

## **Prairie City Public Library Collection Development Policy and Guidelines**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made and to guide the Library Director in the selection of materials.

The Prairie City Public Library strives to provide books and other library materials of value and interest for information and enlightenment for all people in the community. The library attempts to maintain a collection of carefully selected representative book and non-book materials that are both of current interest and permanent value. The library will strive to provide items of interest for patrons of all ages.

**Responsibility:** the responsibility for selection of materials lies with the Library Director. The City code of Prairie City bestows the responsibility for purchase to the Library Board of Trustees. The Bylaws of the Library Board of Trustees grant the authority to purchase materials to the Library Director. The general public and staff members may recommend items for consideration.

**Purpose of the Collection:** The Library strives to maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of current materials in various formats and levels of comprehension which will support the working, cultural, education and leisure time needs of citizens in our service area regardless of their age, social and physical condition or level of intellectual achievement.

**Selection Criteria and Procedures:** The library subscribes to the general principles embodied in the Freedom to Read, Library Bill of Rights, and the American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Manual. These statements are prepared by the American Library Association.

Because the library recognizes its responsibility to provide access to all aspects of the human record, the widest possible variety of subjects and views are included in the collection. Selection is based on the merit of a work in relation to the need and interest of the community. Critical judgment is used to select those items best suited to fill these needs. Cost, space, usefulness, demand and current holdings must be considered. Freedom of choice is an essential prerequisite of democratic library service. The Library's immunity from attack of censorship is reasonably assured by providing a written materials selection policy based on the Library Board's approval of the documents listed above.

Books and other materials for the Youth Department are selected from those which are considered to be of value and interest to children from pre-reader through pre-adulthood. These materials are not necessarily shelved by age groupings. The library attempts to make all its resources available to users of all ages with emphasis on need, interest and ability rather than chronological age.

The library encourages suggestions and comments about the collection. They are important in helping to decide what to acquire.

**Challenges:** The Library will not remove specific titles solely because individuals or groups may find them objectionable. All material shall be judged as a whole. No work shall be judged for exclusion by taking single passages out of context and basing condemnation of that book on such lifted passages. The Prairie City Public Library does not supply textbook and specialized materials for public school, community college and university curricula.

Patrons who wish to initiate comments or complaints will receive copies of the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, Freedom to View and the Collection Development Policy. The library director will go over these materials with the patron. It is important to understand that concerns call into question selection decisions that have been made according to policy. The process of registering complaints is designed to make sure the selection was appropriate and results in informing the patron about the philosophy and criteria used. Patrons whose concerns are not satisfied by the staff may fill out a "reconsideration form" that will be passed on to the Board of Trustees. The form is available at the end of this policy, and on our website. The patron is welcome to attend the meeting of the trustees. The decision of the trustees on the material is final.

**Interlibrary Loans:** In order to provide access to materials beyond the financial limitations and storage capacity of the Prairie City Public Library, the library participates in a variety of interlibrary cooperative arrangements, including membership in regional, state and nationwide interlibrary loan networks for both print and non-print materials. A \$1.00 fee is charged for each request.

Items that are received from other libraries are subject to the lending policies of the lending library. That library will determine the date the item is to be returned.

Patrons will be notified when the items they have requested have arrived. Patrons have five days to pick up the item from the library. If an item is not picked up, the interlibrary loan fee will be added to the patron's library account.

Items that are obtained through interlibrary loan and are NOT returned to the Prairie City Public Library to be returned to the lending library, or are returned in a damaged condition, will be billed to the patron who requested the item. The fee for the replacement of interlibrary loan items is set by the lending library.

**Gifts and Donations:** The Prairie City Public Library appreciates gifts and donations to the library. Gifts and donations are accepted subject to the following guidelines:

1. The Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
2. The Library staff make the final decision of the use or disposition of the gift. Gift additions of books and other items must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials.

3. When requested, a book plate will be included in each gift to identify the donor and the purpose of the donation.
4. Gift items not included in the Library's collection will be sold or disposed of using established procedures.

### 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.

### 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:**

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.

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.

### [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 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.

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 1

**Adopted by the Prairie City Public Library Board of Trustees December 2018**

**Prairie City Public Library**  
**Material Reconsideration Form**

The library board of the Prairie City Public Library has delegated the responsibility for evaluation of library materials to the director of the library. If there is a verbal complaint, the director will discuss the item with the person making the complaint. If further discussion is needed, then the director will consult with any other staff that might be required to handle the problem. The director will notify the patron of the reached decision. If the patron would like to pursue the matter, then a formal written complaint is needed to bring to the board. Please return this form to the Library Director.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Organization? (Specify name) \_\_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting: \_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_ Textbook \_\_\_\_ Video \_\_\_\_

Display \_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_ Library Program \_\_\_\_ Audio Recording \_\_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_\_

Electronic information/network (please specify) \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about the resource? (Use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_