



BLOUNT COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
*Bound Together*

---

Approved Date: 11/05/2024

Date of Creation: 8/21/2012

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Lawren Gmerd*

## **Collection Development and Weeding Materials Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Collection Development Policy provides guidance within budgetary and space limitations for selection and evaluation of materials which anticipates and meets the needs and interests of all Blount County Public Library (BCPL) patrons.

As the community changes, BCPL evaluates and adapts its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. BCPL recognizes a responsibility to residents in adding materials that maintain an overall balance of opinion, viewpoint, and source of enrichment. The Collection Development Policy is evaluated annually and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

### **BCPL Mission**

The Blount County Public Library empowers residents to think, act, and aspire by providing opportunities to connect to our community, participate in life-long learning, and explore the world at large.

### **BCPL Vision**

We work towards building a sustainable community by celebrating history, creating connections, and inspiring imaginations.

### **Philosophy of Selection**

In support of its mission the BCPL fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to View Statement and the Freedom to Read Statement

of the American Library Association. These documents are available as appendices to this policy.

BCPL upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. Selection is based upon criteria stated in this policy. Materials available in the BCPL present diverse viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy. All public libraries contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. Libraries may omit from the collection materials that some patrons feel are important. In either case, BCPL has procedures that patrons may use in reconsidering or recommending library materials.

### **Responsibility for Selection**

The authority and responsibility for selecting library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director and Library Board of Trustees. The Library Director will first review all books selected for purchase. Once reviewed, the Library Director will provide a list(s) of newly purchased materials to the Board of Trustees. Under the direction of the Library Director, selection of materials is delegated to the Collection Librarian. These decisions are made within the limitations of available space and funding, and within the scope of a written collection development plan. Materials will be selected based upon their value as a whole. Selection presumes liberty of thought and intellectual freedom within the bounds of reason and law. The general public and all BCPL staff are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration.

### **Development of Collections is made through:**

- Engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with Library users and recognizing that individuals have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, or other characteristics.
- Interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness.
- Handling all requests equitably.
- Understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes.
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy diverse needs of Library users.
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information.
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing data analysis and measurement.

- Reviewing the collection regularly to identify areas of community interest that may need to be strengthened.

## **Collection Selection Criteria**

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. Materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following standards. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection. Books and materials that contain sexual themes or content are reviewed by the BCPL Director independently for age-appropriateness and cataloged accordingly, potentially overriding publisher recommendation.

### **General Criteria**

- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Requests by Library users
- Relevance of format and content to the intended audience
- Impact on materials expenditure plan
- Popular appeal
- Available space
- Attention by critics and reviewers
- Contemporary significance
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the public
- Accessibility of material
- Physical Format
- Quality of production

### **Content Criteria**

- Objectivity
- Clarity
- Currency
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Receipt or nomination for awards
- Reputation or significance of one of the creators of the work
- Published evaluations or reviews
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Sustained interest
- Relevance and use of the information
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of history or social setting

## **New or Emerging Formats**

BCPL develops collections that include a comprehensive range of formats utilizing the unique capabilities and advantages of alternative, new, and evolving technologies in delivering information and expressing creativity and ideas. Before adding new formats, the following criteria are considered:

- Impact on equipment, staff, storage, and space
- Demand for format in community
- Durability of format for Library use
- Technical quality of production or reproduction
- Compliance with industry standards and specifications
- Availability of adequate startup and continuing funding
- Capability for networked distribution, download, and printing
- Suitability to be circulated or housed in a sturdy, safe, and convenient manner
- Availability of technical support and staff training
- Accessibility of material
- Ease of use by patrons and staff
- Ownership of product

As new formats emerge, steps will be taken to phase-out duplicated, obsolete mediums. These include discontinuation of ordering new or replacement copies, redistribution, and removal of existing collection from within the system. The time frame and need for implementation of each step will vary based on patron demand for the product (as demonstrated by circulation statistics and patron requests), affordability, and availability of product from vendors.

## **Independently Published Material**

BCPL is often asked to include items in the collection that are written and/or published independently. BCPL looks for material with regional connections and collection relevance that will appeal to a wide audience.

