

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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COCHISE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Approved by Board of Directors on September 9, 2002

I. What is the role of the Cochise County Library District?

The mission of Cochise County Library District is to provide essential support services to the seven member city libraries, effective management of the branches and bookmobiles which serve rural residents, and leadership in the development of public library services countywide.

The city libraries in Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista, Tombstone and Willcox are member libraries in the Library District. These independent libraries, in accordance with intergovernmental agreements between the cities and the Library District, serve county residents free of charge and participate in the planning and implementation of cooperative countywide projects.

Branch libraries have been organized in the unincorporated communities of Bowie, Portal, Sunizona, Sunsites, and Elfrida. The rural areas of the county are also served by the Library District Bookmobile, which makes about forty stops per month at post offices, general stores, mobile home parks, and elementary schools. A mini-bookmobile provides service to homebound and institutionalized people.

The Library District is a primary source of current titles and basic retrospective collections for the bookmobiles and the branches. The Library District is a secondary source for the city libraries, providing supplementary titles, both current and retrospective, to round out the collections which each city purchases on its own. At any give time, approximately one-half of the Library District's collection is on long-term loan to the libraries.

In addition, the Library District operates a countywide online system that gives access to a shared catalog as well as to the Internet. This system greatly facilitates interlibrary lending within the Library District and also provides the data for cooperative collection development among the Library District libraries. The libraries easily borrow from each other online on behalf of customers, and individual customers are able to place requests online themselves on the website (<http://cochise.lib.az.us>).

The Library District serves as the out of county interlibrary loan center for all of the libraries except Sierra Vista, searching requests on the national database (OCLC) when the items are not available on the countywide database. The Library District also serves as a mid-level Reference Center for the libraries in the county; a professional librarian assists with reference questions which cannot be answered at the local level.

II. How is the Library District funded?

The Cochise County Board of Supervisors serves as the Library District Board of Directors and each year sets the Library District budget and tax rate. The majority of the Library District's budget comes from a secondary tax levied on all property in the county; this is, in most years, supplemented by private, state, and/or federal grants.

III. About our county

Cochise County is a predominantly rural county of about 120,000 residents. About one-third lives in Sierra Vista, whose growth is fueled by the presence of the Fort Huachuca military base. Slightly less than another third lives in the six other incorporated cities. The remaining forty percent of the population lives either on the outskirts of these cities, or in two dozen or more small, isolated unincorporated communities, or on farms and ranches.

Primary occupations include the military, farming and ranching, government, prisons, services and tourism. The median age is 35.9 and 14.7 percent of the population is 65 or older; both of these figures are somewhat higher than the Arizona average. Approximately 26 percent of the total county population is under 18. Of this group, more than 30 percent lives below the poverty level. A majority of the population of Bowie and Douglas is bi-lingual (Spanish-English), and smaller numbers speak both languages in Bisbee, Elfrida, Willcox, and a number of other communities. Sierra Vista includes residents who speak a variety of European and Asian languages.

IV. Who are our users?

The Library District serves all of the residents of the county through its bookmobiles, branch libraries, and member libraries.

In the year 2013, the number of registered borrowers at all of the libraries and bookmobiles is 98,000, or 74 percent of the population. Circulation of barcoded library materials was 634,197 for 2012-13.

V. Who makes decisions about collection development?

Approximately 75 percent of the Library District's current selection is done by the local librarians according to their perception of local needs. The balance of current selection is done by the Library District headquarters staff.

VI. How is the Library District's collection distributed to users?

Librarian orders: Six times per year branch and city librarians have an opportunity to select new materials for which they submit orders to the Library District. The Library District purchases and catalogs these items and sends them to the selecting library on long term loan. The library may keep these materials as long as they choose, and return them to the Library District when no longer needed.

Librarian selections: The local librarians may visit Library District headquarters at any time which is convenient to choose books and other materials on long term loan. The headquarters collection includes older materials which librarians use to flesh out their collections, as well as new materials recently purchased or returned from another library.

Online selections: Local librarians may also search the headquarters collection in the online catalog and request that any items which are available at the Library District be sent to them on long term loan.

On demand: Many out of county libraries will not lend new materials through interlibrary loan. When a local library submits an interlibrary loan request from a customer for a new book published within the last year, the Library District generally buys rather than trying to

borrow through the national network. The requested item is sent to the library for the customer's use. The library may request to keep it on long term loan or return it the Library District.*

Requests: All Library District materials, whether on long term loan to a local library or on the shelf at the Library District headquarters, are available to individual users through the county wide request system. A customer may request an item either at his local library, or online at the countywide website.

