

Objective of the Selection Policy

In order to satisfy its stated mission – of meeting the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the residents of Marion County – one of Marion County Library's main objectives is to provide and maintain a general collection of materials that will

- cover a broad range of knowledge,
- include both basic works of permanent value,
- include timely materials on current issues.

Due to limitations of space and budget, the Library's collection will not be able to satisfy all requests for materials. Those materials that are beyond the scope of the collection may be obtained through interlibrary loans.

The purpose of the Selection Policy is to guide the librarians in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

Responsibility for Selection

Initial decisions on the selection of library materials rest with the Collection Development Committee. This committee is made up of the Director and members of the professional staff. Selection duties are assigned to each professional according to his or her area of responsibility and personal expertise.

Selection is based primarily on reviews in accredited journals of librarianship, the book trade, and other reputable national magazines, and on the professional judgments of the librarians. Patron requests for purchase and suggestions from staff members working directly with the public are forwarded to the appropriate member of the Collection Development Committee for consideration.

The ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the policies established by the Board of Trustees.

General Principles

The Board of Trustees of Marion County Library has endorsed the Library Bill of Rights that is appended to this Selection Policy. In part it states: *"In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors."*

It further states that: *"Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."*

The Library Staff, the Library Director, and the Board of Trustees do not necessarily endorse every idea, opinion, or presentation that is contained in the materials that are selected. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents. No item will be placed on closed shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

The responsibility for supervising a child's reading materials or access to other library materials rests with his or her parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the adult, young adult and children's collections is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate.

The Library will review the selection of a specific item upon request of a member of the community. "A Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials," a copy of which is appended to this policy, is available at the Circulation Desk. One should complete this form and return it to the library. The Collection Development Committee will review the complaint and make a recommendation for action. This Selection Policy will be used as a basis for the review. The Library Director will promptly send a letter of explanation to the person or organization making the complaint. If necessary, the complaint will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

School and college libraries are expected to assume chief responsibility for the needs of their students. No extraordinary attempt is made to meet demands for large class assignments.

Selection Guides

The following sources are the *major* selection guides used by the staff in selecting materials:

Library Journal

School Library Journal

New York Times Book Review

Horn Book

Booklist

Science Books and Films

Kirkus Reviews

Selection Criteria

The following general criteria apply to the entire collection, including Children's, Young Adult, Reference, and the General Adult Collection. Following this section, specific statements discuss special collection areas.

Information concerning particular material being considered for selection in most instances is obtained through selection sources mentioned in "Selection Guides." Generally, at least one favorable review in a selection guide will be required before an item is purchased. As a rule, books will not be purchased from vendors. Requests for purchase of a particular item by citizens of the community are welcomed, but the same selection criteria will apply. The Library does not accept materials "on approval."

Fiction - The following criteria will be used as guidelines in the selection of fiction materials:

- Literary merit and style
- Popular demand
- Price and physical quality
- Quality of illustrations
- Relationship to existing collection
- Social significance
- Reputations and significance of author and/or illustrator
- Reputation of publisher

Non-Fiction - The following criteria will be used as guidelines in selection on non-fiction materials:

- Accuracy and authenticity of factual material presented
- Quality of writing
- Popular demand
- Relation of work to existing collection
- Reputation and significance of author
- Permanent or timely value
- Price and physical quality
- Reputation of publisher
- Quality of illustrations

Special Collection Areas

Children's Collection - In selecting books for children, the Library's objective is to make available a collection that satisfies the informational, recreational and cultural reading needs and potentials of children from preschool age to age twelve. The following guidelines are used:

- The best books available that fill an emotional need, or which serve as a stepping-stone to better reading, may be selected even though they may not be of the highest literary quality.
- Fiction should not emphasize stereotypical attitudes or characteristics.
- Content and vocabulary should be suitable to age level.

Young Adult Collection - The Young Adult Services Association of the American Library Association defines young adults as "persons between the ages of twelve and eighteen." For practical purposes, the Marion County Library Young Adult Collection will emphasize materials for young adults aged twelve to fifteen years old, and in grades seven through ten. However, since young adults mature physically, emotionally, and intellectually at differing rates and levels of sophistication, these age levels are suggested guidelines. The collection may include appropriate materials written for a younger or older audience in order to meet the needs of Marion County's young adult patrons.

