



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Purpose:

The purpose of the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland (The Library) is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time. Because of the volume of publishing as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a collection development policy which meets the community's interests and needs if it is to fulfill its objectives.

This policy is used by Library Staff to select, maintain, and weed materials and also to serve to acquaint the general public with the principles of collection development.

The Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement and The Freedom to View Statement have been endorsed by the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland and are integral parts of the policy. The materials selection and collection development policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

Objectives and Scope:

The Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland acquires and makes available materials, which inform, educate, entertain, and enrich persons as individuals and members of society. Since it is not possible for any library to acquire all materials, it is necessary for every library to employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions.

The Library provides, within its financial limitations, a general collection of reliable materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Included are works of enduring value as well as timely materials on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on community needs, both those expressed and those inferred from study of community demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

New formats shall be considered for the collection when, by industry report, and evidence from local requests, a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. Availability of items in the format, the cost per item, and the Library's ability to acquire and handle the items will also be factors in determining when a new format will be collected. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the Library's collections.

Impartiality and judicious selection shall be exercised in all materials acquisition practices. Allocation of the materials budget and the number of items purchased for each area of the collection will be determined by indicators of use, the average cost per item, and objectives for development of the collection.

The Library will be aware of the resources available in surrounding libraries and will develop its collection with this in mind. In general, scholarly, highly specialized, or archival materials are beyond the scope of the Library's collections. The Library strives to acquire items that enhance its position as a resource for local history.

Responsibility for selection:

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the Library Staff; however, because the director must be available to answer to the library board and the general public for actual selections made, the director has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

Criteria for selection:

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

1. need for added material in subject areas
2. availability of material through the consortium
3. availability of material through interlibrary loan
4. physical limitations of the library building
5. relevance to community needs
6. budgetary considerations
7. public demand, interest or need
8. contemporary significance, popular interest or permanent value
9. prominence, authority and/or competence of author, creator or publisher
10. timeliness of material
11. relation to existing collections
12. statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
13. authenticity of historical, regional or social setting
14. special needs of library patrons for materials in accessible formats

Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship or value to humanity; others are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational or educational interests of the community.

Additional Selection Considerations:

Local Authors and Materials

The library recognizes that there is customer interest in local authors and provides access to such materials while acknowledging that such works do not always fully meet selection criteria. Decisions to make available materials created by local authors will be made by the library director or designee and are based on criteria for selection defined elsewhere in this policy.

Resources generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The library respects the intellectual property of human authors and creators. The library will make reasonable efforts not to purchase AI-generated content, or AI-generated audio editions of human-created works. AI-generated content inadvertently added to the collection will be labeled as such in the catalog record but will not be weeded unless it meets one or more criteria for weeding (poor circulation, damaged, superseded, etc.). AI-assisted content is permitted in the library collection, subject to the same requirements and criteria as wholly human-authored works. AI-assisted content is work that is written by a human but for which the author used AI tools to edit, refine, or error-check the work.

All librarians and staff have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in developing collections. The collection should reflect the diversity of people and experiences worldwide (see appendix D on Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights). The collection should also contain the various positions expressed on important or controversial questions, including unpopular or controversial beliefs or views. This provides an arena for individuals to freely examine issues and make independent decisions. Selection of a given item for the library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

The Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland will purchase materials of general scholarly interest in all fields of knowledge. It will not, however, duplicate specialized materials already available in local institutions. Neither does the Library feel obligated to purchase textbooks used by the school, nor supply any title in quantity proportionate to extensive demand, nor professional or trade journals and services not of general use. Efforts will be made to provide materials representing all viewpoints. Tools used in selection include professional journals, trade journals, publisher's promotional materials, and reviews from reputable sources. Purchase suggestions from library patrons are welcome and are given serious consideration.

Intellectual Freedom

The Library and the Library Board uphold the democratic right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thoughts and ideas. The Library Board considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Library Board believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the

right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library and the Library Board adhere to the principles stated in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement published by the American Library Association (appendices A, B, and C). The Library Board have also adopted a Resolution Against Book Bans (appendix F). These supporting documents can be found as appendices at the end of this policy.

Library collections will be organized, marked, and maintained to help users discover the materials they seek. We will not use any system of coding, rating, or labeling to identify or segregate materials to limit discovery or access. (see appendix E on Labeling Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights). Any sequestering or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned. Our selection of materials does not mean we endorse the contents or views expressed in those materials.

Interlibrary Loan:

Because of the limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network, and to make an effort to have its current holdings listed in a tool that is accessible by other libraries throughout the state.

Weeding:

An up-to-date, attractive and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions and availability of newer editions.

Professional Library Staff regularly reviews items in the collection to ensure that they continue to meet patrons' needs. Materials that are worn, obsolete, unused, old editions or unnecessarily duplicated are removed. It is the responsibility of professional staff to assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed or lost. Items are not automatically replaced. Decisions are based on need, demand, budget and criteria for selection.

