

Collection Development Policy



Van Meter Public Library
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

Objectives

The Van Meter Public Library acquires, organizes, makes available, and encourages the use of all media, print, and non-print that:

- Contribute to the individual's awareness of self, community, and society while providing insight into a wide range of human and social conditions and various cultural heritages.
- Meet the informational and recreational needs of the entire community.
- Stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the state, the nation, and the world.
- Give free access to a variety of opinions and ideas.
- Assist individuals to grow intellectually and culturally.

Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The selection of materials for the collection is the responsibility of the Director and is done so within the framework of the policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The Director may delegate selection of

certain materials to a qualified selector(s) in an area of the collection for which they acquire and withdraw materials. The Library welcomes suggestions for selection from staff, Board, and community members, but the final decision for inclusion in the collection rests with the Director.

Criteria for Selection

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. The following criteria shall be used as guidelines in the selection process. The following list is not ordered by importance. An item need not meet all the criteria to be acceptable.

- Reviews in professionally recognized sources
- Inclusion in standard bibliographies, awards lists, or bestseller lists
- Reputation or qualifications of author, publisher, or another contributor
- Accuracy, authority, and objectivity
- Breadth and depth of coverage
- Currency of information
- Artistic presentation
- Vitality and originality
- Popular appeal and demand
- Local significance
- Availability of material in other libraries
- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relationship to materials available elsewhere
- Representation of important movement, genre, trend, or national culture
- Unique or controversial point of view

- Importance as a document of the times
- Permanent value as source material or interpretation
- Price
- Space available on library shelves
- Availability of material in print or other formats
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Appropriateness of form, subject, and style for intended audience

These specific factors do not and will not apply to every item selected. The aim of this policy is to facilitate the building of a diversified library collection of merit and significance that reflects the interests and needs of the total community within the physical and budgetary constraints of the library. Selectors consult reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and booklists.

The Library makes no attempt to assume the rightful role of parents in monitoring, controlling, or curtailing the reading, listening, or viewing behavior of their children. Parents should be interested and involved in their children's utilization of library materials. The Library does not assume responsibility for the possible misuse of information found in the collections by young readers. Children have access to the complete collection. The Van Meter Public Library supports the "Library Bill of Rights" by the American Library Association (Appendix A), "The Freedom to Read" statement by the American Library Association (Appendix B), and the Association of American Publishers, and the American Library Association's statement on "The Freedom to View" with the American Film and Video Association (Appendix C).

Textbooks, test preparation, and curriculum support

The Library encourages students at all levels to use the books and other materials in the collection. The collection includes some textbooks and test preparation materials that are useful to the general reader, but the Library will not attempt to provide textbooks for formal courses of study. The Library is not obligated to provide multiple copies of materials for classroom assignments.

Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loan refers to the process of borrowing materials from other libraries. When the Library deems a requested item unavailable or inappropriate for purchase, the item may be borrowed from another library through interlibrary loan, in accordance with the Library's policies and procedures regarding interlibrary loans.

Other areas of limited, or no, acquisition

- Puzzle books or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites and authoritative and evaluative information about them is lacking
- Self-published/subsidy published materials unless they are reviewed in established publications.

Exceptions are made for materials whose content is within the scope of the Special Collections area and meet its criteria.

Scope of Collection

General Print Fiction and Nonfiction Collections

The Library's collection of general fiction is geared towards adults and includes best sellers, genre fiction, classic literature, literary works, and books of general interest; the focus is broad and eclectic. The primary purpose of this collection is to satisfy demand from recreational readers. Newly published titles are emphasized, and multiple copies are acquired when warranted by demand.

The focus of the nonfiction collection is to meet general information needs in a wide range of topics of current and ongoing interest to the community. Materials pertaining to developing areas of knowledge are selected in as much quantity and variety as is possible without omitting items essential to maintain breadth in the collection. In subjects such as science, technology, and geopolitics, where the currency of the information is particularly important, new material is regularly selected to reflect changes in these areas.

The Library will purchase accurate, scientific and current books on human sexuality for adults and young people. Some areas covered are sex education for all ages, family planning, human reproduction and childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual orientation.

The Library attempts to include authoritative materials that introduce and explain the basic concepts, beliefs, practices and background of all the major religions. An attempt is made to include the sacred scriptures of the major religions.

Children's Collection

The objective in providing reading material for children is to guide the child toward the enjoyment and appreciation of reading as well as meeting the developmental and informational needs of children from birth to approximately grade five, and the needs of parents, educators, and others concerned with children. Materials in a variety of print and non-print formats are selected for all levels of children's understanding and reading abilities.