The purposes of the young adult collection are:

- to serve as a transition from children's literature to adult reading
- to interest this age group in reading for pleasure
- to encourage young adults to become lifelong readers
- to provide for the informational needs of the adolescent reader.

The Selection Policy for young adults shares the major goals and objectives of the general selection criteria of Marion County Library. However, lack of literary style should not exclude books of high popular, current, and ephemeral interest. Additional criteria to be considered are as follows:

- Recognition that twelve to fifteen-year-olds have many reading and interest levels.
- Recognition of special characteristics of the teenage years:

- awareness of self
- uncertainty and idealism often covered by aggression
- need for a "hero" image
- the close relationship with a peer group
- breaking away from the family unit
- uncertainty about the future while beginning to evaluate his or her own set of beliefs
- sudden changes of interests, ideas, values and attitudes
- a desire to accept responsibility while striving for adult maturity.

South Carolina and Local History Collection - The Library recognizes the particular interest in Local and State history and seeks to build, maintain, and preserve a strong collection of published materials on Marion County, the Pee Dee Area, and South Carolina. These materials are assigned to the Reference Collection, the circulating South Carolina Collection, or the non-circulating South Carolina Room Collection depending on appropriate use, value, number of copies available, and special preservation considerations. (A separate, more detailed, South Carolina Room Policy is appended.)

Materials on South Carolina, the Pee Dee Area, and Marion County and by South Carolina, Pee Dee or Marion authors will be selected when they contain pertinent information and make a significant contribution to literature or the study of state or local history.

Reference Material - Reference materials will be purchased to answer specific informational needs of patrons served and to assist patrons in their research. Subject value, accuracy, scope, depth-of-coverage, ease-of-use and availability in the area are considered in the purchase of reference materials.

Professional Collection - All professional journals, periodicals, books and other materials are housed downstairs in the office area. Under "item availability" on the online patron access computer, these materials are assigned to Marion and given the call number location "Administration." The majority of these professional materials are not allowed to circulate, but patrons who have need of them are allowed to use them in the library.

Building Blocks Collection: In support of parents and caregivers, the Library provides a special collection of materials in the areas of parenting skills, child growth and development, language development, and creative play for parents/caregivers and their children. This Building Blocks Collection is shelved as a separate collection and contains books, journal and magazine articles, video cassettes, and audio cassettes

Storytelling Collection: Designed for staff use with library groups and as a representative collection of the best in literature for young children, this collection is for in-house use only. Having an in-house collection of children's literature fills the needs of patrons as well as staff.

Many adult students studying education or library science are required to read all of the Caldecott Award winners. Copies of these books in the circulating collection are usually checked out. These awarding winning titles and other outstanding works of children's literature are always available in this Storytelling Collection. Those interested in giving books to children as gifts are shown this collection. It also provides a special reading area for children in the library. It is shelved next to the South Carolina circulating non-fiction collection.

Large Print Books: A collection of Large Print materials, fiction and non-fiction is maintained for the enjoyment of patrons who are more comfortable using large print books. The collection contains classics as well as the latest best-sellers and contemporary non-fiction.

South Carolina State Library's Talking Books Services Division: This agency provides talking books and large print materials services at no cost to certified patrons. The Marion County Library will assist in the application process.

Special Material Types

Audiovisuals - Audiovisuals are purchased to meet the needs of groups and individuals. These materials also provide a format that can be used by non-readers, allowing the Library to meet the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of persons with specialized needs. The general criteria for the selection of books as well as the following criteria will be used:

Sound Recordings - our active collection consists of non-musical recordings especially books on tape, children's stories, language learning, and instructional materials. When purchasing books-on-tape, preference is given to unabridged titles. Priority will be given to spoken arts and instructional resources.

Sound recordings will be selected according to:

- Need for material based on public requests and present holdings
- Quality of interpretation and technique
- Technical quality of the recording
- Price

Video recordings - The motion picture is one of the contemporary art forms and should be judged for its technique as well as its content. Film content, subject matter and treatment are evaluated in relation to their validity, lasting value or timeliness, imagination and originality. Emphasis in this collection will be on instructional and informational titles and award-winning feature films for children or adults.

Video recordings will be selected according to:

- Need for material based on public requests and present holdings
- Lasting value or timely significance
- Artistic and technical qualities of photography, sound track, color reproduction, or clarity of black and white print
- Technical quality of the recording
- Price

Microforms - Microforms may be acquired in place of printed materials to conserve space and to preserve material of permanent reference value and historical importance. When the original printed material has an intrinsic or historical value, it may be retained in addition to the microform copy.

