

# **CLEVELAND BRADLEY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY**

**Approved by the Library Board on 11.28.2023**

## **I. Serving the Community**

The Cleveland Bradley County Public Library receives its financial support from the City of Cleveland and Bradley County. In turn, the library undertakes as its primary responsibility to provide the best possible library service to meet the varied needs of the city and county residents.

In carrying out this responsibility, the Library Board will review and approve this policy annually. The library will select, organize, preserve and make freely and easily available to all people of the community print and non-print materials. These materials will be purchased within the limitations of space and budget.

## **II. Responsibility for Selection of Library Materials**

The Library Board delegates to the Library Director the authority and responsibility for selection and management of all print, non-print and electronic materials, within the framework of this policy. Actual selection and management activities are shared among trained library staff who shall discharge this obligation consistent with this policy and established procedures. Selection presumes liberty of thought and intellectual freedom within the bounds of reason and law. A list of newly selected and purchased materials will be shared with the Library Board.

## **III. Censorship**

The Library Board believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for himself/herself books and materials of which s/he does not approve, s/he cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the same freedom of others. The Board has adopted the "Library Bill of Rights", "Freedom to Read", and "Freedom to View" statements of the American Library Association. (See Appendix I, II, & III)

## **IV. The Collection**

The Cleveland Bradley County Public Library collection of print items, eMaterials, and media provides a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, informational and recreational materials for people of all ages. Collections include popular and in-demand materials as well as special formats such as large print books, foreign language materials, test and study guides, financial, tax and business information, company and telephone directories, school and career information, consumer, health and medical information. In addition, the History Branch and Archives preserves and documents the history and genealogical information of Bradley County and East Tennessee.

The variety of formats collected:

- Print: books, documents, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, manuscripts, and maps.
- Audiovisual Media: DVDs, CD Books, CD music, and Playaways (digital audio book).
- Electronic Media: databases, software, electronic books, downloadable audio books, videos and music, video games, and databases. The library also provides access to the Internet. Selected Internet sites are cataloged and linked to the Library's website.

- Other: multimedia kits, microforms, framed art prints, eReaders, laptops, tablets and hotspots.

## V. Guidelines for Selection

The purpose of a selection policy is to guide librarians in the selection of a wide range of materials of current interest and/or permanent value, and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection is made. Its primary objective is to provide a framework for the selection of relevant materials that present diverse viewpoints, enabling citizens to make informed choices necessary in a democracy. Titles are not excluded on the basis of moral, racial, religious, or political prejudice.

General criteria for selecting library materials are listed below. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Relevance to community interests, requests, and needs
- Contemporary significance, popular interest or permanent value
- Attention to professional journal critics and reviewers
- Prominence, authority and/or competence of author, creator or publisher
- Timeliness of material
- Authenticity of regional or social setting
- Literary, artistic, historic or scientific merit
- Statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
- Relation to the existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Cost and availability of space
- Availability of material in other local libraries and through interlibrary loan
- Accessibility for multiple users of electronic formats
- Suitability of format of the material for library purposes

### Selecting Fiction

In selecting fiction, the Library uses no arbitrary standard of literary quality. Books covering a varied range of topics, interests, tastes and reading levels are purchased. The Library will purchase works of current, popular and notable authors and best-sellers. The same standards apply to both the adult, young adult, and juvenile fiction collections.

### Selecting Nonfiction

The following standards may be considered for purchase of nonfiction:

- Date of publication within the last three years
- Cost under \$50 for most items
- Hardbound bindings preferred
- Balance of points of view with existing collection
- Scope, organization and accuracy of content
- Readability
- Relevance of material to the community
- Timeliness of permanent value

## Selecting Reference Material

The same standards used for nonfiction are generally used in selecting reference materials. It is expected that some Reference materials will cost more than nonfiction books.

## Special Collections

### Tennessee and Local Authors Collection:

Library funds are used to help build a collection of books by Tennessee and local authors. The cataloging record for these titles indicates their special collection designation as well as their location.

