

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

**Olathe Public Library
201 E. Park Street
Olathe, Kansas 66061**

And

**Indian Creek Branch Library
12990 S. Blackbob Road
Olathe, Kansas 66062**

Adopted by the Board of Directors

March 25, 1998 (Rev. April 19, 2002, December 15, 2004, February 16, 2011)

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Collection Development Policy

Introduction

The Olathe Public Library is a distinct legal entity which provides library service to the citizens of Olathe, Kansas. It is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor of Olathe. Funding is provided primarily through local tax levies with help from state aid and local contributions.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) Enable staff members of the Olathe Public Library who make recommendations for the selection of materials to work with greater consistency toward the stated goals and objectives of the library thereby developing stronger collections and allocating financial resources more wisely and methodically;
- (b) Inform library staff, customers, administrators, Board members and the public as to the scope and character of existing collections, and the plans for their continuing development;
- (c) Provide guidelines which will assist in the allocation of funds to round out the collection and to fill in gaps.

Philosophy

The formulation and application of any policy governing the operations of the library must be in harmony with the library's mission and vision, set forth as follows:

The library actively pursues a role as the primary information center in the community. Accurate and useful information is provided to the citizenry through the use of technology and resource materials. Further emphasis is placed upon young children and their families through materials and services which will encourage reading and lifelong learning. In addition, the library features current, high-demand materials of popular interest for users of all ages in various formats.

Approved by the Board of Directors
Olathe Public Library
October 25, 1994

To meet the lifelong informational, educational and recreational needs of the community through the quality services and resources.

Approved by the Board of Directors
Olathe Public Library
September 1998

Materials Selection

It is the stated mission of the Olathe Public Library to provide a variety of materials for the citizens of Olathe. The Olathe Public Library strives to purchase and provide access to library materials that reflect the major languages spoken in this community. Selection is primarily based on community demand for popular titles and subjects, reference and community information, and materials that aid in the overall development of young children. Materials selected should be reviewed in library-recognized sources and be suitable for medium-sized libraries.

The Olathe Public Library recognizes that many materials are controversial. Decisions for the addition of materials are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the collection and serving the diverse needs and interests of the community. The Olathe Public Library makes available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its users, including materials on various sides of controversial questions - religious, social, political or economic - to enable customers to make up their own minds about controversial subjects. Variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever available. (See appendixes A and B on pages 11 and 12.)

While some materials will be of historical value and may be regarded as permanent parts of the collection, the majority of newly selected materials will depreciate in two to five years based on circulation and timeliness of information contained therein. In building the collection of the Olathe Public Library, the selection of materials is divided into different subject areas.

Professional staff is given specific subjects and/or formats for acquisition. This ensures the development of all materials and thus limits the influence of personal interests and biases. Staff members responsible for selection also choose materials based on the various age groups represented by the local community.

The Olathe Public Library collection “floats” between the library’s locations. This means that an item is shelved at the location where it is returned and checked in. Therefore, title selections and number of copies to purchase are based on the needs of the whole system rather than an individual location. Specific collections are exempt from floating such as: reference and Kansas Room materials, magazines and newspapers. Some collections may be housed only at one library location.

Adults

Adults are served by materials relevant to their informational, recreational and educational needs. The aim of the library is to provide the adult public with the materials needed for general reading, reference and recreation. All backgrounds, abilities and levels of education identifiable in the adult community served by the library are taken into consideration as materials are selected.

Young Adults

Young adult materials are selected for upper elementary grades through high school levels, with the major emphasis placed on the middle school or junior high grade level. The young adult fiction collection is designed to complement the recreational reading and listening materials available at the Olathe Public Library. Materials in the young adult nonfiction collection concern topics of interest to young people with a focus on personal, social and emotional needs as well as recreation and entertainment.

Children

Children’s materials are selected for birth through upper elementary grades. Materials in this collection reflect the concept of the child as an individual with greatly varying needs at any given time in his development. The Olathe Public Library is deeply committed to the conviction that a public library should provide all children with the freedom to select materials. The library has the responsibility to provide the very best materials for the children of the community. Therefore, materials produced with less than quality construction or content are not considered for selection.

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Collections

Books

Fiction and nonfiction titles are provided to satisfy the needs of the general reader as well as reference works to aid those in search of specific information. Textbooks are not usually selected; however, customer demand or donation may allow for the acquisition of such titles.