VII. How are purchasing decisions made?

When Library District Headquarters staff and local librarians select new books and other items for purchase, they consider the following criteria:

1. Demand for the material.
2. Present and potential relevance to community needs.
3. Critics' and staff members' reviews.
4. Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience.
5. Reputation and significance of the author.
6. Relationship to existing materials in the collection on the same subject.
7. Availability and accessibility of the same materials in other libraries and the Library District.

Librarians consult competent review sources such as Booklist and basic lists of standard materials compiled by organizations such as the American Library Association. They check the countywide online catalog to analyze their own holdings and those of the other libraries. They may ask subject experts for specific advice in certain fields. They listen to recommendations from the general public, and study interlibrary loan requests for evidence of user needs and interests.

The Library District frequently buys on demand requests but reserves the right not to, if probable future use is very limited. Final responsibility for selection rests with the Library District Director who operates within the framework of this collection development policy.

*NOTE: As of 2005, on demand titles are routinely sent to the requesting library on long term loan.

VIII. Specific collection goals

Periodicals: The Library District subscribes to book selection tools for the branches and some city libraries. The Library District also subscribes to a modest number of popular magazines for the branch libraries and for reference use at Headquarters. To fill most requests for magazine articles, Library District staff use online resources such as MasterFILE Premier and also request photocopies from larger libraries through OCLC.

Reference: Library District headquarters serves as a reference center for local libraries and provides the answers to mid-level and research level questions for them. To support this service the Library District maintains an in-house collection of basic reference sources and also makes use of the Internet and specialized online tools such as FirstSearch. The Library District is the primary funding source for the branch reference collections, and purchases modest collections of non-circulating reference materials for them. However, the Library District does not generally purchase non-circulating items for the city libraries.

Adult fiction: The Library District buys contemporary fiction and multiple copies of bestsellers based on librarian orders and on demand requests. Local libraries may mark these items 'Local Request' for their initial period of local high use, but should return them to circulating status for the use of the rest of the county as soon as possible. The Library District also attempts to maintain complete runs of the older works of major popular authors in the countywide collection by checking holdings of all libraries when making weeding decisions.

Nonfiction: The Library District buys popular nonfiction based on librarian orders and on demand requests. The Library District does not currently attempt to provide basic coverage in all subject areas in making purchasing or weeding decisions. The ready availability of some types of information on the Internet impacts the traditional goal of maintaining a well-rounded nonfiction collection.

Children's books: Preschool and elementary school aged children form a large and important user group at all of the libraries. The Library District purchases popular children's fiction and nonfiction based on librarian orders and on demand requests. The Library District specifies certain librarian orders each year as children's only. In making weeding decisions, the Library District will keep multiple copies of children's classics on headquarters shelves even if other copies are available countywide.

Young adult: Young adult generally refers to junior and senior high school readers. Some of the larger city libraries maintain separate young adult areas and collections. For any local library who requests this, the Library District will purchase young adult books for librarian orders and on demand requests. In making weeding decisions, the headquarters staff use adult fiction and nonfiction criteria rather than those used for children's books.

Nonbook materials: The Library District purchases a variety of nonbook materials both for librarian orders and for on demand requests from individual customers. Formats include recorded books on CD, musical recordings on CD, computer software, videos, and DVDs.

Large print: The Library District is the principal source of large print books for the minibookmobile, the bookmobile, the branches and several city libraries. The Library District subscribes to a number of standing order plans which automatically send new large prints as they are published. There is a large historical large print collections at Headquarters, which is weeded according to adult fiction and nonfiction criteria.

Paperbacks: Trade paperbacks are purchased and cataloged exactly as hardcover books are. Mass market paperbacks are purchased for the bookmobiles and branches on request for their browsing collections and are not cataloged or barcoded although circulation is still recorded. The Library District does not purchase unbarcoded items for city libraries; however, a collection of donated paperbacks in good condition is available for librarians to choose from when they come to headquarters for selection.

Spanish language materials: The Library District buys Spanish language and bilingual fiction, nonfiction, DVDs and other materials based on librarian orders and on demand requests.

Arizona collection: The Library District buys books about Arizona and the Southwest, books by local authors, and publications of local organizations, based on librarian orders and on demand requests and also recommendations by headquarters staff. In making weeding decisions, the Library District keeps multiple copies of Arizona and local classics, even if other copies are available countywide.

Online resources: The Library District provides access for local libraries to District funded online cataloging resources such as the Library of Congress. The Library District also subscribes to specialized online databases that library customers can use, either at their local library or at the home computers.

IX. Gifts

Gifts of books and other materials are accepted on behalf of the Library District by the Friends of the Cochise County Library, Inc., with the understanding that the Library District may make whatever use of the material it feels is appropriate.

Because an attempt is made to represent a variety of points of view, the Library District will accept works on the doctrine and history of all religious denominations and faiths, as well as all political ideologies and systems, in quantities which are in accord with the concept of collection balance.

