

Collection Development Policy

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Kennett Library is igniting imagination, enriching lives, and creating community. To achieve this mission the Kennett Library attempts to provide a representative, well-balanced collection of general and specialized materials. The Kennett Library believes that an open and free library is fundamental to democracy and that it is our responsibility to provide access, quality resources and essential information services to our communities. The proliferation of information sources and the rapid spread of technology have made the selection and maintenance of library materials an increasingly complex responsibility. This document establishes policies and principles that guide the selection and the removal of materials.

Additionally, Kennett's Collection Development Policy:

- Provides information for library users seeking to understand the process of materials selection, maintenance, and the composition of the collection;
- Helps local library staff respond in an informed and professional manner to issues about the philosophy and criteria of selection; and,
- Assists library staff charged with selecting materials in choosing from a vast array of available materials.

The Kennett Library Board and the library staff believe that the right to read and the right of free access to the library collections for all persons are essential to the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. Accordingly, the Kennett Library has adopted the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to View Statement, and the Freedom to Read Statement, copies of which are appended to and made a part of this Collection Development Policy.

Chris Manna, Director

Kennett Library Board Approved May 17, 2022

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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[PART I. Responsibility for Selection: Executive Director, Staff, and Board](#)

The Executive Director, operating within Board policies, is responsible for the selection and evaluation of library materials. The Executive Director delegates this responsibility to designated librarians who recommend policy and establish selection and evaluation procedures.

Designated librarians follow the General Selection Criteria in purchasing materials. Staff, under the direction of designated librarians, will use the General Selection Criteria to assess gifts to the library and recommend their addition to the collection. Staff, under the direction of designated librarians, will use the General Selection Criteria to select materials to be removed from the collection.

These policies shall be reviewed periodically or any time upon request. Comments, criticisms and suggestions concerning this policy may be submitted to the Executive Director.

PART II. Factors in Selection

A. Objectives in Selection

The Kennett Library attempts to provide a representative, well-balanced collection of general and specialized materials to meet the needs of the communities it serves. Designated librarians, with assistance from branch staff, will determine the focus of each branch collection. Kennett Library maintains a collection of materials that is determined by budget, space, and current library service priorities. Service priorities may change in accordance with the library's planning process

B. General Selection Criteria

Separate collections are provided for children, teens, and adults. Materials selected must meet several of the General Selection Criteria, regardless of format:

- Community needs, interests and demands
- Accuracy of information
- Favorable reviews in library and other professional critical review publications
- Author's, artist's or editor's qualifications or reputation
- Professional standing and reputation of publisher
- Social significance
- Availability of funds
- Suitability for intended audience
- Quality of presentation
- Representation of diversity of viewpoint and culture
- Timeliness and relevance of information/topic/subject

The requests of library customers for particular titles are welcome and will be considered for purchase. Duplicate copies will be purchased to meet demand contingent on budget.

Materials in all formats are selected for the information, interest, and entertainment needs of the Kennett Library communities and will be purchased using the General Selection Criteria.

Kennett Library also provides remote access to online collections of materials, which may include, but are not limited to, e-books, databases, music, film, audio, and magazines. Individual items in these collections may not conform to the General Selection Criteria.

C. Reference

The Reference Collections of the Kennett Library will collect primary and secondary materials which have the following scope: 1) history of Kennett Borough; 2) history of Chester County); and 3) history of Pennsylvania, migration, and settlers as these relate to the founding of Pennsylvania, with an emphasis on important works. Family histories will not be purchased but may be accepted as gifts.

D. Other Considerations

Not all material will be suitable for, nor of interest to everyone. Librarians are available to help customers locate items that fit their personal tastes and interests. The supervision of a minor's access to library material is the responsibility of the parent or the legal guardian.

Selection is based on the total work and not on the presence of words, phrases, or situations, which in and of themselves might be objectionable. Serious works presenting an honest aspect of some problem of life are not excluded because of coarse language or frankness. The Kennett Library subscribes to the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights and follows the principles of the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements (Appendix II, III, and IV.)

Items are carefully selected to provide a balanced and diverse collection. Items that are recognized as classics and are of considerable literary merit are retained, even though the content may be unacceptable by today's standards. Items will not be excluded because of the racial ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality or the political, moral, ethical, or religious views of the writer.

Selection tools include library and professional trade journals, critical reviews, award/nominated titles/authors lists, general media, subject bibliographies, publishers' materials and staff knowledge and expertise. Purchase suggestions and donations from the public are given consideration in the context of the selection policy.

The selection of materials for the shared collections does not constitute an endorsement of contents. The Kennett Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection decisions are made on the merits of a particular item in relation to building the collection and fulfilling the library service levels of the System

Materials on human physical development and human sexuality are carefully selected on the basis of scientific accuracy, quality of presentation, and target audience. Kennett Library does not knowingly add or retain materials that are determined to be illegal under Pennsylvania or federal law by the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Kennett Library collection presents a variety of viewpoints on many topics, but does not advocate any position on an issue. The Kennett Library will provide access to information, enabling citizens to make up their own minds about important issues. The Kennett Library recognizes that the style, manner in which information or ideas are presented, perceived accuracy, or classification of materials may not be universally appealing.