The following materials may be purchased in microform, using the accompanying guidelines:

- Indexed in standard indexes held by the Library

- Significant and continuing reference value
- Major source of Marion County coverage

When there is a choice of microforms, the following points will be considered:

- Clearness of copy
- Ease of use
- Availability of adequate equipment for reading and printing
- Cost
- Amount use the material receives

CD ROM and Electronic Databases – Non- Fiction CD ROM materials are acquired for in-house use in the South Carolina Room genealogy collection, in Reference, and CD Rom materials are sometimes included with books as added material. Some Recorded Books are chosen in CD rather than tape format, guided by the needs of the public. Electronic databases in addition to those provided through DISCUS are added on an as-needed basis as funding allows. Criteria for choosing these materials are:

- Quality and quantity of data included
- Quality of graphics (if applicable)
- Ease of use
- Quality of indexing
- Cost vs. print materials and similar CD ROM products
- Networking capability
- Value of and utility of the item for the library system as a whole

When possible, electronic databases are evaluated on our system for a trial period before purchase.

Government Documents - The Library is not an official Depository Library for United States Documents. Documents are selected on the basis of possible interest and use to members of the community. Using the same criteria, the Library obtains State, County, and City documents.

Paperback Books - The Library maintains a collection of paperback books that serves to supplement and extend the hardbound book collection. The collection capitalizes on the advantages of the paperback book form; it provides a wide range of subjects and titles at minimum expense. The aim, in paperback selections is to provide popular materials of general interest, within the guidelines of this policy.

Paperbacks may also be purchased for the following reasons:

- The title is in heavy demand
- The title is out of print or otherwise not available in sturdier format
- The title has never appeared in any other format
- The title in the hardbound format is expensive and useful only occasionally

Periodicals and Newspapers - In general, the selection policies for periodicals parallel those for books. The purpose of the selection process is to obtain periodicals that are important to the

accomplishment of reference and research work in the various subject areas, and to provide general and popular reading.

To provide current news coverage, the Library subscribes to local newspapers, newspapers of other major South Carolina cities and towns, and newspaper from important cities in the United States.

Periodical and newspaper holdings are reviewed annually to determine the need for additions and deletions.

Pamphlets and Vertical File Materials - Pamphlets are selected for their content, low cost, timeliness, local interest, and to supplement the book and periodical collections. They provide quick access to information that is often difficult to locate in more standard sources.

The vertical files accommodate non-book items such as charts, pictures, maps, clippings, pamphlets, and brochures that provide depth or currency for the study of a particular subject. The Reference Collection vertical file consists of three major divisions - general interest, current South Carolina, current Marion County.

A vertical file of Local History materials is maintained in the South Carolina Room. Arranged in alphabetical order with simple subject headings, it contains clippings from newspapers (local and state), biographies of local people, information on historic sites and buildings, local churches and church histories, and locally significant events.

Textbooks - The Library purchases textbooks only if the book represents the best or only information suitable for the library's collection in that subject. The Library will not purchase textbooks or other materials specific to the needs of any educational institution including home-schoolers. The Library has a broader role in the support of education programs in community.

Abridgements - The Library does not purchase abridged editions of materials that are best read in their entirety. When an exception is made for the Children's Collection, those are selected which meet the standards of good writing without weakening the original work.

Controversial Subject Areas

Political opinion: Materials are chosen *to reflect all sides of an issue* as authoritative works become available and are fully reviewed.

Sex and Sex Education: The Library attempts to purchase accurate, scientific up-to-date materials dealing with sex for readers of all ages and varying backgrounds. In selection of any book in this area, *judgment is based on the total piece of work rather than on the presence of words, phrases, or situations that in themselves might be objectionable to some.*

Medicine: The Library gears its selection to the layman's requirements in such areas as preventive medicine, vocational aspects of health care careers, personal health and hygiene, and certain basic subjects of general interest. Standard drug and medical dictionaries and encyclopedias are acquired for reference purposes. Highly technical clinical texts on diagnosis and treatment are not usually purchased. *The library staff does not interpret or give medical advice.*

The Law: The Library attempts to acquire general statutes and regulations (especially those applying to South Carolina), books on court procedure, jury duty, divorce, and such aspects of law as are needed by laymen in pursuit of their daily affairs. *The library staff does not interpret the law or provide legal advice.*

