

# Collection Development Policies

<b>Collection Development Policy</b>	Policy Number: 103
Adopted Date: 07/2005	Revised Date: 06/2022

Baldwin Borough Public Library (BBPL) acquires, organizes, and provides open access to information, resources and services that inspire and help community residents meet their lifelong personal, educational, cultural, vocational, and recreational information needs.

The library recognizes the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association, found in Appendixes A and B respectively.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This collection development policy defines the standards and outlines the responsibility for materials selection for BBPL. Within these guidelines, the Director or staff that he/she designates will use their professional judgment to determine the materials which best meet the objectives of the library as a place to inspire, enrich, learn and grow and meet the need of its patrons.

## COLLECTION PRIORITIES

The following collection development priorities have been determined for all material formats:

- Fiction
- Audio-visual (video, recorded books)
- Non-Fiction (including some materials for curriculum support)
- Non-traditional materials (games, tools, etc.)

## MATERIALS NOT COLLECTED

- Textbooks
- Rare books
- Computer software
- E-materials (provided through Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh)
- Online databases (provided through eiNetwork and Commonwealth Libraries)

## SELECTION CRITERIA

BBPL selects material for its collection in accordance with professionally accepted guidelines. The library aims to provide a variety of types of resources to satisfy readers of differing tastes, interests, and reading skills. The library will attempt to represent all approaches to public issues of a controversial nature. The library and its board of trustees does not sanction particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given item equivalent to an endorsement of the author's viewpoint or content of material.

The selection of materials is governed by the library's mission statement, its assessment of the present and future needs of the community, its recognition of and cooperation with neighboring libraries accessible to residents, and the limitations of space and budget. The library collects

materials in a variety of formats (print, audiovisual, physical, and digital) which hold value, contemporary significance, and special interest to the community.

There is no single standard by which to judge materials, however, the following criteria will be considered:

- Popular demand
- Reputation of the author and/or publisher
- Literary and artistic merit
- Appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended users
- Physical and technical qualities of the item (clarity of picture and sound quality)
- Publication date
- Authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher
- Accuracy of information
- Physical qualities of the item (binding, paper, etc.)
- Cost

*Reference.* Reference materials are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. Because of the availability of such information on-line collection of reference books is limited. These books are now part of the Non-Fiction collection.

*Periodicals.* Periodicals are publications issued and received on a regular basis. They are intended to complement the book collection. The library does not subscribe to highly specialized or technical periodicals or to professional journals other than those in the field of library science. Many are available in online databases (provided through eiNetwork and Commonwealth Libraries)

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

*Responsibility for selection.* The Board of Trustees approves the Collection Development policy for BBPL. The responsibility for administering this policy rests with the Director.

*Community Participation.* Involvement by the community in the selection process is encouraged and can be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- Reserve requests – the general public may reserve currently checked out circulating materials. The library may consider adding duplicate copies to satisfy the expressed demand.
- Purchase suggestions – Library users are encouraged to suggest titles and/or subjects that they would like to see in the collection. Suggestions can be made to any staff member. In such cases, the stated selection criteria will be taken into account.

*Selection Tools.* Professional staff members are expected to read current library and review journals or on-line selection tools in order to suggest materials for purchase. In addition, librarians should be aware of materials that are being reviewed in other sources, such as major national and local print media, broadcast media and on-line sites.

## **DIVERSITY IN COLLECTIONS**

The library values the principles of diversity, equality, and inclusion and recognizes that our service area incorporates individuals of all ages who represent various racial and ethnic backgrounds, economic levels, educational levels, and physical and mental abilities. The library seeks to develop collections that contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences. Librarians and staff responsible for the development and management of library collections will consider the following:

- Regularly review current and emerging demographic trends
- Promote awareness of diverse issues and not exclude material that could be considered offensive
- Provide an equitable basis for the purchase of materials
- Provide resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities

## **SELF-PUBLISHED TITLES**

Self-published titles are held to the same criteria as any other work the library evaluates for the collection. Any title accepted becomes exclusive property of the library. The library reserves the right to deselect the title at any time.

## **MATERIAL FORMATS**

Although the majority of the library's collection is offered in the traditional print format, valuable information is also available in audio-visual and electronic formats. Materials will be selected and purchased in the most appropriate format for library use, including but not limited to:

- Hardcover books
- Paperback books (trade and mass market)
- Games
- DVDs & Blu-Rays
- Large Type Books

## **GIFTS AND MEMORIALS**

The library welcomes monetary contributions specifically for book purchases in memorial or honor of named individuals. Books given as memorials must meet the same standards as other materials selected for inclusion in the library's collection. In order to properly honor the generosity, a special form (appendix D) to record the information is used and should be completed by the donor. The library cannot commit to perpetually housing a donation. The donor may specify gifts toward the collection, but the library makes the final decision on the material(s) selected.

## **DESELECTION AND REPLACEMENT OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

*De-selection.* De-selection of library materials, or weeding, is an integral part of collection development. Materials are withdrawn from the library's collection through systematic weeding

or because of loss or physical damage. The following categories of materials will be considered for de-selection:

- Worn or mutilated items
- Duplicate copies of seldom used titles
- Materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information
- Superseded editions or specific titles
- Materials no longer of interest or demand

*Replacement.* While the library attempts to maintain copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn due to loss or physical damage. Decisions concerning the replacement of individual items are based on the following considerations:

- Demand for the item
- Number of copies held
- Existing coverage of the subject within the collection
- Accuracy of its contents
- Availability of title for reorder
- Cost of mending versus cost of replacement
- Availability of title from other libraries in Allegheny County

### **Statement of Concern Regarding Library Materials**

There may be occasions when a member of the community may be concerned about a particular item in the library's collection. If a patron wishes the library to reconsider material that is in the collection, a form (Appendix C) is available from the circulation desk this form must be completed in its entirety and returned to a library staff member. Once the form is received, the Director will review the request, the item's place in the collection, and reasons for including the item in the collection. The Director will then contact the patron. A copy of the letter will be filed and the Board of Trustees will be informed.

If the patron is not satisfied at this level, he/she will be invited to attend the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Board, after hearing the complaint and considering the material, will notify the patron in writing of the Board's decision. Final authority rests with the Library Board of Trustees.

### **APPENDICES**

- A. Library Bill of Rights
- B. Freedom to Read Statement
- C. Statement of Concern Regarding Library Materials Form
- D. Memorial/Honor Book Information Form

## **Appendix A: 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 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 B: 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.

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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 C: Statement of Concern Form

## Statement of Concern

### Baldwin Borough Library Statement of Concern regarding Library Materials

Request Initiated by\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Anonymous requests will not be accepted

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

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

Request represents \_\_\_\_\_ Individual

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Other Name \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to be notified of the Director's decision in writing, please enter your contact information below.

1. Have you read or viewed the entire work? YES NO If not, what parts?

2. To what in the material do you object? Please be specific: cite pages or sections.

3. What do you believe is the theme of this material?



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Director's Signature

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Date

# Appendix D: Memorial Donation Form

## *Memorial Book Form*

### Donor Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **Baldwin Borough Public Library**, and mail to the address below.

### Honoree Information

Choose one:     In Honor of             In Memory of

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(As you would like it to appear on the bookplate)

**Who should we notify?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to Honoree** \_\_\_\_\_

(friend, sister, father, etc.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_