If any title in the collection is criticized or questioned by individuals or organizations, they may fill out and sign the form: "Individual's Comments on Library Materials" available in Appendix I of the Kennett Library Collection Development Policy on the Kennett Library website. The form may either be mailed to the library or given to a librarian. The Executive Director will review all individual comment forms. The Executive Director or designated staff will evaluate the material. A letter will be written to the customer explaining what action was taken with an

appropriate explanation. Customers who are not satisfied may appeal to the Kennett Library Board of Trustees for further consideration.

E. Student Use

General student use of the library is encouraged. Kennett Library will provide supplementary sources for students' reading and reference purposes that are also useful for the general reader.

Kennett Library does not attempt to substitute for the development and use of school or academic library resources.

F. Collections of Other Institutions

The functions and resources of nearby libraries are considered in material selection. For example, the presence of a research collection at nearby colleges and universities precludes the necessity for the purchase or preservation of materials for the purpose of academic research.

G. Interlibrary Loan

This service is provided by the Kennett Library to obtain material or information that is not available or is not suitable for inclusion in the collection. Customers can make requests for specific titles, articles and information on a particular subject.

H. Allocation of Funds

Available materials funds will be allocated annually in a manner to meet, as far as possible, the needs of the communities served. The materials budgets are determined by a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the population served by the library, the building capacity, and funds available.

I. Evaluation for Withdrawal of Materials

A systematic evaluation of materials is made on a regular basis. Library staff, using collection development maintenance tools and the Kennett Library weeding guidelines have an obligation to constantly update the collection by withdrawing unneeded items.

In addition to the Selection Criteria, factors in withdrawing items include outdated information, balance of viewpoint, acquisition mistakes, multiple copies no longer in demand, age, condition, and low circulation. Materials removed from library collections are declared surplus and may be sold, disposed of or donated to library programs, designated community groups, other libraries, and Friends of the Library.

J. Replacements

Materials withdrawn because of loss or condition are replaced only if they remain useful (current, important in the subject area or in demand) and if sufficient duplicate copies do not remain in the collection. Generally, no attempt is made to replace out-of-print titles.

K. [Gifts and Donations](#)

Monetary gifts for the purchase of materials are received by the Kennett Library.

The Kennett Library welcomes gifts or donations of books and other materials as space permits and with the understanding that they may be used or disposed of in accordance with the library's collection development policy. The library reserves the right to make final selection for any materials that may be added to the collection. In addition, the library reserves the right to withdraw materials from the collection when they are no longer appropriate as outlined under the collection development policy. Materials not selected to be added to the collection may be returned to the presenter or added to the library book sale which generates funds for programming.

L. [Copyright](#)

Kennett Library abides by the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code), which guarantees the intellectual property rights of authors.

Media owned and circulated by the Kennett Library are for private use only and any other use including performance in public, in whole or in part, is prohibited by law unless public performance rights have been obtained.

Appendix I. Individual's Comments on Library Materials

The Kennett Library serves people from all walks of life, with a variety of viewpoints and tastes, and we welcome your comments. Before completing this form, you may find it informative and helpful to read the following brief summary of the library's policy on library materials.

The Kennett Library's professional staff chooses books and other materials to meet the informational, educational, and recreational interests of the citizens of the community. The staff is guided by the Collection Development Policy adopted by the Kennett Library Board of Directors. The Board and the staff support the belief that the right to read and the right to free access to library collections, for persons of all ages, is essential to individual freedom of thought, which is fundamental to democracy. The Board has also adopted the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement, all of which represent the library's interpretation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In practice, this means that the library will resist efforts to remove or censor materials, "objectionable" materials or authors. The Library does not knowingly add or retain materials that are determined to be illegal under Pennsylvania or federal law by the Supreme Court of the United States.

If you would like copies of the Collection Development Policy for the Kennett Library, the Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read and the Freedom to View Statements, please ask the librarian. Your comments will receive a written reply within 30 days.

Kennett Library Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The trustees of the Kennett Library have established a materials selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the library director.

Kennett Library. 216 E. State St. Kennett Square, PA 19348

Date

Name

Address

City State/Zip

Phone Email

Do you represent self? ____ Or an organization? ____ Name of Organization

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

___ Book (e-book)

___ Movie

___ Magazine

___ Audio Recording

___ Digital Resource

___ Game

___ Newspaper

___ Other

Title

Author/Producer

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?
4. What concerns you about the resource?
5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?
6. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

Please comment on the material as a whole. Be specific about those matters which concern you and feel free to suggest other materials (books, etc.) on the subject for our consideration.

[Appendix II. The Freedom to Read Statement](#)

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the

United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than

those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and

creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

Appendix III. The 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 of 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 Executive Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Executive Directors in 1989.

Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990.

Appendix IV. Library Bill Of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

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

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

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

- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.