Junior Fiction and Nonfiction

These materials are intended to serve children from the third grade through the sixth grade. Junior fiction and nonfiction materials should provide reading for pleasure and information, suited to a wide variety of interests. Special attention will be given to features which appeal to young readers: reading and comprehension level, illustrations, type, and format.

Easy Readers

These materials are intended to serve the needs and interests of beginning readers. Easy readers are intended to foster an enjoyment and appreciation of reading in the formative years. Those features noted as appealing to young readers under "Junior Books" above are applicable to Easy Readers, when suited to the reading level of beginning readers.

Picture Books

These materials are intended to serve the needs and interests of children of all ages, particularly those aged three to eight. Picture books are intended to foster an enjoyment of reading and, and through the illustrations, to develop an appreciation of art. They are designed to be read to children. Features

noted as appealing to young readers under "Junior Books" above are applicable to Picture Books, when suited to the appropriate reading level.

Board Books

These materials are provided in a sturdy format for the needs and interests of babies and toddlers.

Teen Collection

The Teen collection serves as a transition between the juvenile collection and the adult collection.

Materials in a variety of print and non-print formats are selected to meet the informational, recreational, and emotional concerns of teens in grades six through twelve.

Graphic Novels

The Library maintains a separate collection of illustrated novels for the Children's, Teen, and General collections, providing materials from many genres and novel types.

Audiovisual Materials

The Library maintains an extensive collection of visual recordings as well as a collection of audio materials. The Library makes no attempt to provide a comprehensive collection. When selecting audiovisual material, the following factors are taken into consideration in addition to aforementioned selection criteria:

- Technological trends and advances.
- Vulnerability to damage and/or theft.
- Types of equipment customers are likely to own.
- Types of materials available for purchase.

Reference

The reference collection is a non-circulating collection of materials designed to provide access to information in authoritative forms. It includes, but is not limited to, standard reference tools such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, handbooks, directories, and biographical materials.

Special Collections

The Library maintains a special, non-circulating collection of genealogy and local history materials.

Magazines

The Library subscribes to magazines, most of which are selected for interest to the general reader. General selection criteria apply to the selection of periodicals. Another factor considered in selection of periodicals is accessibility to contents through standard indexes and reference tools. Some periodicals are selected for professional use by library staff. Some are selected with reference value in mind. The list of periodical subscriptions is reviewed annually by the Director as the orders become due for renewal.

Internet Information Resources

The Internet is an unregulated global computer network. The Van Meter Public Library provides public access to the Internet to augment the community's educational resources. The Van Meter Public Library cannot guarantee the accuracy and/or authenticity of information discovered through this resource. Patrons who find information or subject matter that is erroneous, out-of-date, illegal, offensive, and/or controversial should contact the original producer or distributor of that work directly. Library users of the Internet should be aware of the following:

The Van Meter Public Library holds the position that only parents and legal guardians have the right – and the responsibility – to monitor and control their own minor children's access to the Internet and to information obtained from the Internet.

The Van Meter Public Library cannot guarantee confidentiality over the Internet. Patrons entering personal information (credit card numbers, social security numbers, etc.) do so at their own risk.

The Van Meter Public Library complies with the United States Copyright Law, and all other federal, state and local laws relating to the use of the Internet and other electronic media.

The Van Meter Public Library is not responsible for work or information lost due to computer or system malfunction.

Electronic Resources

These resources will be acquired to complement or enhance the library materials that have historically been provided in physical formats, such as books, magazines, audio-visuals, and reference, and other academic resources.

Factors to be considered in evaluating and selecting digitized resources include:

- patron demand
- available format(s), with a preference for fully online (no local storage) resources
- value
- accessibility
- ease of use
- availability of equivalent resources
- accuracy, authority and uniqueness of content
- frequency of updates

In addition to the above factors, the library also needs to consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of acquiring resources in digitized format rather than in physical form. Since digitized resources do not require any shelf space, they would reduce the amount of storage space needed in the library, but they may also require a greater number of computer stations, increased bandwidth or specialized software. Another consideration is the compatibility of an online resource with equipment at the library and within the community. A final consideration is having an effective strategy for insuring adequate training and public awareness.

The Library provides access to informational databases, primarily Gale and Bridges: Iowa's eLibrary. Reference information, as well as scholarly and professional articles are available through Gale. Bridges eLibrary offers access to a collection of popular and literary titles in downloadable format.

Large Print

To better serve our visually impaired patrons, the Library maintains a collection of large print books, including both fiction, nonfiction, and biography.

Gifts, Donations, and Memorials

Donations to the library are accepted with the understanding that the library retains unconditional ownership. This includes, but is not limited to, the right to make the final decision on their use, and to determine the conditions of display, housing, and access if added to the collection. Materials not added to the collection will be taken to Half Priced Books to be sold. Funds from sold materials may be used for purchasing new materials or funding library programming. The library will not attempt to appraise or assign a valuation to any donated item.

