



Collection Development Policy of the Sam T. Wilson Public Library

The Sam T. Wilson Public Library selects materials that support its mission to meet the evolving educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of the community. The Library serves as an information and educational resource for the community.

The Library adheres to the professional collection standards adopted by the American Library Association (ALA). Further, the Library continues to meet Tennessee's "Minimum Standards for Public Libraries." The Library recognizes and affirms the rights of citizens granted by the constitutions of the United States and Tennessee.

Community Served

Arlington is centrally located in the Mid-South region of the United States in West Tennessee. Located on the eastern edge of Shelby County, Arlington is in the southeast growth corridor of Memphis, one of the most thriving metro areas in the South. Preschool and elementary age children form an important part of the Library's clientele. This is a critical time to instill a love of learning and reading and to foster a child's identification of the Library as an appealing and useful part of life. For preschool children, who are served by no other community agency, the Library is their first experience of a structured educational environment. Materials for the Youth Services section expand learning and create a lifelong enjoyment of reading. Fostering a love of books and reading is crucial to building an educated and responsible population.

The Sam T. Wilson Public Library's hours of operation are considerably longer than those of school libraries. Since the Library is open in the evening and on weekends, high school, middle school, and elementary students frequently use its facilities and collections for research and study purposes. For that reason, materials are selected with their needs in mind. Students require access to general interest periodicals and newspapers, as well as a variety of encyclopedias, dictionaries, collections of literary criticism and other reference tools geared to their grade level and subject interests. Special emphasis is placed on supporting K-12 students and on stimulating children's interests and appreciation for reading and learning.

The presence of The University of Memphis, several area community colleges and private colleges indicates that a college level student population comprises a proportion of the Library's clientele. Further, the local adult and senior population is served through ongoing access to best sellers, audio books, popular fiction and non-fiction and audio / visual materials.

The economic development of the community depends to a great extent on its business environment. Small and medium-sized businesses often require business-related information in order to make sound decisions and plans. As they generally do not have their own libraries, it is vital that the library selects resources to satisfy their specific needs.

Finally, the Library, as a service unit of the Town of Arlington, is responsible for providing reference information services to the government. Developing a collection of materials that will provide officials with the information they need is a goal.

Developing the Collection

The collection development policy is important to prevent the library from being driven by events or by individual enthusiasms and from purchasing a random set of resources, which may not support the mission of the library. The Collection Development Committee of ALA has developed “Codes” to define levels of collection intensity practiced by type of library, its defined roles, and the type of patron it serves.

The Sam T. Wilson Public Library attempts to collect at the “basic information level” which is defined as follows: “A highly selective collection which serves to introduce and define the subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere. It includes up-to-date general materials, major dictionaries, and encyclopedias, selected editions of important works, historical surveys, important biographies and periodicals.” Also, included is access to a limited collection of owned or remotely accessed electronic bibliographic tools, texts, journals, etc.

The collection should be frequently and systematically reviewed for currency of information. Superseded editions and titles containing outdated information should be withdrawn. Classic or standard retrospective materials may be retained.

Selection Process

Under this policy, both collection development and maintenance decisions will be made by the Library’s professional staff under the direction and management of the Library Director and subject to the oversight of the Sam T. Wilson Public Library Board. All staff members may recommend materials for consideration. Involvement by the community in the selection process is encouraged. Several mechanisms are provided for this purpose including: analysis of pending hold requests; purchase suggestions submitted by library patrons; and questionnaires and surveys administered by the Library. Patron suggestions for purchase will be evaluated in accordance with the Collection Development Policy.

Selection Tools

Based on an understanding of the community needs and the knowledge of authors and publishers, the library staff utilizes professional, literary, specialized and general periodicals in addition to standard lists of basic works to determine purchases. Publishers’ catalogs and bibliographies prepared by other libraries and subject authorities are also checked. Title announcements from Baker & Taylor are reviewed. Additionally, Accelerated Reader Lists are checked. The following is a list of recognized sources used in the selection of public library materials. This list is representative but, is by no means comprehensive:

Booklist; Library Journal; Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books; New York Times Book Review; Publisher’s Weekly; Voice of Youth Advocates; School Library Journal; Kliatt; and Kirkus Reviews.

Selection Criteria

Librarians apply their judgment and experience in selecting materials for value of interest, information, recreation and enlightenment of all people in the community. Criteria employed for selection decisions include:

- ❖ Literary or artistic merit
- ❖ Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
- ❖ Present and potential relevance to local interests and needs
- ❖ Physical format

- ❖ Receipt or nomination for awards
- ❖ Authority or significance of one of the creators of the work
- ❖ Published evaluation or reviews
- ❖ Degree of user demand
- ❖ Price and availability
- ❖ Quality of production

Types of Collections

Based on the criteria outlined, the Library staff selects for the following collections:

Fiction: The collection focuses on twentieth century literature including classics and standard titles, and diverse genres. There is no single standard for inclusion in the fiction collection. Because of the large volume of fiction published, it is possible to purchase only a representative selection with emphasis on major authors and the most popular examples of a genre. Patron requests for fiction are purchased whenever possible and influence the addition of multiple copies. Every attempt is made to acquire and maintain books in a series written by a popular author. An effort is made to insure access to the titles on required reading lists issued by Arlington area schools.

