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Collection Development

Collection Development and Maintenance

The Collection Development and Maintenance Policy of the Mountain Home Public Library supports the mission of the Library (Exhibit 3.01b), the Library's Strategic Plan, and the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* (Exhibit 5.01a) and *Freedom to Read Statement* (Exhibit 5.01b).

The policy outlines principles to guide selectors in acquisitions, provide direction to maintain materials over time, and build a strong collection based on community interest and need for a variety of popular formats. All acquisitions, before being purchased or accepted as an out-right gift, will be evaluated against as many of the applicable criteria noted below:

- Popular appeal and public demand, both specific and in general, as expressed through requests, suggestions, and collection use
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Reputations, qualifications, and significance of author, producer, or publisher
- Attention of critics, reviewers, awards, and public
- Effect subjects and viewpoints have on developing a balanced collection
- Relation to existing collection and other material on the subject
- Availability of the same or similar materials in other libraries or agencies
- Accuracy, currency, timeliness, and validity
- Physical quality and format
- Availability of collection space
- Budget and cost as measured against competing materials on the same subject
- Availability of discounts and efficiency of vendors used for purchasing
- Availability of subscriptions and standing orders for popular materials, reference and nonfiction titles published or released annually

Responsibility

The Mountain Home Library Board of Trustees is legally Responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the Library. It delegates the responsibility for selection to the Director or designees as assigned through the Director. The Director, or designees, shall examine the collection regularly for the purpose of selection, assessment, and retention of materials. The same criteria will be used in weeding materials from the collection as are used in their acquisition.

The Board Invites Mountain Home residents to make recommendations for library collection purchases. Selection of materials will not be based upon any anticipated approval or disapproval, but instead on merits of the material and the value it has within the collection. The final responsibility for selection rests with the Library.

The use of Library materials by patrons is an individual matter. Responsibility for children's and teen's use of the Library materials rests with their parents or legal guardians.

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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 abridgement 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. Library 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

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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 judgement, 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 to 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.

Freedom to Read Statement

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 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 to 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.

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 a 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 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 creator. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers

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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 them 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 of 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.*



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Freedom to Read Statement

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.

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Request for Reconsideration of Materials

The Library will review decisions regarding specific titles upon written request from Mountain Home Public Library patrons. The Director or designee will provide a Request for Reconsideration Form (Exhibit 5.02a) for this purpose. Requests for reclassification will be brought to the attention of the Library Board but final determination of placement within the collection will be made by the Director.

When a completed Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form is received by the Library Director, the Library will begin its reconsideration process for exclusion of an item. The process consists of the following steps:

1. The Director will notify the Library Board a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form has been received.
2. The Library Director and designated staff will review the materials under consideration and communicate their decision to remove or retain materials in question to the patron and Library Board of Trustees in writing within 20 business days of receipt of the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form.
3. Should the patron not be satisfied with the staff's decision, the patron may appeal the decision in writing to the Library Board within 10 business days.
4. The Board may schedule a date to hear the patron's request and/or communicate a final decision to the patron within 20 business days.

In considering Requests for Reconsideration, staff, the Director and the Board will consider each work as a whole, and individual passages will not be treated out of context. They will also consider the literary merit of work recognized as classics, even though classic works may contain words or sentiments which, today, are deemed controversial.

No materials shall be excluded from the Library's collection solely due to coarse language or implicit or explicit treatment of certain situations, if a reasonably accurate picture of the human experience is portrayed or if the work is deemed a significant artistic endeavor.



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Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

**Mountain Home Public Library
Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form**

Patrons wishing to contest the appropriateness of library material are required to fill out the following form for each title in question. Completed Request for Reconsideration of Library Material forms must be returned to the Library Director. Requests for reconsideration will be placed on the next regular meeting agenda of the Library Board of Trustees and a formal review process, as outlined in the Library Policy Manual, *Section XIII – Collection Development Policy*, will be initiated.

Type of material: adult fiction ____ adult nonfiction ____ juvenile fiction ____
 juvenile nonfiction ____ teen fiction ____ teen nonfiction ____
 periodical ____ audio ____ CD ____ DVD ____

other _____
description

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher & Copyright: _____

This request is being initiated by:

Name: _____

Address, City, State, Zip

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Do you represent: Yourself ____ Group ____ Organization ____

If so, please include name, phone & contact information:



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Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

Please complete the following questions regarding the material you are challenging. You may add sheet as needed.

1. What do you find inappropriate with the material you wish to challenge? Please include specific citations and page numbers.

2. Fully describe what you have based your objections upon.

3. Have you read, listened to, or viewed the entire work you are challenging?

Yes _____ No _____

If no, specifically describe what portions you did read, listen to, or view.

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Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

- 1. What consequences do you feel you have encountered as a direct result of reading, listening to, or viewing this work?**

- 2. What action do you request the Library Board take in regard to this material?**

- 3. Do you feel this work would be of interest to others not sharing your viewpoint and, if so, what do you feel would result from allowing others access to the materials?**

Note: In conformance with the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights, it is the Mountain Home Public Library's express obligation to provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues and thereby resist abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas. Library policy has been based on the belief that in order to prevent censorship, materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

- 4. In light of this philosophy, could you suggest a viable alternative to the removal of this material from the library's collection?**

- 5. What would you recommend as replacement material which would better convey the scope of the subject in question? Please include specific title, author, publisher, copyright, cost, and professional review information.**