Religion: The Library attempts to provide accurate and objective information on beliefs and practices of various religions, denominations, and sects. Its selection is broad, tolerant, and without partisanship, consistently directed toward choosing the best books in regard to authority, timeliness, and literary quality. *Tracts and materials of a proselytizing nature are not included.*

Fiction: While the Library collects representative novels of the past, it also has the responsibility of making available contemporary works portraying many aspects of current society. Style of writing, characterization, philosophy, or social commentary may make a work a worthwhile acquisition. Since each novel is ordinarily judged on its individual merits, no attempt is made at completeness in the library's holdings of an author's works. In selecting fiction, the library has set up no arbitrary, single standard of literary quality. *An attempt is made to satisfy a diverse public.*

New Technologies and Formats: Marion County Library will not limit its selection to specific formats. Changes and advances in technology make it imperative that the Library adapts in order to offer the best and most complete information services to its constituents. It is Library policy to explore all formats in order to stay current and contemporary. This includes on-line services, software and any other formats consistent with the Library's goal of information delivery.

Gifts and Memorials

When the Library accepts gifts of books and materials, it is with the understanding that they become the property of the Library and will be evaluated against the same criteria as purchased materials. Books which are useful the library collections will be retained, and other books disposed of in whatever manner the Library deems best -- by discarding or selling them, or giving them to other libraries or institutions. Strictly sectarian propaganda and tracts of an obviously proselytizing nature will not be accepted.

The Library does not have a special area set aside for gift books or memorials. Gifts are interfiled with other titles on the same subject, so that all collections are classified and organized according to library standards for the best public service. Individual gift volumes or memorials may be marked with bookplates identifying the donor and/or acknowledging the honoree or memorial.

The appraisal of gifts to the library for tax purposes generally is the responsibility of the donor since it is the donor who benefits from the tax deduction. Any costs associated with appraisal should in most cases be borne by the donor. To protect both its donors and itself, the Library, as an interested party, ordinarily does not appraise gifts made to it. A gift letter is given to donors who wish a receipt for their donation/gift. A copy of the gift letter is in the Addenda section of this policy.

The Library sometimes receives from an individual or an organization the gift of a book or a sum or money for the purchase of books in memory of a family member, friend, or

acquaintance. Library selection criteria apply in these cases. A memorial or gift plate is placed in these books and the family of the person memorialized is notified of the gift.

Duplication

Although duplication of titles is not generally encouraged, multiple copies may be purchased in response to consistently heavy demand.

Current popular books are duplicated to meet demand by using Lease Plan books which allow the Library to have multiple copies of a current high demand title, send them back when reserves have been satisfied, and order the latest current high demand titles needed for our patrons.

Rotation of the Collection

Automation has allowed us to keep track of where individual titles are at any given point in time. Books are not assigned to a particular library when purchased. All purchases are assigned to Marion and rotated among all the Libraries outlets. Books are shifted daily between libraries and the bookmobile in response to patron requests. Occasionally, books are purchased for a specific branch collection due to heavy demand in a particular subject area.

Maintenance of the Collection

Decisions must be made continuously on how to handle worn books -- whether to mend, bind, replace or weed them. These decisions are based on the guidelines that follow.

Weeding - Weeding is an integral part of collection development. Weeding of the collection should be done on a continuous basis, with a concentrated emphasis on weeding at least once every two years. Selectors are responsible for the weeding of their order areas.

One of more of the following criteria should be considered in weeding the collection:

- Poor physical condition; not suitable for rebinding
- Duplicate copies of a title no longer in demand
- Obsolete content:
 - Books that contain material that is no longer timely
 - Books that contain outdated or inaccurate information
 - Books that are superseded by a more recent edition

- Material which has not circulated within the following time periods:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Shelf Life Cut-off Point</u>
<i>Adult Collection</i>	
Fiction	3 years
000's, 100's, 300's & 400's	3 years
200's, 500's, 600's, 700's & 800's	2 years
900's	7 years

Children's Collection

Fiction	1 year
Non-fiction	2 years

Replacement - While the Library attempts to have copies of all standard and important works, it is unable to replace each copy withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Decisions will be based on the following criteria:

- Demand for the specific item
- Number of copies in the system
- Existing coverage of the subject area within the system
- Availability of newer and better materials on the subject
- Price of the replacement copy

Binding - Factors considered when choosing volumes to be sent to the bindery are:

- Value and use of the title
- Possibility of replacement
- Physical condition, including quality of paper, margins and illustrations
- Cost of rebinding versus cost of replacing
- Number of copies within the system

Policy Revision

This policy may be revised as time and circumstances require. Revisions will ordinarily be made by the Collection Development Committee and submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval.