## **Suggestions for Purchase**

BCPL strongly encourages input from the community concerning the collection. A suggestion for purchase procedure enables citizens to request a particular item or subject be purchased. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. It is BCPL's intent that suggestions for purchase be used to help BCPL in developing collections which serve the interests and needs of the community.

## **Gifts and Donations**

BCPL welcomes gifts of books and other materials. BCPL reserves the right to keep, discard, sell, or make other appropriate disposal of any donated books or materials as determined by its mission and needs. Donated materials are potential additions to BCPL's collections or may be used to support the Blount County Friends of the Library (BCFOL). Funds raised by the BCFOL support valuable Library initiatives, programs, etc. BCFOL donation instructions are located on the BCFOL website at [www.bcfol.org](http://www.bcfol.org).

Items not accepted for the collection:

- Material in poor condition (stains, water damage, smell, writing, etc.)
- Textbooks and magazines (National Geographic, etc.)
- Formats not currently being collected by the Library, such as VHS, audio cassettes, LPs, encyclopedias, national geographics, etc.

## **Memorial or Honorarium Gifts**

Memorial donations are accepted to purchase new books for the BCPL. A memorial book is a splendid way to show support of public libraries and to honor/memorialize a friend or loved one. Donors may recommend the book to be purchased, suggest a subject area, or bring in the actual item. A plate will be placed in the book with the person's name being remembered as well as the donor's name, and a memorial card will be sent to the family.

All donations (monetary or gift) of books are accepted in accordance with the BCPL's Selection and Weeding Policy and Gift Policy. Because of the limitation of space and the requirements of the BCPL Collection Policy, the Library reserves the right to discard all materials, including memorial donations, at its discretion. The BCPL cannot guarantee that any memorial book will remain in the collection permanently.

## **Youth Services Collection**

BCPL assumes responsibility for encouraging children to develop an interest in and appreciation for the Library's resources. Nevertheless, BCPL does not assume the parental role in youth reading development or censoring any Library material. Selection of Library materials will not be restrained by the possibility that such materials may inadvertently come into contact with children. Parents and caregivers are responsible to where a minor is in the library and what they are doing.

Materials in the Youth Services collection are purchased acknowledging that young readers are the influential adults of tomorrow. Therefore, the collection attempts to satisfy the recreational, cultural and informational needs of youths from infancy through young adulthood.

The guidelines for selection of materials for Youth Services follow the same principle as those put forth in the Collection Selection Criteria.

### **Statement of Concern**

BCPL is fully aware that some items are controversial and that some patrons may find any given item offensive. Materials will be selected on the merits of the work and its relation to BCPL's collection. Materials will also be selected in relation to the expressed and/or anticipated needs of the community.

A concerned patron who is dissatisfied with certain Library material(s) will be offered a copy of the Collection Development and Weeding Materials Policy that includes BCPL's Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Library Collection Development & Weeding Materials Policy, Statement of Concern Form, Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement.

Materials must be reviewed in their entirety and not have selected portions taken out of context. Patrons must have a full access BCPL Library card in good standing (i.e. card is not blocked or expired and no fines exceeding \$5) and are the primary card holder to submit a Statement of Concern form. If patrons desire a material to be re-examined, they must complete and submit a Statement of Concern Form to the Library Director. Patrons are allowed up to 3 Statement of Concern submissions each calendar year.

Once received, the Library Director will review the Statement of Concern Form and the material(s) in question to contemplate whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the Library Collection Development & Weeding Materials policy. Within 30 days, the Library Director will make a decision and send a letter to the concerned patron who submitted the Statement of Concern, stating the reasons for the decision. If more than one title is submitted, the Library Director may assign materials to Professional Librarians (Masters in Library and Information Sciences degree) and notify concerned parties of an extended decision schedule.

If the patron is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within ten business days and addressed to the Library Board of Trustees. If the Library Board of Trustees intends to address the appeal at their meeting, the concerned patron will be notified of when/where the meeting will be held. A group of Trustees selected by the Board Chair will consume the material in question in its entirety. In addition, the Trustees will review BCPL Collection Development & Weeding Materials Policy, Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, BCPL's Mission & Vision Statement and reviews from professional journals & critics.