Newspapers

The library subscribes to newspapers representing local, state and national coverage. Many newspapers are available via library databases. Newspapers in print format are retained no longer than six months.

Periodicals

Periodicals are selected to serve both the informational and recreational needs of children, young adults and adults. Research needs are now substantially covered by the full text articles in library databases. The collection also contains periodicals that serve the professional reading needs of the library staff. All children's magazines and the back issues of young adult and adult magazines circulate. Back issues of many titles are also available through library databases.

Large Print

The Olathe Public Library buys a wide variety of Large Print books to serve that part of the population that prefers or needs larger print. The adult collection includes a representation of all genres of fiction and nonfiction currently in the library. The children's collection only includes a representation of fiction genres.

Pamphlets

Pamphlets are selected as a free or inexpensive means to supplement book and periodical resources. They are most often housed in the Reference vertical files or categorized for Ready Reference.

Municipal and County Documents

The Olathe Public Library is not an official document depository for the city of Olathe or Johnson County. However, selected documents are obtained without cost by the Adult Services department.

Telephone Listings

The library provides telephone listings via print and library database. Residential, business and consumer directories are acquired in print for most Kansas towns and cities.

Microfilm

The library maintains a collection of items on microfilm. As the permanent archives for The Olathe News, the library retains the paper on microfilm back to the beginning of publication through September 2003. Issues after September 2003 are available on CDs. The library also keeps The New York Times on microfilm from 1979 - 2003.

DVDs

The library acquires DVDs. The DVD collection is designed to supplement print materials as well as provide visual materials where print is not the most appropriate format. Non-theatrical selections represent many nonfiction subjects and interests. Theatrical selections emphasize classic, award-winning and popular motion pictures as well as films related to literature and the performing arts.

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Electronic Books

Electronic books are provided to customers through current technologies offered by library vendors. Title selection is based on the same criteria used for choosing books in the print format; however, emphasis will be placed on current, popular titles.

Books on CD

The library acquires published books in compact disc format. The collection includes fiction, nonfiction, dramatic and classic works.

Music on CD

The library acquires recorded music on CD. In order to maintain a balanced collection, the library selects CDs on the basis of enduring popularity, value to reference and core collections, and high priority among current requests.

Video Games

The library acquires video games suitable for various game consoles. Types of game play and associated skill sets, popularity, demand, **target audience**, recreational aspects and technical requirements are applied in the selection of titles.

Electronic Databases

Library databases are acquired through direct purchase or subscription. Specific reference works, indexes and serial information are provided that broaden and update the collection as well as give customers additional access to information. In-house public access computers provide customer access to these resources. In addition, the majority of databases are available via remote access from home, schools and businesses.

Websites

Websites are chosen for the library's collection to provide additional and alternative sources of information for library customers. These sites are offered via the library website and in-house computer access.

Special Collections

The Olathe Public Library has developed specific collections of materials not only to meet the needs of the community but also to enhance the overall materials collection. These special collections usually reflect a particular theme or subject and may consist of one or more formats.

Reference

1. The Adult Reference collection provides research information within the full scope of the Dewey Decimal classification system.
2. The Atlas Reference area includes current, general atlases, historical atlases and road atlases. Rare and older atlases and Geological Survey maps of Johnson County are kept in the Kansas Room.
3. The Auto Reference area primarily contains repair manuals for cars, but also includes some materials on boat, lawn equipment and motorcycle repair.
4. The Child Professional Collection is a non-circulating collection. The materials in this collection reflect a variety of topics of interest to library staff working with children.
5. The Consumer Reference area primarily contains information on the evaluation and purchase of household goods and automobiles rather than products used in business or industry. Current and back issues of Consumer Reports and Consumer Digest are included in this area.