- South Carolina Room Policy
- Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read
- Freedom to View
- Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials
- Procedure for Handling Complaints Concerning Library Materials
- Acknowledgment of Gifts Letter
- Gifts and Memorials – Acquisition Procedures

Approved: May 28, 1996
Marion County Library
Board of Trustees
Revised: January 23, 2001

South Carolina Room Policy

South Carolina Room Mission Statement

The mission of the South Carolina Room of the Marion County Library is to provide a *working collection of materials* to support basic genealogical research and the study of local history.

Collection Development

The South Carolina Room of the Marion County Library houses a collection comprised of local history materials, Pee Dee materials, South Caroliniana, and Marion County Library archives.

Definitions and guidelines for material types:

- *Local History Materials* are those non-ephemeral resources of significance that specifically relate to Marion County people, places, or events. These items will be cataloged for the South Carolina Room Collection. Duplicate copies are often retained in this collection as well.
- *South Caroliniana* is defined as any printed material by a South Carolina author or on a South Carolina subject. If the library system owns only one copy of a South Carolina book, it most likely will be placed in the South Carolina Room Collection. If there is more than one copy of a South Carolina book, the copy with the earliest date of publication will be placed in the South Carolina Room and the next copy placed in the South Carolina collection of circulating materials. Additional copies may be distributed to branches.

South Carolina State documents are examples of South Caroliniana materials. Many of these documents are not assigned to the South Carolina Room collection, but are cataloged as Reference materials. Decisions are made on individual items as they are cataloged.

- *Pee Dee Material* is defined as any printed material by a native of the Pee Dee or on a subject related to the Pee Dee. A broad interpretation of the Pee Dee designation includes the following South Carolina counties:

Chesterfield	Dillon	Horry	Marlboro
Clarendon	Florence	Lee	Sumter
Darlington	Georgetown	Marion	Williamsburg

If there is only one copy, it will be assigned to the South Carolina Room. Additional copies are desirable and will be allowed to circulate from the South Carolina Collection. Additional copies may be distributed to branches.

- *Marion County Library Records* will be archived in so far as is practical based on constraints of space and budget. Items of high priority include annual reports, newsletters, and official records of the Board of Trustees.

Description of the South Carolina Room Collection:

The emphasis of the South Carolina Room Collection is on published materials. The collection's material formats include monographs, volumes in series, scrapbooks, photographs, microfilm,

audio tapes, maps, periodicals, pamphlets, and a few manuscript items. A subject vertical is maintained for materials that do not lend themselves to other housing.

Selection Criteria

- It is not the library's intent to develop or maintain a "rare book" collection. Items will be acquired based on content and rare items added only if the need is great and proper preservation techniques can be supported.
- Materials which aid in the interpretation of local history or which facilitate basic genealogical research are purchased for this collection.
- With emphasis on Marion County, materials of the Pee Dee Region and the state of South Carolina will be collected.
- The collection will also include relevant materials of adjacent states and other regions when these materials reflect migration patterns of the people of Marion County or contain information which contributes to a greater understanding of Marion County's history and her people.
- Marion County Library is not the official repository for Marion County government documents or records.

Note: A few individual nineteenth century Marion County documents do exist in the South Carolina Room Collection. These were given to the library as gifts, and serve as random examples of past community civic life.

Gift Acceptance

- Any *gifts* to this collection are subject to general library policy and must fit the library's selection criteria for South Carolina Room materials.
- Any items deemed memorabilia or an artifact should be given to the museum.
- Pieces of artwork will be accepted only under special circumstances. Decisions will be made on an individual basis.
- Published or typescript histories of individual families will be accepted as donations.

Collection Maintenance

Weeding:

- Unlike the other library collections, the South Carolina Room collection will not be subject to stringent weeding.
- Due to limited space and resources, items are to be added to this collection judiciously.
- If appropriate upon reevaluation, some items may be moved from the South Carolina Room collection to the South Carolina Circulating collection or to the Reference collection if the needs of patrons will be better served, the item is replaceable and extraordinary preservation precautions are not necessary.

Preservation:

- Many items in the South Carolina Room Collection are fragile and/or not easily replaced. Every effort will be made within the confines of space and budget restrictions to provide proper storage of materials.