The Library Board Chair reserves the right to limit the length of public comments. The decision from the Library Board of Trustees is binding for one calendar year. The

Board's decision will be reflected in the minutes which are publicly available. The petitioner must be present for the scheduled meeting with the Library Board of Trustees. Failure to appear at the meeting shall result in the withdrawal of the complaint. From the date a decision is made, the material may not be challenged for one calendar year.

The BCPL recognizes Blount County patrons as a community of diverse individuals with various backgrounds and experiences and, therefore, seeks to develop collections that cover all sides of an issue. Such selections are not an endorsement of the theories, ideas, or policies contained therein.

### **Collection Maintenance**

In addition to acquiring new materials, removing items from the existing collection that are no longer useful or relevant is important. This policy provides authority for the systematic and regular evaluation of the existing collection and subsequent withdrawal of worn, obsolete, or infrequently used materials and supports the public's right of access to an appealing and relevant collection. BCPL Management Staff systematically review the collection to maintain the quality and vitality of library resources. This process of collection analysis incorporates the use of output measures, circulation reports, and other statistical information for continuous collection evaluation.

### **Weeding Evaluation Criteria**

Weeding in this context is defined as the process of evaluating a book to determine if it will be retained, repaired, relocated, replaced, or retired. The objective of weeding is to make more effective use of BCPL's resources while improving service to users.

The benefits of weeding can be listed as follows:

- Space – Materials selected for weeding may provide the shelf space required to continually update the collection so that it will be current and relevant to the community.
- Time – Crowded shelves full of ragged books impedes time and raises the frustration level of patrons and staff when looking for a particular book.
- Appearance of library – Replacement or discarding of less than useful materials can increase circulation through enhanced shelf appearance. The trademark of an open and friendly Library is maintained.
- A continuous check on the collection – Gaps in subject areas and replacement needs become more apparent. The collection's strengths and weaknesses are more readily addressed so that usefulness is maintained.

### **Withdrawal criteria (items do not have to meet all criteria):**

- Ugly (worn out beyond mending or rebinding)
- Superseded by a new edition or a better source

- Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit)
- Irrelevant to the needs and interest of Blount County patrons
- Elsewhere (the material may be easily borrowed from another source)
- Misleading and/or factually inaccurate
- Duplicate copy

### **Replacement Criteria**

While BCPL attempts to have copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn. The same criteria that apply to original selection also apply to replacements. The need for replacement is based on:

- The number of duplicate copies
- Existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection
- Demand for the specific title or subject area
- Availability of replacement material
- Budget availability

### **Removal of Withdrawn Material**

Materials that no longer meet the stated objectives of BCPL will be withdrawn from the system. This board approved policy allows BCPL to determine how materials are removed and where they are sent after removal from the BCPL's catalog.

### **Duplicate Copies**

The purchase of multiple copies of any title will be determined by the author's current popularity and/or the number of patron requests.

### **Special Collections**

BCPL recognizes a special interest in state and local history. Consequently, it will endeavor to acquire materials relating to the history of the state of Tennessee and, in particular, Blount County. Special interest is also acknowledged with regard to Tennessee authors. However, BCPL is not under any obligation to add everything by Tennessee authors, publishers, or printers to its collection.

Appendix A – Statement of Concern of Library Materials

Appendix B – Library Bill of Rights

Appendix C – Freedom to Read

Appendix D – Freedom to View

## Appendix A

### Blount County Public Library Statement of Concern of Materials

The Trustees at Blount County Public Library have established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that process. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the Library Director.

Blount County Public Library  
508 N. Cusick Street  
Maryville, TN 37804

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book/eBook  Movie  Magazine  Audio Recording  Newspaper  
 Display  Other

Title \_\_\_\_\_

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

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you examined the entire resource?? After examination how did the section(s) that cause concern not relate to the beneficial development of the piece of work?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B

### Library Bill of Rights

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.*

*Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

## Appendix C

### 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 arise 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 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.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and

consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.* No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.
4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.* The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.
6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of

public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which 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.*

## Appendix D

### 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 guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

*This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.*

*Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council*

*Blount County does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d).*