Gifts/Donations:

The Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that the items will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If items are not needed because of duplication, condition, or

dated information, the Library Director may dispose at his/her discretion. The same criteria of selection, which are applied to purchase materials, are applied to gifts.

Since most publications of fraternal, clubs, and service organizations are of interest only to members, these will be accepted only if they have a broader appeal to a general audience.

Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted with suitable bookplates placed in the book. Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. The Library prefers to order the materials from established vendors. Therefore, monetary donations are preferred. It is desirable for gifts of or for specific titles to be offered after consultation with The Library Director. The director will make a book selection if no specific book is requested. The Library encourages and appreciates material gifts and monetary donations.

By law, The Library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor. However, gifts to The Library are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. The donor will be given a copy of the completed gift form for tax purposes. The Library has the right to discard any gifts which are outdated or in poor physical condition. All personal property, if accepted, is accepted only on the condition that it may be retained, sold, given away or discarded at the discretion of the Library Board of Trustees and/or the Library Director. An appropriate deed of gift or similar document transferring sole and exclusive ownership of the item to the Library will be required.

Gifts of real property, art objects, portraits, antiques and other museum objects are accepted or rejected on the basis of suitability to the library's mission, décor and the availability of space for display, as well as the understanding that the library has the authority to make whatever disposition is deemed advisable, which may include sale, transfer to another agency, and so forth.

Monetary gifts without restriction will be utilized to purchase materials or equipment, support Library programs or in other ways that the Library Board deems appropriate. Monetary gifts offered with restrictions, including endowment funds, require Board approval of such restrictions before such monetary gifts are accepted by the Library Board. Restrictions must be submitted in writing. All gifts become the property of the Library.

Review/Reconsideration of Materials/Programs:

The objective of the material/program review procedure is to encourage as well as respect all library patrons' opinions and ideas by providing a step-by-step procedure for processing their concerns. Parents and legal guardians have the right and responsibility to educate their minor children about the books and other materials/programs that may be best for them. No other adult should make those decisions for their parents' or guardians' children.

Selection of library materials/programs will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials/programs may come into the possession of children.

The Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland supports and endorses the Intellectual Freedom Statements: "Freedom to View", "Freedom to Read" and the "Library Bill of Rights." Copies of these documents are available upon request.

The library materials/programs about which a request for reconsideration has been made will not be removed from the collection, nor will their use be restricted in any way, before final action is taken by the Library Board on the request.

Library patrons may express an informal or formal request for reconsideration of a library resource. Informal concerns should be brought to library staff for discussion and help finding alternate materials.

Procedure for Formal Review of Library Material or Programs

- The library patron should obtain a **Formal Review of Library Material or Programs** form (from the main circulation desk at the Library), complete the form, and return it to the Library Director in the supplied envelope.
- The Library Director will contact the patron to acknowledge receipt of the form.
- The Library Director will review the request and present findings to the Library Board within 30 days of receipt of the form.
- The Library Director may request that the Library Board president appoint an ad hoc committee comprised one (1) board member, one (1) Library Staff, and one (1) community member, to review the request with the Library Director and present findings to the full Library Board. None of the committee members can have posed the challenge, be related to the challenger, or be affiliated with the organization bringing the challenge.
- In all cases, materials/programs are to be judged based on the entire work, not on selected excerpts.
- The individual requesting material/programs review will be notified of meeting dates.
- The library item under review shall remain in place and accessible throughout the entirety of the process.
- The board will review only one reconsideration form per meeting. Only one material or program allowed per form.
- One copy of the final report from the Library Board shall be given to the patron, one copy to the Library Director, and one copy shall remain in the Library Board official records. The decision of the Library Board will be final.
- Requests to reconsider materials/programs, which have previously undergone the reconsideration process, will not be reevaluated unless more than 60 months (five years) have passed since completion of the review.



Thomas St. Angelo Public Library
of Cumberland
~ A Carnegie Library

Formal Review of Library Material or Programs Form

The Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland is committed to the fundamental rights of all people to read, access materials, resources, and other media services. The Library Board has established a Collection Development Policy for gathering input about items owned by the library. If you wish to make a statement of concern or request a review of a library resource, please return the completed form to the Library Director in the supplied envelope.

Material being challenged **must be read or viewed in full**. Please use additional paper and refer to question numbers to fully complete this form.

If the form is incomplete or unsigned by the petitioner, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed. The board will review only one reconsideration form per meeting. Only one material or program allowed per form.

Name
(print): _____ Your Age: _____

Address _____

_____ Zip code _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Who do you represent?

My Self

Organization Name of Organization: _____

Type of material being addressed:

Book

Audio Book

Magazine

Newspaper

DVD

Library Program Content

Other: _____

Title: _____

Author/Producer: _____

Year of Publication: _____

1. Did you read/listen to/view this entire item/program? Yes_____ / No _____*

*For “No” responses, no further action is needed. If the entire material has not been reviewed by the petitioner, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed.