- In order to facilitate access to the collection and to maximize the life of the materials:
 - In all instances where practical, paper, file folders, pamphlet files, and storage boxes used will be of archival quality, acid-free, and of a size appropriate to the item.
 - Very large oversized items will be stored flat in a map case
 - Books with fragile bindings and/or pages will be stored in boxes
 - Photographs will be stored in separate photo files according to size
 - Pamphlets will be stored in pamphlet boxes
 - Items needing restoration will be transported to the South Carolina Archives as funding allows
 - Audio materials will be transcribed as is practical in order to facilitate access to the information.

Collection Access

- Items in the South Carolina Room collection do not circulate and must be used in the library, preferably in the South Carolina Room.
- Items from this collection are not be loaned through interlibrary loan.
- The South Carolina Room is open during regular hours of library operation.

Note: The South Carolina Room must also serve as Marion Library's meeting room, and it is the Storytime space for the Youth Services Department. Materials are sometimes brought out into the main area of the library to accommodate patrons needing South Carolina Room materials while the room is in use for library programs or has been reserved for a meeting.

- The subject vertical file is arranged in one single alphabet with clear, simple subject headings and contents of each folder listed on the folder front.
- The book collection is shelved in Dewey order, with the exception of oversize volumes that are shelved in a designated section.
- Most frequently used genealogical resources have a special sticker, making them easy to locate quickly.
- Pathfinders and collection guides have been developed to facilitate the use of the collection. These are updated as needed.

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 that 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.

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.

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 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, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

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

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher/Producer _____ Copyright _____

Type of Material _____

Request Initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____

Complainant represents:

_____ Himself

_____ (Name of Organization) _____

_____ (Identify other groups) _____

1. To what in the material do you object? (Be specific. Cite pages, or frames, or sections.)

2. What do you feel might be the result of using this material?

3. For what age group would you recommend this material?

4. Is there anything good about this material?

5. Did you read/view this material in its entirety? If not, which parts?

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by literary critics? (Material selection tools such as *Horn Book*, *Booklist*, *Fiction Catalog*, *Public Library Catalog*, *Kirkus*, etc?)

7. What do you believe to be the theme of this material?

8. What would you like your public library to do about this material?

_____ Withdraw from library _____ Classify to another section

_____ Ask that Board reevaluate

Other _____

9. In its place, what material of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

Signature of complainant

Date

Procedure for Handling Complaints Concerning Library Materials

It is assumed that all materials in the Marion County Library system have been acquired in accordance with the library's established Collection Development Policy and with the basic ideals expressed in the Library Bill of Rights and The Freedom to Read statement. Complaints concerning library materials should be handled according to the following procedure:

A. Staff Members

1. Listen calmly and courteously to the complaint and advise the complainant of the library's procedure for reconsideration of materials. Handle the complaint according to the established rules. Treat the individual or group who complains with dignity and courtesy.
2. Ask the complainant to fill out the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form stating the objections to the specific materials.
3. Provide the complainant with a copy of the library's Collection Development Policy.
4. Notify your supervisor and/or the Library Director of the complaint.
5. Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the procedure, refer him/her to the Library Director or to the person in charge of the library at the time of the complaint.
6. If the incident becomes a public issue, refer all media requests to the Library Director.

B. Department Head

1. When necessary, meet with the complainant and explain library policies and procedures.
2. Review the Request for Reconsideration to ensure that it provides full information about the nature of the complaint.
3. Refer the complainant's form to the Marion County Library Director for investigation and recommended action

C. County Library Director

1. Appoint a three-member review committee to investigate the complaint and recommend action.
2. Inform the complainant in writing of the procedure to be followed and the date by which a response can be expected.
3. Be sure that all staff members are kept fully abreast of the situation as it develops. If necessary, intensify the library's on-going program of education about the principles of intellectual freedom.
4. Inform all library board members about the incident. Keep them advised about the progress of the situation.
5. Review the Request for Reconsideration and the recommendations of the Review Committee, add relevant comments as needed, and prepare a written response to the complainant.
6. Assert the principles of the Library Bill of Rights as a professional responsibility.
7. If the incident becomes a public issue, make accurate and complete information available to all local news media and ask for a public hearing to present all viewpoints to the controversy.
8. When appropriate, contact the SCLA Intellectual Freedom Committee and the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom to inform them of the complaint and to enlist their support.
9. When appropriate, inform other organizations and agencies to enlist their support.
10. After consultation with the Marion County Library Board of Trustees, seek legal advice from the County Attorney if deemed advisable.
11. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response, arrange a hearing before the Marion County Library Board.