### Historical Branch Collection:

The Library assumes responsibility for collecting and providing information about local history. In addition, a collection of resources for genealogical research is maintained. Separate guidelines for the development of this collection have been drafted. See Appendix IV.

### Parent Resource Collection:

The Library purchases materials designed to aid in general parenting, to promote healthy families, and provide supplements to educational curriculum for children and teens.

### Audiovisual Media:

Formats such as DVDs, CD Books, CD music, and Playaways are shelved in areas separate from the book collection. They are also subdivided by adult and juvenile and will likewise be shelved in either the Children's Library, Teen Zone, or the Adult Fiction area. CD Books and Playaways are selected by the same criteria that fiction and non-fiction books are selected. CD music and DVDs selection criteria may include: popular singers, famous actors or actresses, award winning work, work recently in the theater, or popular on TV series, current or past.

## VI. Selection Tools

In an effort to develop a balanced collection, the staff will consider the available review tools and standard lists as well as recommendations and requests from library users. "Library Journal", "Booklist", and the "School Library Journal" will be the primary review sources. Popular magazine and newspaper reviews and the "New York Times" best-seller list will also be consulted.

## VII. Serving Varied Clientele

The Library's first priority is to serve the informational and recreational reading needs of adults, young adults, and children. Books and programs which encourage reading among preschool and school-aged children will be provided and promoted. Materials providing a transition from children's reading to adult reading will be made available in the young adult section of the Library.

The collection is subdivided into sections for adults, young adults, and children, with the children's collection further subdivided by reading or age levels. A library card in good standing will provide adults, young adults, and children with access to the library's entire collection. The library staff will not restrict any borrower to any portion of the collection, unless materials are marked as

non-circulating. Books and materials that contain sexual themes or content are reviewed by the public library independently for age-appropriateness and cataloged accordingly, which may override publisher recommendation. Parents are advised to guide their children in the selection of Library materials and are ultimately responsible for their choices.

Cooperation with the educational community is a basic aspect of public Library service. Responsibility for the provision of curriculum-related materials belongs properly to the schools, but the Library will provide materials which supplement and enrich the reference, research and recreational needs of students of all ages.

Large-print books and CD Books are provided to meet the needs of visually impaired persons. Selection of these materials is based on the same criteria as those used for other materials. The library will refer handicapped persons to the Tennessee Library for Accessible Books and Materials, which provides services for their special needs.

In an ongoing effort to promote adult literacy, the Library will provide a collection of high-interest low-level reading materials for functionally illiterate adults. These will include tutorial, recreational and resource materials.

The On-the-Go Bookmobile is a mobile collection of mostly juvenile picture books, easy reader books, and other children's literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The Bookmobile also contains a collection of young adult and adult fiction and non-fiction. The Bookmobile maintains a regular route of stops to daycares and pre-schools, adult assisted living facilities, and community locations in the Bradley County area. The Bookmobile can be scheduled for special events upon request.

#### VIII. Gifts of Books and Other Materials

The Library is grateful for gifts, and its collection has been greatly enriched by many donations. Books and materials received as gifts which meet the standards of selection may be added to the library at the discretion of the library staff. If gifts are not suitable or useful, they may be sold or given away. The Library Director is not authorized to accept gifts requiring special housing or handling. Gift materials are processed and added to the collection as the workflow of purchased materials allows.

Cash gifts given in memory or honor of an individual are accepted. The library staff will place a bookplate in a book or books purchased with funds donated. The donor may suggest titles or topics to which their gift may be applied, but all selection decisions are made by the Library staff in accordance with this policy. For donations to the History Branch and Archives, please see Appendix V.

#### IX. Withdrawal of Materials

The library maintains a weeding process in order to make the best use of space and to keep the collection current. Materials no longer of interest to the community, materials containing outdated information, and materials in poor physical condition are removed from the library by the librarian responsible for that portion of the Library.