The same criteria used for selection of all other materials will be used in evaluating gift materials. Items which are not needed in the collection may be returned to the Friends group for sale. Proceeds from the Friends book sale are used to purchase new books.

X. Maintenance of the collection

An ongoing program of weeding keeps the headquarters collection vital. The Library District's goal is to annually weed and discard approximately the same number of items as were purchased.

Materials are weeded because they are out of date, because they are so badly worn or damaged that they cannot be bound or mended, because they are once popular items that

are no longer used, or because, according to the countywide catalog, there are more copies in the system than circulation warrants.

Because of its interlibrary loan function, the Library District retains some older fiction and nonfiction which provides historical perspective and a wider collection scope than that which is generally available at the local libraries.

Weeded materials are marked 'discarded' and disposed of in accordance with State law and contractual agreements. Library District owned materials which are weeded may be sold at a public sale by the Friends of the Cochise County Library, Inc., and proceeds are used to buy additional materials.

XI. Controversial materials

Cochise County Library District is a tax supported public institution. Since the county's population includes individuals with diverse views and opinions, the Library District's collection necessarily includes a variety of views on controversial topics of interest. Some of the material may be offensive to some individuals or groups because of perceived profanity, social, economic, and political ideas, religious viewpoints, the background of the author, or the kind of information provided. The Library District does not approve of or endorse any particular view or belief represented in its collection. It provides a resource where an individual may freely examine issues and make his own decision.

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the selection of reading material for children and adolescents rests with their parents and legal guardians, who must sign the application of a minor for a library card. While a person may reject materials for him/herself and for his/her children, he/she may not restrict access to the materials by others.

In the selection and use of books and other materials, the Library District subscribes fully to the principles adopted by the American Library Association in its Library Bill of Rights and its Freedom to Read statement, both of which are appended.

XII. Complaint procedure

The Library District recognizes that occasionally a customer may find materials in the collection to be objectionable, and may wish to make a formal complaint.

The procedures outlined in this section will be followed for complaints originating in a branch library or bookmobile. Complaints about Library District materials which are housed in any of the city libraries will normally be handled according to the city library's approved procedure; the District will provide assistance as requested.

Complaints must be in writing, and signed by the individual. Forms for this purpose are available on request at Library District headquarters and from any bookmobile and branch library. A copy of the complaint form is appended.

The fully completed complaint form should be returned to the Library District Director, along with the material in question.

The Library District Director will appoint a three-member committee to evaluate the material in question in light of the customer's request and the collection development policy. The committee will include: the branch library coordinator or, if the complaint originates on the bookmobile, the bookmobile driver; a representative to the District's Citizen Liaison Council; and a member of the Library District's professional staff.

Evaluators will submit their recommendations to the Library District Director, who will make a decision concerning the material. The Library District Director will notify the customer originating the Request for Reconsideration. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may appeal to the Board of Directors.

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Initiated

by: _____

Telephone: _____ Address: _____

Complaint represents:

SELF _____
(please identify)

ORGANIZATION _____

Material Questioned:

BOOK TITLE _____

AUTHOR _____

COPYRIGHT DATE _____

OTHER LIBRARY/MEDIA MATERIAL _____

Please respond to the following questions. Use additional paper if necessary.

1. Have you read the book in its entirety? _____

2. To what do you object in this work? Please cite specific instances.

3. What reviews of this book have you read? _____

4. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work?

5. Are you aware of the judgment of this work by critics?

6. Are you aware of the library's purpose in purchasing this book?

7. What action do you recommend the library take on this material?

8. Can you recommend alternate materials that would provide adequate information on the subject?

DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

Please return to:
Director, Cochise County Library District, P.O. Drawer AK, Bisbee, AZ 85603
Tel: 520-432-8930
800-231-1574

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.**

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.

Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

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.

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens 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 citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens. 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 need the help of censors to assist them in this task. 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.

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:

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 or unpopular with 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.

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.

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.

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.

It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it 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 the citizen. 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.

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.

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.

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 citizens 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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by:

[American Library Association](#) and
[Association of American Publishers](#)

Subsequently Endorsed by:

[American Association of University Professors](#)

[American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression](#)
[American Society of Journalists and Authors](#)
[American Society of Newspaper Editors](#)
[Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith](#)
[Association of American University Presses](#)
[Center for Democracy & Technology](#)
[The Children's Book Council](#)
[The Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)
[Feminists for Free Expression](#)
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)
[International Reading Association](#)
[The Media Institute](#)
[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)
[National PTA](#)
[Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays](#)
[PEN American Center](#)
[People for the American Way](#)
[Student Press Law Center](#)