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6. The Juvenile Reference collection provides a variety of materials for both adults and children. Reference works include information of special interest to preschool and elementary teachers and daycare providers, as well as homeschool parents. A wide range of subjects are covered in materials written specifically for children.
7. The Legal Reference area primarily contains information for the layperson on common legal issues, the Kansas Statutes Annotated and Kansas Administrative Regulations. The library does not collect any materials on Federal statutes, regulations or court decisions. Legal materials of more academic interest, such as constitutional law, are housed in regular reference.
8. The Professional Reference area includes information of interest to library workers on a variety of topics in the field of library science.
9. The Reader's Advisory Reference area contains materials to help library customers find fiction materials to read. The reference books include subject indexes to fiction, lists of best books in different fiction genres, lists of books in series and other finding aids.
10. The Ready Reference section contains materials to answer quick questions including definitions, spellings, addresses and telephone numbers and is shelved at the reference desk area.
11. The Statistical Reference area contains information on local statistics only. It also contains government documents including information on local Superfund sites, agendas for meetings of local governing bodies and yearly reports of government agencies.

Local History Collection

The Olathe Public Library has developed a unique resource devoted to the study of Olathe, Johnson County and the state of Kansas. Located in the Kansas Room, this collection reflects the early social, natural and cultural history of Olathe and its surrounding region along with county and state information. Many formats such as atlases and newspapers on microfilm help to portray this area during earlier times. The Kansas Room vertical file, a collection of past and current newspaper and magazine clippings, contains information about Kansas and Olathe history. Continual acquisition of appropriate materials and the maintenance of professional ties with the Olathe Historical Society, the Johnson County Community College and the Johnson County Historical Museum help to make this a highly individualized asset.

Archival Photographic Collection

Amplifying local history materials is the collection of nearly 2,500 images documenting the history of Olathe and Johnson County from the Civil War years through the 1970s. The collection includes cartes de visite, tintypes, slides and a large number of black and white prints. The collection was digitized in 2005 and is available through the JoCoHistory website (www.jocohistory.org).

Genealogy Collection

The Genealogy collection housed with the Local History collection in the Kansas Room of the library, incorporates a wide array of materials to aid beginners and visitors from out of town search for their family history. With emphasis placed on both the "how to" of genealogy and the Olathe, Johnson County and Kansas region, this collection of books, periodicals, indexes, census microfilms and other genealogical resources contain information intended for the study of family history.

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Spanish Language Collections

The library maintains two Spanish Language collections, one for adults and one for children. The Spanish Language collections are intended to meet the needs of Spanish speakers who have not yet mastered enough English to seek resources elsewhere in the library. The Spanish Language collections are not intended to duplicate other collection areas with Spanish versions of specific items, but rather are geared toward meeting the most immediate, urgent needs of Spanish speakers who are new to this country or who for some other reason have not yet mastered English. Spanish language materials in all formats are represented in these collections.

Graphic Novels

The library has established a collection of graphic novels for customers. Graphic novels are book-length collections told with a combination of sequential art and text and may comprise a single story or a collection of stories. Titles may be part of a series or stand-alone. The graphic novel collection is primarily for recreational use. Various subjects are covered and both fiction and non-fiction titles are collected.

Parenting Collection

A Parenting Collection in the Children's Department contains materials on guiding children's reading, promoting reading, books for parent and child on medical treatment, potty training and other pertinent topics. Additionally the library's nursery rhyme collection is housed in this area. Books on child development and learning are currently housed with the adult collection.

Emerging Formats and Limitations

Emerging technologies and formats are periodically reviewed for possible inclusion in the collection. Some formats may not be acquired due to reasons such as: budget constraints, commercial viability, durability, community demand, collection focus, shifting formats or changes in technology.

Resource Sharing

In addition to building collections that meet the needs of the library's customers, the Olathe Public Library is also capable of providing additional materials and services through the following arrangements:

- (1) on-line resource sharing with Johnson County Library
- (2) membership in the Mid-America Library Alliance/Kansas City Metropolitan Library and Information Network, which is the facilitator for COKAMO
- (3) membership in the Northeast Kansas Library System which is the facilitator for Blue Sky Express
- (4) access to the Kansas Library Catalog/Kansas Courier
- (5) access to OCLC Resource Sharing
- (6) Internet connections for both staff and customers.
- (7) access to Kansas Library Cards via Kansas State Library
- (8) statewide access to electronic databases through contracts negotiated by the Kansas State Library

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Collection Maintenance

The Olathe Public Library recognizes the need to continuously evaluate its collection in response to the changing nature and needs of the community through weeding (i.e., removal from the collection), replacement, duplication and retention.