Withdrawn materials are disposed of in the most appropriate manner as determined by the Library Director. Items may be offered for public sale or given to other institutions.

## X. Suggestions for Additions to the Collection

To assure the acquisition of resources desired by Library users, customer suggestions are always considered for addition to the collection. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. Patrons can request that specific items be purchased by filling out a Material Request form.

## XI. Requests for Reconsideration

The request of a patron wishing to have material removed from the Library must be submitted in writing on a "Request for Reconsideration" form. Such requests will be reviewed by a committee of library selection staff and library board members according to the Library's policies. Anonymous complaints submitted by any other means are not honored. No action will be taken to remove or restrict access to any materials until a final decision has been made by the Library Board. The "Request for Reconsideration" form can be found in Appendix VI of this policy.

**Approved by the Library Board 11.28.2023**

# Appendix I

## 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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

## Appendix II

### 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.

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 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.

## Appendix III

### 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 expressions. 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

# Appendix IV

## The History Branch and Archives

### Mission Statement

The History Branch and Archives is dedicated to collecting and preserving materials relevant to the history of Bradley County and the Ocoee Region. Special emphasis is placed on providing historical and genealogical researchers with reference assistance to this specialized collection, accurate reference sources, and access to Bradley County's earliest extant records.

The preferred materials format is print, but significant microfilm, photographs and vertical file items will be added as space permits. Materials may include, but are not limited to, general histories, photographic histories, school annuals, publications of local businesses, schools, churches, or other organizations, maps, databases, genealogies of area families and compilations of local records. Preference is given to indexed materials. Objects are not collected, with the exception of objects directly related to the Craigmiles-Johnston House.

Collecting priorities by subject area (in order of priority):

1. Ocoee Region. This includes Cherokee history, Cleveland and Bradley County.
2. Contiguous counties.
3. Tennessee statewide
4. National materials which include the Ocoee Region, the Cherokee, Cleveland, or Bradley County.
5. Other Tennessee Counties
6. Contiguous states
7. Computerized databases and/or cd-rom products.
8. Electronic access
9. Basic research guides

# Appendix V

## CERTIFICATE OF GIFT

Name(s) of Donor(s)

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Address

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Description of gift:

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I (we) being the sole legal owner(s) of the property described above hereby give the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library, for its use and benefit without restriction as to its use or disposition, the property described above. In addition, I (we) give all copyright and associated rights I (we) have. To the best of my (our) knowledge I (we) have good and complete right, title and interest (including all transferred copyright, trademark and related interests) to give. I (we) have no objections to our names appearing as donor(s) in connection with this gift in library records, publications and other descriptions.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix VI

## Cleveland Bradley County Public Library Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library Board of the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library has established a material 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.

Request initiated by (your name): \_\_\_\_\_

Library card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:

yourself       an organization/group (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a:  book     magazine     recording     DVD     other: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you read the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library Material Selection Policy?

yes     no

2. To what in the work do you object (please be specific; cite page numbers):

3. Did you read/view/listen to the entire work?  yes     no

If not, which parts have you read/viewed/listened to? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you aware of any reviews of this work by literary critics? \_\_\_\_\_

5. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey a similar perspective of the subject treated? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What would you like the Library to do about this work? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Staff use only:**

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Director received: \_\_\_\_\_ Director initial: \_\_\_\_\_

# BOOK CHALLENGE CHECKLIST

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Complainant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Publication \_\_\_\_\_

L.A.D. \_\_\_\_\_ # Copies \_\_\_\_\_ # Circs \_\_\_\_\_

All Copies Removed From Circ for Review \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

Reviews Requested \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no      Reviews at CPL \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

Reviews Received:	Recommended	Not Recommended	Marginal
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Awards, Honors, Recommendations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CBCPL Reviewer Comments:

Library Board Review and Comments:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Returned to Collection
- \_\_\_\_\_ Withdrawn
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron complaint acknowledgment sent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron informed of decision