Non-fiction: The non-fiction collection includes timely, accurate and useful informational materials to support, individual, business, government, and community interests. It emphasizes materials that are current and in high demand. Resources are available for all ages and reading levels in a variety of formats. Materials are selected to represent a continuum of opinions and viewpoints when available. Titles with continued value and those of current, accepted authority are part of the collection. Textbooks are included when they are the only source available on a subject, or when they give an overview of a subject, but are not added in support of a specific curriculum. As a new field emerges, the Library attempts to respond with timely additions.

Reference: Reference materials, in print and computer-based formats, are selected to provide information on a wide variety of subjects and index other material in the collection. Ready reference sources suitable for providing quick access to specific facts, as well as comprehensive materials which offer breadth and depth in subject areas, are collected. Examples of reference materials include, but are not limited to, almanacs, encyclopedias, directories, indexes, bibliographies, dictionaries, critical essays, biographical resources.

Periodicals: Periodicals are an important source of new ideas, current topics, and consumer information and are in demand as recreational reading material. A balanced subject collection of periodicals is maintained as a current supplement to the book collection. Selection is based on appeal and demand and the accuracy and objectivity of the authors, editors and publishers.

Newspapers: Newspapers are selected to provide current information, and to satisfy casual interest in current events. Local papers and some national papers are selected.

Government Documents: Documents are purchased as additions to the reference and non-fiction collections provided these materials are timely, up-to-date, and subject oriented.

Large Print: Large print materials are purchased to meet the needs of the community. They are usually duplicates of titles held in other collections, both fiction and nonfiction. Talking books, tapes, and Braille materials are available from the Tennessee Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Applications for this free Library service are available from the Information desk and online.

Young Adult Materials: The young adult collection will be both informative and recreational in scope. Materials will be selected based on the principles outlined for the adult fiction, adult non-fiction and reference, but with focus on the experience and maturity of young people. The YA collection includes series that are popular with young adults as well as biographies.

Children's Materials: Selection of materials for the children's section is based on the informational, recreational, and cultural reading needs of children from infancy through grade 6. Curricula oriented material to meet school demands is considered and purchased. Emphasis is based on quality, critically acclaimed materials as demonstrated in awards or reviews; quality and aesthetics of illustrations; awareness of curriculum-based needs of public, private and home schooled students; information and stories, which represent the richness and diversity of young people's local and world community; materials which meet the particular developmental needs of youth at different stages. Material selection for children reflects the concept of the child as an individual with greatly varying needs at any given time in his/her development.

Classics: This collection provides access to titles that are on required reading lists issued by various Arlington schools. Paperbacks are purchased because of cost.

Parent/Teacher: This collection, located near the children's collection, is comprised of materials to assist educators, parents and home school educators. Curriculum activities, resources that promote positive parenting, child development and health, home schooling, tutoring, recommended books for children, art activities, games, and storytelling are examples of materials included.

Professional Collection: A collection of specialized materials pertaining to the management and development of public libraries is kept for use by library staff. Materials include professional journals, books that deal with collection management, fundraising, planned giving, administration, programming, storytelling, library web sites, copyright, and the internet. These materials are non-circulating.

Audiobooks (CD's): Audio materials are considered an adjunct to the print collection; this collection is not intended to mirror the literature collection or to systematically cover non-fiction topics. Efforts are made to select on a variety of topics and to appeal to a range of interests. Selection for the audiobooks collection is currently being purchased in compact disc format.

Videos and DVD's: The Library makes an effort to purchase a wide variety of video materials to meet the needs of a broad cross section of patrons. The collection will emphasize educational, instructional, documentary, classics, children's materials, and theatre releases. General interest works including how-to, self-paced learning, sports, health, etc are selected. Selection for this collection is currently being purchased in DVD format.

Exams/Career: Preparation guides for tests include but are not limited to the GRE, LAST, SAT, GED, MAT, and TOEFL. Resources include career information, resume preparation, and college directories.

Electronic Resources: This collection includes, but is not limited to, citation or full-text databases. The following criteria should be considered when selecting these resources: ease of use by library patrons; enhanced searching capabilities; price of print versus electronic; frequency of updating; anticipated demand; remote access capability; licensing fees and usage restrictions. The Library coordinates with the Tennessee State Library and Archives to provide access to electronic resources. In addition, the Sam T. Wilson Public Library works in cooperation with the Lucius E. and Elsie C. Burch Jr. Library to provide access to electronic books of interest to both communities.

Appendix

Constitution of the United States

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Constitution of Tennessee

Article I Section 19

The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may speak, write, and print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.

The Library endorses the “Library Bill of Rights,” “the Freedom to View,” “Freedom to Read,” and “Intellectual Freedom” statements of the American Library Association.

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.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community that the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. 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.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.
6. 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.

The Freedom to View

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.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. 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.