Monetary donations will be used for augmenting the library materials budgets. A donor may specifically request a material(s) to be purchased with the donation with approval from the Director.

Collection Maintenance

The Library will undertake a continuous inventory and weeding of all holdings to update the collection, to identify missing items, and to ensure the accuracy of the computer database. The collection is maintained and weeded through an ongoing process of collection analysis. Items are repaired, withdrawn, or replaced based on the several factors, including but not limited to:

- number of circulations, requests and reserves
- availability of similar materials in the collection
- affordability
- in-print status
- appearance in standard lists
- space available
- availability at other libraries
- physical condition

Intellectual Freedom

The Van Meter Public Library upholds the democratic right of all individuals to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. We support the right of everyone to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thought and ideas.

In support of these ideals, the Van Meter Public Library offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive, and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Censorship

The selection of library materials is predicated on the library patrons' right to read and to be free from censorship by others. Many items are controversial and any given item may offend some persons. The library's collection contains a diversity of viewpoints and opinions. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate the Library's endorsement of its contents. Selection of materials by the Van Meter Public Library will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to building the collection and to serving the interest of the readers.

The Van Meter Public Library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that anyone is free to reject for themselves books or other materials, but cannot exercise the right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Access to Materials

The Library will not restrict patrons' access to material based on their origin, background, or views.

Materials are freely and easily accessible to the public. Children are not limited to the juvenile collection and young adults are not limited to the young adult collection. The arrangement of materials within the library will take into consideration contemporary community sensibilities and the strategic goal of offering a welcoming environment. The decision about what a minor may or may not read is the responsibility of the parent or guardian, and is not the responsibility of the Library. As is the case with adults, circulation to minors cannot be denied by the Library. Library staff will not express judgment on, or monitor, anyone's reading.

Labeling of Materials

Library materials are not marked or identified to indicate approval or disapproval of their content.

Labels on library materials are viewpoint-neutral directional aids designed to save the time of users. The

fact that materials are purchased, processed and added to the collection shall in no way reflect an endorsement of the materials.

Challenged Materials

Due to the diverse nature of the library collection, it is possible that any individual may find information and ideas with which he or she disagrees contained in the library's collection. For this reason, the Library has a *Procedure to Address Challenged Materials* (Appendix D). An individual who has a concern about the inclusion of a specific title in the collection is encouraged to discuss this concern with a librarian and/or submit a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form* (Appendix E).

Adopted – October 23, 2017

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 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of age reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix B

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 C

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

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

Appendix D

Procedure to Address Challenged Materials

If a patron objects to the presence of certain library materials, the patron should be referred to the Director. If after speaking with the Director the patron remains unsatisfied, they should be offered a *Request for Reconsideration of Material Form* (Appendix E). A reminder should be given to the patron that no action will be taken based on a verbal complaint alone, and recommend that they should read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety before filling out the form.

Once the form has been submitted, the Director will take it before the Board of Trustees and complete the following procedure:

- Examine the concerns expressed in the request.
- Review the challenged material by reading, viewing, or listening to the material in its entirety.
- Determine if the material was selected within the parameters of the Library's Collection Development Policy.
- Determine the general acceptance of the material by reading reviews, if available.
- Weigh the values, strengths, and weaknesses of the material and form opinions based on the entire work rather than on limited passages or sections taken out of context.
- Consider the material in the context of the Library's mission statement.
- Review the material in conjunction with the ALA Library Bill of Rights.

Once a decision is reached, the Director will prepare a letter of response, and mail the letter to the patron. If a decision has not been reached within 60 days from the date of the request for reconsideration, the Director will notify the customer in writing stating that the title is still under review, and that a letter will be mailed upon a decision.

If the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision, she or he may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the President of the Board. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Van Meter Public Library.

Appendix E

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Author: _____

Title: _____

Format: _____

Publisher: _____ Date Published: _____

Request Initiated by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail _____

Do you represent yourself? (circle one) Y N

Do you represent an organization? (circle one) Y N

If yes, what is the name of the organization? _____

Have you read, listened to, or viewed this material in its entirety? (circle one) Y N

How recently? _____

What do you believe is the main theme or point of this material?

To what in the material do you object? Please be specific. Site page numbers in book, scenes in movie, lyrics on CD, etc.

Why do you believe the material does not comply with the Collection Development Policy?

For what age would you recommend this material?

Is there anything good about this material?

Are there conditions under which this material might be helpful to someone?

Are you aware of reviews by literary critics?

What would you like the Library to do about this material? (Circle)

- a) Keep the material
- b) Remove the material
- c) Move the material to another location in the library

Signature_____