Weeding

Weeding is an integral part of collection development. Weeding of the collection should be done at least once every three years library-wide as well as on a daily basis if an individual title warrants consideration. Systematic removal of materials eliminates unnecessary items, dated or superseded materials, worn or mutilated copies. The same criteria that are applied to materials selection form the basis for weeding the collection. Where selectors are responsible for specific subject and/or format areas, they are responsible for weeding those materials according to the guidelines set forth in the Collection Maintenance Manual.

Any type of material weeded by a librarian will not be given to any customer or organization. All weeded items are first scrutinized for the Friends of OPL book sales. Materials not accepted for book sales are disposed of promptly. Materials that do not meet the criteria for weeding are retained for continued use by customers.

Replacement

While the library tries to have copies of standard and important works, it does not attempt to replace each copy withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Community interest and the availability of newer and/or other formats are the primary considerations as well as number of copies, existing coverage of subject in the library and replacement costs of materials.

Duplication

Selectors give serious consideration to public demand as a guide to duplication. The purpose of additional copies is to improve the likelihood that patrons will find popular materials available immediately in the library or within a short amount of time. Popular demand, importance of the materials and budgetary limitations will be the determining factors. Purchase of additional copies must not be at the expense of new content needed for the collection.

Donations

Materials/Media

The Olathe Public Library is pleased to accept, on behalf of the Friends of OPL, new or used donations of print and digital materials from the community. These types of donations are gratefully and willingly accepted as long as no restrictions are placed on their use.

The library will review materials. The library has the right to determine suitability for inclusion in the library collection. The library is not obligated to retain any donations that fail to meet its criteria for collection development.

The library has the right to discard any donations that are not in good physical condition.

The library has the right to assign duplicate copies and unsuitable titles to the Friends of OPL. The Friends will then determine suitability of donated items for their sales.

The library does not appraise materials for income tax purposes or otherwise. A materials donation form may be obtained from the library. Donor completes a materials donation form and assigns value to the items.

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Monetary Gifts

The Olathe Public Library may receive monetary gifts in the form of donations, endowments, bequests, trusts, etc. The Olathe Public Library Foundation may receive monetary gifts and any other approved financial contribution per the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

The library reserves the right to accept or reject any monetary gifts.

The library considers restricted gifts, i.e. donated funds designated for specific materials or equipment.

The library considers non-restricted gifts, i.e. donated funds without specific designation.

Memorial and Honor Designations

The Olathe Public Library accepts donated funds or new materials given in memory or honor of family members and/or friends.

The library will consult with the donor of funds in the purchase of new materials for memorial and honor designations.

The library will review materials presented by the donor for a memorial or honor designation. The library is not obligated to accept materials deemed unsuitable.

The library reserves the right to dispose of designated memorial/honor items as the needs of the library collection and facilities dictate.

The library will process memorial and honor materials with inscribed plaques and/or plates.

Customer Comments on Library Materials

When a customer questions the inclusion of an item in the library's materials collection, the customer may register his or her opinion in writing by completing the Customer Comments on Library Materials form.* The customer may fill out this form at the library or mail it to the library in care of the library director. The customer should be informed that he or she will receive a written response within two weeks. Once the written comment is received, the materials selector will prepare a response (letter of explanation signed by selector) to be mailed to the customer. Should the customer wish to discuss the matter further, he or she may make an appointment to speak with the library director. If the customer is not satisfied with the decision of the library director, the customer may request (in writing) that the library board review the decision. The person shall be present in person when the library board reviews the request. The decision of the library board will be final. The library reserves the right to present all points of view, beliefs and creeds.

Review of the Collection Development Policy

This policy will be periodically reviewed by the director and the Library Board to ensure that it is responsive to both the needs and objectives of the Olathe Public Library and the changing nature of the community.

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 basis, 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.

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.

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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

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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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

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 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990

FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS *An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources available to other users violate the *Library Bill of Rights*. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.¹

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information in the library. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.¹ Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether material is not constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents—and only parents—have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

¹See Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville, 422 U.S. 205 (1975)-"Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable [422 U.S. 205, 214] for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors. See Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist., *supra*. Cf. West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943)."

Adopted June 30, 1972; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council.

ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS TO NONPRINT MATERIALS

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library collections of nonprint materials raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors. Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The American Library Association's principles protect minors' access to sound, images, data, games, software, and other content in all formats such as tapes, CDs, DVDs, music CDs, computer games, software, databases, and other emerging technologies. ALA's Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights states:

The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

[P]arents—and only parents—have the right and responsibility to restrict access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Policies that set minimum age limits for access to any nonprint materials or information technology, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Age limits based on the cost of the materials are also unacceptable. Librarians, when dealing with minors, should apply the same standards to circulation of nonprint materials as are applied to books and other print materials except when directly and specifically prohibited by law. Recognizing that librarians cannot act *in loco parentis*, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Libraries should provide published reviews and/or reference works that contain information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences for nonprint materials. These resources will assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship.

In some cases, commercial content ratings, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings, might appear on the packaging or promotional materials provided by producers or distributors. However, marking out or removing this information from materials or packaging constitutes expurgation or censorship. MPAA movie ratings, Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) game ratings, and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing (Expurgation of Library Materials). For the library to add ratings to nonprint materials if they are not already there is unacceptable. It is also unacceptable to post a list of such ratings with a collection or to use them in circulation policies or other procedures. These uses constitute labeling, "an attempt to prejudice attitudes" (Statement on Labeling), and are forms of censorship. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the Library Bill of Rights.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people's access to materials and services that reflect diversity of content and format sufficient to meet their needs.

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Adopted June 28, 1989, by the ALA Council; the quotation from *Free Access to Libraries for Minors* was changed after Council adopted the July 3, 1991, and the June 30, 2004, revision of that *Interpretation*; amended June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council.

Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks **An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights***

Introduction

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information.¹ Libraries and librarians protect and promote these rights regardless of the format or technology employed to create and disseminate information.

The American Library Association expresses the fundamental principles of librarianship in its *Code of Ethics* as well as in the *Library Bill of Rights* and its Interpretations. These principles guide librarians and library governing bodies in addressing issues of intellectual freedom that arise when the library provides access to digital information, services, and networks.

Libraries empower users by offering opportunities both for accessing the broadest range of information created by others and for creating and sharing information. Digital resources enhance the ability of libraries to fulfill this responsibility.

Libraries should regularly review issues arising from digital creation, distribution, retrieval, and archiving of information in the context of constitutional principles and ALA policies so that fundamental and traditional tenets of librarianship are upheld. Although digital information flows across boundaries and barriers despite attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to channel or control it, many people lack access or capability to use or create digital information effectively.

In making decisions about how to offer access to digital information, services, and networks, each library should consider intellectual freedom principles in the context of its mission, goals, objectives, cooperative agreements, and the needs of the entire community it serves.

The Rights of Users

All library system and network policies, procedures, or regulations relating to digital information and services should be scrutinized for potential violation of user rights.

User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association, including “Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services, and Facilities.”

Users’ access should not be restricted or denied for expressing, receiving, creating, or participating in constitutionally protected speech. If access is restricted or denied for behavioral or other reasons, users should be provided due process, including, but not limited to, formal notice and a means of appeal.

Information retrieved, utilized, or created digitally is constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court of competent jurisdiction. These rights extend to minors as well as adults (“Free Access to Libraries for Minors”; “Access to Resources and Services in the School Library

Media Program”; “Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials”; and “Minors and Internet Interactivity”).²

Libraries should use technology to enhance, not deny, digital access. Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. Contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users should not violate this right. Libraries should provide library users the training and assistance necessary to find, evaluate, and use information effectively. Users have both the right of confidentiality and the right of privacy. The library should uphold these rights by policy, procedure, and practice in accordance with “Privacy: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*,” and “Importance of Education to Intellectual Freedom: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*.”

Equity of Access

The digital environment provides expanding opportunities for everyone to participate in the information society, but individuals may face serious barriers to access.

Digital information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be equally, readily, and equitably accessible to all library users. American Library Association policies oppose the charging of user fees for the provision of information services by libraries that receive support from public funds (50.3 “Free Access to Information”; 53.1.14 “Economic Barriers to Information Access”; 60.1.1 “Minority Concerns Policy Objectives”; 61.1 “Library Services for the Poor Policy Objectives”). All libraries should develop policies concerning access to digital information that are consistent with ALA’s policies and guidelines, including “Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*,” “Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities,” and “Services to Persons with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*.”

Information Resources and Access

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user’s age or the content of the material. In order to preserve the cultural record and to prevent the loss of information, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained digitally. Libraries have an obligation to provide access to government information available in digital format.

