

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The purpose of the Anne Arundel County Public Library in materials selection is to provide materials in various formats, which will meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of all the residents of Anne Arundel County. The AACPL collection is a user-oriented collection that is open for use by all residents.

The ultimate responsibility for selection of materials rests with the library administrator who operates within the framework of policies approved by the library board of trustees. Those policies include the AACPL "Freedom to Read Statement", the ALA Library Bill of Rights", and this "Materials Selection Policy".

A representation of a wide range of views and ideas is selected on a basis of quality of content or community interest. The AACPL recognizes the diversity of interests of the county citizens and recognizes the right of all citizens to choose their library materials. Materials are therefore purchased to serve this diversity of interests and needs in the community without endorsement of any particular ideals and precepts. The library does not assume the parental responsibility for children's choices of library materials.

Materials are purchased to meet current demand and the collection is assessed on a periodic basis to insure it remains relevant to the needs of county residents.

The library does not purchase or otherwise make available pornography, whether obscene or not. The display of pornography in the library is against library policy and will not be permitted. This includes images on the screens of computers or other electronic devices.

Suggestions from county residents for materials purchase, evaluation, or retention are welcomed and are given serious consideration.

The principles governing reference and other non-circulating materials collections are general community needs and interests, not specialized research. Specialized materials collected by other libraries are assessable to Anne Arundel County residents via the Maryland Interlibrary Organization and through other referrals.

MARYLAND AND LOCAL MATERIALS: The AACPL selects and maintains a collection of descriptive and historical materials concerning Maryland, especially Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. The primary aim is general community interest, not specialized research. Such special materials are collected by other institutions such as the Hall of Records, the Maryland Historical Society, the State Law Library, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, and others. Referrals may be made to these other resources.

Local authors are included in this special collection when the works' subject matter pertains to Maryland.

The library welcomes gifts to the Maryland collection.

Approved by Board of Trustees
April 16, 1987
Revised, January 15, 2004

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 the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or view 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 prescribed 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 abridgment 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.

Adopted June 18, 1948

Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980

By the ALA Council.

Adopted September 10, 1981
Board of Library Trustees

FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

Freedom to read is essential to our democracy. This is recognized as the power of individuals to choose whatever they desire to read. It is in this multipolarity that our democracy gains its strength.

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.

WHEREAS, Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Library Association has adopted the Library Bill of Rights as the basic policy statement in support of the rights of individuals to have freedom of choice in their reading materials and related services:

NOW THEREFORE, in view of the vast importance of this principle, the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Library Association further affirms the following propositions:

It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

The power of a democratic system to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them.

Publishers, librarians, and booksellers serve the educational process by making available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase in learning; however, an endorsement of every idea of presentation contained in the materials is not to be assumed.

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 in the public interest that a book should be judged as a book; therefore, publishers and librarians are not to determine acceptability of a book solely on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author. Art and literature cannot flourish if they are measured by the political views or private lives of its creators, and the society of free individuals cannot tolerate the banning of writers.

It is in the public interest to resist efforts to coerce the taste in reading materials of others and to avoid inhibiting writers from achieving artistic expression. 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 and are not to be discharged simply by preventing the young from reading works for which they are not yet prepared.

It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to refrain from categorizing any book or author so as to force a prejudgment of ideals upon the reader.

Individuals of a democratic society are not to be directed in forming an opinion of the ideas they examine.

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to assume the responsibility to be guardians of the people's freedom to read and to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large. Individuals are free to determine what they wish to read. Each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members; however, no group has the right to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon individuals or groups.
2. It is the affirmative responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books and materials that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression.

The best demonstration of this responsibility 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.

AND FURTHERMORE, Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Library Association attaches a priceless value to all reading materials and sincerely accepts these propositions as neither lightly stated nor made as easy generalizations. The administration and operation of this library system will tenaciously uphold the freedom to read as herein stated and do so because we believe in the goodness, enormous variety and usefulness of books. These doctrines are worthy of cherishing and the American people shall always have the freedom to read.

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April 16, 1987