Material on subject matter no longer of current interest.
- D. Multiple copies of titles no longer in demand.
- E. Old editions of non-fiction titles which have been replaced with updated material.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The library board recognizes that the circulation records of the library are confidential in nature and advises all employees that such records shall not be made available to anyone including any agency of federal, state, or local government except pursuant to federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative investigatory power.

Furthermore, the board will resist the issuance of enforcement of any such process, order or subpoena until such time as proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Adopted by the Board of Ely Public Library, Ely, Iowa, on August 1, 1978.

Revised by the Board 12/1/1999

Reviewed and approved 12/2002

Reviewed and approved 2/1/12

Reviewed and approved 8/12/15

THE FREEDOM TO READ

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to 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

Ely Public Library
Collection Development Policy

Page 4

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.

Ely Public Library
Collection Development Policy

Page 6

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

THE FREEDOM TO VIEW

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 guarantee 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 January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

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

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

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

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 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.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library respects patrons' rights to express their views on items in the library's collection. Any patron who objects to an item in the library's collection must fill out a Request for Reconsideration form, which can be obtained from the library staff. Once this form is completed, it may be turned in to any member of the library staff. If the complaint is brought against children or young adult library material, it will be reviewed by the Children's Librarian and the Library Director in cooperation. Any other contested materials will be reviewed by the Library Director. The contested material will be removed from circulation and checked out to the Library Director during the reconsideration process.

In addressing a request for reconsideration, the Library Director has the right to seek advice from other library staff and other local librarians, as well as the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. The Ely Public Library supports the American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement. The Library Director will also consider the contested material's value within the guidelines of the library's collection development policy. The library will provide copies of their Collection Development Policy, Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement to any person who requests them.

The Library Director will provide the complainant with a written decision within 30 days. If the complainant objects to the library director's decision, he/she may appeal the decision to the library board. The complainant may appear before the board to express his/her views on the contested materials. The Library Director will then be able to defend his/her position. The Library Board reserves the right to limit the number of presentations and speakers at the meeting. The Library Board will take into account whether the contested item is in accordance with the board-approved collection development policy, as well as the opinions of the complainant and the Library Director in making its decision to uphold or overrule the library director's decision.

Policy approved on 10-7-09.

Amended and approved 8-12-15.

Ely Public Library
Collection Development Policy

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Title _____

Book _____ Periodical _____ Other _____

Author _____

Publisher _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Request made on behalf of _____ Yourself
_____ An organization

(name) _____

_____ Other group

(name) _____

1. Did you read/view the entire work?

2. What is your objection? Please be specific. Cite pages.

3. What is positive about the work?

Ely Public Library
Collection Development Policy

4. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing the material?

5. For what library patrons would you recommend this work?

6. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

7. What resource(s) do you suggest to provide additional information on this topic?

8. Action requested:

Return it to the staff selection committee/department for reevaluation

Other.

Explain. _____

9. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a perspective of the subject treated?

SIGNATURE