D. Review Committee

1. Review the Request for Reconsideration and the material in question to determine the grounds for the complaint.
2. Locate published reviews of the material in question if possible
3. Evaluate the original reasons for the purchase of the material in terms of the library's Collection Development Policy, the principles of the Library Bill of rights, and the opinions of the various reviewing sources used in materials selection.
4. Prepare a written report, addressing the user's concerns and recommending an appropriate response. Responses may include but are not limited to:

- a. A statement that the materials meet the requirements of the library's selection policy.
- b. A statement that the library does not endorse the contents of the materials in its collection.
- c. An acknowledgment that not all library materials will be read or approved of by all of the citizens, but the library attempts to provide a wide variety of materials, in order to serve users in the entire county.
- d. An acknowledgment that the materials, upon examination, do not meet the criteria established by the library's Collection Development Policy and a recommendation that the materials should be withdrawn. (In some cases, it may be a matter of moving materials to another classification within the library's collection – i.e. change classification from Juvenile to YA or from YA to Adult.) Acknowledging that the library erred in selection should not be considered to be capitulating to censorship pressure.

E. Marion County Library Board

1. Review the complain, the library response, and all written documentation including the library's Collection Development Policy, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement.
2. Hear the argument of the complainant.
3. Determine the appropriate course of action for the library to take and inform the complainant.
4. Issue a statement to the media explaining the library's actions and the reasons for such actions.
5. In the event of legal action, request the assistance of the County Attorney, the South Carolina Attorney General, the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, and the Freedom to Read Foundation.

*Adopted by the Marion County Library Board of Trustees
January 18, 1994*

Acknowledgment of Gifts letter (on library letterhead)

Name _____

Address _____

Dear

The Marion County Library appreciates your gift to the library of:

Paperbacks

Video/Audio cassettes

Hardbacks

Other

This is acknowledgment of your gift to the library and you should keep this receipt for use in preparing your income tax return as such gifts are tax deductible.

The Library does not evaluate your gift for tax purposes. Should you wish to report your gift, you are requested to make the determination. You may wish to make a more detailed list, or have your gift appraised by a professional third party. The IRS is reluctant to accept a donor's appraisal except in amounts under \$200.00. For further information you may refer to IRS publication 561, "Valuation of Donated Property."

Because collection development is a library responsibility, we reserve the right to make the decision as to whether gift books will be added to the collection, set aside for a library used booksale, given to another institution, or discarded.

Sincerely,

Salley B. Davidson

Director

Staff Initials

Date

Gift and Memorial Item Requests

The staff person who first receives a request to purchase a memorial or gift item will have the donor fill out a memorial book form. The form shall then be referred to the selector for the subject-area specified in the donor's request. The selector will provide a copy of the form, with donation attached to the Library Director. If the donor wishes, a letter will be sent to the honoree(s), or the family of the deceased in the case of a memorial gift, naming the donor and the item selected. A copy of this letter will be sent the donor. If the donor does not wish to have the honoree(s) or family contacted, the Library Director will send a letter to the donor, acknowledging receipt of the contribution and any conditions or appropriate topics pertaining to the gift.

Selection Procedures for Gift and Memorial Items

The selector will attempt to locate a suitable item from materials already received but not processed, or from items currently in stock with the Library's book vendor. As a last resort, the selector may obtain an item from a local retail outlet when prompt acquisition of the item is urgent and suitable materials are not available.

Record Keeping and Processing for Gift and Memorial Items

The selector will report the amount of the donation to the Library Accountant who will assign the fund code and follow the proper bookkeeping procedures.

Memorial book forms will accompany the item through the processing procedures so that memorial or gift plates can be affixed to the selected item. When the item is ready for check-out, any specified persons will be notified.

Minimum Donations for Gift and Memorial Items

A minimum donation of \$15.00 will be required in order for a book to receive a plate naming an honoree or person memorialized. In the case of an audiovisual item, the donation should cover the actual cost of the item. Gifts of less than the minimum will be accepted, and the donor may specify the subject-area to which the gift will be applied. In this case, a memorial book form will be filled out and given to the Account for bookkeeping purposes even though no specific book order is placed.

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