

CHARLOTTE HOBBS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Collection Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Charlotte Hobbs Memorial Library (CHML) Collection Policy is to provide guidelines to the Director, and to make known to the public the principles that guide the management of the collection. This policy is based on the CHML mission: bringing people, information and ideas together to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge and strengthen our community.

DEFINITIONS

Collection - All materials available for public use in the CHML, on the CHML website, through Minerva, for member use, and for interlibrary loan.

Materials - Books (print and electronic), magazines or journals, non-traditional offerings, newspapers, audio-visual, electronic databases, emerging technologies and allied materials.

Member - A patrons with an active CHML library card and eligible to vote under the bylaws.

POLICY

1. **Selection Responsibility** - The selection and deselection of materials legally rests with the Board of Trustees (Board) of the CHML. The Board delegates this responsibility to the Director who oversees the daily development of the collection.
2. **Selection** - The CHML selects materials in all formats for use by members of all ages in accordance with the following:
 - a. The CHML provides free access to materials in a variety of formats (print, electronic, and other media). In order to be inclusive, rather than exclusive, in developing its collections and assure all users access to legally obtainable materials, the CHML chooses a wide range of materials. Library users make their own choices as to what they will use based on individual interests and concerns, and the CHML will not exclude materials on the grounds that they may offend some library users or library staff, on the basis of partisanship, religion, or gender, sexuality, politics, or that some might consider them they may be inappropriate for some Patrons or children.
 - b. Materials selected provide a variety of information and stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic value, entertainment value, and ethical standards. Materials selected are based on quality including accuracy, authority, and currency (in the case of non-fiction); production quality (in the case of audio-visual material); quality of illustration and reproduction (in the case of picture books, art books, etc.). Materials will not be excluded from the CHML collection based by the possibility that they may come into the possession of

Charlotte Hobbs Memorial Library Collection Policy

children, and children are not limited to the children's collection. Responsibility for a child's reading rests with the parent or guardian, not the CHML

- c. Donated materials are subject to the same standards and are accepted or rejected by those standards. The Director reserves the right to dispose of donated materials as she/he sees fit, including the right to discard or sell them.
 - d. The Director relies on professional and general periodicals, book reviews, member recommendations, and lists of award winners and bestsellers for guidance in selecting for the collection.
3. **Challenges to Materials** - A Member who wishes to challenge any of the CHML's collection material must complete the Challenged Materials Request Form and submit it to the Director.
- a. A Member who wishes to challenge any of the CHML's collection material must complete the Challenged Materials Request Form (attached at the end of this Policy) and submit it to the Director.
 - b. The Director may meet with the Member presenting the challenge or request additional information before rendering a decision regarding the challenge. Decisions of the Director are final.
 - c. The Director shall inform the Board of any Challenged Materials Request Forms received, as well as how the challenge is resolved.
4. **Deselection** - Deselection decisions, like selection decisions, are based on the overall goals and mission of the CHML and are intended to keep the collection vital and relevant. Deselection is ongoing and based on multiple considerations, including condition, accuracy, past use, and perceived current or future interest. Deselection decisions are not based on controversy about the material or its authors.

On following pages:

APPENDIX A: "Freedom to Read Statement," as adopted by the American Library Association (3 pages)

APPENDIX B: Challenge to Materials Form (1 page)

Adoption: This policy was adopted by the Board of the CHML on July 17, 2015; amended on February 17, 2021, and further amended to incorporate the Challenged Materials Policy on May 17, 2023.

CHARLOTTE HOBBS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

COLLECTION POLICY – APPENDIX A

FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

A Joint Statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers, adopted June 25, 1953; affirmed June 30, 2004.

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.

Charlotte Hobbs Memorial Library Collection Policy – Appendix A: Freedom to Read Statement

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

Charlotte Hobbs Memorial Library Collection Policy – Appendix A: Freedom to Read Statement

machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

Source: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

CHARLOTTE HOBBS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
COLLECTION POLICY – APPENDIX B

Challenge to Materials Form

Complete One Form for Each Item Challenged

Material Challenged:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Request Initiated by: _____

CHML Library Card Number of Member Initiating This Request: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Affiliated Organization (if any): _____

1. What in and about the material do you object to? Please be specific, cite examples, page numbers or run times if with video. Attach additional pages if necessary:

2. How was the item brought to your attention? _____

3. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety? ___Yes / ___No

4. Is there anything good or of value in this material? ___Yes / ___No If "Yes," what?

5. Please provide any additional information related to this challenge. _____

SUBMITTED

Member Signature _____ Date _____

RECEIVED

Library Director Signature _____ Date _____

RESOLVED

Library Director Signature _____ Date _____