

Kelso Public Library

Policy No. 401

Collection Development Policy

Purpose of the Collection Development Policy

- 401.1 The Collection Development Policy is one of the Library's fundamental policy documents. It outlines the philosophies that create and shape the Kelso Public Library's collection, the practices that maintain it over time, and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs while protecting the collection from societal, ideological, and political pressures. The Collection Development Policy ensures that over time, the Kelso Public Library's collection will remain on course, reflecting the needs of its community, while creating unique experiences of meaning and inspiration for individual patrons.
- 401.2 Acquisition does not constitute endorsement of the materials or its, the Library's, or City of Kelso's point of view.
- 401.3 Responsibility for the selection of materials, in accordance with the policy, rests with the Library Director, or the Director's designee.

Philosophy of the Collection

- 401.4 The Kelso Public Library collects materials, in a variety of formats, which support its function as an information source for the needs of population the Library serves. The collection also serves the general educational interest, recreational, and entertainment needs of the public, and reflects the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the community.
- 401.5 Widespread interest and usage are the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. The other driving force is the Library's strategic plan.
- 401.6 Inherent in the collection development philosophy is an appreciation for each patron of the Kelso Public Library. The Library provides materials to support each individual's journey, and does not place a value on one customer's needs or preferences over another's. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information without judgement or prejudice, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others.
- 401.7 Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the diversity of the community and our world. The reading and viewing activity of minors is ultimately the responsibility of parents, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Kelso Public Library does not intrude on that relationship.

Selection Criteria

- 401.8 The Library's collection development staff use their training, knowledge, and expertise along with the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- a) Relevance to interests, demands, and needs of the community.
 - b) Extent of publicity, critical review, and current or anticipated demand.
 - c) Current, historical, or regional significance of the author or subject.
 - d) Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses.
 - e) Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry.
 - f) Suitability of format to Library circulation and use.
 - g) Date of publication.
 - h) Price, availability, and Library materials budget.
 - i) Online resources are also evaluated based on accessibility and the availability of library licensing.
- 401.9 Materials shall be selected in accordance with the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement (available within the Appendix).

Patron Recommendations

401.10 Patrons of the Library may request items the Library does not own. Each request is reviewed for inclusion in the collection using the selection criteria.

Requests for Reconsideration

401.11 Individuals or groups may take exception to specific items in the Library's collection, and may register their thoughts by discussing the material with the Library Director and/or by completing a "Materials Review Request" form.

- a) The Library Director or designated librarian will examine the materials in question and let the individual know the decision within thirty days of receipt of the request.

401.12 If an individual is not satisfied with that decision, they may present a written appeal to the Library Director within fourteen days. The Library Director has fourteen days to provide a written final decision. A title will only be reconsidered once.

401.13 Materials will not be removed from public use while they are being reconsidered.

401.14 No individual may restrict the freedom of access of others, with exception that the responsibility for what a child reads rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Collection Management

401.15 The Library's collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community. Decisions are influenced by patterns of use, and the capacity of the Library. Staff review the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

401.16 The Kelso Public Library uses the following criteria for selection of materials for withdrawal:

- a) Damage or poor condition.
- b) No longer relevant to the needs and interest of the community.
- c) Infrequent use and lack of demand.
- d) No longer accurate information.

e) Availability elsewhere including neighboring libraries and the digital collection.

Gifts & Donations

401.17 The Kelso Public Library accepts donations of books and other materials. The Library retains the authority to accept or reject gifts. Library staff make all decisions as to the use, housing, and final disposition of donations. The Library does not evaluate or appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

Signed this 9th day of January, 2025



Andrew Hamilton, City Manager



Erik Moser, Library Director

Revision History:

- Original Adoption: March 2023
- Revised: January 2025

Appendix

Washington State Constitution

ARTICLE 1 SECTION 5 FREEDOM OF SPEECH: Every person may freely speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right.

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.

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:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses
The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression