

BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Bridgman Public Library Joint Board of Directors
(hereafter referred to as "The Board")

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide the public with an understanding of the purpose and nature of Bridgman Public Library's (hereafter referred to as "The Library") collection and to give guidance to library staff for collection development.

2. Mission, Vision, and Core Values:

- A. Mission: To enrich the lives of community members by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that provides equitable access to resources, innovative programs, and fosters a love of reading.
- B. Vision: To engage and inspire a community of life-long learners.
- C. Core Values:
 - 1. Libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in Democratic Societies.
 - 2. The Library provides free and equal access to information resources.
 - 3. The Library upholds the values of Intellectual Freedom.
 - 4. The Library provides the highest quality of service to all.
 - 5. The Library promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion in our community and the world.
- D. The Library and The Board fully endorse the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A), the Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix B), and the Freedom to View Statement (Appendix C).

3. General Description of Library and Community:

- A. Established in 1966, the Bridgman Public Library is a central library that serves the communities of Bridgman City, Lake Charter Township, and a portion of Chikaming Township. The majority of the Library's funding comes from property tax revenues in the form of two millages from the City of Bridgman, service contracts with Lake Charter Township and Chikaming Township, penal fines, and state aid. The Library building is approximately 10,000 square feet and is located inside the city limits of Bridgman in a neighborhood that includes both residential and commercial property.
- B. According to 2020 census data, the population the Library serves is culturally homogenous, with a higher average household income and education level than others reported for the county and state. The three largest employers in the community are the Donald C. Cook Nuclear Plant, Bridgman Public Schools, and River Valley Public Schools. Because of its close proximity to Lake Michigan and Interstate 94, the community's economy is driven by tourism, agriculture and small-scale manufacturing. The population swells in the summer months when second-homeowners, who come primarily from Chicago, return to the area.

4. Collection:

- A. The collection of the Bridgman Public Library is approximately 40,000 items in print, audio visual, and digital formats. A collection of databases and Internet resources may be accessed from The Library's website.

- B. The Library aims to provide a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, and informational materials for people of all ages.
- C. The Library's collection reflects the collective educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community at large, rather than any one individual's needs.

5. Responsibility:

The authority and responsibility for selection of materials is delegated to the Library Director by The Board. The Library Director may also appoint a designee who operates within the framework of this policy.

6. Selection:

The following principles are key to the development of a strong library collection:

- A. Resources are selected for the needs of the community as a whole, meaning current patrons of the library as well as potential patrons.
- B. Resources are evaluated on the whole, not on the basis of a particular section or sections.
- C. Intellectual Freedom – selection will be carried out with regards to the Library's commitment to and endorsement of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read Statement and Freedom to View Statement*. (Appendices A, B, C)
- D. The Library recognizes that some materials in the collection may offend some individuals or groups because of language, moral implication or religious or political point of view expressed. However, selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the evaluation of the item's merit based on the criteria below.
- E. The Library does not advocate particular beliefs or points of view and the presence of an item in the collection does not indicate endorsement of its content.
- F. Balance – one of the aims of selection is to establish a well-balanced collection which adequately represents various points of view on a subject.
- G. Due to limited funds and space, the Library cannot collect all worthy items. If an item is requested that is out of the scope of the Library's collection, efforts will be made to find the item either through another of the libraries that BPL shares a catalog with or through the state-wide interlibrary loan service.
- H. Responsibility for the use of the library's collection by children age seventeen and under rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of adult library materials shall not be inhibited by the possibility that such items may come into the possession of minors. The library will not act *in loco parentis* as to what materials a child is mature enough to borrow.
- I. Textbooks are the responsibility of schools and are not added to the collection.
- J. Resources related to local city and township government will be collected and made accessible to all patrons.
- K. New formats will be considered for the collection when evidence from local requests suggests that a significant portion of the community has the necessary technology to make use of the new format. Availability of items in the new format, cost per item and the library's ability to acquire and handle the new materials will also be factors in determining when a new format will be added. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the library's collection.
- L. The library recognizes that there may be times when one copy of a title is not sufficient (popular authors) and may purchase multiple copies of a single title. Additional titles may be purchased in

different formats (audiobook, e-book, large print) depending on the patron demand. In subject areas of high interest, the library would prefer to purchase several different titles representing a broad range of viewpoints on the subject rather than buying multiple copies of one title.

7. Criteria:

Selection or rejection is not based on a single criterion. Decisions are made because an item satisfies several criteria. Materials given the highest priority are those materials most in demand by residents. The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading materials of minor children rests with their parents or guardians. The Library will not act *in loco parentis*. The following criteria apply to both purchased and donated material:

- A. Accurate, current, and impartial content; or content where the bias is clearly stated
- B. Professional or literary reputation of the author, publisher, or producer
- C. Enduring value
- D. Anticipated demand or review publicity
- E. Suitability of physical form for library use
- F. Budget and space limitations
- G. Relation to items already in the collection
- H. Relation to local interests and needs of the community
- I. Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- J. Availability in other formats or from another library via Interlibrary Loan

8. Requests:

Patrons may request an item be purchased at any time. The Library will consider the request in terms of whether the item conforms to the criteria outlined in this policy, the availability and cost of the item, as well as the likelihood that the item will be of general interest.

9. Format:

Materials will be purchased in a variety of formats for The Library patron's use. Multimedia formats are considered and collections established when a significant portion of the community has access to the necessary technology to make use of the format.

10. Special Collections:

A. Local History

1. The Library acknowledges and accepts a responsibility to collect local history to support the interests of those researching the economic, political, cultural or social history of Bridgman and the area.
2. For the purposes of collection development, the area is defined as information about the City of Bridgman, Lake Charter Township, and Chikaming Township.
3. Materials acquired for this collection may be designated as in-library use only in order to preserve the integrity of the research collection.
4. Materials included in this collection may be works by and about members, places and events of the City of Bridgman, Lake Charter Township, and Chikaming Township.

11. Collection Maintenance:

- A. The Library continually reviews its collections and removes materials that are worn, obsolete or duplicates in order to maintain a collection that is up-to-date and responsive to the needs of the

community. The Library uses the **CREW** Method (**C**ontinuous **R**eview, **E**valuation, **W**eed) for Collection Maintenance, which is also known as “weeding.”

- B. The Library will weed materials based on “**MUSTIE**” criteria:
 - 1. **Misleading**: item is factually inaccurate
 - 2. **Ugly**: item is worn beyond mending or rebinding
 - 3. **Superseded**: a newer edition of the item is available
 - 4. **Trivial**: item is of no discernable literary or scientific merit
 - 5. **Irrelevant**: item is unimportant to the needs or interests of The Library’s community
 - 6. **Elsewhere**: the item is easily obtained from another library
- C. Items that are weeded from the collection will either be donated to the Friends of the Bridgman Library to be sold in the Book Shoppe or Annual Book Sale, or recycled.
- D. Materials that are lost or withdrawn will be considered for replacement based on the criteria found in this policy as well as the following:
 - 1. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection
 - 2. Community demand for the specific item
 - 3. Availability of the specific item

12. Statement of Concern about Library Resources at Bridgman Public Library

- A. The Library is open to expression of opinion from the community concerning materials selected or not selected for inclusion in the collection.
- B. Patrons are always welcome to request material be added to the collection.
- C. The request will initially be evaluated by the person responsible for selection in the area of concern.
- D. When a patron expresses concern about the use of or inclusion in the collection of particular material, a staff member shall provide the patron a “Statement of Concern About Library Resources” form (see Appendix D). The patron may fill out the form and return it to any library staff.
- E. The Library Director will send a written response to the patron within four (4) weeks. In addition to addressing the patron’s concerns, the reply will also inform the patron that if he or she is not satisfied with the response of the Library Director, he or she may, within thirty (30) days, make a final appeal in writing directly to the Library Joint Board of Directors.
- F. The appeal will be added to the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Joint Board of Directors.
- G. A final determination will be made in writing to the patron within thirty (30) days of the board meeting. The material in question will remain in the collection until a final determination is made.

13. Gifts and Donations to the Collection

The Library has long been favored by public-spirited citizens as a beneficiary of gifts. Since such additions to our resources assist in carrying out our purposes, they are always encouraged and welcome. Once a gift is given it becomes the property of The Library. Donated materials which do not meet the Library’s selection criteria are given to the Friends of the Bridgman Library, donated to other organizations, or recycled. Patrons may request a record of their donations for tax purposes. The Library cannot assign a value to materials donated to the collection. Please see The Library’s Gifts and Donations Policy for information on gifts of money and property.

Appendix A

Library Bill of Rights

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

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Appendix B

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.

Appendix C

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, these principles are affirmed:

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

Statement of Concern About Library Resources at Bridgman Public Library

The Bridgman Public Library Joint Board of Directors, hereafter referred to as The Board, has delegated the responsibility for collection development to the Library Director. If you wish to request reconsideration of library materials, please return this completed form to: Bridgman Public Library, Library Director, 4460 Lake Street, Bridgman, MI 49106 or to any Library employee. The materials referred to on this form will be reviewed and you will be informed of the results. This review does not automatically result in withdrawal of the material(s).

PLEASE PRINT:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ HOME CELL (Please circle one)

Do you represent: Self? _____ Organization? _____ Today's date _____

Resource to be reconsidered:

Book ___ Periodical ___ Movie ___ Audio Book ___ Newspaper ___ Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

What brought this resource to your attention?

Have you examined (read / viewed / listened to) the entire resource? _____

If not, what portions have you examined? _____

What concerns you about this resource? (use back and additional pages if necessary)

Are there resource(s) you can suggest to provide additional information (such as reviews) and /or other viewpoints on this topic? _____