Providing connections to global information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing materials for a library collection. Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to digital information because of its allegedly controversial content or because of a librarian’s personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Furthermore, libraries and librarians should not deny access to digital information solely on the grounds that it is perceived to lack value.

Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children’s use of digital resources should provide guidance to their own children. Some information accessed digitally may not meet a library’s selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to

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determine what is appropriate.

Publicly funded libraries have a legal obligation to provide access to constitutionally protected information. Federal, state, county, municipal, local, or library governing bodies sometimes require the use of Internet filters or other technological measures that block access to constitutionally protected information, contrary to the *Library Bill of Rights* (ALA Policy Manual, 53.1.17, *Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries*). If a library uses a technological measure that blocks access to information, it should be set at the least restrictive level in order to minimize the blocking of constitutionally protected speech. Adults retain the right to access all constitutionally protected information and to ask for the technological measure to be disabled in a timely manner. Minors also retain the right to access constitutionally protected information and, at the minimum, have the right to ask the library or librarian to provide access to erroneously blocked information in a timely manner. Libraries and librarians have an obligation to inform users of these rights and to provide the means to exercise these rights.³

Digital resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide access to information presenting all points of view. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement. These principles pertain to digital resources as much as they do to the more traditional sources of information in libraries (“Diversity in Collection Development”).

¹*Martin v. Struthers*, 319 U.S. 141 (1943); *Lamont v. Postmaster General*, 381 U.S. 301 (1965); Susan Nevelow Mart, *The Right to Receive Information*, 95 Law Library Journal 2 (2003).

²*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969); *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, (1982); *American Amusement Machine Association v. Teri Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 954 (7th Cir. 2001); cert.denied, 534 U.S. 994 (2001)

³“If some libraries do not have the capacity to unblock specific Web sites or to disable the filter or if it is shown that an adult user’s election to view constitutionally protected Internet material is burdened in some other substantial way, that would be the subject for an as-applied challenge, not the facial challenge made in this case.” *United States, et al. v. American Library Association*, 539 U.S. 194 (2003) (Justice Kennedy, concurring).

See Also: “Questions and Answers on Access to Digital Information, Services and Networks: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*.”

Adopted January 24, 1996; amended January 19, 2005, by the ALA Council.

Olathe Public Library Materials/Media and Monetary Gifts

Date _____

_____ In Memory of

_____ In Honor of

_____ Gift from Individual

_____ Gift from Club/Organization

Donor's Name _____

Address _____

In Memory or in Honor of

Name _____

Contact/Address _____

Special Instructions _____

Amount \$ _____ Title/Author/Genre _____

For installation of plate – check appropriate designations

_____ In Honor of

_____ In Memory of

_____ Presented by

Please make check out to Olathe Public Library.

Assigned Selector _____
(Selector will order materials and send thank you acknowledgement)

_____ Donor wishes to see materials when they are processed.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS ON LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Olathe Public Library wishes to thank you for your interest in the library and its materials. In order for the library to address your concerns, they must be in writing. The “Customers Comments on Library Materials Form” is made available for your convenience.

The library’s procedure for responding to concerns expressed by customers is as follows:

1. A review process will begin within five (5) working days of the receipt of your written concern.
2. While your comments are being considered, there will be no change in the status of the material in question and
3. The materials selector will contact you upon the completion of the review process by way of written correspondence.
4. If you are not satisfied with the decision or wish to discuss the matter further, you may request a meeting with the library director.

The library takes very seriously all comments expressed by customers, and attempts to respond as quickly as possible. Therefore, you should receive a letter from the selector within two (2) weeks.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS ON LIBRARY MATERIALS

Title_____

Author_____

Publisher_____ Publishing Date_____

Form of Material (book, magazine, DVD, Audiobook, Music CD, Video Game)_____

Please state your comment, suggestion or criticism of the material as specifically as possible.

Did you read, see, listen or otherwise use the material in its entirety?_____

If not, then which parts?_____

Are you aware of any opinions of this material by professional reviews?_____

If yes, please identify the source(s)_____

Additional comments_____

Date_____ Name_____

Telephone_____ Signature_____

Address_____

The Olathe Public Library appreciates your interest. Your comments will be forwarded to materials selector who will address your comments in a letter within two (2) weeks.