2. If “yes,” please explain how you learned about this material/program?

3. Explain the purpose of this material/program.

4. What positive qualities does the material/program present?

5. What are your concerns about this material/program? Provide supporting sources and quotations.

6. How has the material/program been assessed in professional review sources? Provide supporting sources and quotations.

7. Provide professional sources in support of your objections.

8. Explain how the material/program fails to meet Intellectual Freedom standards.

9. Who would be negatively impacted by this material/program and how? Provide supporting evidence and sources (required).

10. What is your desired action for this material/program?

11. If removed, with what would you replace this material/program? Include titles and professional reviews of your suggested replacement material/program.

The library material/program under review shall remain in place and accessible throughout the entire review process.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If the form is incomplete or unsigned by the patron, the review/reconsideration process cannot proceed. Only one form from a household will be accepted at a time. Return completed form in the provide envelope.

For Library Director Use Only	
Date Received: _____	Director Initials: _____

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.

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.

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.*

*A Joint Statement by:
American Library Association
Association of American Publishers*

*Subsequently endorsed by:
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
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*

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 possible 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 and 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.

Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article I of the Library Bill of Rights: “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.” A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves. This means acquiring materials to address popular demand and direct community input, as well as addressing collection gaps and unexpressed information needs. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered.

A well-balanced collection does not require a one-to-one equivalence for each viewpoint but should strive for equity in content and ideas that takes both structural inequalities and the availability of timely, accurate materials into account. A diverse collection should contain a variety of works chosen pursuant to the library’s selection policy and subject to periodic review.

Collection development, as well as cataloging and classification, should be done according to professional standards and established procedures. Developing a diverse collection requires:

- selecting content in multiple formats;
- considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers;
- seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups;
- evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed;
- including content in all of the languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible; and
- providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.¹

Best practices in collection development assert that materials should not be excluded from a collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial. Refusing to select resources due to potential controversy is considered censorship, as is withdrawing resources for that reason. Libraries have a responsibility to defend against challenges that limit a collection’s diversity of content. Challenges commonly cite content viewed as inappropriate, offensive, or controversial, which may

include but is not limited to prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, scientific research, sexual content, and representation of diverse sexual orientations, expressions, and gender identities.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to varying expressions of ideas through which a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be fair and just in defending the library user's right to read, view, or listen to content protected by the First Amendment, regardless of the creator's viewpoint or personal history. Library workers must not permit their personal biases, opinions, or preferences to unduly influence collection development decisions.²

¹ "Services to People with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," adopted January 28, 2009, by the ALA Council under the title "Services to Persons with Disabilities"; amended June 26, 2018.

²ALA Code of Ethics, Article VII, adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008.

Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 25, 2019.

Labeling Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read, view, listen to, or otherwise access. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections or in resources accessible through the library. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library. Likewise, providing access to digital information does not indicate endorsement or approval of that information by the library. Labeling systems present distinct challenges to these intellectual freedom principles.

Labels may be a library-sanctioned means of organizing resources or providing guidance to users. They may be as simple as a colored dot or strip of tape indicating reference books or fiction or as elaborate as the Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress call number systems.

Labels as viewpoint-neutral directional aids are intended to facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. Users may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion. Viewpoint-neutral directional labels are a convenience designed to save time. These are different in intent from attempts to prejudice, discourage, or encourage users to access particular library resources or to restrict access to library resources. Labeling as an attempt to prejudice attitudes is a censor's tool. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library resources.

Prejudicial labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment that the content, language, or themes of the resource, or the background or views of the creator(s) of the resource, render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the resource. Such labels sometimes are used to place materials in restricted locations where access depends on staff intervention.

Directional aids can also have the effect of prejudicial labels when their implementation becomes proscriptive rather than descriptive. When directional aids are used to forbid access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement, the effect is the same as prejudicial labeling. Even well-intentioned labels may have this effect.

Prejudicial labeling systems assume that the libraries have the institutional wisdom to determine what is appropriate or inappropriate for its users to access. They presuppose that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The American Library Association opposes the use of prejudicial labeling systems and affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read, view, listen to, or otherwise access.

Adopted on June 30, 2015, by ALA Council.

Thomas St. Angelo Library of Cumberland Resolution Against Book Bans

WHEREAS, reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms; and

WHEREAS, libraries provide access to books that offer teachable moments for readers of all ages and expand our understanding of people with different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs; and

WHEREAS, books are tools for understanding complex issues; and

WHEREAS, limiting people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues; and

WHEREAS, all people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's collection; and

WHEREAS, librarians are professionals trained to not impose their own thoughts and opinions on which ideas are right, but to make knowledge and ideas available so that people have the freedom to choose what to read; and

WHEREAS, removing and banning books from public libraries is a slippery slope to government censorship and the erosion of our country's commitment to freedom of expression; and

WHEREAS, a large majority of Americans across the political spectrum oppose book bans; and

WHEREAS, book bans harm communities; then

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Trustees of the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland endorse the following statement:

Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. Further, no one should make decisions for other parents' or guardians' children about what they read.

We, the Trustees, are united against book bans.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland Board will act to protect the rights of everyone to access a variety of books and materials in libraries and online.